

Lexington
College



Self-Study Report 2008

For The Higher Learning Commission of
The North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW	
• Profile of Lexington College.....	1
• The Self-Study Process.....	2
CRITERION 1 – <i>Mission and Integrity</i>	
• Introduction.....	5
• Core Component 1a.....	6
• Core Component 1b.....	9
• Core Component 1c.....	14
• Core Component 1d.....	25
• Core Component 1e.....	30
• Recent Achievements, Strengths, Challenges & Opportunities....	35
CRITERION 2 – <i>Preparing for the Future</i>	
• Introduction.....	37
• Core Component 2a.....	38
• Core Component 2b.....	45
• Core Component 2c.....	51
• Core Component 2d.....	55
• Recent Achievements, Strengths, Challenges & Opportunities....	61
CRITERION 3 – <i>Student Learning & Effective Teaching</i>	
• Introduction.....	63
• Core Component 3a.....	64
• Core Component 3b.....	75
• Core Component 3c.....	79
• Core Component 3d.....	84
• Recent Achievements, Strengths, Challenges & Opportunities....	89
CRITERION 4 – <i>Acquisition, Discovery and Application of Knowledge</i>	
• Introduction.....	91
• Core Component 4a.....	92
• Core Component 4b.....	99
• Core Component 4c.....	104
• Core Component 4d.....	107
• Recent Achievements, Strengths, Challenges & Opportunities....	109

CRITERION 5 – Engagement and Service	
• Introduction.....	111
• Core Component 5a.....	112
• Core Component 5b.....	114
• Core Component 5c.....	120
• Core Component 5d.....	125
• Recent Achievements, Strengths, Challenges & Opportunities....	129
CONCLUSION.....	131
FEDERAL COMPLIANCE.....	135
INSTITUTIONAL SNAPSHOT.....	141
APPENDICES	
LIST OF TABLES	
Table 1.1 Percentage of Students by Ethnicity, 2003-2007.....	9
Table 1.2 Percentage of Students by Geographical Origin, Fall 2004-2007.	10
Table 1.3 Percentage of Students by Age and Full-Time Status, 2007.....	10
Table 1.4 Advising Survey Responses, 2007	13
Table 2.1 Average GPA of Incoming Freshmen, Fall Semester.....	40
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1.1 Faculty Degree Backgrounds.....	17
Figure 1.2 Lexington College Organizational Chart.....	26
Figure 2.1 Average GPA of Entering Class 2003-2007.....	41
Figure 2.2 Development Revenue 2003-2007.....	46
Figure 2.3 Space Allocation 2003-2007.....	48

Lexington
College



Introduction



Institutional Overview

Profile of Lexington College

Founded in 1977, Lexington College is a private, single-purpose college for women, specializing in hospitality management and located in the West Loop neighborhood of Chicago. Since 1983, Lexington College has been authorized by the Illinois Board of Higher Education to offer the Associate of Applied Science degree (AAS) in Hospitality Management. In August of 2002, Lexington College was authorized by the same institution to grant a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Hospitality Management. Lexington has been accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1993. Lexington College is an Illinois not-for-profit organization.

A five-year comprehensive visit from the Commission took place in March 2003. The visiting team recommended that the Commission continue institutional accreditation and accredit Lexington College to offer a degree in hospitality management at the baccalaureate level, the Bachelor of Applied Science degree. The Commission formally approved the team's recommendation in May 2003.

In addition, the visiting team asked for a Progress Report on the assessment of student learning due August 2003 and for three monitoring reports concerning finances, enrollment and hiring for fiscal years 2003, 2004, and 2005. These reports were submitted by Lexington and approved by the Commission. A Monitoring Report regarding progress in "strengthening assessment of student learning outcomes" was also required, submitted in January 2005, and later approved by the Commission.

Lexington's 129-credit hour bachelor's program requires two internships and a concentration in Culinary Arts, Event Planning, Hotel/Restaurant Management, or Health Care & Wellness. General education requirements constitute 55 credit hours, Hospitality Management courses constitute 27 credit hours; Management requirements constitute 41 credit hours; and the remaining six credit hours are elective specialization courses. The 66-credit hour associate's program requires one internship and students can take an elective course in any of the four specializations. General Education courses comprise 34 of the associate's degree credits, while Hospitality Management courses the remaining 32 credits.

Women who are high school graduates or hold a general equivalency diploma (GED), have a minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA), and have an 18 ACT or 1000 SAT score, are eligible for the degree program on a full-time or part-time basis. Lexington College is authorized under U.S. Federal Law to enroll non-immigrant alien students. During the past five years, between 40 and 59 students of diverse backgrounds were enrolled in the degree program.

The campus environment at Lexington complements the academic program and demonstrates high standards of physical care and appearance of the building, classrooms, and common areas. Through the attractive and professionally arranged surroundings, which include well-maintained culinary laboratories, welcoming library, attractive chapel, and classrooms conducive to intellectual and social learning, students at Lexington are reminded of the value of hospitality and aesthetics.

The characteristics of hospitality management careers are essentially people-and-service oriented. With this in mind, Lexington emphasizes social responsibility, social maturity, elegance, and openness to cultural diversity and international understanding. Personal guidance and advising reinforces classroom instruction for a coherent education.

