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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE

A BRIEF OVERVIEW
 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE  
A BRIEF OVERVIEW

General Information: Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce) is a multi-location university with an enrollment of slightly under 8000 students. The main campus is located in Commerce, Texas, a small predominantly rural town 65 miles east of Dallas with a population of 7,650. In addition to its main campus, the university offers classes at the Metroplex Center in Mesquite, the Universities Center at Dallas (UCD) in downtown Dallas, and Navarro Community College in Corsicana. A&M-Commerce is a member of the Federation of North Texas Area Universities. The Federation, created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, includes Texas Woman's University and the University of North Texas, as well as three affiliated universities (Midwestern State University, the University of Texas at Arlington, and the University of Texas at Dallas).

History: The University began as East Texas Normal College in 1889, when founder William Leonidas Mayo opened the doors to a one-building campus in Cooper, Texas, about 15 miles from the present campus. Only four other public universities in Texas have a longer history: Texas A&M University (1876), Prairie View A&M University (1876), the University of Texas at Austin (1883), and Sam Houston State University (1879). In 1894, "Mayo College" or Mayo's College moved to Commerce.

In 1917, the State of Texas accepted responsibility for the 50-acre campus, and the school was renamed East Texas State Normal College. In 1923, the name changed again and the school became East Texas State Teachers College. A graduate teacher education program was added in 1935. In 1957, recognizing that the purpose of the institution had become much broader than that of teacher education, the Texas legislature deleted the word "Teachers" from the name of the college. In 1962, East Texas State College was authorized to offer the doctoral degree. In 1965, after the institution reorganized into the School of Arts and Sciences, School of Education, School of Business, and Graduate School, the legislature changed the name to East Texas State University. The University joined the Texas A&M University System in 1996; the official name became Texas A&M University-Commerce. A&M-Commerce is the third largest university in the A&M System.

Today, the University campus proper is located on 140 acres, with an additional 1,696 acres of land in or near Commerce, including a University farm. The physical plant is valued at $240 million. It is one of thirty-four public universities in Texas. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board coordinates the role, scope, and programs of these institutions.

Programs: Texas A&M University-Commerce offers degrees from the baccalaureate through the doctorate. Presently, 84 undergraduate, 68 master's, and 6 doctoral majors are offered through 25 academic departments. Degrees awarded include:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Arts or Science in Criminal Justice
- Bachelor of Arts or Science in Interdisciplinary Studies
- Bachelor of Business Administration
• Bachelor of Professional Accountancy
• Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems
• Bachelor of Fine Arts
• Bachelor of Music
• Bachelor of Social Work
• Master of Arts
• Master of Business Administration
• Master of Education
• Master of Fine Arts
• Master of Music
• Master of Science
• Master of Social Work
• Doctor of Education
• Doctor of Philosophy

During the academic year 2000-2001, the total number of degrees awarded was 1,620. The following is a breakdown, according to degree level: 1) 997 bachelor’s degrees, 2) 586 master’s degrees, and 3) 37 doctoral degrees.

Organizational Structure: The organizational structure of Texas A&M-Commerce reflects its history and mission. A&M-Commerce was established as a state institution of higher education by state law in 1917. Since its founding as a private institution in 1889, several changes of title have reflected its growing and evolving scope. Beginning as East Texas Normal College, and progressing through East Texas State Normal College, East Texas State Teachers College, and East Texas State University, the current title is Texas A&M University-Commerce.

• The Board of Regents: The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents is the legal governing board for all A&M System institutions, including A&M-Commerce. The Board of Regents is responsible for providing policy direction for the A&M System and its component agencies and universities. The Texas A&M System is comprised of the System Administration and General Offices, including the Office of the Board of Regents, nine component universities (including A&M-Commerce), and eight component agencies.

• The University President: The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the university. Organizationally, the President reports to the Chancellor of the Texas A&M University System. The President is charged with implementing policies and programs with an impact on all parts of the institution, including the recommendation of an organizational structure necessary to implement the purpose and mission of the University and the establishment of appropriate administrative offices. The President coordinates the planning, development, and operation of all activities and programs of the University. The President is responsible for the development of A&M-Commerce’s legislative budget request and submits it to the Chancellor of the A&M System and the State Legislature Budget Board.

In 1998, a new President was chosen and organizational restructuring occurred over the next three years. The current structure provides for a provost and vice president of
academic/student affairs, vice president for business and administration, and vice president for marketing and resource development. In addition, there are three academic colleges - College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Technology, and College of Education and Human Services. The University organizational charts are provided in Appendix A (A1-A5). The charts are also located on the university's Web site (http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/administration/organization_charts/).

**University Organization:** The following paragraphs identify the major organization structure of the University and outline the general areas of responsibilities for each.

- **The University President:** The President and Chief Executive Officer has the day-to-day functional authority and responsibility for the management of the University. Three vice presidents report directly to the President, and each is responsible for one of the three divisions of the University. The three divisions are as follows: academic and student affairs, business and administration, and marketing and resource development.

- **Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs:** The provost/vice president for academic and student affairs is responsible for all instructional and research activities, as well as student affairs. The academic affairs area includes three colleges (Arts and Sciences, Business and Technology, and Education and Human Services), graduate studies and research, instructional technology and distance education, Mayo College, the Honors Program, student assessment and evaluation, and the library. The student services area includes Offices of Enrollment Management (Admissions and Records), Financial Aid and Scholarships, Counseling Center, Housing, Intercultural Services, and Career Services and Veteran Affairs, as well as the Memorial Student Center.

- **Vice President for Business and Administration:** The vice president for business and administration is responsible for financial services; human resources; computing, telecommunication and information services; physical plant; printing services; purchasing and contract administration; transportation; University Dining Services; and the University Police Department.

- **Vice President for Marketing and Resource Development:** The vice president for marketing and resource development is responsible for Advancement Services; Community Development, Customer/Constituent Services, External Relations (including Alumni Records, Services, and Association, and The A&M-Commerce Foundation), Information Services, and Marketing Services.

Each division has subordinates who manage these functions and are responsible for the day-to-day operation of their respective span of control. As stated earlier, the organizational charts are provided in the appendices (Appendices A1-A5), as well as on the University's Web site. All administrative officers possess the appropriate credentials and training for the positions with which they are entrusted.

**Fact Book:** The information in the following pages regarding institutional data/statistics is from the Texas A&M University-Commerce’s 2002 Fact Book. The data are produced and maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. To facilitate “easy access” during the site visit, several print copies will be available on-site.
**Student Characteristics:** The University attracts the major portion of the student body from a 10 county surrounding area (Hunt, Hopkins, Collin, Dallas, Lamar, Fannin, Kaufman, Grayson, Tarrant, and Rockwall), with a population exceeding 4.7 million. Texas A&M University-Commerce is the nearest university to 20 northeast Texas counties. The following data provide an indication of student characteristics at A&M-Commerce.

**Table 1**

*ACT, SAT, GRE Averages -- Fall 2001*

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<th>Test</th>
<th>Average</th>
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<td>SAT</td>
<td>971</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRE:</td>
<td>984</td>
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<td>Masters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
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**Table 2**

*Student Enrollment Status -- Fall 2001*

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<th>Status</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>1443</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(78% of U.G.)</td>
<td>(20% of GRAD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(22% of U.G.)</td>
<td>(80% of GRAD)</td>
</tr>
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Note: Total 7,934 Undergraduate 4448 Graduate 3486 (Doctoral 258)
Table 3

*Semester Credit Hours by On- or Off-Campus Location -- Fall 2001*

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>On-campus</td>
<td>63,396</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus</td>
<td>13,688</td>
<td>(17.8%)</td>
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Table 4

*Student Gender -- Fall 2001*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>1231</td>
<td>3061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(41% of U.G.)</td>
<td>(35% of GRAD)</td>
<td>(39% of Total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2618</td>
<td>2255</td>
<td>4873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(59% of U.G.)</td>
<td>(65% of GRAD)</td>
<td>(61% of Total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4448</td>
<td>3486</td>
<td>7934</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

*Average Age of A&M-Commerce Students -- Fall 2001*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

Ethnicity of A&M-Commerce Students -- Fall 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Anglo</td>
<td>3386</td>
<td>2290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(76%)</td>
<td>(66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16%)</td>
<td>(17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(&gt;1%)</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(&gt;1%)</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4448</strong></td>
<td><strong>3486</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 1400 new undergraduate students in fall 2001, 47% were first-time freshmen, 43% were community college transfers, and the remaining 10% transferred from universities. Student financial aid data indicates that traditionally some 68% of the undergraduate and 22% of the graduate students receive financial aid. These characteristics emphasize the University’s historical appeal to low income, first generation college students.

**Enrollment Trends:** The University enrollments for the fall semesters between 1995 and 2001 are presented in Table 7. Of these seven fall terms, four increased in total enrollment, although the trend in undergraduates was declining. The greatest fall-to-fall increase was from 2000 to 2001; this period saw a 6.00% increase. The greatest fall-to-fall decrease was between 1999 and 2000, when the University enrollment declined 3.6%. In striving to increase enrollment, the University has employed several strategies. One effort was the creation, in 2000, of the Office of Marketing Services within the Division of Marketing and Resource Development. With a new focus in the Office of Enrollment Management, the work of the Office of Marketing Services, and renewed dedication and support from faculty and staff, the University has made significant strides to increase enrollment. The fall 2002 total headcount of 8,487 (not included in Table 7) reflects a significant two year increase (13%) over fall 2000. It is anticipated that current and future building projects in the areas of academics, housing, and recreation, and the continuous improvements in curriculum and the acquisition of new academic programs will contribute to significant increases in future enrollments.
Statistics on undergraduate and graduate semester credit hour production for the previous seven-fall semesters are indicated in Table 8. During this period, undergraduate semester credit hour production reversed its declining trend in 2001. With the exception of 1999 to 2000, during this same period, graduate semester credit hours increased each ensuing fall.

In fall 1997, there were 319 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty as compared to 312.8 FTE faculty in fall 2001. The University’s student-teacher ratios (STRs) for the fall semesters from 1997 to 2001 are presented in Table 9.

**Faculty and Staff:** In fall of 2001, the 873.8 full-time University employees included 312.8 full-time equivalent faculty and 561 non-instructional staff. Of the full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF),
slightly under 55% are tenured or on tenure track. Faculty at the rank of professor comprises 20.5% of the total FTEF, while the percentages for the ranks of associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor are 14.9, 18.5, and .003, respective. The remaining FTEF are lecturer/other faculty (39.4) and teaching assistants (6.2). Almost 83% of the FTEF teach on-campus classes. The total non-duplicative headcount is 531, of which slightly over half (54.4%) are male. In looking at diversity among faculty, almost 91% of the total headcount is white. Blacks comprise the second largest ethnic group (5%), with Asians or Pacific islanders comprising the third largest group (2.2%).

The Future: Although historically forward-looking, in 2000-2001, Texas A&M University-Commerce began placing a new, vital emphasis on planning for the future. Spurred by the challenges presented in State Demographer Steve Murdoch’s predictions, especially as institutionalized in the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Closing the Gaps: Texas Higher Education Plan, A&M-Commerce, through an intensive effort, produced both a new Campus Master Plan and a new Strategic Plan, Advancing Success, as well as instituted a new planning process. These initiatives, as well as the growth of new programs, led to the theme of the Alternative Model Strategic Self-Study, University Culture: Planning and Change. While the traditions of Texas A&M University-Commerce remain firmly rooted in its rich heritage and history, the institution is now planning to strengthen its position as the leading public institution of higher education in northeast Texas.
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Once every ten years, member institutions of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) must undergo a process for reaffirmation of accreditation. The accreditation process is concerned primarily with the improvement of educational quality and for public assurance that institutions meet established regional standards. Texas A&M University-Commerce was initially accredited in 1925 and was last reaffirmed in 1993.

