

DR. ROBERT SAVORITO

July 29, 2008

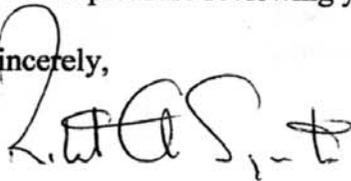
Dr. Charles L. Rice
President
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
4301 Jones Bridge Road
Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

Dear Dr. Rice:

Enclosed is a copy of the Periodic Review Report External Reviewer Assignment for your review.

It was a pleasure reviewing your excellent Institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. A. Saporito". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "S".

Robert A. Saporito, DDS

Report to
Faculty, Administration, Trustees , and Students of

Uniformed Services University

of the

Health Sciences

Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

Prepared following analysis of the Institution's

Periodic Review Report

Submitted June 1, 2008

First Reviewer:

Dr. Robert A. Saporito
Former Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

Second Reviewer:

Dr. Beatrice V. Adderley-Kelly
Dean College of Pharmacy, Nursing
and Allied Health Sciences
Howard University

July 28, 2008

I. Introduction

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is the Nation's Federal health sciences university and is committed to excellence in military medicine and public health. The University is located on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. USU was established by enactment of the Uniformed Services Health Professions Revitalization Act of 1972 to provide a comprehensive education in medicine to men and women who demonstrate potential for and commitment to careers as medical officers in the armed services or Public Health Service. The School of Medicine encompasses undergraduate medical education and graduate programs in Biomedical Sciences and Public Health. A second school within USU, the Graduate School of Nursing (GSN), was authorized by Congress in 1993.

The Periodic Review Report submitted June 1, 2008 reflects a careful review of the institution under the guidance of a Steering Committee, with input from a broad representation of the university community. Planning for the review was initiated in July 2006, in conjunction with a comprehensive Self Study being conducted for the School of Medicine. The report, coordinated by the Office of Educational Affairs, is well organized and documented. Its findings, references and data provide a descriptive chronology of actions taken to address identified recommendations in the USU Self Study and MSCHE Site Visit Team report of 2003. The Periodic Review Report was widely distributed for review and was available on the school's website prior to submission to the Commission.

II. Responses to Recommendations from the Previous Decanal Evaluation

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaffirmed accreditation of the USU on June 25, 2003. At that time the Commission commended the USU for progress to date and for the quality of the Self Study report, with no reporting requirements prior to the 2008 Peer Review Report. The Site Visit Team Report included numerous commendations and noted that the University met and exceeded all standards found within the characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education but identified two priority recommendations:

1. "The USU needs to develop an institutional plan to ensure their systematic assessment at all levels and within all units that will occur on a regular basis and that will be independent of leadership or staffing changes."
2. "The Team strongly recommends the funding and construction of the new planned building "E" be given highest priority and all avenues be explored to expedite the construction."

The USU response to the 2003 Self Study recommendations and Team recommendations were grouped by topic and functional area as indicated. Each element in Section 2 listed the Self Study and Site Visit Team Recommendations and provided a written response to address both.

The USU is unique as a health care educational institution. The University exists primarily to address the educational needs of the Department of Defense, as a result the educational programs are externally driven as clearly defined in the Mission Statement. Of note is the University motto widely disseminated to the University community "Learning to care for those

in harm's way". To more effectively address the need to respond to national and/or global demands, the University has moved from a traditional strategic planning process to a strategic management approach.

USU is an active participant in the planning process of the Department of Defense (DoD) to addressing key elements in the National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, Quadrennial Defense Review and Defense Program Objective Memorandum (POM). Within this context, USU annually conducts its internal strategic management planning focused on the goals of the DoD, Federal Government and the specific educational objectives of the University.

The integration of the USU within the DoD goals is not dissimilar to other academic health care institutions, operating in support of University goals. To sustain a vital and vibrant role within a University environment, a specialized college or school must be an integral part of planning, and address the institutional goals. Critical to successfully fulfilling this requirement, the USU has demonstrated sufficient independence in addressing the DoD needs and effectively documented institutional outcomes. It has been the beneficiary of appropriate resource allocations to meet the needs of the institution.

