



SELF-STUDY:
Introduction

Introduction to Doane College and Response to the 2001 HLC Visit Report

Doane College is proud to present its 2011 self-study to the Higher Learning Commission for continuing accreditation. Our collaboration on the self-study has provided an evaluation of institutional strengths and challenges that demonstrates we meet the basic criteria for accreditation. The evaluation also informs our continuing strategic planning. Doane, at the moment of welcoming a new President, honors its historic identity but is clearly focused on meeting the challenges of the future and delivering an outstanding liberal arts education to all students – traditional, nontraditional and graduate.

Doane College: History and Continuing Identity as a Liberal Arts College

In the 19th Century, railroad companies sent posters of idyllic scenes of Nebraska to Middle Europe to entice farmers to grow crops on the Great Plains. The posters, however, depicted a vision of agricultural success that in reality would take decades of struggle to achieve.

Another vision for the future, one based on promoting education through founding a liberal arts college, was fostered by the General Assembly of the Congregational Churches, who found a supporter in Thomas Doane, chief civil engineer for the Burlington and Missouri Railroad. Through Colonel Doane's efforts, the railroad donated 600 acres of land east of the town of Crete and in 1872 Doane College was officially incorporated as a non-profit institution governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees.

Doane was established as “a literary institution of a high order” in the United Church of Christ's (UCC) tradition of free inquiry, and as the oldest liberal arts college in Nebraska, Doane has continued this mission for nearly 140 years (Crete Campus Catalog 2010- 2011, 3 and Don Ziegler, *Doane, A College on a Hill and Beyond*, 2007). Doane's Crete campus still sits on 300 acres from that original grant and the once treeless land is now a wooded preserve designated a state arboretum. Following the founders' vision of serving students from rural Nebraska and nearby cities, Doane reached out to establish campuses in Lincoln in 1982 and Grand Island in 2003.

The inception of Doane paralleled that of the railroad. As Willa Cather wrote in her essay, “Nebraska: the End of the First Cycle”:

The Union Pacific, the first transcontinental railroad, was completed in 1869.

The Burlington entered Nebraska in the same year, at Plattsmouth, and began construction westward. It finally reached Denver by an indirect route, and went on extending and ramifying through the state. With the railroads came the home-seeking people from overseas.

Many of those who had arrived in the region earlier sought higher education “of a high order.” David Brainerd Perry, who led Doane as its first president from 1872 until his death in 1912, wrote in the early 1880s what we would recognize as a mission statement:

The Frontier College has . . . to do with the growth and development of a new State. . . So needful is its work that in the westward march, as territory after territory falls into State lines, the descendants of the Pilgrims repeat the early experiments of Harvard and Yale . . . Every great State deserves at least one

of these educational centers and it has been the aim of our Congregational Churches in the newer States to concentrate their energies upon one only. (Don Ziegler, *A College on a Hill and Beyond: Life at Doane 1872-2005, 2007, 20*).

Ever faithful to its mission, Doane has remained a liberal arts institution throughout its history. An early witness was Willa Cather who as a University of Nebraska student wrote for several Lincoln newspapers to support herself. When she covered the 1894 Chautauqua at Tuxedo Park in Crete, Cather noted that the observatory on the Doane campus was on the program and open to participants. Boswell Observatory, built in 1883, still offers views of the night sky through its restored eight-inch equatorial telescope.

In 1923, Cather inveighed against “the ugly crest of materialism, which has set its seal upon all of our most productive commonwealths.” She singled out her alma mater (the University of Nebraska) as an example:

There is even danger that that fine institution . . . may become a gigantic trade school. The classics, the humanities, are having their dark hour. They are in eclipse. But the “classics” have a way of revenging themselves. One may venture to hope that the children, or the grandchildren, of a generation that goes to a university to select only the most utilitarian subjects in the course of study—among them, salesmanship and dressmaking—will revolt against all the heaped up, machine-made materialism about them. They will go back to the old sources of culture and wisdom—not as a duty, but with burning desire. (“Nebraska: The End of the First Cycle,” *The Nation*)

Doane’s administration determined to avoid such “materialism” and remain faithful to the liberal arts. That faithfulness, however, has not prevented the college from constantly re-evaluating how to prepare its students to thrive after graduation. The campus and its programs have evolved from those early roots and the concepts of liberal education have been constantly revisited to ensure that Doane provides a vibrant environment to develop students as well-rounded individuals, engaged citizens and leaders in their communities. We celebrate our past, and as this self-study will demonstrate, we constantly evaluate, revise and innovate to enhance learning.