In March 2000, President Keith D. McFarland received an invitation from the Commission on Colleges to conduct an alternative self-study. On September 29, 2000, A&M-Commerce submitted to the Commission of Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools a proposal to conduct an alternative model self-study. Following approval of the self-study proposal, President McFarland, Texas A&M University-Commerce, appointed Dr. James Randy McBroom, director of Institutional Research and associate professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice, to serve as director of the institutional self-study. Dr. Donald L. Cawthon, professor and head of Agricultural Sciences was subsequently named assistant self-study director. During the early stages of the self-study, Dr. Cawthon left A&M-Commerce to pursue other professional opportunities; Dr. Sandy E. Weeks, associate professor of Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies, was then appointed as assistant self-study director and chair of the compliance committee. As a result of Dr. Parnell assuming a position at another university, Dr. Randy Odom joined the Steering Committee in fall 2002. Also, since the initiation of the self-study, several individuals have resigned from the University; others have had changes in titles. Those who departed are still included on the rosters of committee membership; individuals with title changes are associated with their initial title.

The decisions related to the basic approach to the compliance component of the self-study were influenced by the knowledge of the University-wide involvement in the strategic planning process. Under the direction of Dr. McBroom, chair and Dr. Parnell (who was replaced by Dr. J.K. Crain), co-chair, of the Strategic Planning Committee, the University had already experienced an intensive introspective effort at every level to examine strengths and identify opportunities for improvement. The outcome of the strategic planning efforts were used to develop the focus of the strategic component of the self-study, *University Culture: Planning and Change*; the results of that component are presented in a separate document.

Compliance Self-Study Process

The compliance component of the self-study process was organized into nine phases:

1. **Preparation** – during which the Steering Committee, two principal committees, and twelve compliance sub-committees (chaired primarily by Compliance Committee members) were selected and organized; the purposes and goals developed; the *Self-Study Manual, 2000-2003* written; and the orientation meetings for the committees conducted.

2. **Information Gathering and Processing** – during which the compliance sub-committees sought data and information that demonstrated the extent to which the university met compliance with the *Criteria*. 
3. **Self-Study Preliminary Findings** – in which the sub-committees submitted a preliminary narrative, recommendations, and suggestions to the Compliance Committee chair.

4. **First Draft and Review of the 2003 Self-Study Compliance Report** – in which the Compliance Committee chair prepared a cohesive document. The Steering Committee, along with selected individuals, examined the draft for accuracy and completeness. Additional sources of information were identified, and sub-committees were informed where additional work was needed.

5. **Additional Information and Documentation Gathering** – during which time sub-committees continued to gather information and document findings. New and revised information was submitted, including additional recommendations and suggestions.

6. **Second Draft and Steering Committee Review** – during which a revised draft was prepared. The Steering Committee reviewed the revised report. A meeting was then held where recommendations and suggestions were accepted or rejected. Accepted items were forwarded to the appropriate vice president for corrective action.

7. **University Review** – in which a draft of Self-Study sections was posted on the University Web site. Revised material was periodically uploaded onto the Web.

8. **2003 Self-Study Compliance Report** – in which new information was added, sections were refined, and the report was sent to Steering Committee and sub-committee chairs to read for accuracy. Upon return, accepted edits were incorporated into the document.

9. **Final 2003 Self-Study Compliance Report and Preparation of the Follow-up Plan** – during which the draft sections were incorporated into a cohesive document and submitted to the self-study editor. The final report was uploaded onto the University Web site.

During the time the self-study process was occurring, a Self-Study Library was created to house all of the information received. This resource library also contains statistical data, a copy of the *Texas A&M University System Policies and Procedures Manual*, a copy of the *Texas A&M University-Commerce Academic Affairs Procedures Manual*, various reports, results of surveys, and other information that provided each committee with the majority of information needed to conduct its analysis. The library will serve as one of the primary sources of information for the SACS Visiting Committee. Another source of information will be the Web. Visiting Committee members will be able to view the *System Policies Manual*, the *A&M-Commerce Procedures Manual*, and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rules on the Web. Links are provided throughout the Self-Study Report for direct access to the appropriate Web sites. *(It should be noted that only the A&M System has policies; component universities have rules and procedures. So, it is important that, as the Self-Study is read, when a reference is made to an A&M-Commerce procedure, it is equal to what non-system universities have at policy level.)*

Other material in the library includes the following publications and documents from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS):

*Alternative Model for Institutional Self-Study*
Recommendations and Suggestions

The compliance sub-committees periodically submitted recommendations and suggestions to the Steering Committee for review and acceptance or rejection. When accepted, they were forwarded to the President and appropriate vice presidents for corrective action. Throughout the Self-Study, the recommendations and suggestions that remain unresolved at the time of final printing are in bold print. Those that have been resolved are included as regular text with an explanation of the action taken for resolution. In either case, the recommendations and suggestions are clearly identified throughout the document and are summarized at the end of each subsection, as well as a complete summary at the end of the Report.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized by addressing, each “must” statement in the Criteria and a majority of the “should” statements. Following a general introduction to each section or major subsection, each criterion within the Section is listed in numerical order. A response, in narrative format, follows each statement or group of statements. When the University is in compliance, the documentation is listed after the response, with the compliance status following. When “initially not in compliance,” an initial status that reflects that fact is made, then a recommendation is stated. Next, an action is provided. For a criterion brought into compliance, documentation is provided and a compliance statement (final status) is made. When the final status is not in compliance, an action statement reflects that the area is still being addressed. The following provides an illustration of this formatting.

Table 10

Organization of the Report by Criterion Compliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Compliance</th>
<th>Initially Not in Compliance</th>
<th>Final Status Not in Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion</td>
<td>Criterion</td>
<td>Criterion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Initial Status</td>
<td>Initial Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Status</td>
<td>Final Status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suggestions given when the University is in compliance are stated after the statement of status; action taken to address the suggestion follows immediately. When a suggestion is given for an area of non-compliance, it follows the recommendation and is addressed in the action. As indicated above, at the end of each sub-section within a section, a summary of recommendations and suggestions is listed. Each is identified as either being resolved or unresolved.

Special Notes

- Style: The writing style within the 2003 Self-Study Compliance Report is a combination of the APA Style and The Texas A&M University System Style Guidelines. According to the latter format, for academic titles: “Capitalize titles only when preceding a name; otherwise, use lower case. Before a name, give a person only one title.” Another capitalization style in the latter states, “Official names are capitalized; unofficial, informal, shortened or generic names are not.”
- As mentioned earlier, A&M-Commerce has rules and procedures; only the A&M System has policies.

To locate documentation, the reader should follow the instructions below:

- If only an item/document is cited, it is filed in the SACS Self-Study Library. Files are arranged according to section and statement number and are color-coded. The colors are: Section I=green, Section II=lavender, Section III=yellow, Section IV=blue, Section V=gray, and Section VI=pink. Some documentation is located in notebooks. The index of documentation for each criteria indicates when a notebook should be accessed.
- When an item/document is located in an office, the office name follows the item/document name. An index of offices that includes location and contact information, along with a campus map, is provided at the beginning of each section.
- Some documentation can be accessed either in hard copy or on the Web.
- Printed copies of all A&M System policies and A&M-Commerce procedures referenced within a section are provided in a report folder at the front of each section.
- If, when using a link in the Self-Study, a prompt to “Enter Network Password,” is displayed, click on cancel. The connection to the site will then be made.
SACS Self-Study Committees

Steering Committee Members

Randy McBroom, SACS Self Study director; director, Office of Institutional Research; associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice; co-chair, Strategic Planning Committee
Sandy Weeks, assistant SACS Self-Study director; associate professor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies; chair, Compliance Committee
J.K. Crain, co-chair, Strategic Planning Committee; assistant professor, Industrial and Engineering Technology
Donna Dunbar-Odom, SACS Self-Study editor; associate professor, Literature and Languages
Mary Hendrix, director, Instructional Technology and Distant Education
Ronnie Brooks, director, Trio Programs
Randy Odom, professor, Marketing and Management
Jana Sandall, Student Body President
Ron Hufstutler, SACS (Compliance) Self-Study consultant, associate vice president, Planning and Institutional Research

Compliance Committee Members

Sandy Weeks, chair, assistant SACS Self-Study director; associate professor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies
Jon Travis, associate professor, Secondary and Higher Education
Phyllis Erdman, department head and professor, Counseling
Bob Folden, director, Continuing Education
Rex Giddens, comptroller, Financial Services
Natalie Henderson, doctoral degree coordinator, Graduate Studies and Research
Willie Edwards, associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Sue Espinoza, associate professor, Secondary and Higher Education
Ed Sunderland, instructor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies
Robert Seay, assistant dean, College of Business and Technology
Carol Dodd, assistant director, Systems and Technical Services, Gee Library
Bill Wadley, professor, Art
Charles Rogers, professor, Physics
Linda Matthei, associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice

Compliance Sub-Committees and Members

Principles and Philosophy of Accreditation
Steering Committee

Institutional Purpose
Phyllis Erdman, chair, department head and professor, Counseling
James Grimshaw, Regents Professor, Literature and Languages
INTRODUCTION

Matthew Kanjiranthinkle, dean, Graduate Studies and Research
Randy Odom, professor, Marketing and Management

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Dale Funderburk, chair, professor, Economics and Finance
Thad Anglin, assistant dean of Students, Office of the Dean of Students
Linda Carmichael, director, Student Accounts, Financial Services
Larry Chaloupka, associate professor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies
Nancy Hill, graduation/NCAA coordinator, Records and Reports
Gerald Haskins, associate professor, Mass Media, Communications, and Theatre
Jeremy McMillen, research analyst, Planning and Institutional Research
Robert Seay, assistant dean, College of Business and Technology

Educational Programs (A)
Natalie Henderson, chair, doctoral degree coordinator, Graduate Studies and Research
Tyson Bennett, director, Field Experience and Certification, College of Education and Human Services
Ronnie Brooks, director, Trio Program
Vivian Freeman, interim director, Printing Services
Dean Ginther, professor, Psychology and Special Education
Mary Hazal, assignment editor, News Service
Richard Fulkerson, professor, Literature and Languages
Barbara Hammack, associate professor, Elementary Education
Mary Hendrix, director, Instructional Technology and Distance Education
Garvey House, assistant professor, Psychology and Special Education
Madeline Justice, associate professor, Secondary and Higher Education
SuzAnne Keifer, director, Metroplex Center
Kayla Peak, director, Zeppa Recreation Center
Jim Reynolds, professor, Literature and Languages
Bill Thompson, professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice

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Sharon Chambers, assistant professor, Secondary and Higher Education
Wendell Edwards, department head and professor, Accounting
Staussa Ervin, advisor, Advisement Services
Anita Pankake, professor, Educational Administration
Heidi Staebler, assistant professor, Mathematics
James Vornberg, professor, Educational Administration
Student

Educational Programs (C)
Linda Matthei, co-chair, associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Ann Moseley, co-chair, Mayo Professor, Literature and Languages
Don English, professor, General Business and Systems Management
John Hannsers, department head and professor, Mass Media, Communication, and Theatre
Richard Lampe, professor, Counseling
Royce Lee, department head and professor, Biological, Earth, and Environmental Sciences
Louise Skinner, assistant to the dean, Graduate Studies and Research
Don Taylor, doctoral student
Vance Underhill, professor, Mathematics
Paul Zelhart, department head and professor, Psychology and Special Education

Educational Programs (D)
Willie Edwards, chair, associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Chuck Arize, professor, General Business and Systems Management
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Sarah Sienty, assistant professor, Secondary and Higher Education

Educational Support Services (A)
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Brad Abell, interim instructor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies
Anna Beth Arnold, programming supervisor, Media Services
Mike Cagle, director, Computing, Technology, and Instructional Services
Randy McDonald, director, Admissions
Diane Downing, department head, reference services, Gee Library
Connie Greiner, clinical instructor, Secondary and Higher Education
Carolyn Kacena, director, Library
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Rick Kreminski, assistant dean, Arts and Sciences, associate professor, Math
Charlotte Larkin, technology support coordinator, Instructional Technology
Sang Suh, assistant professor, Computer Science and Information Systems
Richard Tuerk, professor, Literature and Languages

