

# Cornerstone University

## Annual Assessment Report

2012-13



Cornerstone  
UNIVERSITY®

BUILD A LIFE THAT MATTERS

Traditional Age Undergraduate

Professional and Graduate Studies

Grand Rapids Theological Seminary

Asia Biblical Theological Seminary

## **General Summary**

The 2012-13 academic year was a very important one for Cornerstone University as the campus community continued the maturation of its work in the assessment of student learning. After coming off a successful review of the accreditation report (November 2011), the university faculty, staff, administration and students maintained and moved forward the processes, procedures and practices of evaluating student learning. The motto adopted by the Assessment Committee set the tone for the rest of the campus:

**Institutional accreditation is a driving force in creating a culture of assessment. Without the pending reaccreditation process, institutions lose their drive, or forward momentum, to maximize the quality and effectiveness of its assessment practices.**

**(Hardin, Assessment Update, 24:4:12)**

The Assessment Committee put forth a determined and strategic effort to make certain that accreditation was not the primary factor driving campus assessment efforts. The work of assessment and one which is growing at CU is that the evaluation of student learning is an important task and one which is prompted by a group of professional educators holding themselves accountable to providing the students what the university promises as a Cornerstone University education (and the accreditation work is becoming secondary). Clearly, the work of assessment is developing into an expected set of behaviors and is being layered into the academic culture of the organization.

Among the many activities occurring on campus during the past year include:

- All divisions of the university agreeing to a set of “next-steps” to guide its work

- All divisions reporting on the progress of the work regarding the “next steps”
- The Core Curriculum Committee is setting the context to provide a more robust evaluation of the set of classes comprising the basic education of all students
- The Alumni Relations Department becoming more involved in assessing the learning of the university’s alumnae
- The introduction of the NSSE survey as part of the overall assessment package for the traditional undergraduate program
- The continued good work of the PGS, GRTS and ABTS parts of the university

There is great anticipation for the work of assessment to continue into the 2013-14 academic year.

## **Eagle Assessment Award**

The university annually selects an individual or a division to win the “**Eagle Assessment Award**” – signifying significant and outstanding work in the area of the assessment of student learning.

The Spiritual Formation Office received the 2013-14 Eagle Assessment Award for its:

- Creative work in evaluating key university objectives
- Development of an overall matrix to guide its work
- Consistent work in meeting the appropriate university learning objectives
- Administering a campus spiritual perceptual survey for students

Congratulations to the Spiritual Formation Division for their excellent work and for modeling best practices for the university community.



## **Plans for 2013-14**

Maintaining campus momentum is important to the success of an assessment program and the following “next steps” are being planned:

- ❖ Each campus unit or division will identify 2-3 of its own next steps
  - They will work on these items over the course of the academic year
  - Period meetings will take place between the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and the unit leader to keep the projects moving
  - The annual report filed by each unit will reflect specific movement of the selected 2-3 steps
  
- ❖ All campus units will continue to mature its development based on the “assessment checklist”
  
- ❖ The following divisions are reporting to the Assessment Committee as part of the 3 year reporting cycle
  - Business
  - Kinesiology/Science/Math
  - Communication & Media Studies
  
- ❖ The continued development of multiple points of training and accountability including:
  - Office of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Assessment Committee
  - Core Curriculum Committee
  - Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

## **Objectives of Assessment at Cornerstone University**

1. To clearly articulate a set of curricular and co-curricular learning objectives to inform a student's
  - \* knowledge level of a given content area
  - \* skill level as appropriately defined
  - \* spiritual formation leading to a set of values
  - \* critical thinking skills
  
2. To develop a well-defined strategy to achieve those objectives, including identifying and monitoring
  - \* trends in student profiles
  - \* trends in student learning
  - \* the instruments and methods used in assessing student learning
  - \* alumni activities and perceptions
  
3. To offer verifiable evidence of the achievement of those goals by
  - \* the use of direct methods of assessment
  - \* the use of indirect methods of assessment
  
4. To provide a means of accountability to insure systematic assessment
  - \* through appropriate organizational accountability processes
  - \* through meeting the guidelines of the Higher Learning Commission and various external accrediting organizations
  - \* through the maturation of a campus ethos of assessment
  
5. To gather, interpret, and use widely across all units of the campus community the evidence of assessment in the institutional decision-making processes of
  - \* instruction
  - \* program improvement
  - \* strategic planning
  - \* resource allocation
  
6. To provide yearly and other regular reports to the campus community

**Please see the links on the Assessment website to view the various divisional reports for 2012-13.**