The campus in Crete displays a blend of architecture from the past and present – all devoted to our core mission of creating an exceptional liberal arts learning environment. The jewel in the crown is The Whitcomb Lee Conservatory (1906-07), an exemplar of Prairie School architecture. Originally a chapel occupied the center of the building and was surrounded by the Department of Music, plaster casts preserved from 19th Century modes of art instruction line the authentically olive green walls of the lobby spaces, and daylight descends through a stained glass window of the lamp of wisdom. The building was renovated in 2003-04 to provide an extraordinarily versatile performance space for the Department of Theatre in which students can explore cutting-edge 21st Century drama.

The physical beauty of the campus as an official state arboretum is enhanced with bridges, lakes and benches for sitting and thinking to celebrate the life of the mind. When determining the placement of the award winning-design for the Lied Science and Mathematics Building (1999) with its advanced laboratories and learning spaces, the college deliberately set the building to make maximum use of the natural environment. Students and faculty can gather to talk in informal spaces that overlook the tree tops as well as pursue advanced research in the laboratories. Frogs and insects are woven into the upholstery fabric to remind them of the aesthetic dimensions of the scientific disciplines of mathematics and the sciences, and so does

the pattern of formulae on the bridge to the main entrance. An array of scientific instruments from the past, including an enormous slide rule, maintains a vigil in display cases and on the walls of the upper floors even as the most modern of NMRs is installed in 2011.

The continued development of the physical campus mirrors our continued development of learning programs. Determined to re-envision the role of a small private college, Doane formed the first non-traditional programs in Lincoln in 1982, which has led to an impressive array of undergraduate and graduate programs housed in Lincoln and later in Grand Island (initiated in 2003), and serving the larger needs of the citizens of Nebraska. Delivered by practitioner faculty, these programs have clearly anchored themselves in the liberal arts.

While advancing the founders' liberal arts vision of teaching the foundational skills for intellectual inquiry and moral reasoning for the traditional students, the college has also recognized the need to prepare them for the world beyond Crete. Faculty formed an interterm to encourage study away from campus as early as the 1970s and now the college provides a \$1,000 travel scholarship for all students in their junior or senior years. Doane students have succeeded in obtaining 57 Fulbright awards and counting. Since 2001, we have innovated in academics in several areas, including developing the Liberal Arts Seminar for entering first-year students, expanding undergraduate research programs, experimenting with learning communities, and creating a leadership learning environment in Hansen Hall.

As you will discover in this self-study report, we believe that we can continue to improve our programs and to look in the next few years to revise our general education program, develop enhanced support for faculty and student scholarship, and improve the collaboration on common student learning outcomes across all our campuses. We look forward to the comments of the review team as we continue our 140-year quest to provide an exceptional liberal education for our students.

Key Changes in the Last Decade: Presidential Transition

After a long and successful tenure, Dr. Fred Brown stepped down as President of Doane College in 2005 and was replaced by Jonathan Brand, J.D. With a strong background in planning from his experience at Grinnell College, President Brand initiated a new strategic planning process and helped lead the college in a self-examination that led to the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan. The college engaged in a purposeful effort to make data-driven decisions to improve our education and our service to multiple constituencies. The President's Five-Year Report on the accomplishments of that plan clearly documents an institution that has been invigorated by the challenges and opportunities of contemporary higher education. Highlights of those accomplishments that will be discussed in this self-study report include:

Academics

- Addition of new programs such as Biochemistry and Environmental Sciences in Crete; for Lincoln and Grand Island undergraduates addition of Criminal Justice and the RN to BSN Program; and for graduate students the approval of the new Education Specialist degree.
- Creation of the Writing Center in Crete.
- Establishment of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- Receipt of a Mellon Foundation grant to support the development of first-year learning communities.

- Creation of the Office of International Programs and an expansion of the number of students studying abroad.
- Addition of a full-time First-Year Student Adviser in Crete and implementation of the Retention Alert system; the addition of full-time undergraduate advisers in Lincoln.
- Addition of new tenure-track faculty lines and a one course reduction in the normal teaching load.
- Recognition of students in numerous areas, including outstanding Theatre students by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, and national success by Doane's Forensic team.
- Opening of the impressive learning spaces in the Chab Weyers Education and Hixson Lied Art Building in 2007, and the purchase and renovation of the Lincoln campus building into the Fred D. Brown Center with classrooms and support services for our non-traditional students.
- Renewal of a five-year Department of Education Trio Grant for academic support of first-generation and at-risk students in 2010.
- A successful record of receiving grants to support student and faculty research from the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health-INBRE (Idea Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence) program, the American Chemical Society, and Nebraska EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) and to support curriculum innovation from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Cooper Foundation, and the Kemper Foundation.
- Over the last five years, 98% of Doane graduates have either successfully found employment (76%) or pursued graduate or professional school (22%).