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Jennifer Baker, counselor, Counseling Center
Anne Bomar, associate professor, Mass Media, Communication, and Theatre
Alicia Currin, director, Financial Reporting
Larry Clinton, professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Leannah Dodson, student
Sean Kendall, student, Student Government Association
Gwen Lareau, director, Advisement Services
Bill Oellermann, assistant vice president, Marketing Services
John Patton, director, Financial Aid
Patsy Pope, international student advisor, International Students
Jana Sandall, student athlete
George Shepard, student athlete
Tom Tallach, assistant athletic director, instructor, Health, Kinesiology, and Sports Studies
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Charles Rogers, chair, professor, Physics
Gene Lockhart, department head and professor, Music
Brian Nichols, director, Memorial Student Center
Chester Robinson, assistant professor, Counseling
R. N. Singh, professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Donna Spinato, chief of police, University Police
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David Weirschem, assistant professor, General Business and Systems Management

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associate professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice
Harvetta Robertson, assistant professor, Psychology and Special Education
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Rick Miller, coordinator, Campus Synergy Lab
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Mitzi Money, associate vice president, Business and Administration

SACS Self-Study Editor
Donna Dunbar-Odom, associate professor, Literature and Languages

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Sharon Crump, administrative assistant, Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Sathish Chennakesavula, graduate assistant and compliance Web master, SACS Self-Study Office
SECTION I: PRINCIPLES AND PHILOSOPHY OF ACCREDITATION

Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce) is committed to the accreditation process and the responsibilities associated with it. As a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the University conducts self-studies at appropriate intervals, accepts the assessments of strengths and weaknesses provided by its own investigations and those of visiting committees, and always addresses recommendations and suggestions for improvement. As indicated in the introduction, the current self-study involved many individuals across campus and examined all aspects of the University's operation.

1.0 Principles and Philosophy of Accreditation

1. The Commission on Colleges supports the right of an institution to pursue its established educational purpose; the right of faculty members to teach, investigate and publish freely; and the right of students to have opportunities for learning. However, the exercise of these rights must not interfere with the overriding obligation of the institution to offer its students a sound education leading to recognized certificates or degrees. (Page 2, line 35)

Response:
Texas A&M University-Commerce provides its students with a sound education leading to a 2-year certificate in printing production and degrees at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels in accordance with its mission, role and scope, and program inventory. It should be noted that, as a result of low productivity and staff retirements, the 2-year certificate in printing production is being phased out.

Documentation:
Approved Table of Programs (THECB) and Inventory of Programs (THECB), 2002 Fact Book, Section 4, Degrees Awarded: [link]
Evelyn Foust, Coordinator of Program Development, Interoffice Memorandum, March 1, 2002 Undergraduate Degrees Awarded by Level 1995-2001, 2002 Fact Book, Section 4, Degrees Awarded: [link]
2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 7: [link]

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

1.1 Institutional Commitment and Responsibilities in the Accreditation Process

2. The effectiveness of self-regulatory accreditation depends upon an institution's acceptance of certain responsibilities, including involvement in and commitment to the accreditation process. An institution is required to conduct a self-study at the interval specified by the Commission and, at the conclusion of the self-study,
accept an honest and forthright peer assessment of institutional strengths and weaknesses. (Page 5, line 4)

3. The Commission requires that the self-study assess every aspect of the institution; involve personnel from all segments of the institution, including faculty, staff, students, administration and governing boards; and provide a comprehensive analysis of the institution, identifying strengths and weaknesses. (Page 5, line 8)

4. In addition, the Commission requires an adequate institutional follow-up plan to address issues identified in the self-study. (Page 5, line 14)

Response:
A&M-Commerce has been, and continues to be, committed to the self-study process and the institutional effectiveness concepts. In doing so, the University is committed to accepting the honest and forthright peer assessment of institutional strengths and weaknesses that will be provided by the Visiting Committee.

Although A&M-Commerce chose the alternative model for reaffirmation of accreditation, a comprehensive self-study was conducted. As indicated in the introduction, the current self-study, which involved campus-wide personnel participation, examined all aspects of the university’s operations. It was designed to provide a comprehensive analysis that identified strengths and weaknesses.

This 2003 Self-Study Compliance Report constitutes an invitation to the Commission and its representatives to read, question, evaluate, recommend, and suggest with full access to all aspects of the university’s operations. The Steering Committee presents this Report and the supporting documents as a complete and accurate description and analysis of Texas A&M University-Commerce as of fall 2002.

A plan to follow-up on the recommendations of the Self-Study Steering Committee and the Visiting Committee was developed and approved by the President. After the self-study was completed, members of the Steering Committee reviewed the preliminary draft of the document, as well as all recommendations submitted by compliance sub-committees. After considering each recommendation individually, the Steering Committee voted on each section as a whole as to whether or not further action was needed. As a result of support documentation indicating University compliance, a few recommendations were removed. However, the Steering Committee elevated some of suggestions to recommendation status. All of the approved recommendations were then distributed to the appropriate division vice president for action; a report of corrective actions was required. The follow-up plan on recommendations received by the Visiting Committee is outlined in the "Tracking of Self-Study Recommendation Flow Chart" (see Figure 1).
When the University receives the report from the Visiting Committee, the President’s Advisory Council, in coordination with the Steering Committee, will develop a detailed response indicating how the University will implement the recommendations of the Visiting Committee. The director of the self-study will coordinate the University's response to the Visiting Committee report and will submit it to the Commission on Colleges within five months after receiving the report.

**Documentation:**
*University Culture: Planning and Change, Proposal for Alternative Self-Study, September 29, 2000*
Alternative Model Approval letter, John A. Roush, November 20, 2000
Letter, Dr. Keith McFarland, President, August 22, 2002
*2003 Self-Study Compliance Report*
Tracking of Self-Study Recommendations Flow Chart, Figure 1
*Self-Study Manual, 2000-2003, Implementation and Follow-up, p. 24*

**Status:**
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

5. **An institution must** be committed to participation in the activities and decisions of the Commission. (Page 5, line 17)

**Response:**
A&M-Commerce is committed to participating in the activities and decisions of the Commission. This is evidenced in such activities as having representation at annual meetings of the Commission, the state meetings, and the business meeting of the Commission, with a Presidential designee voting in the College Delegate Assembly. This commitment includes a willingness to participate in the decision-making processes of the Commission, including those for reporting changes within the institution.

**Documentation:**
*2003 Self-Study Compliance Report*
Letter, Dr. Keith McFarland, President, August 22, 2002

**Status:**
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

6. **An institution of higher education is committed to** the search for knowledge and its dissemination. (Page 5, line 26)

7. **Integrity in** the pursuit of knowledge **is expected** to govern the total environment of an institution. (Page 5, line 27)

8. **Each member institution is responsible** for ensuring integrity in all operations dealing with its constituencies, in its relations with other member institutions, and in its accreditation activities with the Commission on Colleges. (Page 5, line 29)
Through its vision and mission statements, A&M-Commerce reaffirms its institution-wide commitment to the search for knowledge and its dissemination, as well as to integrity in its pursuit. Also, this commitment is fostered in the motto of its founder (William Leonidas Mayo), “ceaseless industry, fearless investigation, unfettered thought, and unselfish service to others.” Through its efforts to carry out its mission and its adherence to its own rules and procedures, the University ensures integrity in all operations dealing with its constituencies, in its relations with other member institutions, and in its accreditation activities with the Commission on Colleges.

Documentation:
2001-2002 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 7-8: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2001-2002 Graduate Catalog, p. 9: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm
2001-2002 Student’s Guidebook, p. 12
System Policies Manual: Policy 03.02 and Regulation 03.02.02:
http://sago.tamu.edu/policy/tocmain.htm

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

9. Each institution **must** provide the Commission access to all parts of its operation and to complete and accurate information about the institution’s affairs, including reports of other accrediting, licensing, and auditing agencies. (Page 5, line 33)

10. In the spirit of collegiality, institutions **are expected** to cooperate fully during all aspects of the process of evaluation: preparations for site visits, the site visit itself, and the follow up to the site visit. (Page 6, line 3)

11. Institutions **are also expected** to provide the Commission or its representatives with information requested and to maintain an atmosphere of openness and cooperation during evaluations, enabling evaluators to perform their duties with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. (Page 6, line 7)

Response:
A&M-Commerce commits to all aspects of the reaffirmation of accreditation process, including providing the Commission access to all parts of its operation and to complete and accurate information about the institution’s affairs, including reports of other accrediting, licensing, and auditing agencies. Additionally, A&M-Commerce commits to cooperate fully during all aspects of the evaluation process, including preparations for site visits, the site visit, and the follow-up to the site visit. The Commission or its representatives will be provided all requested information. During the visit, an atmosphere of openness and cooperation will be maintained, thus allowing evaluators to perform their duties with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report
Letter, Dr. Keith McFarland, President, August 22, 2002

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

12. Each participating institution must be in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of 1992 Higher Education Amendments. (Page 6, line 13)

Response:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance with program responsibilities under Title IV of the 1992 Higher Education Amendments.

Documentation:
Letter, United States Department of Education, October 1999

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

13. Each institution seeking candidacy, membership, or reaffirmation with the Commission on Colleges must document its compliance with the Conditions of Eligibility as outlined in Section 1.4. (Page 6, line 22)

Response:
Compliance with the Conditions of Eligibility is evidenced by this report and by the extensive documentation available for the SACS/COC Visiting Committee. More complete details are included in Section 1.4 of this report.

Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

1.2 Application of the Criteria

14. An institution must refrain from making a substantive change, defined as a significant modification in the nature of scope or an institution or its programs, except in accordance with the Commission’s “Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions” and its attendant procedures. (Page 7, line 4)

Response:
Historically, substantive changes made by Texas A&M University-Commerce have been in accord with the Commission’s “Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions” and its attendant procedures. However, during the self-
study, it was discovered that the University failed to submit its Master of Social Work (MSW) program as a substantive change for Commission approval. The oversight is attributed to the fact that, during the development and approval of the MSW through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs was undergoing a period of significant personnel change.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended the university rectify its failure to report to the Commission intent to make a significant modification in the nature of scope of the University in regards to the MSW program and put in place a process to insure that such a failure does not occur again.

Action:
In a letter dated January 2, 2002, Dr. Keith McFarland, President, notified Dr. James T. Rogers, SACS Executive Director, Commission on Colleges, of a substantive change for A&M-Commerce. Specifically, the Commission was informed of the approval by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents and THECB for the University (1) to initiate a new Master of Social Work degree with a major in social work and (2) to create the Department of Social Work and rename the existing Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Dr. Rogers sent a letter acknowledging the changes and informed the University that no additional information was required.

In order to develop a process to insure that the University, at the appropriate time, notifies the Commission of Colleges of substantive changes, revisions were made in Procedure A03.01, Program Development and Curriculum Approval Process. Specific references were made to following standards of good practice and guidelines established by the A&M System, THECB, and Commission on Colleges of the SACS. Also, a statement was included to insure that all substantive changes are in accord with the Commission’s “Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions” and its attendant procedures. Finally, it was noted that the coordinator of program development maintains a chart of Approved Degree or Certificate Programs that includes a column for dates the various governing bodies were included in the process.

Documentation:
Letter, Dr. Keith D. McFarland, January 2, 2002
Letter, Dr. James T. Rogers, April 5, 2002
Academic Program Proposal Timelines
Program Proposal Checklist
Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

15. *All existing or planned activities must be reported according to the policies, procedures and guidelines of the Commission on Colleges and must be in compliance with the Criteria.* (Page 7, line 9)

Response:
Except for the program cited above, all existing or planned activities have been reported according to the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the Commission on Colleges and are in compliance with the *Criteria.*

Documentation:
Approved Degree or Certificate Programs 2001-2002, Chart, Office of the Provost/VP for Academic/Student Affairs
Status of New Programs in Progress, Chart, Office of the Provost/VP for Academic/Student Affairs

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

16. *Each institution must have adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints.* (Page 7, line 31)

Response:
The University publishes a student handbook annually. This document contains procedures for students who wish to file grievances relating to academics, student programming, student activities, and physical or learning disabilities, along with procedures for complaints alleging sexual or racial harassment or sexual assaults.

