

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

**Earlham College
Richmond, Indiana**

February 8-11, 2004

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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ASSURANCE SECTION**I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT****A. Purpose of Visit**

This visit was conducted in order to carry out a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation at the bachelor's degree level.

B. Institutional Context:

Earlham comprises Earlham College, the Earlham School of Religion, and Conner Prairie, all located in or near the city of Richmond, Indiana. Facilities include a wooded 200-acre front campus, 500-acre back campus, and libraries holding over 400,000 volumes. Expansion, renovation or construction of four major campus facilities — representing an investment of over \$28 million — have been completed since 1998. The chief executive officer of Earlham is the President, who is appointed by the Earlham Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees consists of 24 trustees, including the president who serves ex-officio, six appointed by Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers), six appointed by Western Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, 4 nominated by the College's alumni and 7 nominated by the Board of Trustees. As an educational community, Earlham emphasizes respect for persons, integrity, a commitment to peace and justice, a concern for human and global resources, and governance based on consensus decision-making. Some of these principles one finds at any educational institution, but others reflect Earlham's strong Quaker affiliation.

Earlham College was founded in 1847 and is affiliated with the Indiana and Western Yearly Meetings of the Society of Friends (Quakers). The undergraduate College is a four-year, residential, co-educational liberal arts institution with an enrollment in 2003-04 of 1,170 men and women from 47 states and 34 countries. The faculty numbers 111 (96 full-time), of whom 84% hold the terminal degree in their field. The mission of Earlham College, an independent, four-year residential college, is to provide the highest quality undergraduate education in the liberal arts, including the sciences, shaped by the distinctive perspectives of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Earlham stresses global education, peaceful resolution of conflict, equality of persons and high moral standards of personal conduct. Forty disciplinary and inter-disciplinary fields are offered as undergraduate majors. A Master of Arts in Teaching degree is also offered.

The Earlham School of Religion, established in 1960, offers the Master of Arts degree in religion and the Master of Ministry degree. The chief operating officer for ESR is the Dean of ESR, who is also a Vice President of Earlham. This review did not consider the ESR, which is independently accredited.

Conner Prairie, an outdoor living history museum, was established in 1964. The chief operating officer is the President of Conner Prairie, who is also a Vice President of Earlham. Conner Prairie is also independently accredited by the American Association of Museums.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

None

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited:

E. Distance Education Reviewed:

None

F. Interactions with Institutional Constituencies:

Executive Management

1. Representative members (6) of the Board of Trustees
2. President
3. Vice President for Advancement
4. Vice President for Community Relations
5. Vice President for Financial Affairs
6. Provost and Academic Dean
7. Associate Academic Dean
8. Dean of Student Development
9. Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid
10. Assistant to the President for Enrollment Management

Management and Staff

1. Director of Multicultural Affairs
2. Director of Student Activities
3. Director of International Programs
4. Director of Wilderness Programs
5. Director of Wellness Program
6. Director of Library and Coordinator of Information Services
7. Coordinator of Women's Studies
8. Nominating Committee (3 members)
9. Assessment Committee (6 members)
10. Curricular Policy Committee
11. The Conveners (6 members)
12. Faculty Affairs Committee

Faculty

1. Science Faculty (22)
2. Humanities Faculty (6)
3. Coaching Staff (2)

Students (3)

Alumni (12)

General Faculty/Staff/Students at Open Forum (20)

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed:

Earlham College Accountants' Report and Consolidated Financial Statements
 June 30, 3003 and 2001
 June 30, 3004 and 2002
 Attachment D: Review of 2002-2003 Operating Results and 2003-2004
 Operating Budget
 Earlham College Fact Book 2003
 Earlham College Staff Handbook
 Earlham College Faculty Handbook
 Student Handbook Planner 2003-04
 Earlham College Curriculum Guide 2003-05
 Earlham College "Engaging the World: An Institutional Self-Study" (February 2004)
 Earlham College Strategic Plan 2002-08
 Earlham College Program Pamphlets:
 Biology
 Chemistry
 Environmental Programs
 Mathematics
 Museum Studies
 Physics and Astronomy
 Wilderness Programs
 The Earlham Imperative
 Earlham Word
 Earlhamites
 Class Chronicles
 Minutes, Athletic Committee
 Minutes, Assessment Committee
 Minutes, Faculty Meeting
 English Department Review, 1998

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW**A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process:**

Earlham College has done an exemplary job in its self-study process. That process has involved all central college constituencies, and has examined the past difficulties and accomplishments as well as future opportunities and challenges. It was helpful that the self-study process was conducted in parallel with a strategic planning process. All major issues raised by the previous reaccreditation review team have been addressed in the self-study.

This review team regards the written self-study as an exemplary piece. It focuses clearly on the important issues for Earlham College, presents the evidence needed to satisfy the criteria for reaccreditation, is probing and thoughtful, as well as clearly and concisely written. We congratulate all involved at Earlham College for doing a fabulous job.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report:

We found no evidence that there was any fact or piece of evidence that materially diverged from what was presented in the self-study. The self-study was clear, focused, accurate, and concise.

C. Capacity to Address Previously Identified Challenges

Chapter 3 (pp. 14-19) of the Institutional Self-Study demonstrates how Earlham has responded to the concerns raised by the 1993 evaluation team. Our team confirmed that evidence and found that in the past decade Earlham has strengthened itself in numerous other ways as well.

The team considers the response of the institution to previously identified challenges to be adequate.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment:

The visit was adequately announced. Earlham College did an adequate job of soliciting third-party comment, but none was received.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information.

IV. AFFIRMATION OF THE GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Based on the self-study review and other documentation, the team confirms that the institution continues to meet each of the twenty-four General Institutional Requirements.

V. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

A. CRITERION ONE

The institution demonstrates that it has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion

1. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion is met:

- Earlham College has a mission appropriate to an institution of higher education.
- It is a distinctive mission tied to the College's historic faith tradition, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).
- The Mission Statement is published widely, is understood by all campus constituencies, and clearly informs committee activities and the strategic planning process.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

None.

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

B.**CRITERION TWO**

The institution demonstrates that it has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion**1. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion is met:**

- Earlham has a Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff who are committed to the mission of the College and bring to their duties a wealth of talent and experience. Earlham College has, in its President, an effective leader who has brought energy and focus to the college. He has strengthened functions and relationships with the church and is well respected by the Board, faculty, administration, students, and alumni.
- Earlham students are bright and are actively engaged in the educational process—curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular—and in the governance of the College. Recent efforts have improved the size and quality of the applicant pool.
- Earlham has reviewed and conducted external audits of the offices of admissions, financial aid, advancement, and student development, and has made programmatic changes and new appointments as appropriate.
- Earlham has recently succeeded in adopting a new structure for General Education.
- Earlham College has a beautiful campus. In the last ten years the College has substantially enhanced the physical plant, most notably through the addition of the Wellness Center and the Landrum Bolling Center.
- Earlham has gathered a large endowment for a college of its size. Endowment income augments student revenues and annual giving to support the annual operating budget.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

- For an institution of its size, Earlham College offers a large number of majors, interdisciplinary programs, and off campus study programs. This large number strains the ability of the faculty and staff to sustain those programs. To sustain these programs and also achieve its expressed academic aspirations, Earlham will require additional human and financial resources.

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

C. CRITERION THREE

The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion**1. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion is met:**

- Earlham's results in the National Survey of Student Engagement demonstrate the success of the institution's approach to hands-on learning. Moreover, Earlham's high standing in the baccalaureate origins of Ph.D.s illustrates that graduates have been intellectually challenged and motivated towards academic careers.
- Earlham continues to work effectively at the assessment of student learning. The College has established staff positions in assessment and an active assessment committee to oversee these efforts. A culture of assessment now characterizes the work of departments, all of which have developed portfolios of assessment plans and results. The College did use its assessment results to plan the new General Education program, and the Assessment Committee is preparing the assessment plan for the new General Education program, now in its first year.
- The impressive array of international and off-campus programs, both institutionally and consortially sponsored, continues to support the institution's global mission and provide outstanding faculty development opportunities.
- The newer three-week May Terms involve ten or eleven faculty and some 130 students each year. Budgeting for them is still complicated.
- The record of Earlham students' participation in volunteer service activities is impressive and consistent with the mission of the College.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

- Earlham's impressive array of interdisciplinary programs, now coupled with the new general education program, places staffing and curricular problems for many departments, especially the small ones. When one or two department members are on off-campus semester programs and others are partially committed to on-campus interdisciplinary or general education teaching, some departments are hard pressed to staff their own core curriculum for their majors. Earlham needs to give careful attention to this tension.

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

D.**CRITERION FOUR**

The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion**1. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion is met**

- Earlham has demonstrated its vision in a comprehensive strategic plan attractively presented in *The Earlham Imperative* and elsewhere. Elements of the plan include increasing and stabilizing enrollment at 1200 students; strengthening the curriculum with focus on general education, technology, and pathways to vocation; making Earlham a more diverse community, and strengthening relationships with the community, alumni, and Quakers. Responsibilities for key elements of this plan have been assigned to committees and staff members.
- Recent and planned improvements in facilities and technology will be helpful in attracting and retaining students and faculty.
- In its planning process, Earlham has recognized the important challenges for its future.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

- The evaluation team concurs with Earlham's conclusion that, in order to achieve its ultimate aspirations, it must improve its ability to raise funds through major gifts and annual giving.
- Some capital improvements need attention, such as better Fine Arts facilities and improved technology for foreign language study.

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

E.**CRITERION FIVE**

The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion**1. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion is met:**

- Policies and procedures for students, faculty, and staff are clearly explained in their respective handbooks.
- To fulfill its commitment to the wider community, the College has created an effective Office of Community Relations and through it has developed productive relationships with numerous city and county agencies.
- The President has made special efforts to re-establish strong and open relationships with the Indiana and Western Yearly Meetings of the Society of Friends (Quakers)
- The Board of Trustees has exercised a high level of integrity in its handling of the current complications regarding Conner Prairie.

2. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion needs institutional attention

- The evaluation team concurs with Earlham on the need to develop a campus-wide governance manual.

3. Evidence that demonstrates the criterion requires institutional attention and Commission follow-up

None.

Recommendation of the Team

Pattern of evidence sufficiently demonstrated; no Commission follow-up recommended.

VI. ACCREDITATION RELATIONSHIP

ACCREDITATION RELATIONSHIP:

A. CONTINUED ACCREDITATION

Next Comprehensive Visit: 2013-2014

Rationale: Earlham College has done an exemplary job in its self-study. It meets the General Institutional Requirements and satisfies all five criteria for accreditation. We believe that Earlham College is doing an excellent job in fulfilling its mission and in educating its students.

B. DEFINERS OF RELATIONSHIP

1. Degree Level

No change.

Rationale:

2. Ownership

No change.

Rationale:

3. Stipulations

None.

Rationale:

4. New Degree Sites:

None.

Rationale:

5. Other (Identify):

None.

Rationale

C. COMMISSION FOLLOW-UP

None.

D. SANCTION

None.

VI. Additional Comments or Explanations (Optional)

None.