Student Leadership and Co-Curricular Programs

- Established Multicultural Support Services and created the positions of Campus Chaplain and Service Programs Coordinator, helping to support over 400 students in 2,700 community service hours as well as earning Doane a place on the President's Community Service Honor Roll for three years running.
- Expanded the number of on-campus events through the Office of Student Leadership and Student Activities Council.
- Established a new leadership development effort for first-year students called the Directions Program under the Hansen Leadership Program.
- Established a full Safety Office covering all of Doane's campuses.

Athletics

- Finished in the top half of the Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) standings in each of the last six years.
- Added Cheer and Dance as intercollegiate sports.
- Established full-time Athletic Director and full-time Assistant Athletic Director positions.
- Established an athletic training partnership with the Crete Area Medical Center.

Admissions/Recruitment/Retention

- Achieved record first-year enrollment two years in a row: 313 in Fall 2009 and 329 in Fall 2010. Set a goal of 300 entering first year students for 2011.
- Established a full-time Financial Aid Committee to monitor financial aid policies and an Admission Committee with faculty and staff members to monitor admissions standards.
- Implemented an Enrollment Management Plan.

Technology

- Established a solid network and technology infrastructure on the Crete, Lincoln and Grand Island campuses.
- Implemented a Five-Year Technology Refresh Plan.
- Converted to Google Mail and applications.
- Expanded the number of technology classrooms and labs to 70 on the Crete campus, 12 on the Lincoln campus and seven in Grand Island.
- Implemented new modules of the Datatel administrative system, including Colleague Advancement, Retention Alert and Datatel Orchestrator.
- Constructed a new Data Center in the Chab Weyers Education and Hixson Lied Art Building and installed a centrally managed Wireless Local Area Network on the Crete and Lincoln campuses.

Facilities Improvements

- Renovated all dining facilities, including the dining hall, Tiger Inn and a new coffeehouse (2006-08).
- Completed the Chab Weyers Education and Hixson Lied Art Building (2007).
- Constructed the Jose and Elizabeth Ledon Softball and Baseball Complex (2007).
- Completed major renovations of three historic residence halls: Frees Hall (2009), Sheldon Hall (2010) and Smith Hall (2011).
- Built the new George and Sally Haddix Recreation and Athletic Center (2010).
- Renovated and dedicated the Fred D. Brown Center in Lincoln (2007).

Advancement/Marketing

- Launched our \$5.7 million Legendary Coaches Campaign in 2010 to complete our Sports and Fitness Facilities Project.
- Completed fundraising for the \$11 million Chab Weyers Education and Hixson Lied Art Building.
- Raised 100% of the \$13 million in gifts and pledges for the George and Sally Haddix Recreation and Athletic Center.
- Successfully completed Doane \$40 million campaign, begun in 2002, by raising approximately \$45 million.
- Our Office of Marketing Communications has received 42 regional CASE awards, redeveloped the *Doane Magazine* and the college's logo and web site.

Business Functions and Human Relations

- Maintained a conservative debt policy and in 2010 began steps to reduce use of endowment income from 5% to 4.5% over a five-year period.

- Established new policies in a number of areas, including the college's investment portfolio, conflict of interest and codes of conduct.
- Employed a full-time Human Resources Director.
- Established a new employee orientation program and a staff leadership development program, the Doane Leadership Quotient (DLQ).
- Added new benefits such as the employee assistance program.

Doane's cycle of planning continues. We launched a new strategic planning campaign with a meeting of the entire campus community in January 2010, surveyed current students and alumni in that spring, and held regular campus meetings in 2010/11 as we developed strategic themes and recast the mission statement. While the timeline for completion of the new strategic plan has been altered to permit the input of our new President, the process is intended to be ongoing, leading to approval by the Board of Trustees in May 2012. Doane intends the new plan to be continuously reviewed, so that by rolling the plan forward year-by-year we can continuously be planning five years into the future.