After a thorough review of academic procedures, it was determined that the University has adequate procedures for addressing student complaints. The 2002-2003 *Student's Guidebook* incorporates all procedures for addressing written student complaints in one location. In the guidebook, specific personnel or offices to be contacted are listed in the section for grievance procedure for students. The guidebook also has a quick reference guide.

Documentation:
2001-2002 *Student's Guidebook*
2002-2003 *Student's Guidebook*
Sexual Harassment Procedure, Office of EEO Coordinator

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.
SECTION I

Suggestion:
It is suggested that errors in academic procedures numbers in the Student's Guidebook be corrected.

Action:
The incorrect academic procedure numbers in the 2002-2003 Student's Guidebook were edited to reflect the correct procedure numbers.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Application of the Criteria

Resolved:

Recommendations

Recommendation 1.2.14 (Page 7, line 4)
It is recommended the University rectify its failure to report to the Commission intent to make a significant modification in the nature of scope of the University in regards to the MSW program and put in place a process to insure that such a failure does not occur again.

Suggestions

Suggestion 1.2.16 (Page 7, line 31)
It is suggested that errors in academic procedures numbers in the Student's Guidebook be corrected.

1.3 Separately Accredited Units

17. A unit is required to apply for separate accreditation or to maintain separate membership if, in the judgment of the Commission, the unit exercises this level of autonomy. (Page 8, line 22)

18. If an institution seeks separately accredited status for one of its units, it must notify the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges of its intent and follow procedures established by the Commission. (Page 8, line 26)

Response:
Texas A&M University-Commerce does not have any separately accredited units.

Documentation:
Not applicable.

Status:
Not applicable.
1.4 Conditions of Eligibility

19. Any institution seeking candidacy must document its compliance with each of the thirteen Conditions of Eligibility to be authorized initiation of a self-study, or to be awarded candidacy or candidacy renewal. (Page 9, line 1)

20. In addition, the institution must provide evidence that it is capable of complying with all requirements of the Criteria and that it will be in compliance by the end of the period allowed for candidacy. (Page 9, line 5)

Response:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is seeking reaffirmation of accreditation, not candidacy.

Documentation:
Not applicable.

Status:
Not applicable.

21. The Conditions of Eligibility are basic qualifications which an institution of higher education must meet to be accredited by the Commission on Colleges. (Page 9, line 9)

22. Accredited institutions must also demonstrate compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation which holds institutions to appropriately higher standards of quality. (Page 9, line 17)

Response:
A&M-Commerce has maintained a long tenure with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as an accredited institution; the institution was initially accredited in 1925. This Self-Study affirms continued institutional quality in measurement of compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation.

Documentation:
Letter, Dr. James T. Rogers, July 20, 1993
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

23. In obtaining or maintaining accreditation with the Commission on Colleges, an institution agrees to the following:
   a. That it will comply with the Criteria for Accreditation of the Colleges Delegate Assembly consistent with the policies and procedures of the Commission on Colleges.
b. That the Commission on Colleges, at its discretion, may make known to any agency or member of the public requiring such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution's status with the Commission.

c. That it will comply with Commission requests, directives, decisions and policies, and will make complete, accurate and honest disclosure. Failure to do so is sufficient reason, in and of itself, for the Commission to impose a sanction, or to deny or revoke candidacy or accreditation. (Page 9, line 21)

Response:
The University affirms its commitment to comply with the current criteria of the College Delegate Assembly and any future criteria which may be modified in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Commission on Colleges.

The University is aware the Commission on Colleges may, at its discretion, publicize the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the university's status with the Commission and agrees to abide by any action taken by the Commission on Colleges.

The University agrees to disclose to the Commission on Colleges any information that may be required for the Commission to carry out its evaluation and accreditation function.

Documentation:
Letter, Dr. Keith D. McFarland, President, August 22, 2002
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

24. The institution must have formal authority from an appropriate government agency or agencies located within the geographic jurisdiction of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award degrees. (Page 10, line 1)

Response:
A&M-Commerce is one of 34 public universities in the state of Texas. It is authorized by THECB to award the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in accordance with mission, role and scope, and program inventory.

Documentation:
THECB, University and Health Related Institutions, Program Information, Texas Public Universities: [http://www.thech.state.tx.us/uhri/](http://www.thech.state.tx.us/uhri/)
Approved Table of Programs (THECB), 2002 Fact Book, Section 4, Degrees Awarded: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/)
Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

25. The institution **must** have a governing board of at least five members, which has the authority and duty to ensure that the mission of the institution is implemented. (Page 10, line 5)

26. The governing board is the legal body **responsible** for the institution. (Page 10, line 8)

27. Evidence **must** be provided that the board is an active policy-making body for the institution. (Page 10, line 9)

Response:
As a member of the Texas A&M University System, the A&M System’s nine-member Board of Regents governs A&M-Commerce. Appointment of each regent is made by the State governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate. The A&M System Board of Regents is in charge of the legal responsibility for the University and is the active policy-making body for the institution.

Documentation:
Bylaws of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System: http://tamusbor.tamu.edu/bylaws.htm
2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 275: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

28. The board is ultimately **responsible** for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. (Page 10, line 11)

Response:
The Board of Regents of the A&M System has final authority in terms of ensuring that the financial resources of the university are used to provide for sound educational programs. Final approval of the A&M-Commerce annual budget by the A&M System Board is required.

Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section VI

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.
29. The board **must** not be controlled by a minority of board members or by organizations or interests separate from the board. (Page 10, line 13)

30. The presiding officer of the board **must** have no contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. (Page 10, line 15)

31. The majority of other voting members of the board **must** have no contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. (Page 10, line 18)

**Response:**
The A&M System Board of Regents is not controlled by any organization or interests separate from the board, nor is there any minority of board members which exerts control of the whole. All matters requiring board action are first considered by the appropriate committee which then gives a report or makes a recommendation to the full board.

The presiding office of the Board has no contractual, or employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the A&M System or A&M-Commerce. Also, no contractual, or employment, or personal or familial financial interest is held by any of the voting members of the board.

**Documentation:**
System Policies Manual: Policy 02.01: [http://sago.tamu.edu/policy/02-01.htm](http://sago.tamu.edu/policy/02-01.htm)
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section VI

**Status:**
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

32. The bylaws of the board or other legal documents **must** ensure appropriate continuity in the board membership, usually by staggered terms of adequate length. (Page 10, line 22)

33. The bylaws or other legal documents **must** ensure the independence of the board. (Page 10, line 25)

34. **Amendment of the bylaws must occur only by vote of the board after reasonable deliberation.** (Page 10, line 26)

**Response:**
As a means of ensuring appropriate continuity in the board membership, three new board members are appointed every two years by the governor to serve six-year terms. The bylaws of the A&M System Board of Regents ensure the independence of the board. Amendment of the bylaws occurs only by vote of the board after reasonable deliberation.
Documentation:
Fact Sheet, Board of Regents, the A&M System: Promise for a New Century.
http://tamusystem.tamu.edu/index.cfm?PageID=53
System Policies Manual: Policy 02.01: http://sago.tamu.edu/policy/02-01.htm
Bylaws of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System:
http://tamusbor.tamu.edu/bylaws.htm
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section VI

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

The criteria contained in the pagination noted at the end of this paragraph pertain to
"military institutions authorized and operated by the federal government to award
degrees." They do not apply to A&M-Commerce. (Page 10, lines 29-41; Page 11, lines
1-14)

35. The institution must have a chief executive officer whose primary responsibility is
to the institution. (Page 11, line 15)

36. The chief executive officer must not be the presiding officer of the board. (Page
11, line 16)

Response:
As approved by the A&M System Board of Regents on August 19, 1998, Dr.
Keith D. McFarland became President of A&M-Commerce effective September
1, 1998, replacing Dr. Jerry D. Morris. As President and Chief Executive Office
of A&M-Commerce, Dr. McFarland’s primary responsibility is to Texas A&M
University-Commerce. Policies and Regulations: The Texas A&M University
System delineates the duties of the president. The presiding officer of the board is
elected from among the board members. Thus, Dr. McFarland does not serve as
the presiding officer, since he is not a board member.

Documentation:
System Policies Manual: Policy 02.05: http://sago.tamu.edu/policy/02-05.htm
Minutes, Board of Regents, The Texas A&M University System, Minute Order 164-98, August
Bylaws of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System:
http://tamusbor.tamu.edu/bylaws.htm

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

37. The institution must be in operation and have students enrolled in degree
programs at the time of the committee visit. (Page 11, line 19)

Response:
A&M-Commerce began as East Texas Normal College in 1889 in Cooper, Texas
then moved to Commerce in 1894. During the fall 2001, the University had an
enrollment of slightly below 8,000. The University will have students enrolled in degree programs at the time of the committee visit.

Documentation:
2001-2002 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 7-8: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/)
2001-2002 Graduate Catalog, p. 9: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm)

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

38. The institution must offer one or more degree programs based on at least two academic years at the associate level, at least four academic years at the baccalaureate level, or at least one academic year at the post-baccalaureate level. (Page 11, line 22)

Response:
A&M-Commerce offers 84 programs leading to the baccalaureate degree, 68 programs leading to the master’s degree, and 6 programs leading to the doctorate. These degrees normally require at least four years of post secondary study for the bachelor’s degree, a minimum of one year of full-time post baccalaureate study for the master’s degree, and at least two years of full-time study beyond the master’s degree for the doctoral degree.

Documentation:
Approved Inventory of Programs (THECB), 2002 Fact Book, Section 4, Degrees Awarded: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/)
2001-2002 Graduate Catalog: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm)

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

39. The institution may make arrangements for some instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia. However, the institution itself must provide instruction for all coursework required for at least one degree program at each level at which it awards degrees. (Page 11, line 26)

40. Any alternative approach to meeting this requirement must be approved by the Commission on Colleges. (Page 11, line 31)

Response:
A&M-Commerce has no provisions for instruction to be provided by other accredited institutions or entities through contracts or consortia.
Documentation:
Not applicable.

Status:
Not applicable.

41. In all cases, the institution must be able to demonstrate that it evaluates all aspects of its educational program. (Page 11, line 33)

Response:
Evaluation of educational programs exists in many academic departments. However it does not encompass all aspects.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University develop means by which it evaluates all aspects of its educational program.

Action:
As discussed in detail in Section III, the University has reaffirmed its commitment to linking strategic planning, unit planning, learning outcomes assessment, evaluation, and enhancement at all levels and in all aspects of the education programs. A new strategic plan, Advancing Success, has been implemented and is now the guide for all University planning, institutional effectiveness, and quality enhancement endeavors. Coincidental with the new strategic plan, a new University Mission Statement was developed and subsequently approved by the A&M-Commerce Faculty Senate, University administration, Texas A&M System administration and Board of Regents, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The new Mission Statement now provides the focus for the purpose of A&M-Commerce. A new position and office, assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness, was created. This new office, reporting directly to the University President, coordinates University planning at all levels, directs and monitors institutional effectiveness/quality enhancement processes, and procedures, and also coordinates all University accreditation activities. The Office of Institutional Research also reports to this new office. Following assessment of current planning and institutional effectiveness procedures, a new University planning and institutional effectiveness procedure and guide was developed, approved, and adopted. This procedure integrates the overall University strategic planning cycle and process with unit annual plans and assessment procedures, and links the planning and assessment process with the budgetary development process. All University units have developed and now operate under unit annual plans (linked to the University strategic plan), have developed unit institutional
effectiveness reports from the previous year, are using these reports to modify current and future plans. All academic units now have plans to evaluate learning outcomes for all programs at all levels. The Strategic Planning Committee is now a standing committee, charged with evaluation of progress toward the strategic plan, as well as recommending modifications to the current plan and development of new plans on a four year cycle. A new committee, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, comprised of the President, vice presidents, chair and co-chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, and presidents of the Faculty Senate and Student body will annually evaluate overall University effectiveness and quality enhancement, and direct the assistant to the President for planning and Institutional Effectiveness in the development of Annual University Institutional Effectiveness Reports. In addition, the strategic focus component of this self-study has allowed the University to focus on planning and the cultural barrier to change in the institution. The results of this study will be analyzed and the resulting best practices will be incorporated into the planning and assessment processes throughout the University.

Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section III and Section IV
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual; Procedure IE03.01.01:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
Unit Annual Plans and Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports; Office of the Assistant to
the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance

42. The institution's degree programs must be compatible with its stated purpose and based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. Institutions may experiment in developing and defining new fields of study, but the Commission cannot evaluate for membership an institution that offers only programs which represent fields of study that are outside of the expertise of the Commission's accredited institutions. (Page 11, line 36)

Response:
Degree programs at A&M-Commerce are compatible with its mission and are appropriate to fields of study at institutions of higher education. All programs offered, at all levels, are within the role and scope of the Approved Table of Programs which are overseen by THECB.

Documentation:
Approved Table of Programs (THECB) and Inventory of Programs (THECB), 2002 Fact Book,
Section 4, Degrees Awarded: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.
43. The institution must have a clearly defined, published statement of purpose appropriate to an institution of higher education. (Page 12, line 3)

Response:
A&M-Commerce has a clearly defined, published statement of purpose (approved through the appropriate governing bodies) appropriate to an institution of higher education. The newly approved statement will replace the existing statement of purpose in all official university publications, including the university undergraduate and graduate catalogs, the Student’s Guidebook, and the Strategic Plan.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University publish its newly approved mission statement in all official university publications.

Action:
As the official university publications were prepared for the 2002-2003 editions, appropriate University personnel saw to it that edits were made to replace the former University mission with the newly approved statement.

Documentation:
2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 7: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2002-2003 Graduate Catalog, p. 9: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2002-03/graduate_catalog.htm

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

44. The institution must have an appropriate plan, as well as a functioning planning and evaluation process, which identifies and integrates projected educational, physical and financial development, and incorporates procedures for program review and institutional improvement. (Page 12, line 6)

Response:
A&M Commerce has developed a functional strategic planning process which identifies and integrates projected educational, physical and financial development, and incorporates procedures for program review and institutional improvement. However, since an appropriate and functional evaluation process does not exist, the following recommendation is being made.
Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that A&M-Commerce approve and implement its strategic planning and evaluation process, which identifies and integrates projected educational, physical and financial development, and incorporate procedures for program review and institutional improvement.

Action:
As addressed previously in the response to must statement 1.4.41, and outlined in detail in Section III of this Self-Study Compliance Report, A&M-Commerce developed and implemented a new planning and institutional effectiveness process that now brings the University into compliance with this must statement.

Documentation:
Advancing Success, University Strategic Plan 2002-2003
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE03.01.01:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

45. The institution must have published admission policies compatible with its stated purpose. (Page 12, line 12)

Response:
Admission procedures for A&M-Commerce are published in the catalogs and other appropriate admissions literature, as well as on the university Web site, and are compatible with the University mission. The procedures address the following classifications: freshman admission, admission with distinction, admission to concurrent enrollment for high school, transfer admission, admission to special programs, academic fresh start, readmission, out-of-state students, international students, and graduate students. Section IV of this report provides detailed information pertaining to admission procedures.

Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedures A11.15 and A11.35:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/
2001-2002 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 11-17 and 234-235:
http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2001-2002 Graduate Catalog, pp. 29-31 and 37-38: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section IV
Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

46. All undergraduate degree programs of the institution must include a substantial component of general education courses at the collegiate level. (Page 12, line 14)

Response:
For the bachelor's degree, the general education courses (known as University Studies at A&M-Commerce) include a 46-semester credit hour component. Effective fall 1998, THECB established guidelines for a core curriculum. Allowing a limited number of variations, the required components included courses in English composition, literature, American history, American political science, mathematics, science, social and cultural studies, fine arts and philosophy, and liberal arts. The courses, which are required of all students, comprise a broad range and are not focused on any one occupation or profession.

Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures: Procedure A11.18:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpsa/procedures/A1118.doc
THECB, Core Curriculum: Assumptions and Defining Characteristics, April 1998:
http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/Ctc/ip/core11_00/assumption.htm

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

47. For degree completion in associate programs, the component must constitute a minimum of 15 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours and for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours. (Page 12, line 16)

48. The credit hours must be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural sciences/mathematics. (Page 12, line 21)

49. The courses must be designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and must not be narrowly focused on those skills, techniques and procedures peculiar to a particular occupation or profession. (Page 12, line 24)

Response:
A&M-Commerce is a four-year institution.

Documentation:
Not applicable.
Status:
Not applicable.

50. The number of full-time faculty members must be adequate to provide effective teaching, advising and scholarly or creative activity. (Page 12, line 28)

51. In each major in a degree program, there must be at least one full-time faculty member with responsibility for supervision and coordination of the major. (Page 12, line 30)

52. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration. (Page 12, line 33)

Response:
During the fall semester of 2001, A&M-Commerce had 312.8 full-time (teaching) faculty equivalents (FTE), thus allowing for adequate time for executing the duties associated with effective teaching, advising, and scholarly or creative activities. The 312.8 FTE faculty included 222 full-time appointments as faculty, of which 56.4% were either tenured or on tenured track. Each major and curricula area, or concentration, has at least one full-time teaching faculty with the responsibility for supervision and coordination.

Documentation:
Faculty Roster, fall 2001, fall 2002
Faculty Data, fall 2001, fall 2002, Office of the Provost/VP for Academic/Student Affairs
Institutional Profile, Full-Time Equivalent Faculty, fall 2001, 2002 Fact Book:
http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/
Undergraduate Curriculum by Department by Major or Curricular Area Survey

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

53. The institution must have sufficient learning resources or, through formal agreements or appropriate technology, ensure the provision of and ready access to adequate learning resources and services to support the courses, programs and degrees offered. (Page 12, line 36)

Response:
A&M-Commerce has sufficient learning resources and services to support its educational programs. Information included in Section V provides a complete description of these resources and services.

Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Section V

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.
54. The institution must have an adequate financial base to accomplish its purpose at an acceptable level of quality on a continuing basis. (Page 12, line 41)

55. The institution must provide financial statements and related documents (as specified in Section 6.3.6) which accurately and appropriately represent the total operation of the institution. (Page 13, line 2)

Response:
The annual financial reports of the A&M System include the financial statements of A&M-Commerce. The State Auditor’s Office audits these reports as part of a statewide process of financial compliance review. These financial statements are prepared in accordance with GASB statements.

Documentation:

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

The criteria contained within the pagination noted below pertain to “institutions seeking initial candidacy for membership, candidacy renewal, or initial membership.” These criteria do not apply to A&M-Commerce. (Page 13, lines 6-29)

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

**Conditions of Eligibility**

**Resolved:**

**Recommendations**

Recommendation 1.4.41 (Page 11, line 33)
It is recommended that the University develop means by which it evaluates all aspects of its educational program.

Recommendation 1.4.43 (Page 12, line 3)
It is recommended that the University publish its newly approved mission statement in all official university publications.

Recommendation 1.4.44 (Page 12, line 6)
It is recommended that A&M-Commerce approve and implement its strategic planning and evaluation process, which identifies and integrates projected educational, physical and financial development, and incorporates procedures for program review and institutional improvement.
1.5 Initial Membership

56. An institution seeking initial membership (accreditation), in addition to fulfilling requirements outlined in the Criteria, must document its compliance with all Conditions of Eligibility and have been in operation—i.e., have, without interruption, enrolled students in degree programs—through at least one complete degree program cycle and have graduated at least one class at the level of the highest degree offered prior to action by the Commission on Colleges. (Page 14, line 1)

Response: Not applicable.

Documentation: Not applicable.

Status: Not applicable.

1.6 Representation of Status

57. An institution must be accurate in reporting to the public its status and relationship with the Commission. (Page 14, line 10)

58. In catalogs, brochures and advertisements a member institution must describe its relationship with the Commission only according to the following statement:

(Name of institution) is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award (name specific degree levels). (Page 14, line 12)

Response: A&M-Commerce is accurate in reporting its status and relationship with the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to the public. However, the expanded address and phone numbers of SACS needs to be included in future documents.

Initial Status: Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation: It is recommended that information in all University catalogs, brochures, and advertisements describe its relationship with the Commission only according to the following statement: Texas A&M University-Commerce is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
(1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097: Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

Action:
As the 2002-2003 catalogs, brochures, and advertisements were prepared, edits were made to include the expanded address and phone numbers of SACS.

Documentation:
2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 4: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2002-2003 Graduate Catalog, p. 3: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2002-03/graduate_catalog.htm

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance

59. No statement may be made about possible future accreditation status with the Commission on Colleges. (Page 14, line 26)

60. The logo or seal of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools must not be used by the institution. (Page 14, line 28)

Response:
A&M-Commerce publishes no statements regarding future accreditation status with the Commission on Colleges.

The logo or seal of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools are not used by the University.

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

Documentation:
University Publications

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Representation of Status

Resolved:

Recommendation

Recommendation 1.6.58 (Page 14, line 12)
It is recommended that information in all University catalogs, brochures, and advertisements describe its relationship with the Commission only according to the following statement: Texas A&M University-Commerce is accredited by the
Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.
SECTION II: INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

2.0 Institutional Purpose

1. *An institution must* have a clearly defined purpose or mission statement appropriate to collegiate education as well as its own specific educational role. (Page 15, line 1)

2. *This statement must* describe the institution and its characteristics and address the components of the institution and its operations. (Page 15, line 3)

Response:
Prior to January 2002, Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce) had a mission statement that was initially approved by the Board of Regents of East Texas State University on July 13, 1988. After joining the Texas A&M University System in 1996, the Board of Regents of the A&M System approved the mission statement for Texas A&M University-Commerce in March 1997. The mission statement was revised during 2000-2001 and outlines the university’s purpose. It was approved by the Board at its December 6-7, 2001, meeting.

The formulation of the current mission statement emerged out of a long process, which began in March 2000, when President Keith McFarland appointed the Strategic Planning Committee to develop a university strategic plan. This process culminated in the development and final approval of a new mission statement, which was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in January 2002.

Embedded in the University’s history and vision, the mission clearly states that “the University exists for the purpose of nurturing and educating for success through access to academic, research, and service programs of high quality.” This mission statement is preceded by a vision statement that envisions the future of the University in terms of “becoming the university of choice for all those seeking a higher education in the north Texas region and beyond.”

The mission statement describes the institution’s components and operations as serving the three major goals of academics, research, and service. The historical portion of the mission statement describes the evolution of the university from a private college to a state university within the A&M System, offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs to the citizens of northeast Texas and beyond through its four major components: the Commerce campus, the Metroplex Center, the Universities Center at Dallas, and Navarro College.

Documentation:
Minutes, Mission Statement (88-85), Board of Regents of East Texas State University, July 13, 1988
Minutes, A&M System Board of Regents
Minute Order 37-97 (Agenda Item 5), March 26-27, 1997:
Minute Order 246-2001 (Agenda Item 14) December 6-7, 2001:
Minutes, Section VI.G, THECB, Board meeting, January 2002:
http://www.thech.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/mm0102.pdf
http://www.thech.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/Ag0102/VIG/default.htm
2001-2002 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 7-8: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2001-2002 Graduate Catalog, p. 9: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2001-02/graduate_catalog.htm
2001-2002 Student’s Guidebook, p. 12

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

3. The official posture and practice of the institution must be consistent with its purpose statement. (Page 15, line 6)

Response:
The official posture and practices of A&M-Commerce are consistent with the university’s mission statement. This University’s actions, programs, and procedures reflect its commitment of resources in support of its purpose, which is reiterated in the President’s Vision Statement.

