



# THE ACCREDITOR

NEWSLETTER • UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS • MARCH 2008

## To the UMSL Community *UMSL Engaged*

*The aim of undergraduate education should be not only to prepare students for productive careers, but also....to generate new knowledge [and] to channel that knowledge to humane ends.*

-Ernest Boyer<sup>1</sup>

Boyer's quote applies well to both undergraduate and graduate education programs at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. As a metropolitan research university located in the largest and most vibrant city in the state, our campus is committed to the type of scholarship, teaching, and service that sustains the vitality of our community, locally, regionally, and internationally. Boyer, a former U.S. Commissioner of Education and president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, challenged higher education to broaden its conceptions of scholarship and teaching to apply discoveries community-wide. UMSL takes pride in how we are meeting this challenge.

Our campus's partnerships in the immediate and global communities create extraordinary learning opportunities for faculty, staff, and students.

- Faculty and students in all disciplines are afforded abundant opportunities to inquire about or apply concepts, course experiences, or research to hospitals, schools, social agencies, cultural organizations, businesses, and government offices. In addition to internships, clinicals, and student teaching, some of our unexpected partnerships include the following:
  - MIS students work in teams to develop web pages for small businesses or not-for-profit organizations.
  - Business Writing students enhance the promotional letters and brochures for several organizations each semester.
  - Nursing students provide prenatal education for pregnant high school students.
  - History students conduct oral history interviews with members of St. Louis's Greek-American community.
  - Students in Spanish classes volunteer in community organizations that provide social services to area Hispanics
- The Office of Student Life holds a Month of Service every November to draw attention to community involvement. This year students and staff participated in volunteer projects at Walbridge Elementary School, Centenary Cares, St. Louis ARC, Dining Out for Life—St. Louis' Effort for AIDS, and Operation Food Search.
- The Student Athlete Advisory Council sponsors 20 days of community service each academic year. This year student athletes worked on Habitat for Humanity projects, served dinner to the residents of Centenary Cares, and participated in sporting activities with the children at St. Vincent's Children's Home.
- The UMSL Staff Association raises revenue for UMSL scholarships through the annual Holiday Bazaar, Staff Association Cookbook, and the annual Trivia Night.
- Faculty, staff, and students supported UMSL's first Relay for Life event in April 2007. This campus-wide event where teams pledge that at least one team member will walk for 24 hours raised an astounding \$55,000 for the American Cancer Society. (And it is not too late to register or join a team for Relay for Life 2008 on April 11 and 12.)

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Campus-wide efforts to prepare for re-accreditation have raised awareness of the variety and breadth of UMSL's community engagement activities. This fall the Provost appointed a Civic Engagement Steering Committee to help promote, coordinate, and track how UMSL faculty, staff and students collaborate locally and globally. The re-accreditation committee is relying on campus surveys and reports to provide data to begin the inventory. Dr. Susan Cahan, Des Lee Endowed Professor and member of the UMSL Accreditation Steering Committee, summarized what we are learning

*Community service is intrinsic to many of the campus's other academic programs and is carried out through internships, practical research, capstone experiences, and service learning. UMSL's capacity to engage with its constituents and communities is vividly demonstrated by its aggressive and successful fundraising efforts and its ongoing responsible fiscal management.*

The campus is beginning to inventory these important community partnerships. As we learn to assess the impact of these efforts, we must ensure that our work is done intentionally in ways that are sustainable and that mutually benefit the community and the campus. One goal for the near future it to submit a successful application for the new Carnegie classification of a community engaged campus. Securing that classification will validate and celebrate the commitment UMSL has to its regional, national, and international partners in our ever-widening campus community. Your help will be essential to attaining this goal. Please send your community efforts to Peggy Cohen; faculty should also post their work on FAS as they prepare their annual reports.

<sup>1</sup> *Campus life: In search of Community*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990.

## KNOW YOUR ACCREDITATION STEERING COMMITTEE



*Some accreditation steering committee members completing their assignments for a committee meeting. (L to R) Susan Farberman, Tom Walker, Tim Farmer and Gloria Schultz.*

### WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT YOUR STEERING COMMITTEE?

From the two columns below match the person's current job assignment as listed in column I with an unknown fact about that person from column II. Answers will appear in the next edition of the Accreditor.

- | I.  | II.  |
|---|--|
| A. Director of Millennium Student Center              | 1. Renowned piano player   |
| B. Asst. Professor College of Business Administration | 2. Four-H Club member and was life guard at girls camp for summer job. |
| C. Dean of Continuing Education                       | 3. Principal bassoonist in Canadian symphony orchestra                 |
| D. Academic Director, College of Nursing              | 4. Plays tabourine with group Expressions and Tom George               |

ANSWERS from last Accreditor: A1, B3, C4, D2

# VALUE OF ASSESSMENT

## ASSESSMENT AT UMSL

<http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/assessment/assessment.html>

Since 2002 the University of Missouri-St Louis has moved toward the concept of continuous improvement as we assess the effectiveness of our programs, faculty, and processes. The Provost oversees assessment, with responsibilities delegated to the dean of each college for the assessment of their programs. Faculty are considered the experts in assessing student learning, both in their classes and in the program's learning outcomes. The focus in the programs is on the disciplinary knowledge and skills of each individual student, however, faculty also participate in the development and assessment of General Education objectives.