Doane in Fall 2010 at a Glance

	In Total	Crete	Lincoln/Grand Island
Buildings	42	38	4
Majors	53	40	13
Graduate degrees	4	0	4
Endowment	\$78.3 million	--	--
Enrollment Headcount	2,787	1,049	1,738
Enrollment FTE	2,103	1,044	1,059
Retention rate	79%	79%	--
Bachelor Degrees (2010)	376	178	198
Masters Degrees (2010)	420	0	420
Graduation rate 2004 cohort	--	4 yr – 54%/5yr – 55%	--
Graduation rate 2003 cohort	--	4 yr – 60%/5 yr – 64%	--
Faculty FT	75	71	4
Faculty PT	149	47	102
Professional/Clerical*	156	137	19*
Federal grant aid	41% of students		
State grant aid	26%		
Institutional aid	100%		
Loans	83%		

* Note: Lincoln and Grand Island are also served by professional staff and offices housed on the Crete campus.

Doane College and the Higher Learning Commission

Doane College was first accredited in 1913 and had its most recent site visit in October 2010 by a team evaluating our successful request to offer an Education Specialist degree. As a result of the October 2001 on-site re-accreditation visit, Doane's accreditation was continued for 10 years with no progress or monitoring reports required. The visiting consultant-evaluator team identified four challenges: 1) faculty workload, 2) gender equity and student diversity, 3) academic structure to ensure faculty role in monitoring the curriculum, and 4) systematic program review.

1) Faculty Workload

On Doane's Crete campus, the faculty load includes teaching, scholarship and service with an emphasis placed on teaching. In the last decade, the college has taken steps to lessen the teaching load and provide more support for scholarly activity. At the time of the last report, the faculty workload was 12 credits each fall and spring term and a three-credit interterm two of three years.

Two policy changes were implemented to reduce faculty teaching load. In fall 2002, the interterm teaching expectation was revised from two courses in three years to one course every two years. In fall 2008, the teaching load was lowered to 21 credits in the fall and spring term from the previous expectation of 24 credits in the two terms. These two reductions in regular teaching load were made to increase faculty time for scholarship and to enhance interaction with students.

Some faculty receive reassigned load credit for non-teaching responsibilities, including Division Chairs, the Assessment Officer, the Director of the Honors Program and the Director of the Writing Center. Increasing enrollments have kept us from fully reaching the goal of 21 credits; in 2009-10 the average full-time faculty member taught 22.5 credits. However, the college continues to plan the addition of full-time faculty, hiring new tenure-track positions in Mathematics and Biology for August 2011. Doane has increased its support for faculty research, including establishing a summer undergraduate research program with undergraduate students while also hiring a Grant Writer to help faculty find external support. Institutional support for faculty research will be more fully discussed under Criterion 4, but it should be noted that external grants have increased research opportunities and supported reassigned time for a number of faculty in the sciences.

2) Gender Diversity and Student Diversity

Diversity is, of course, a challenging issue for most small colleges in the Midwest. Doane has made continued efforts to work toward a college community that more closely resembles the diversity of Nebraska, and to ensure that students are prepared for the diverse world they will enter upon graduation. Doane has engaged in special task forces and audits on diversity in 2006, 2008 and 2011 in order to update plans and review progress. We have made some modest progress, but have continued work to do, as will be discussed more fully under Criterion One. In particular, on the issues of gender equity raised in 2001, we have made these efforts:

- Human Resources reviews faculty salaries to guarantee equity at all ranks.
- The percentage of women among full-time faculty has risen from 39% to 47% (36 of 76 faculty in 2009-10).
- The number of women among coaches and physical education faculty has increased from four to seven of 23 in 2010-11.

- The number of women on the Board of Trustees increased from seven in 2001-02 to 11 out of 39 members in 2005-06. However, because of recent retirements from the Board, the number has fallen once again to seven out of 35 in 2010-11. The Board is aware of the issue and actively working to identify suitable new candidates for membership.
- Interestingly, the Crete campus has defied the trends toward larger female enrollment among liberal arts colleges and has maintained a consistent 50-50 male-female split in the last three years, although women are retained to graduation in larger numbers. Women students are a larger proportion of the non-traditional students at 58.9% on the Lincoln and Grand Island campuses, and predominate in the graduate programs at 76.8%.