Although seemingly positioned in a "bureaucratic maze" the USU is provided the opportunity to plan, develop and implement programs that address a clearly defined mission statement with goals and objectives developed through a collaborative and transparent process.

The University's Board of Regents (BOR) is a federal advisory committee, not a governing committee. In accordance with policy enacted in 2004, the BOR acts as the advisor to the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of Defense has delegated direction authority, and control over USU to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD-HA). The President has been provided authority and delegated responsibly through the ASD-HA, for USU operations.

In response to the USU Self Study, 2003 and MSCHE Recommendations, following a review of institutional organization and staffing in 2006, the USU President restructured the university's organizational chart. The changes were implemented to consolidate functions and streamline reporting lines to increase efficiency and improve communication.

The allocation of sufficient resources to address facility requirements have been provided through congressional authorization. Funding has been provided for the construction of building "E", as identified in the MSCHE Site Visit Team Report 2003, with construction scheduled for completion in June 2008. In addition, major renovation projects have been completed to improve laboratories, conference rooms, learning resource centers and general audio-visual/information management capacity. The University has been provided four (4) additional buildings on the National Naval Medical Center base to increase laboratory and administrative space. The improvement significantly enhance facilities considered excellent by the MSCHE Team in 2003.

The USU Self Study and MSCHE Site Visit Team both recommended a written outcomes assessment plan be developed for the entire Institution. Although the elements that would/should be included in this reference plan have not been compiled into a single institutional document, the processes currently implemented to assess outcomes, in this rather unique institution, are

clearly documented and effectively used to assess current and past outcomes, and provide direction for future action plans.

The outcomes assessment documentation provided in the PRR demonstrates an effective systematic outcomes process that occurs on a regular basis and is independent of leadership and staffing changes. A Graduate School of Nursing Assessment Plan has been developed and implemented. Development of a USU institutional plan should follow.

The USU Self Study and Site Visit Team Reports indicated the recruitment of students and faculty in the past was impeded by compensation limits. This issue has been addressed through Federal Legislation. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 significantly increased faculty compensation limits to enhance the competitiveness of USU in the recruitment of faculty. Funding for graduate students, has been increased through support from the Henry Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.

III. Major Challenges and/or Opportunities

The USU faces unique budgetary challenges and excellent opportunities for program development in collaboration with other federal agencies. As a federal entity it cannot carry funds over from one fiscal year to the next, it has limited ability to move funds between expenditure categories and has no access to traditional long range funding, i.e. the bond market. This inability to accumulate capital decreases the institution's flexibility to address budgetary needs therefore requiring long-range planning process that is fully integrated into the annual budget development process.

Despite these particular funding challenges, the University has very effectively met institutional needs. USU continues to expand its collaborative initiatives in many areas including disaster medicine and humanitarian efforts. Additional opportunities for the University include information technology, biotechnology, prosthetic research, biodefense and medical ethics.

The development of the necessary physical infrastructure to support the teaching and research missions is embedded in the USU Strategic Management Planning process. As the previously described new facilities are brought on-line, planning is underway for further expanding capacity.

The current government mandated base realignment and closure (BRAC) initiative, that currently has impacted many communities around the nation, requires increased coordination and collaboration between agencies and facilities in diverse geographic locations. The projected result of these activities is a more effective and efficient use of resources to meet national needs. This business principle is an opportunity for USU as described in the PRR.

BRAC/Integration will strengthen education and research capacity. This is already a process in San Antonio, Texas (Wilford Hall and Brooke Medical Centers). A critical element in the success of these activities is the representation of the USU president and medical center commanders on the Executive Board responsible for the integration.

As referenced USU's expanded relations with local, national and international communities has greatly expanded their ability to meet their mission. The following five (5) examples depict these opportunities:

1. Adult Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMH-NP) Program.
2. Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) Tissue Repository.
3. Air Force Graduate School of Dentistry affiliation with USU to award a Master of Science in Comprehensive Dentistry.
4. DoD Center of Excellence for Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health will be located on the new (WRNMMC) campus in association with USU.
5. Expanded Role of the United States Military Cancer Institute. The first coordinated, multi-organization meeting initiated plans for analysis and subsequent action to focus the efforts of multiple federal agencies.

IV. Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections

The graduation and enrollment numbers for the University have remained stable for the past five (5) years with a modest increase. No appreciable change in the enrollment is projected over the next five (5) years.

The financial outlook for USU is excellent. The DoD Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS) provides a stable, predictable funding base. The long-term financial plan provided in the PRR identified resources for the current year (FY08), budget year (FY09) as well as for years FY10-FY15. Allocation of resources for the educational mission of the University through FY15 will effectively address the institutional Strategic Management Planning for the identified periods.

V. Assessment Processes and Plans

As previously referenced, the USU does not have a written outcomes assessment plan for the entire institution. It does, however, use existing outcomes assessment processes to demonstrate institutional progress on meeting its goals. The Graduate School of Nursing (GSN) has developed a comprehensive document that includes education tools and describes the evaluation process. The GSN Evaluation Committee has primary responsibility for developing, testing and coordination of evaluation tools. The School of Medicine (SOM), Executive Curriculum Committee (ECC), and its subcommittees have responsibility for the undergraduate medical education program, which includes mapping of required courses to educational objectives and mapping outcomes measures to educational objectives. Supporting documentation has been provided in the PRR. Extensive information is collected by administrative offices to address external program review/accreditation requirements, DoD annual and semi-annual reports on fiscal outcomes and reports to the ASH-HA on educational outcomes. University action to address the Defense Program Objective Memorandum (POM) initiatives required data driven outcomes assessment process that is directly in support of University Strategic Initiatives.

VI. Linked Institution Planning

USU is primarily funded by federal appropriations. As an institution within the DoD, income from traditional health science institutions is not available to the University. The acquisition of non-federal funds is governed by federal law and regulations of the DoD. A very effective process is in place to link institutional planning and budgeting. The University participates in the DoD Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS) to establish, maintain and revise funding for Future Years Defense Program (F-YDP). Each year, a Program Objective Memorandum (POM) is submitted to the Secretary of Defense. This document includes USU funding. The POM reviews budget execution in the current year, updates upcoming year budget needs and projects budget requirements for an additional six (6) years. Every item in the POM must directly relate to the University's strategic plan to be eligible for submission. As previously referenced, the USU Strategic Management Planning process provides for the annual review, assessment and modification of the institution strategic initiatives. While the POM process allows the University to identify and justify long-term financial needs for strategic planning, USU follows additional procedures at the operational level for developing and monitoring annual budgets. This follows a more traditional review of academic and administration department budget on a semi-annual time table.

The processes followed by the DoD/USU are very effective and the institution has benefited by receiving excellent fiscal support and has maintained an important role in the Health Affairs in the Department of Defense.

VII Conclusion

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences has made exceptional progress toward fulfilling a clearly articulated primary mission. An in-depth review of the USU Periodic Review Report and the 2003 MSCHE Site Visit Team Report documents highly effective leadership, and excellent planning and assessment, in a challenging global environment.

The Institution should be commended for the service it provides our nation in addressing the academic, research and service needs of those who serve their country in both military and public health service.

The unique complexity of functioning within a federal department guided by national and international demands, has manifested operational flexibility not often required in traditional academic environments. The administrative changes referenced have aided this progress.

The space issues identified in the 2003 MSCHE Report have been fully met and will be further enhanced to support the new initiatives and expanded programs previously referenced.

As indicated, USU has effectively utilized existing data sources to assess programmatic outcomes for both internal and external requirements, however, it is recommended that, in concurrence with the MSCHE Site Visit Team recommendations "... to develop an institutional plan to ensure their systematic assessment at all levels..." a coordinated institutional assessment plan be developed.