### POINTS OF PRIDE

- 100% of programs at UM-St Louis have undergone a 5-Year Review or have one scheduled.
- 94% of programs at UM-St Louis have specified learning outcomes.
- 100% of undergraduate programs at UM-St. Louis build on the critical thinking skills in the campus' General Education curriculum.
- 94% of programs at UM-St Louis have specialized accreditation if it's available

As part of the five year review process units under review must state in their review what they have completed to meet the assessment criteria. In the **College of Business** they reported the following:

- Course-by-course evaluation and grade reporting facilitates comparison within and across Areas to ensure that appropriate levels of classroom rigor are maintained.
- Embedded assessment ensures that fundamental principles are being learned. Nationally-normed testing provides benchmark evaluations.
- Ongoing faculty evaluation ensures that the most qualified people are put in the classroom, both in terms of currency in academic research and practitioner experience.
- Face-to-face exit surveys of graduating students provide nearly "real-time" input on curriculum, teaching, advising, and facilities.

In the **College of Education**, the **Counseling Division** reported the following assessment activities in their unit in their five year review:

Faculty members in the **Counseling Division** hold an all-day retreat before each semester. At that meeting they discuss student evaluations of courses and student performance, including performance on the comprehensive examination developed by the National Board for Certified Counselors and based on counseling competencies developed by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs. Course and program requirement changes based on this review are discussed at each retreat. The division also established a Task Force on Program Evaluation and Assessment.

### NEW PROPOSED CAMPUS VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Drafts of the new campus vision, mission, and values statements are now available for the campus community to read, consider, and submit your comments. The new draft campus vision, mission and values are posted at <http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/strategic-plan/index.html> once at the site use the tab in the left margin, click reference documents and this is where the proposed new vision, mission and values are posted. Please send your comments about the vision, mission or values statements to <http://CTLSilhouette.wsu.edu/surveys/ZS75295>.

After comments are received they will be compiled and submitted to the steering committee for further review, discussion, and revision of these statements.

Please take a few minutes to click on <http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/strategic-plan/index.html> and read the draft of a new campus vision, mission and values statements and send in your comments.

Please respond by **March 14, 2008**.

## DID YOU KNOW?

This letter was submitted from a staff member regarding the invaluable assistance she received from a lecturer in **College of Business Administration** while at the Faculty Resource Center.

*"I volunteered to build a website for a club that I belong to. I'd been working on it at home for quite some time and had become very frustrated. The biggest problem was that I could not figure out how to use FTP software to upload my files. I stopped by the Faculty Resource Center on my lunch hour yesterday to see if they had some ideas. Jennifer Spearman Sims directed me to log into a computer while I explained my problem. Bob McCarthy, a lecturer for the College of Business, happened to be in the center at the same time. He teaches courses on the web. He stopped his work and came over to the computer Jennifer and I were working on. He showed us how to get the files uploaded and he reviewed some of the html code and told me that there were things I didn't need. Jennifer stayed with us the entire time since this was something they didn't have a lot of experience in doing and it might help her do a better job in the future. I now know how to upload files and I am happily working on my website."*

Elizabeth A. Sampson

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This letter was sent to the **Student Success Center** from a proud mother who came to the UMSL campus seeking assistance and guidance.

**To Whom It May Concern:**

*Often good things go unnoticed, are not passed on, and people do not get the credit due to them.*

*While I do not know the names of all the people involved, I feel compelled to make sure that this message goes to the top . . . which brings me to you.*

*My daughter, Maddie, found herself without a Calculus class at the beginning of last week and we had to find a class to transfer her to so she could finish. No one was willing to help, and I mean no one. She was facing expulsion from XXCC College if she did not have a C or better in this class. Maddie had blown her final in Calc and ended up with a D. I called every where leaving messages before we drove to UMSL to ask for help in person.*

*First, the Academic Advisor in the Student Success Center. She was awesome. She listened to our story, looked up the Basic Calc classes and made suggestions on what to try. She didn't talk about 'the rules'. She acknowledged that it was a long shot, but we should talk to the teachers. If we got signed papers, she would admit her knowing all the circumstances. She gave us hope when everyone else turned us away.*

*Kim Stelzer - wonderful woman, listened attentively to Maddie's plight. She explained that Maddie would have to make up all of the 26 homework assignments and the two tests, but if she was committed, she would take her on. Maddie stayed that night for class and she actually enjoys her class!*

*Academic Advisor and Registrar last Friday - frankly we were still afraid the other shoe would drop and 'the rules' would keep this from working, but the manager in Academic Advising signed off with a smile on her face, and the registrar went above the call of duty to get Maddie the information on where I.T. resided when we realized she could not access MyGateway to do the homework assignments.*

*I.T. - these guys knocked my socks off. John & Mike (don't know*

*which one was which) made it happen. Apparently it takes 3-5 business days to get connected. When they found out Maddie had 26 Calculus Homework assignments to make up they didn't talk about 'the rules' either. Phone calls were made, copies made of receipts, paperwork was hand carried to places unknown to me for signatures. Without those guys she would have done zero.*

*After dealing with the inflexible people at XXCC, I cannot tell you how refreshing it was to deal with the UMSL staff. Without fail, everyone was about finding a solution for the student, and making it happen. I commend you on having a team that not only does their job well, but takes the time and initiative to make things happen. I know this is one student, one girl . . . but she is my daughter and your team, working individually yet with the same mindset, made it possible for to keep her dream. You can make a difference in the world, even if it is one student at a time, you can . . . and your team did.*

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An UMSL student sent this message to **Lorraine Simeone** in the Center for Student Success.

*Ms. Simeone,*

*Thank you for the email, the semester ended alright, not as well as I had hoped, but I feel I can walk away from this semester with a few more credits under my belt and with a better understanding of myself and what I need to do to succeed. I meet with an advisor and plan on scheduling tomorrow for the spring semester. I want to thank you for your help this past semester, you helped open my eyes and gave me a realistic approach to my work load and school load.*

*Thank you!  
Mary Elizabeth*