(Source: Doane Fact Book 2009-2010 and Doane Fact Book 2010-2011)

Doane has also made modest gains in developing racial and ethnic diversity. Counting underrepresented minorities and international students, Doane increased the diversity of the student body in Crete from 7.3% in 2001 (71 out of 971) to 10.1% in 2010 (out of 1,049 students), and among Lincoln/Grand Island undergraduates from 5.5% to 10.82% over the same time period.

Diversity among Doane Students

	Crete	Lincoln/ Grand Island
2005	6.78%	6.76%
2006	11.06%	6.29%
2007	11.72%	8.20%
2008	11.44%	8.04%
2009	10.73%	11.00%
2010	10.1%	10.82%

Faculty diversity has been represented by as many as four faculty in 2009(5.2%), but dropped again in 2010 to two individuals, the same as in 2001. The college needs to continue its efforts to recruit more diversity among students and faculty, and particularly will look for methods to help Nebraska's increasing Latino population move successfully from secondary to higher education. Recognizing that new efforts are needed in these areas, at the beginning of 2010-11 academic year, the President appointed a Special Assistant to the President on Equity and Inclusiveness to guide the college community in the development of a plan focused on structures and processes that will encourage progress in building a diverse and inclusive community on a sustainable basis. These plans will be considered by the appropriate bodies on campus in 2011-12 as part of Doane's larger institutional strategic planning process.

3) Academic Structure and Role of Faculty in Monitoring Curricula

The Doane College governance structure is designed so that full-time faculty participate in advisory and decision-making roles in planning, establishing and implementing the undergraduate and graduate curricula. The Doane College Organization Chart is presented on page 1-3 of the 2010-2011 Faculty Handbook.

At the graduate level, four Deans are appointed with leadership responsibilities for each

program. The Deans, each to a greater or lesser extent, serve as instructors as well as carry out administrative duties. The Deans of the Master of Arts in Counseling, the Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, the Master of Educational Leadership, and Master of Arts in Management are appointed as *ex officio* members on the standing Graduate Academic Affairs Committee. An adjunct faculty member from each degree program, three graduate students and a full-time faculty member from either the graduate degree program or the undergraduate degree program also serve on the committee.

At the undergraduate level, the Academic Affairs Committee approves all new or revised courses and curricular programs for undergraduate majors. Membership includes a faculty chair, five faculty who represent the academic divisions, and *ex officio*, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies for the Lincoln and Grand Island sites, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar and two students. The general education program is supervised by the Doane Plan Committee, which also is chaired by a faculty member, includes divisional representation, and includes the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and Dean of Undergraduate Studies in *ex officio* roles.

Any proposal for change in the curriculum begins at the program level, proceeds through the appropriate Academic Affairs Committee and is placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the faculty. All proposals must be approved by a vote of the full faculty. Additionally, the division chairs meet nearly every month with the VPAA to discuss broader policy and implementation issues including policies for program reviews and evaluation of the academic programs.

Along with formal mechanisms for faculty discussion and approval of curriculum changes, the college has two informal mechanisms for faculty discussions. Implemented in 2007-2008, “Faculty Forums” involve full-time faculty on the Crete campus and exist “To provide a venue in which faculty can discuss and debate matters of interest to the full faculty,” and “To provide a process in which the collective faculty voice can be heard for matters of interest to the full faculty” (Doane College, Faculty Handbook, 2010-2011, p. I-18, section H). Although the Faculty Forum has no official place in the governance flow chart in relation to the monitoring of curriculum, faculty may place discussion of proposed curricular revisions on the Faculty Forum agenda. This Forum allows open and candid discussion of the impact of proposed curricular revisions on Doane students and on faculty teaching assignments.

“Conversations with Colleagues” is a series of luncheons hosted by the Office of Academic Affairs that provides a second place for sharing ideas and initiatives on teaching and curricular changes. Conversations may be used to allow faculty who are returning from sabbatical or who have completed research grants to present findings. The Mathematics faculty, for example, shared information about its program review at one conversation. In relation to faculty oversight of the curriculum, Conversations with Colleagues has served as a venue for new majors to be discussed and revisions suggested before a department takes a proposal to the appropriate curriculum committee. A conversation in January 2011 allowed the faculty to have an informal discussion on a variety of workload issues with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

4) Systematic Program Review Cycle

In 2006-07, the Vice President for Academic Affairs asked the Assessment Committee to develop a schedule for a regular five-year program review cycle for all academic majors of the college. Faculty members on the Assessment Committee met with their division chairs

and colleagues to establish the first schedule and guidelines for review. The schedule has since been revised, but requires all major programs to undergo an external review every seven years. Starting with Biology in 2007, Mathematics, Chemistry, Art, Physics, Business Administration, Psychology, Music, the Perkins Library, Information Science and Technology, and Environmental Science have now completed self-studies and hosted external reviewers. Some of the program changes that resulted from the reviews are discussed under Criterion 3.