Documentation:
A&M-Commerce homepage: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/
A&M-Commerce, About Us: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/university/about.htm
2002-2003 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 7: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/catalogs/
2002-2003 Graduate Catalog, p. 9: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2002-03/graduate_catalog.htm
2002-2003 Student’s Guidebook, p. 12

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

Suggestion:
For visibility and more accessibility, it is suggested that the mission statement be included in multiple locations (e.g., on billboards, on KETR, on each university web site), including the University catalogs, the Student’s Guidebook, the Faculty Handbook, and alumni publications.
Action:
For visibility and more accessibility, the new mission statement is found in multiple locations, including official University publications. The mission statement has a prominent location on the University homepage. It will be included on other appropriate sites at appropriate times.

4. **Appropriate publications must accurately cite the current statement of purpose.**
   (Page 15, line 8)

Response:
As a result of a mid-year revision of the statement of purpose (mission), the A&M-Commerce 2001-2002 official publications do not accurately cite the university’s statement of mission. The new mission will be included in the 2002-2003 editions.

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that all appropriate university publications accurately cite the mission statement.

Suggestion:
Since the most recent *Faculty Handbook* is a 1999 edition, it is suggested that the *Faculty Handbook* be revised and updated on a more regular basis in order to provide faculty with current information such as this.

Action:
All appropriate university publications now accurately cite the mission statement. Also, the *Faculty Handbook* has been revised and is available in hardcopy and on the University Web site. The handbook will be revised through an annual review monitored by the Provost’s Office. The administrative assistant to the provost has the responsibility for updating the *Faculty Handbook*.

Documentation:
2002-2003 *Graduate Catalog*, p. 9: [http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2002-03/graduate_catalog.htm](http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/graduateCatalog/2002-03/graduate_catalog.htm)
2002-2003 *Student’s Guidebook*, p. 12
2002-2003 *Extended University Schedule of Classes*
Suggestion Form 2.0.4, Vicki Davis, July 23, 2002

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.
5. The statement of purpose should be developed through the efforts of the institution's faculty, administration, and governing board. (Page 15, line 11)

6. The statement of purpose must be approved by the governing board. (Page 15, line 13)

Response:
The statement of mission evolved out of a formal process that began on March 28, 2000, when Dr. Keith McFarland, President, presented his Vision for the University and charged the Strategic Planning Committee with the task of developing a university strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Committee began its work by collecting data on institutional trends, enrollment patterns, service area, census, and economic information. Additional data were collected from focus groups of stakeholders. Preliminary strategic initiative recommendations were presented to the university community for comment and input during fall 2000, and a preliminary report was delivered to the President in November 2000. After further input and revisions, the President approved the final version of the Strategic Plan in September 2001.

In spring 2001, a sub-committee of the Strategic Planning Committee began developing the mission statement in line with the new strategic plan. Subsequently, the entire committee discussed the draft statement generated by the sub-committee, and the revised statement was presented to the university community for comment during fall 2001. The committee considered the input from the university community and presented a revised mission statement to the President and vice presidents for further comments. It was then submitted to the A&M System Board of Regents, and was approved in December 2001. THECB granted final approval of the mission statement on January 24, 2002.

Documentation:
President Keith D. McFarland, "A Legacy of Caring... A Commitment to Excellence," Special Faculty Meeting, March 28, 2000: http://www7.tamucommerce.edu/vision/introduction2.htm

2000-2002 Strategic Planning Committee Files

Minutes, Section VIG, THECB, Board meeting, January 2002: http://www.theebb.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/mn0102.pdf
http://www.theebb.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/Ag0102/VIG/default.htm

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

7. An institution must study periodically its statement of purpose, considering internal changes as well as the changing responsibilities of the institution to its constituencies. (Page 15, line 14)
Response:
A&M-Commerce periodically reviews its mission (purpose), considering internal changes as well as the changing responsibilities to its constituencies. Periodic review is mandated at various governing body levels. As stated in Section 61.0511 of the Texas Education Code (Role and Mission Statement), “Each institution of higher education shall develop a statement regarding the role and mission of the institution reflecting the three missions of higher education: teaching, research, and public service.” To this end, THECB, at least every four years, reviews the University’s role and mission statements, along with its Table of Programs and all degree and certificate programs. Prior to that review, the role and mission statement is reviewed by the A&M System Board of Regents. Interim reviews are made any time A&M-Commerce submits a Substantive Program and/or Administrative Change Request, as the governing bodies must verify that each is within the existing statement of mission (purpose) and program authority. If not, a request for modification must be submitted for approval.

The following provides an example of a request for modification. The University’s Strategic Planning Committee began developing a revised mission statement in spring 2001. A draft of this statement, which was in line with the University strategic plan, was generated and presented to the university community for comment and revision during fall 2001. The final version of the mission statement was presented to, and approved by, the entire Faculty Senate in November 2001. It was then submitted to the Board of Regents and approved, before final submission to the THECB in January 2002. Faculty and staff were notified on February 18, 2002, via email, of the final approval and location of the approved mission statement. The new Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Procedure will provide an ongoing evaluation of the University statement of purpose.

Documentation:
THECB, Texas Education Code, Section 61.0511, Role and Mission Statement:
http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/ed/ed006100.html/ed021.61.0511
THECB Rules, Chapter 5, Subchapter Q:
http://www.thech.state.tx.us/CSRULES/readtac5ext276d.html
“Strategic Plan and Mission Statement Development Timeline,” Office of Institutional Planning and Research, October 2001
Minutes, Faculty Senate, November 5, 2001
Minutes, Section VI.G, THECB, Board meeting, January 2002:
http://www.thech.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/mn0102.pdf
http://www.thech.state.tx.us/about/AgendaMinutes/Ag0102/VIG/default.htm
E-mail, “Faculty & Staff <employees_moderator@tamu-commerce.edu>” to “employees@listserver.tamu-commerce.edu”, February 18, 2002, subject “Mission Statement Web.htm”
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

8. Consequently, the institution must demonstrate that its planning and evaluation processes, educational programs, educational support services, financial and physical resources, and administrative processes are adequate and appropriate to fulfill its stated purpose. (Page 15, line 19)

Response:
A&M-Commerce demonstrates that its planning and evaluation processes, educational programs, educational support services, financial and physical resources, and administrative processes are adequate and appropriate to fulfill its stated purpose. Detailed documentation is addressed in Sections III, IV, V, and VI of the 2003 Self-Study Compliance Report.

Documentation:
2003 Self-Study Compliance Report, Sections III, IV, V, VI

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Institutional Purpose

Resolved:

Recommendation

Recommendation 2.0.4 (Page 15, line 8)
It is recommended that all appropriate University publications accurately cite the mission statement.

Suggestions

Suggestion 2.0.3 (Page 15, line 6)
For visibility and more accessibility, it is suggested that the mission statement be included in multiple locations (e.g., on billboards, on KETR, on each university web site), including the University catalogs, the Student's Guidebook, the Faculty Handbook, and alumni publications.

Suggestion 2.0.4 (Page 15, line 8)
Since the most recent Faculty Handbook is a 1999 edition, it is suggested that the Faculty Handbook be revised and updated on a more regular basis in order to provide faculty with current information such as this.
SECTION III: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Introduction

In the Epilogue to the 1993 Self-Study Report, the co-chairs reported that under the leadership of the President, a university-wide planning process had been established and implemented. They further stated:

However, no such process can be established and implemented smoothly and completely overnight. Rather, the process is iterative in nature, focusing on continually improving the University’s procedures, operations, programs and planning process itself. When we step back and look at how far we have progressed in our strategic planning process since 1987, we can justifiably take pride in our accomplishments. However, much remains to be done as we continue our efforts. The University is committed to the concept of institutional effectiveness and has devised and implemented means to achieve this end.

In the decade that has followed much has been accomplished in terms of institutional effectiveness. Certainly, there have been “fits and starts” with the effort. However, many unforeseen circumstances have affected that effort. For instance, the Texas legislature established performance measures to be used in evaluating institutions of higher education. Along with the mandate, public-funded state universities were required to develop five-year strategic plans that were to be updated every two years in preparation for the biennial funding process. One of the most significant results was the merger (fall 1996) of then East Texas State University into the Texas A&M University System as Texas A&M University-Commerce. The ongoing institutional effectiveness process had to be adapted as a result of both changes. Not only was the University dealing with mandated State legislative performance measures, it was establishing its relationship with the A&M System. This relationship included coordinating with System efforts at various levels, including planning and institutional effectiveness.

Another set of circumstances arose toward the end of the 1990’s that affected the strategic planning and institutional effectiveness processes that were in place: major changes at the highest administrative levels. Perhaps the most significant change was the selection of a new president – former graduate dean and Interim President, Keith D. McFarland, was selected as President and CEO in 1998.

As soon as the new President was named, another change with a direct impact on strategic planning and institutional effectiveness occurred. The University was reorganized by merging the roles vice president for academic affairs and vice president for student and university advancement. The new position was named
“provost and vice president for academic and student affairs,” and a new person assumed the post. In addition, an interim vice president for business and administration was appointed, and a new position, that of vice president for marketing and resource development, was created and filled. Later, after a search, a vice president for business and administration was selected from outside the University. Thus, in only short two-years, the University had a new president and three new vice presidents. In addition, as these administrative changes were being made at the presidential and vice president level, all new academic deans were hired within the same span of time.

As a result of these changes, the strategic planning and evaluation model that had been in place (which was still operating at most levels) had little centralized oversight or monitoring. While most university units continued planning and assessment (see Section III Appendix for academic assessment matrix and other existing planning documentation), these efforts, in many instances, were not linked at the university level, and very tenuously linked to budgeting.

With the approaching decennial self-study, the current President and administration leaders recognized that the university should emphasize sound strategic planning for institutional effectiveness. That emphasis was begun in the fall 2000, with a planning retreat for the President, vice presidents, and the associate vice president for institutional effectiveness. As a result, strategic directions were developed that would form the basis for a new strategic planning effort.

Subsequently, the President appointed a new Strategic Planning Committee. That committee conducted an extensive strategic planning process using input from all stakeholders. Dr. McFarland provided a new University Vision that became the driving force behind the new strategic plan. These efforts culminated in the strategic plan, Advancing Success, currently providing goals for the university through 2003, as well as a new University Mission Statement (see Section III Appendix for all these documents). The issues raised during the development of this plan led to the Strategic Focus component of this self-study. As pointed out in that document, the university community has demonstrated a heightened awareness and interest in planning, institutional effectiveness, and quality enhancement.

During the period of the changes in administrative leadership, the Institutional Research Office was enhanced. The efforts to provide accurate and complete data to drive the planning process were improved. A turnover in staffing allowed the institution to hire a director of Institutional Research and a research analyst. The backgrounds and capabilities of these people added additional expertise to the institutional effectiveness effort. Additional surveys of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and students were begun (see the University Self-Study 2002 Fact Book for more information) as well as ongoing in-depth analyses of census data, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) data, Texas Workforce
Commission data, and internally generated student, faculty/staff, and academic data. An enhanced Web site was developed, with links to major reports generated from institutional research efforts. The traditional hard-copy University Fact Book was replaced by an integrated Web-based version. This change came after assessment and analysis of the previous hard-copy Fact Book. After recognizing the problems associated with generating timely, accurate data from the University's transactional databases, the Office of Institutional Research began developing a stable institutional data warehouse. This development continues, but has already resulted in several presentations at regional and national conferences, as well as several publications in process.

