

# Virginia Polytechnic Institute And State University

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Institutional Research  
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## Self Study Fall 1996 Briefing

### to University Commissions and Committees

#### Background

In the fall of 1995, the university proposed and received approval from our accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to conduct a non-traditional self-study/reaccreditation. To help inform the university community of the self study process Dixon Hanna, Interim Vice Provost for Outreach and David Conn, Director of the Self Study have directed the Office of Institutional Research to prepare a briefing. The contents of that briefing are attached to this report.

The SACS-approved non-traditional format means that we will be conducting both an indepth assessment in an area of concern to our institution (which we've called the Strategic component) AND, in addition, responding to the criteria for reaccreditation (which we've called the Institutional Effectiveness component).

The strategic component pulls together nearly 50 individuals from a wide variety of areas from around the campus into a steering committee and four distinct subcommittees each representing and studying in detail a learner group. The committees are identified by the learner groups they study; for example: Traditional, Non-Traditional, Graduate students/Post Doctoral Researchers, and Faculty/Staff. These committees will be meeting through the duration of the self-study to study and compile a strategic report.

The second component, Institutional Effectiveness, more closely follows the traditional rules and regulations of compliance. Through institutional effectiveness SACS wants documentation that planning and evaluation processes support the unit's mission. In all likelihood, all of our operations, policies and procedures meet the letter of the law as outlined in the SACS criteria. Documentation and evidence demonstrating compliance will be gathered and written into a report.

The Institutional Effectiveness portion alone has required the involvement of over 100 individuals, most commissions and several committees all supporting the achievement of a successful reaccreditation. Many of these individuals support one of three roles created for the Institutional Effectiveness process: Respondents are charged with writing actual responses to the criteria (also called must statements because they contain the word must); Reviewers are charged with reviewing responses crafted for areas they oversee; and, finally, university feedback and validation will be sought by those commissions and committees who oversee the particular area being addressed by the must statement.

The bottom line is that in mid-March 1998, the university will be visited by a site review team that will evaluate our institutional effectiveness component and provide guidance and consultative feedback on the strategic component. Prior to that time a report will be prepared for each component, shared with the university community for feedback, changes made and a final version forwarded to the site visit team during December 1997.

The attached powerpoint presentation was used to share the self-study information with the campus community. (call Sharon Shrader at 12326 to obtain the presentation).

Marcia Harrington

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