The 2001 team also made several suggestions for institutional improvement. Suggestions with the largest impact on college policy include:

- Clarifying the role and responsibility of Academic Department Chairs – new language on the roles of department chairs was discussed by the Faculty Affairs Committee and will be discussed by the full faculty in the fall of 2011.
- Review of the Doane Plan – faculty have regularly made improvements to the general education program, including teaching the first learning communities in 2004 and developing the Liberal Arts Seminar in 2005-06 in order to introduce entering students to college-level writing and critical thinking. At the request of the Doane Plan Committee, the VPAA appointed a task force in September 2010 to review the philosophy, learning outcomes and structure of the general education program in light of the revised mission statement and current best practices in liberal education. The task force is charged to report to the Doane Plan Committee in the fall of 2011.
- Review the Purpose of Interterm – since 2001, the college has made modest changes to the interterm program such as increasing the flexibility of travel courses by scheduling some in May as well as in January and reducing the expectation that faculty teach in interterm to once every two years. However, there are still some disagreements over the best educational purpose of interterm, and the Interterm Committee has been charged to develop options for reinvigorating the program for faculty discussion in the fall of 2011.
- Awareness of the Mission Statement – as discussed in the chapter on Criterion 1, the college carried out extensive community conversations to develop a revised mission statement that was approved by the faculty and the Board of Trustees in February 2011.
- Continue Progress in Human Resources – the college has continued the systematization of policies and development of staff development programs through the Human Resources Department. Major accomplishments include:
 - 2001: centralized the hiring function for all staff positions and began offering financial counseling seminars on various topics, including: long term care, mutual funds, insurance, and financial planning. Also implemented on-going training and education on anti-harassment for faculty and staff.
 - 2004 and 2009: revised the employee handbook.
 - 2005: established a background check process for new hires.
 - 2006: established a process for benchmarking positions by using a combination of external and internal market data.
 - 2007: revised all staff job descriptions; revised the vacation, sick leave and holiday pay benefits; established several work/life benefits for employees; and developed a new employee orientation program.

- 2009: implemented a staff leadership development program
- 2010: rolled out a holistic staff development program. The program focuses on four basic components: employee growth and development, compliance training, building a culture and work/life balance.

Currently, the college is in the process of creating a workforce planning model that will connect hiring and talent management to strategic initiatives and goals and is planning a revision of our performance management system.

- Collaboration between Crete and Lincoln-Grand Island faculty – full-time faculty in Crete have been consulted and involved in the establishment and revision of the curricula for the major programs offered through Lincoln and Grand Island. The recently created Center for Excellence in Teaching in Learning has a presence on both campuses so that all faculty share many of the same faculty development opportunities. This connection is even stronger in education where many of the faculty teach in both the undergraduate program in Crete and the graduate courses offered around the state. However, the College still needs to determine how to fully engage all faculty in regular reviews of the major programs on the Lincoln and Grand island campuses.

Doane’s Self-Study Process 2008-2011

President Jonathan Brand and Vice President for Academic Affairs Maureen Franklin met in the fall of 2008 to begin preparation for the October 2011 Higher Learning Commission visit. They affirmed Doane’s intent to use the Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ) process for our 2011 on-site review. In November 2008, they jointly agreed to appoint Kay L. Hegler, Assessment Officer and Professor of Special Education, to coordinate the self-study process.

The HLC Self-Study Steering Committee (see the membership list below) was appointed two and one-half years prior to the on-site visit. HLC Steering Committee members included Doane’s vice presidents, academic division chairs, selected faculty, key professional staff, undergraduate and graduate deans, and two undergraduate students from the residential campus in Crete. The HLC Steering Committee members were subsequently organized into five criterion sub-committees. As personnel changed during the preparation process, substitutions were made in the HLC Steering Committee and Criterion Committee memberships.