Consequently, the overall University institutional effectiveness program became a mainstay of the ongoing decision-making process. In January 2002, institutional effectiveness and institutional research activities were reorganized and placed directly under the supervision of the President of the University. The former director of Institutional Research was named assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness, the former research analyst was named director of Institutional Research, and additional staffing and support were provided to these offices. Subsequently, new institutional planning and institutional effectiveness procedures and guidelines have been developed and are currently being implemented (see Section III Appendix for these documents). Beginning in spring 2001, and continuing through fall 2002, planning, institutional effectiveness, and learning outcome workshops were conducted campus-wide. All units of the university, both academic and student support units, are currently participating in the new planning and institutional effectiveness process – all academic units are now engaged in assessing programmatic and student learning outcomes (see Section III appendix for a matrix describing the methods used by academic departments). In addition, the library has also instituted a learning outcomes assessment plan, and is assessing how the library supports academic programs and student learning. This planning and institutional effectiveness emphasis came about as a result of this self-study, and has addressed the initial recommendations in the following sections. The university is now fully committed to the concept of continuous planning, assessment, and quality enhancement, looking forward to the new SACS conditions of eligibility that emphasize these areas.

Another extremely important event occurred during the period discussed above. The University completed the first campus master plan in over twenty years. An outside firm was employed to provide an understanding of all capital needs of the university and to plan for the future. The resulting campus master plan provides A&M-Commerce with an excellent road map for future capital improvements to the university’s buildings and grounds.

The information that follows provides a more in-depth look at institutional effectiveness at Texas A&M University-Commerce.
3.1 Planning and Evaluation: Educational Programs

1. Planning and evaluation for these activities must be systematic, broad-based, interrelated, and appropriate to the institution. (Page 18, line 5).

Response:
A&M-Commerce is fully committed to the educational activities of teaching, research, and public service. The Self-Study Compliance and Steering Committees find that planning, including the establishment of performance indicators, is widely employed throughout the university (see documents in Section III Appendix). The university strategic plan, Advancing Success, and the new master plan have become the guiding documents for university planning. Prior to this academic year, however, the overall university planning and effectiveness process was not coupled with an overall University-wide strategic plan, and documentation of the planning and assessment activities was lacking in some areas. During the past few years the budgeting process had become much more open; units were more involved in budget planning and development; and this process was implicitly tied to overall University plans. What was lacking was a formal structure assuring continuous quality enhancement through an ongoing planning and institutional effectiveness process. While there was a great deal of academic assessment being done, much of this was at the course level and the evaluation of educational goals was not well documented. However, evaluation of teaching, research, and public service can be tied to faculty annual evaluation, promotion, tenure review, and post-tenure evaluation.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University take measures to ensure that its planning and evaluation of educational programs are systematic, broad-based, interrelated, and appropriate to A&M-Commerce.

Action:
These findings led to the development of new, broad-based, university-wide planning and institutional effectiveness procedures administered and monitored by the assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness. Under the new institutional effectiveness procedures, departmental planning and assessment are continuous processes. At the beginning of the academic year (September through August) all units, both academic and student support, begin implementing unit annual plans that include goals, objectives, linkage to the university strategic plan, outcomes and assessment measures, and budgetary implications, as well as updated unit mission or purpose statements. These unit annual plans are based upon both the university strategic plan and assessment of the previous year's annual plan goals and objectives. Academic units also include
plans for program level assessment of student learning outcomes. These plans are developed in accord with strategic planning at the university, division, and college levels. A standard format is used for all departments within a college. Completed plans are submitted through the appropriate dean to the provost/vpasa and other vice presidents for final approval and to the assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness (see Section III appendix for detailed planning calendars for all units at all levels).

Unit institutional effectiveness reports, assessing progress toward the previous year's annual goals, as well as documented changes resulting from these assessments, are also submitted through the appropriate Dean and Vice-President, and are forwarded to the assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee also assesses the overall progress of the university toward the major goals in the current strategic plan. Using these unit institutional effectiveness reports, as well as assessment from the Strategic Planning Committee, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee issues an annual institutional effectiveness report. The Strategic Planning Committee then uses this report as a tool for revising the university strategic plan.

The strategic planning process under the new procedures is based upon a four-year cycle, to coincide with the Texas legislative and budget biennium cycle (see Section III Appendix for a complete description of the new planning process).

Academic units also include learning outcomes goals, as well as assessment measures, at the program level, in the unit annual plans. These learning outcomes assessments vary widely by discipline and department, and are developed at the college and department level. The learning outcomes assessments are ultimately reviewed by the associate vice president for academic affairs and the provost/vpasa, with feedback provided through the deans to department heads. The library also submits a learning outcome assessment plan annually, through the associate vice president for academic affairs.

In addition, the new planning and institutional effectiveness procedure states that all standing university committees will develop annual goals, and will then assess and report progress toward these goals. The goals, and assessments, will then be available to the university community. This component of the planning and institutional effectiveness procedure arose from the Strategic Focus study component of this SACS Self-Study.

Documentation:
Agency Strategic Plan for the Fiscal Years 2001-05 Period
A&M-Commerce Advancing Success, Strategic Plan 2002-2003
Unit Annual Plans, with Learning Outcome Goals and Assessment Measures, Office of the Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness
Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
College Annual Plans, Office of the Provost/VP for Academic/Student Affairs
Institutional Effectiveness Report, Academic & Student Affairs, FY 2001

Final Status:
A&M-Commerce now has planning and institutional effectiveness processes and procedures for educational programs that are systematic, broad-based, interrelated and appropriate to A&M-Commerce, and all planning units (as designated by the appropriate Vice-President and the President) are to have annual plans and institutional effectiveness reports on file with the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. All academic units have developed learning outcomes assessment plans at the program level and have processes in place to assess these student outcomes. All of these measures have brought A&M-Commerce into compliance with this must statement.

2. The institution must define its expected educational results and describe its methods for analyzing the results. (Page 18, line 8)

Response:
While a survey at the beginning of this self-study process indicated many of the academic units within the university define expected educational results (through enunciation of required knowledge, skills and abilities), there was lack of documentation in some areas, and concern that not all academic units within the university define expected educational results relating to programs in terms of clearly identifiable, measurable outcomes. For example, some units approached the issue of educational results through focus on input as opposed to focus on outcomes, while others focused on courses rather than programs (see Section III Appendix for a matrix showing all assessments by department). However, several departments and one entire college are making major improvements in this area. The College of Business and Technology utilizes an embedded assessment model that was recently recognized by their accrediting body.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University take steps to ensure that each unit involved in educational programs has defined its expected educational results at the program level and that the methods for analyzing the results are clearly defined.

Action:
As stated in the previous action response, A&M-Commerce has implemented a new planning and institutional effectiveness procedure that
includes unit annual plans that define program educational outcomes, as well as assessment measures. Several workshops on outcomes learning assessment have been well-attended and received, and there has been a renewed emphasis in this area by the provost/vice president for academic and student affairs. The emphasis has been to assess student learning outcomes at the program level. All academic units have now submitted educational outcomes assessment plans at the program level, and are engaged in this assessment process.

Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
Academic Unit Annual Plans, Office of the Provost/VP for Academic/Student Affairs
Academic Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports
Institutional Effectiveness Report, Academic and Student Affairs, FY2001

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is now in compliance.

3. The institution must 1. establish a clearly defined purpose appropriate to collegiate education 2. formulate educational goals consistent with the institution’s purpose 3. develop and implement procedures to evaluate the extent to which these educational goals are being achieved, and 4. use the results of these evaluations to improve educational programs, services and operations.
(PAGE 18, LINE 10)

Response:
The various units within the university are generally well advanced in the establishment of goals that are consistent with the institution’s purpose. However, evaluation of performance relative to these goals as well as utilization of the results is not as well advanced. The university, as a whole, is not consistent across colleges in this regard. Within colleges, departments are not consistent in this area. Not all units have implemented a procedure that has an ongoing assessment process that provides results that improve educational programs.
Through the annual faculty evaluation procedure, there is a consistent process for insuring that the research and service function of the institution is carried out in a manner and to a degree consistent with the institution’s purpose and goals.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University formalize processes to evaluate the extent to which its educational goals are being achieved, and also procedures to ensure that the results of these evaluations are used to improve educational programs, services, and operations.
Action:
The new mission statement and the strategic plan *Advancing Success* provide a clearly defined purpose for A&M-Commerce. Each academic unit also has developed a unit mission or purpose statement in support of the university mission statement, in alignment with the University purpose. In the Unit Annual Plans, all unit level goals are tied to at least one of the University strategic plan goals, as well as the unit mission or purpose statement. As stated previously, the new planning and institutional effectiveness procedure ensures that educational outcomes are being assessed, and also provides for the use of these assessments to improve educational programs.

Documentation:
*Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01 Planning and Institutional Effectiveness*

Academic Unit Annual Plans, with Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Annual Faculty Evaluations, Office of the Provost/VP of Academic/Student Affairs

Final Status:
The new mission statement and strategic plan establish a clear institution purpose, and the new planning and institutional effectiveness procedures and academic unit annual plans provide a means to formulate and assess educational goals. These steps bring A&M-Commerce into compliance with subsections 1), 2), and 3) of this *must* statement section. However, the new process has not been in place long enough for a complete cycle of planning, assessment, evaluation and improvement ("closing the loop") to take place under the new procedures. **Therefore, it is recommended that A&M-Commerce monitor and document these documents using the results to improve educational programs, services and operations.**

4. *The institution *must* develop guidelines and procedures to evaluate educational effectiveness, including the quality of student learning and of research and service.* (Page 18, line 20)

Response:
As previously mentioned, initial investigation indicated inadequate documentation to establish consistent, effective evaluation of the quality of student learning in all academic units in the University. Although a great deal of evaluation was taking place, it was inconsistent. Research and service are evaluated through both the annual faculty review process and the tenure process.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.
Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University formalize procedures to ensure that it systematically evaluates student learning in all educational programs.

Action:
Under the new planning and institutional effectiveness guidelines discussed previously, all academic departments are required to provide annual institutional effectiveness reports based upon unit annual plans, with assessment of student learning outcomes at the program level.

Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
Academic Unit Annual Plans, with Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Final Status:
A process is now in place to deal with this issue, and all departments have developed Unit Annual Plans along with Learning Outcomes and Assessment Plans. The process ensures that these plans and assessments will be monitored at several levels, and that the results are used for program improvement. These processes and actions bring A&M-Commerce into compliance with this must statement.

5. This evaluation must encompass educational goals at all academic levels and research and service functions of the institution. (Page 18, line 23)

Response:
As previously stated, initial investigation revealed inadequate documentary evidence to establish that there are clearly defined, measurable educational goals at all academic levels. Research and service functions are assessed primarily through the annual faculty reviews and the tenure/promotion process, as well as post-tenure review.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University formalize procedures to ensure that evaluations encompass educational goals at all academic levels.

Action:
Again, the new planning and institutional effectiveness procedure ensures that evaluations will encompass educational goals at all academic levels, undergraduate, masters, and doctoral, for all programs.
Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc

Final Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance

6. The institution must evaluate its success with respect to student achievement in
   relation to purpose, including, as appropriate, consideration of course
   completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates. (Page 19, line
   24)

Response:
While it does appear that data are collected relative to certain outcomes measures
such as course completion rates, state licensing examination performance and
other performance indicators, there is insufficient documentation establishing that
this information is employed as an integral part of an effective evaluation process.
It also appears that data regarding job placement rates of graduates are, at best,
gathered and used inconsistently.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University formalize procedures to ensure that all
units, as well as the university as a whole, evaluate success with respect to
student achievement relative to appropriate measures of educational
outcomes.