The Self-Study Process

Since 2003, when Lexington College was last reaccredited, higher education has evolved following economic swings, increasing expectations of accountability, greater reliance on information technology, and growing expectations that graduates be prepared to participate in a diverse, global society. These factors have influenced this Self-Study, which emphasizes Lexington's effective implementation of its learning and service-driven mission, as well the development of a strong process for assessment of student learning. The focus of this document is on educational outputs such as program outcome achievements in reference to the inputs (i.e. curriculum, faculty and staff) and provides evidence for educational effectiveness. It also demonstrates Lexington's fulfillment of its singular mission in relation to the hospitality industry, higher education and society.

Lexington College's accrediting body, The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), has been the leading organization promoting learning outcome assessment in our region. Since 2003, the criteria for accreditation shifted focus:

- From inputs and resources to results and outcomes;
- From teaching to teaching and learning, not just among students but also among faculty and staff;
- From autonomy to relationships and interdependence;
- From historical description to a future focus; and
- From homogeneity to distinctiveness, and uniqueness of contribution.

Underlying these shifts is an orientation of accreditation criteria toward demonstrating educational accountability.

Organization of the Self-Study report: Lexington College's Self-Study is structured around the five criteria outlined by The Higher Learning Commission, as follows:

1. College profile
2. Self-study process overview
3. Evidence of Lexington College's achievement with the core components of the accreditation's five criteria
4. Discussion of strengths and challenges
5. A concluding segment that highlights future opportunities and visions of how the adoption of recommendations stressed throughout this document might help Lexington College further fulfill its mission
6. Federal compliance
7. Institutional snapshot

Supplementary materials appear in Self-Study appendices. Additional information will be available in the Resource Room for the visiting team.

Goals of the Self-Study: The Self-Study Steering Committee and five Self-Study teams were charged with preparing the Self-Study report for Lexington College's 2008 reaccreditation. They operated under the guiding principle that their work would be of long-term use to the College, not only in demonstrating fulfillment of the requirements for accreditation, but also in assessing progress toward goals and mapping a future direction for the College. One example of this is that the Self-Study process has encouraged in-depth discussions within and beyond committee teams about the need for careful data gathering and reporting mechanisms to guide future decision making.

The senior leadership team at Lexington-- the Administrative Council (AC)--presented a set of goals to guide the Self-Study process:

1. Evaluate and demonstrate the cohesive rollout of the new Bachelor's of Applied Science (BAS) program, its successful development, and delivery according to Lexington College's mission;
2. Show Lexington's academic growth, quality and singularity;
3. Study and describe future growth opportunities with constituents;
4. Enhance campus team spirit, collaboration and service culture through the Self-Study process.

Our Self-Study process: The Self-Study process was structured to ensure broad participation of College constituents. Before starting the Self-Study work, Lexington College sent representatives to the HLC Annual Meetings. Following HLC guidelines, the process for the current self-study started early in 2007 with the nomination of a Self-Study Steering Committee. The process included training for Steering Committee members based on HLC conference and print materials.

The five Self-Study teams each focused on one of the five criteria for accreditation. The teams were led by faculty or staff members appointed to the Self-Study Steering Committee by the Administrative Council. Team members were drawn from a diverse group of constituents including faculty (both full-time

and adjunct), staff, students, the Board of Directors, the Industry Advisory Board, and alumnae. Teams include representation from each of these groups according to their expertise for each Criterion.

Data collection: During the spring and summer 2007 Self-Study teams collected data related to each of the core components of the five accreditation criteria, aligning the Self-Study with Lexington College's mission and strategic plan. Their discussions raised questions that could often be answered with existing data. They also asked questions of Self-Study Co-chairs when answers required new data or less-accessible information. Further, environmental scanning outcomes resulting from faculty, staff and student surveys, were discussed by relevant criterion teams. The discussion and analysis of survey findings facilitated the incorporation of constituents' input in planning the College's future. Discussions focusing on identified issues continue to inform faculty and staff work and planning today.

Teams communicated progress back to the campus community via faculty/staff meetings, a retreat and memoranda. This commitment to open communication helped ensure broad awareness of the activities of the Self-Study teams, and set the stage for data collection, team report writing, and overall campus involvement of this Self-Study.

Having analyzed the data and draft reports prepared by the teams, Steering Committee co-chairs compiled a complete draft of the Self-Study and passed it to the AC for review and feedback. With AC input, the co-chairs revised the Self-Study draft and forwarded it to the Editing Committee for a final Self-Study Report, which we respectfully submit to The Higher Learning Commission.

Criteria committee reports: Team reports form the core of the Self-Study draft. Each team report identifies the College's progress over the past five years, the strengths as well as weaknesses, and opportunities/challenges pertinent to the criterion under consideration. The final Self-Study, crafted from team reports, was integrated and edited for consistency, completeness and to avoid redundancies to create a single narrative that tells Lexington College's story.

Having overviewed Lexington's institutional history and Self-Study process, the remainder of this report addresses the five fundamental criteria for reaccreditation.