Self-Study Steering Committee Membership by Position in 2010-2011

Kay Hegler	Steering Committee Coordinator, Professor of Special Education, Assessment Officer
Jonathan Brand	President
John M. Burney	Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty
Kim Jacobs	Vice President for Student Leadership
Jerry Wood	Vice President for Advancement
Joel Weyand	Vice President for Admissions
Michael Carpenter	Vice President for Information Technology
Julie Schmidt	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Thomas Gilligan	Dean, Master of Arts in Counseling

Janice Hadfield	Dean, Master of Arts in Management and Undergraduate Studies, Lincoln and Grand Island campus
Jennifer Worthington	Director Grand Island Undergraduate Program
Lyn Forester	Dean, Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, Chair, Division of Teacher Education
Jed Johnston	Dean, Master of Education in Educational Leadership
Kim Robak	Member, Board of Trustees
Jacque Pomajzl	Associate Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations
Denise Ellis	Registrar
Peg Tvrdy	Director of Financial Aid
Nicole Williams	Student Congress President
Alec Engebretson	Chair, Doane Plan Committee, Learning Communities
Deryl Merritt	Chair, Division of Economics and Business
Evelyn Haller	Chair, Division of Fine Arts and Humanities
Danelle DeBoer	Chair, Division of Social Science
Chris Wentworth	Chair, Division of Science, Mathematics and Information Science and Technology
Donna Jurena	Chair, Division of Academic Informational Services
Greg Heier	Athletic Director
Suzy Carter	Assistant to the Dean for Undergraduate Studies Lincoln and Grand Island campuses
Laura Sears	Director of Human Resources
Raja Tayeh	Director of Institutional Research
Mike Hartwell	Director of Physical Plant
Carrie Petr	Director, Hansen Leadership Program

In January 2009, the full HLC Steering Committee met jointly for the first time. It reviewed the purpose of Doane's self-study report and the challenges and recommendations from the 2001 HLC team report. The full HLC Steering Committee continued to meet regularly between January 2009 and May 2011. In spring 2011, the criterion sub-committees presented draft criterion chapters to the full HLC Steering Committee. These drafts described the evidence to Doane's claims about each of the criteria and summarized the strengths and challenges for each criterion. The self-study paralleled efforts to develop a new strategic plan, so that information has been shared and faculty and staff meetings held to advance both discussions.

The Associate Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations, the Self-Study Coordinator, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs tended to the publication of the request for third-party testimony. The first request was published in the college's alumni magazine in March 2011, six months prior to the visit. Subsequent requests for third-party comment were published in the *Lincoln Journal Star* (NE), the *Omaha World-Herald* (NE), the *Grand Island Daily Independent* (NE), *The Crete News* (NE), and on the college Web site.

The entire campus was involved as the Vice Presidents shared information with staff in their units and division chairs and the Academic Dean engaged faculty. More particularly, the team

conducted discussion sessions with faculty and staff on the Crete and Lincoln campuses in May 2011, to allow the entire community to comment on draft statements of strengths and weaknesses developed during the self-study process.

Using the Criteria to Promote Change

The self-study report promoted awareness of the five HLC criteria across all three campuses.

- With our institutional goal to revise the mission statement, many hours of discussion focused on Criterion One: Mission and Integrity.
- Consistent with Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future, Doane remains fiscally sound, yet energetic in improving physical, technological and human resources to serve the emerging educational needs of our recruitment area. The college's vision is revealed through new construction and renovations.
- Assessment is an ongoing process at Doane, with regular sharing of assessment data and annual assessment reports of student learning. The assessment program has been shaped in reference to Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching.
- Doane's attention to sound academic programs requires not just students but also faculty and staff to demonstrate life-long learning and intellectual inquiry. New programs for undergraduate student research and first year seminars for students stand alongside enhanced faculty development through the creation of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and leadership training for staff through the Doane Leadership Quotient. These programs will be enriched by our focus on the college's four 2011 mission outcomes (leadership, intellectual inquiry, ethical values, and engagement) and provide evidence of our attention to the meaning of Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge.
- Criterion Five: Engagement and Service was related to our discussion of high impact practices, including service learning and community engagement and helped us to develop a better understanding of our role in the Crete region.

Expected Self-Study Report Impact on Doane College and its Constituents

The Doane self-study report has united the community with a common goal: to evaluate programs as we strive to improve learning and to continue our regional accreditation. Faculty and professional staff members from all three campuses have met regularly as we prepared for the self-study report and edited early drafts of individual chapters. The process has helped the entire community to discuss strengths and weaknesses, and to raise questions that will be answered in our strategic planning.

Accomplishing the Distinctive Goals of Doane's Self-Study Report

Doane established seven goals for the self-study report. Six were stated originally with revisions following review by our HLC staff liaison. A seventh goal was added in the fall of 2010. The goals:

- Doane wishes to continue our accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. Doane's personnel have consciously worked to operate within the Commission's criteria according to our institutional mission to serve and lead in the state, nation and world.

- Doane seeks to document our assessment based on student outcome measurements. In 1993, the NCA approved our College Assessment Plan and the plan was implemented into an active Assessment Program. By 1998, one faculty member had assigned time as Assessment Officer and another as Assessment Facilitator. Since then, the measures of student learning have been revised in detail, but assessment has been consistent, regularly reported to faculty and other constituents, used to improve courses, target faculty development, and to ensure program currency.
- Doane evaluates the long-range strategic planning process through our internal self-study report and the external review of the HLC Consultant-Evaluators. Given the quickening pace of economic swings and service for social change in the global context, Doane will move from use of a static five-year strategic plan to development of a continuous strategic plan with annual review and revision.
- Doane claims through its self-study report to have met or continued the goals of its current strategic plan with the intent to use the HLC strategic review as a guide for the next strategic plan update.
- Doane's HLC Steering Committee includes a Board member, faculty from all academic divisions, the vice presidents, support staff from each governance unit within the college, and students. Alumni (Mike Carpenter, Donna Jurena, Greg Heier, Laura Sears, Peggy Tvrdy, and Jennifer Worthington) are represented on the HLC Steering Committee through their positions at the college. Each administrative unit has reviewed its accomplishment of the appropriate strategic plan goals in reference to the HLC criteria. Doane presents a self-study report that accurately describes our current work, our position as a thriving educational community, and predicts strategies to meet future challenges.
- Doane is faithful to its mission, most notably through its 2009-2011 work to revise the mission statement and undergraduate general education student outcomes. This process is more thoroughly described in Criterion 1 and 3.

The Report

In the fall of 2010, the criterion sub-committees each began to draft evidentiary statements to document Doane's accomplishment of the criteria and their the core components. These evidentiary statements were assembled by either the criterion committee chair or the HLC Coordinator to form a draft criterion chapter. Each draft chapter was reviewed by the full HLC Steering Committee in the spring of 2011. The members suggested additional content, noted duplications with content of other chapters, and identified content that did not seem to fit the criterion, core component or bulleted item. In May 2011, the criterion chairs worked with the HLC Coordinator and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) to identify the strengths and challenges that could be articulated from the data in each chapter. They received feedback on the list at faculty and staff meetings on both the Crete and Lincoln campuses, received the revised drafts from the criterion committee chair, and reviewed the entire draft report. The HLC Coordinator and VPAA then shared the effort to finalize the drafts and develop the evidence for the digital archive before the narrative was given to the Office of Communication and Marketing for final copy work. The final report will be shared again across campus as a foundation for strategic planning efforts that will be renewed under the new President, Dr. Jacque Carter, starting in August 2011.

Key Themes in the Self-Study Report

As detailed in the chapters to come, Doane College has a clear consensus on the key elements of our identity. A focus on the liberal arts, close interaction of students and faculty, and leadership development mark our learning programs. We also recognize the numerous challenges to be faced by any small, private college in attempting to preserve and extend what we know to be the best methods for educating students in trying economic times. This report will detail our continuing efforts to achieve our mission and establish our major themes.

1. Doane College has a clear commitment to the importance and role of the liberal arts in all our academic programs and the development of leadership capabilities on all our campuses and throughout our programs for students, staff and faculty.
2. The college's learning programs are placing a growing emphasis on the application of knowledge to produce students who are both skilled practitioners in their professions and engaged citizens in the world they will face after graduation.
3. The college has a broad understanding of the Doane way of education, centered on a close relationship and interaction between students and faculty, that runs through all its programs.
4. The college is committed to fiscal policies that allow us to improve our educational environment and yet protect the resources for the future.
5. The college is determined to continue to raise the level of academic challenge and thus of student responsibility for learning that began in the strategic plan in 2006. Closely connected to this goal is the commitment to enhance resources and time for faculty development and scholarship.
6. The college will continue to enhance communication and a broad sense of shared mission across all three campuses.
7. The college will work to develop faculty, staff and student populations more broadly reflective of the Nebraska population and the nation at large, and to educate our students on the meaning of inclusive concepts of community.
8. The college community will work with our new President, Dr. Jacque Carter, to create a rolling five-year strategic planning that permits us to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented in this report.