Action:
Under the new institutional effectiveness procedures and guidelines, every
academic unit develops goals with appropriate measures to evaluate
student achievement in relation to its purpose. Some areas, such as
educational programs, utilize state licensing exams. Where appropriate,
the Office of Institutional Research will work with academic units and the
Texas Career Development Resources to measure job placement rates.
The annual university institutional effectiveness report (see Section III
Appendix for details) will also include these measures, as appropriate.
Several departments/programs utilize advisory groups, or boards, as assets
in educational outcomes – several of these also provide employer
feedback. Examples of advisory groups include the College of Business
and Technology Executive Advisory Council, Legal Assistant Studies
Advisory Committee, Social Work Undergraduate Advisory Committee,
Social Work Graduate (MSW) Advisory Committee, Social Work Title
IV-E Advisory Committee, the Council for Education Preparation, and the
Presidents' Education Advisory Committee.
DOCUMENTATION:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/TE030101.doc
Academic Unit Annual Plans, with Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures, Office
of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Academic Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office the Assistant to the
President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Report on Outside Advisory Groups, Institutional Effectiveness Office

FINAL STATUS:
Again, the new process, along with on-going assessment activities, bring the
University into compliance with the processes implicit in this must statement.
However, not enough time has elapsed to demonstrate assessment, evaluation and
quality enhancement in all aspects of the University. Therefore, it is
recommended that A&M-Commerce ensure and document that all units, as
well as the university as a whole, evaluate success with respect to student
achievement relative to appropriate measures of educational outcomes.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Planning and Evaluation: Educational Programs

Resolved:

Recommendations

Recommendation 3.1.1 (Page 18, line 5)
It is recommended that the University take measures to ensure that its planning
and evaluation of educational programs are systematic, broad-based, interrelated
and appropriate to A&M-Commerce.

Recommendation 3.1.2 (Page 18, line 8)
It is recommended that the University take steps to ensure that each unit involved
in educational programs has defined its expected educational results and that the
methods for analyzing the results are clearly defined.

Recommendation 3.1.4 (Page 18, line 20)
It is recommended that the University formalize procedures to ensure that it
systematically evaluates student learning in all educational programs.

Recommendation 3.1.5 (Page 18, line 23)
It is recommended that the University formalize procedures to ensure that
evaluations encompass educational goals at all academic levels.
Recommendations

Unresolved:

Recommendation 3.1.3 (Page 18, line 10)
Therefore, it is recommended that A&M-Commerce monitor and document these evaluations using the results to improve educational programs, services and operations.

Recommendation 3.1.6 (Page 19, line 24)
Therefore, it is recommended that A&M-Commerce ensure and document that all units, as well as the university as a whole, evaluate success with respect to student achievement relative to appropriate measures of educational outcomes.

3.2 Planning and Evaluation: Administrative and Educational Support Services

7. In addition to providing evidence of planning and evaluation in its educational program, the institution must demonstrate planning and evaluation in its administrative and educational support services. (Page 19, line 9)

8. Each administrative and educational support service unit must 1. establish a clearly defined purpose which supports the institution’s purpose and goals, 2. formulate goals which support the purpose of each unit, 3. develop and implement procedures to evaluate the extent to which these goals are being achieved in each unit, and 4. use the results of the evaluations to improve administrative and educational support services. (Page 19, line 12)

9. Each unit in its planning and evaluation processes should consider internal and external factors and should develop evaluation methods which will yield information useful to the planning processes of that unit. (Page 19, line 24)

Response:
As with academic units, most administrative and student support units have been involved in ongoing planning. However, for the most part these efforts have not been systematic or consistent. Departments within the Divisions of Marketing and Resource Development at A&M-Commerce meet annually to evaluate and revise goals. Each departmental goal is evaluated by outcome, and changes brought about by each goal are documented. A Division vision and mission statement is developed which supports the University’s purpose and goals. Specific strategic directions are outlined and divisional goals are established.

In the Division of Business and Administration, goal and mission statements are updated annually. Department heads are responsible for formalizing goals that
support each unit, and units within each department develop and document procedures for educational support services as needed.

However, there is inadequate documentation to establish that results of evaluations are being used on a systematic basis to improve administrative and educational support services. Also, even though two non-academic divisions appear to have the required procedures in place, accessibility to documentation by someone outside the department is a real problem.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the University formalize processes to ensure that the performance of each unit is systematically evaluated relative to that unit's goals, that the results of these evaluations are used to improve performance, and there is clear, accessible documentation relative to the entire planning and evaluation process.

Action:
As with the academics previously mentioned, the new institutional planning and institutional effectiveness procedures and guidelines provide that every administrative and student support unit will, through the annual planning and assessment process, have an appropriate unit mission or purpose statement, and develop goals and objectives that support the department and university as a whole. All administrative and student support units, as designated by the President and appropriate Vice President now submit Unit Annual Plans, as well unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports that include assessment and evaluation of the previous unit annual plan, as well as suggestions for improvement/modification.

Documentation:
Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures Manual: Procedure IE 03.01.01: http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/academic/vpaa/procedures/IE030101.doc
Academic Unit Annual Plans, with Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Academic Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Final Status:
As with the academic units, the process is in place, along with on-going planning activities leading to continuous quality enhancement. Thus, A&M-Commerce is now in compliance with subsections 1), 2), and 3) of this must statement section. However, the new process has not been in place long enough for a complete cycle of planning, assessment, evaluation and improvement ("closing the loop") to take place under the new procedures. Therefore, it is recommended that A&M-
Commerce monitor and document these evaluations using the results to improve administrative and educational support services.

**Suggestion:**
It is suggested that the Divisions of Business and Administration and Marketing and Resource Development publish procedures in centralized locations.

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

**Planning and Evaluation: Administrative and Educational Support Services**

**Unresolved:**

**Recommendations**

**Recommendation 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 (Page 19, lines 9 and 24)**
Therefore, it is recommended that A&M-Commerce monitor and document these evaluations using the results to improve administrative and educational support services.

**Suggestions**

**Suggestion 3.2.7 (Page 19, line 9)**
It is suggested that the Divisions of Business and Administration and Marketing and Resource Development publish procedures in centralized locations.

**3.3 Institutional Research**

10. *Institutional research must be an integral part of the institution's planning and evaluation process. (Page 20, line 1)*

**Response:**
Institutional research has operated in support of the university strategic plan and the development of the university master plan. The Strategic Planning Committee that completed the current university strategic plan *Advancing Success* was co-chaired by the director of Institutional Research; this individual is now assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness and the new director of Institutional Research reports to this position. The assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness also assumed responsibility for the University Master Plan beginning spring 2002. Institutional Research participates in the evaluation processes by providing standard reports and ad hoc reports to vice presidents, deans, department heads, the Legislative Budget Board, and the
A&M System, and is currently creating a university-wide data warehouse using both Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and internal data.

Documentation:

Advancing Success: Strategic Plan for 2002-2003, Texas A&M University-Commerce
University Master Plan, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

11. It must be effective in collecting and analyzing data and disseminating results.
(Page 20, line 2)

Response:
Institutional Research collects and analyzes data, and disseminates the results to a wide variety of departments on the A&M Commerce Campus, the A&M System, the State of Texas, the U.S. Department of Education, and numerous external agencies. This office also directs a schedule of standardized surveys and disseminates this information to the university community, though summaries and reports (see Section III Appendix, along with the SACS University 2002 Fact Book and the on-line reports and Fact Book). Institutional Research has also developed a survey administration cycle (see Section III Appendix). This cycle schedules the use of the following student surveys: Student Satisfaction Inventory (Noel Levitz), College Student Inventory (Noel Levitz), General Education Survey, CORE Survey (alcohol), National Survey of Student Engagement, and CIRP or a variation; staff surveys: HERI Faculty Survey (UCLA), Institutional Priorities Survey (Noel Levitz), and the Survey of Organizational Excellence; and post graduation surveys: alumni survey, employer follow-up surveys, Career Services Survey (Kansas) and the Graduating Student Survey. The National Survey of Student Engagement has been of particular use, as a staff member of the Office of Institutional Research developed and administered a graduate version of the NSSE. The Survey of Organizational Excellence results provided foundation data for the Strategic Focus component of this Alternative Self-study. A data warehouse is under construction, and components are functional now. This data warehouse development process has fostered several presentations to national and international audiences, and several publications are in progress (some already accepted for publication).

Institutional Research uses informal feedback from end-users, including university vice presidents, deans, and department heads to evaluate its effectiveness in collecting, analyzing data and disseminating results.

Documentation:
2002 Fact Book: http://www.7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/
Reports Page: http://www.7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/reports.html
Retention Reports: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/retention%2099-00.pdf
Common Data Set: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/datasetmenu.htm
Numerous other reports, Office of Institutional Research and Institutional Research Web site:
http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

Suggestion:
It is suggested that Institutional Research assure the collection of information from end-users regarding the manner in which the information provided is being used, and what changes occur as a result of the information presented.

Action:
Institutional Research has now instituted a formalized process in which information is collected from end-users regarding the manner in which the information provided is used, and what changes result from the use of that information. An annual report generated from this process will be submitted to the assistant to the President for planning and institutional effectiveness and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

12. An institution must regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its institutional research process and use its findings for the improvement of its process. (Page 20, line 4)

Response:
Institutional Research has established annual goals that are evaluated and improved upon at the end of each year. There is a demonstration that changes have occurred as a result of this evaluation leading to improvement of institutional research processes. Ongoing improvements are also enacted as process evaluations deem appropriate. This process has been in place for several years and will be incorporated into the new university-wide planning and institutional effectiveness procedures. However, documentation as to use of data for process improvement is lacking, as is a consistent, systematic process to ensure this.

Initial Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is not in compliance.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that Institutional Research implement a process to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its institutional research process and use its findings for the improvement of its process.
Action:
Institutional Research has initiated a process to systematically evaluate its information dissemination processes, including using these findings to improve these processes. A process evaluation by outside consultants is planned, and the results of this evaluation will be incorporated into institutional research assessment. However, as in other areas, a full cycle of assessment, evaluation and change has not been completed.

Documentation:
Annual Goal Statements and summary of follow ups, Files, Office of the Vice President for Marketing and Resource Development.
Implementation of a Data warehouse for more effective data collection, compilation, and reporting as a result of feedback received from end-users of the data.
Unit Annual Plans, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Final Status:
A process has been put in place to assure that A&M-Commerce is in full compliance with this must statement. However, as in other areas, a full cycle of assessment evaluation and change has not been documented — therefore, it is recommended that A&M-Commerce document that it is evaluating the effectiveness of its institutional research process and using its findings for the improvement of its process.

13. The institutional research process may be centralized or decentralized but should include the following activities: ongoing timely data collection, analysis and dissemination; use of external studies and reports; design and implementation of internal studies and reports; design and implementation of internal studies related to students, personnel, facilities, equipment, programs, services and fiscal resources; development of data bases suitable for longitudinal studies and statistical analyses; and related activities in support of planning, evaluation and management. (Page 20, line8)

Response:
Institutional Research has conducted ongoing and timely data collection, evaluation and dissemination activities in all of the areas delineated above.

Documentation:
2002 Fact Book: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/Factbook/
Reports Page: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/reports.html
Retention Reports: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/retention%2099-00.pdf
Common Data Set: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie/datasetmenu.htm
Other reports, Office of Institutional Research and the Institutional Research Web site: http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/ie
Annual Goal Statements and summary of follow ups, Files, Office of the Vice President for Marketing and Resource Development.
Implementation of a Data warehouse for more effective data collection, compilation, and reporting as a result of feedback received from end-users of the data.
Unit Annual Plans, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Unit Institutional Effectiveness Reports, Office of the Assistant to the President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.

14. Institutions must assign administrative responsibility for conducting institutional research, allocate adequate resources, and allow access to relevant information. (Page 20, line 18)

Response:
Administrative responsibility for Institutional Research is assigned to the director of Institutional Research, who reports to the assistant to the President for planning and institution effectiveness. Institutional research duties are carried out by the director of Institutional Research, the research analyst, the assistant research analyst, two graduate assistants, one administrative assistant, and two part-time faculty members who serve as research specialists. (See job descriptions in Section III Appendix)

Institutional Research has adequate resources to carry out its functions. There is a willingness on the part of the administration to support additional items as requested (see Institutional Research budget).

Institutional Research has access to relevant information, as delineated by the President.

Documentation:
Job Descriptions, Human Resources Management Office
Institutional Research Budget, Office of Institutional Research
Letter, President Keith D. McFarland, Office of Institutional Research

Status:
Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance.