Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

- 1.a. The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

- 1.b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

- 1.c. Understanding and support for the mission pervade the organization.

- 1.d. The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

- 1.e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.
NCA CRITERION ONE

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When The National Commission for IIT developed a blueprint for the future of the university in 1994, few people connected with Illinois Institute of Technology could accurately predict the sweeping transformation that would occur over the next decade. The mission statement that evolved as part of The National Commission process, and was adopted by the Board of Trustees, read as follows:

To educate people from all countries for complex professional roles in a changing technological world and to advance knowledge through research and scholarship.

In 2000, the creation of the undergraduate Leadership Academy warranted a slight revision of the mission statement to better recognize the focus on leadership development at the university. The university’s mission was slightly altered to read:

To educate people who aspire to leadership roles in an increasingly complex and interconnected world and to support the advance of knowledge through research and scholarship.

As the IIT community embraced the opportunity to prepare for the 2006 North Central Association (NCA) reaccreditation visit, we recognized that a thorough reevaluation of our current mission, vision, and values could serve as a foundation for the institutional 2010 Plan. We found that the process of reassessing our mission proved significantly more valuable to our planning than the exercise of rewriting the words themselves.

1.a. The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

The work of reevaluating our mission statement began with our Board of Trustees in fall 2005. Board members, led by a facilitator from the Association of Governing Boards, focused the mission discussion on issues related to leadership, community, learning environments, and interprofessional education as well as the need to focus on preparing students for professional competency in their respective fields. Multiple meetings with students, faculty, and staff over the course of the next six months carried this first step forward.
Student contributions to the mission, vision, and values revealed how deeply our students believe in the original core institutional value of performing “meaningful roles in society.” In recognition of their commitment to the concept of service, we have incorporated this phrase in the new mission statement, and we have included the goal of enhancing service learning opportunities as part of the new Student Life Task Force convening in fall 2006.

Faculty members and staff input took place during a series of meetings involving more than 100 members of our community. The principal points emerging from these discussions were: supporting the values of “inspirational teaching” and “rigorous learning” as the foundation of our success; defining new opportunities to meet the altruistic nature of our students; and aligning with the needs of our urban community.

As the feedback process evolved, we recognized that our results would benefit from additional opportunities for open communication between the president and the university community. The revised Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) statement would significantly affect the entire university community, yet traditional engagement mechanisms permitted only a limited number of individuals to provide direct feedback. Furthermore, we wanted to provide a chance for people to speak freely, without reservation, which suggested feedback protocols that permitted a level of anonymity.

Early in 2006, President Collens initiated the university’s first Presidential Blog. The most current MVV draft was posted and students, faculty members, staff, and alumni were invited to respond to the document with the option to remain anonymous. At first, many students took the opportunity to use the Presidential Blog to vent on everything from food service to lab facilities. Each day, the president responded to myriad posted comments and posed thought-provoking questions, which led to the theme of the next day’s blog discussion. Over time, the bloggers became increasingly focused on the task of providing constructive feedback to the evolving MVV document. Alumni, in particular, offered an important perspective that helped shape our vision and values.

The Presidential Blog, hosted for one full month, welcomed more than 400 postings that were viewed by 8,472 visitors. While the approach was risky and very public in nature, the results provided evidence that we have an active and engaged body of alumni, faculty, staff, and students with an interest in shaping our mission, vision, and values.
After months of careful deliberation and significant institutional feedback, we reaffirmed our commitment to the fundamental elements of our historic mission as a community, while including additional language to reflect the changing educational and social needs of today’s society. The vision and values section was an area where we were able to use these discussions to distinguish ourselves, as well as to align our institutional vision with the initiatives identified in the 2010 Plan. IIT’s refreshed Mission, Vision, and Values statement is as follows:

**Mission**
To advance knowledge through research and scholarship, to cultivate invention improving the human condition, and to educate students from throughout the world for a life of professional achievement, service to society, and individual fulfillment.

**Vision**
- Our commitment to engineering and science, coupled with our strengths in life sciences, energy and sustainability, and innovation and entrepreneurship, will enable the university to continue to play an important role in advancing humankind.
- We will help solve problems of human health and develop sound policies and technical solutions for the use of natural resources.
- We will continue to embrace interprofessional education to ensure that our graduates have the ability to solve complex multidisciplinary problems.
- We will lead efforts to improve secondary mathematics and science teacher education.
- We will enhance the student experience and maintain a high level of investment in university facilities.
- Through our University Technology Park At IIT, we will support the creation of jobs and businesses based on science and engineering research.

**Values**
- **Inspirational teaching.** Our reputation rests on the quality of our faculty, inspiring teachers, mentors, and colleagues recognized for research, innovation, and creativity.
- **Rigorous learning.** Our faculty challenges students to question the status quo and to build their professional competence by working as team members to solve complex problems within and across academic disciplines.
- **Cultural interaction.** Our community embraces diversity and supports the opportunities for students to interact and develop a deeper respect and understanding of the various cultures of our world.
- **Integrity and social commitment.** Our community seeks to adhere to the highest ethical standards and is committed to using its talents to serve our society.
Affordability and stewardship. Our students benefit from the generosity of our alumni and friends, and we strive to be responsible stewards of the financial resources entrusted to us.

Alumni engagement. We take pride in the professional and civic achievements of our graduates and value their continued involvement in the life of the university.

Staff leadership. Our dedicated professional staff provides exceptional services for students and faculty, and develops a collegial atmosphere for a quality student experience.

Community. Our urban Chicago location provides the university community opportunities to enjoy the benefits of a world-class city as well as to use our many skills and talents to improve the lives of people in our neighborhood.

Architectural heritage. Our Mies van der Rohe campus is internationally famous, and we value our role as faithful guardians of this historical legacy.

While we are confident that our revised MVV will support and inspire our efforts into the next decade, we also recognize that our history reflects a culture of continuous planning and positive change. We anticipate, therefore, that our Mission, Vision, and Values statement will continue to evolve to allow the university to continue its transformative work. As the 2010 Plan also evolves through implementation and outcomes assessment, there will be several touchstone points where recurring reevaluations of our MVV will afford timely and appropriate opportunities to test progress and redefine purpose.

An important measure of the effectiveness of any institution’s mission is the depth and breadth of awareness among the members of the community and external audiences. Our mission statement is accessible through numerous online and printed sources. The mission is featured in the “About IIT” section of the university’s website, www.iit.edu.

Print publications, primarily designed for prospective and current students as well as alumni, include references to the institution’s mission as evidenced in the university’s magazine, recruitment viewbooks, student handbooks, and other campus publications. To engage a diverse external audience, all IIT news releases are tagged with the mission statement, and it is included as part of the Institutional Promotion Plan, an annual set of communication pieces that are targeted to key academic and business influencers. In addition, the majority of the university’s academic and non-academic units publish unit-specific mission, vision, and/or goals statements on their respective home pages.

1.b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

One of the most significant recommendations to come out of The National Commission for IIT, as reflected in our mission statement, is our commitment to extend educational opportunities to people from “throughout the world.” While IIT had an internationally diverse student body in 1994, the advent of the World Wide Web as a recruiting tool, and the rapid evolution of Asian economies focused on science and technology, brought about an explosion in international recruitment in the middle 1990s. IIT now has one of the most
internationally diverse student bodies in the nation. Today, 37% of IIT students are non-U.S. citizens who represent 105 countries of citizenship.

At the same time, the percentage of underrepresented minority students, particularly undergraduates, has remained relatively flat. This has occurred in spite of the institution’s long history of striving to recruit African-American and Latino students to our science and engineering programs. IIT led its peer institutions in the 1970s and 1980s in development of pre-college and transitional support programs for minorities. Reinvigorating these programs will become a top priority for the Student Life Task Force.

As part of a long-term strategy to address the national issue of under-represented minorities in science and engineering, we created a secondary math and science teacher education department in 2001. The department is dedicated to improving the quality of secondary math and science teaching in inner-city schools, with special emphasis on Chicago Public Schools (CPS). In 2006, the university was awarded a $4.2 million contract to work with CPS to replace the science curriculum in seven high schools, three of which are in the immediate neighborhoods surrounding the university. The department also provides Math and Science Masters programs to CPS teachers to help strengthen current high school programs. We anticipate that the teachers’ connection to IIT and the overall improvement of math and science capability among inner-city students served by these teachers will lead to increased minority enrollments at IIT and other technological institutions.

The university, like many other technological institutions that emphasize science and engineering, has traditionally had a lower percentage of women enrolled than less-specialized colleges and universities. The addition and/or expansion of degree programs in biomedical engineering, molecular biology, biophysics, and architecture have slightly increased the percentage of female students. This focus on enhancing the percentage of women students continues to be a top priority.

Our faculty is internationally diverse, reflecting the strong tradition of scientists and engineers emigrating to the United States. In the 1990s, the university developed an incentive program to recruit underrepresented minority faculty and has succeeded in attracting ten new faculty. The university’s staff is also diverse, with 41% of our employees from minority groups. The institution is committed to improving minority representation in leadership positions.
Our Mission, Vision, and Values statement explicitly acknowledges our responsibility to serving the diversity of our surrounding community. The values statement on diversity declares:

"Our community embraces diversity and supports the many opportunities for students to interact and develop a deeper respect and understanding of the various cultures of our world."

The values statement of our social commitment to our surrounding community declares:

"Our urban Chicago location provides the university community opportunities to enjoy the benefits of a world-class city as well as to use our many skills and talents to improve the lives of people in our neighborhood."

Four offices within the university are charged with responsibilities for developing programs and processes to celebrate diversity and social commitment among our students, faculty, and staff:

- Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
- International Center
- Office of Multicultural Student Services
- Community Development Office

The director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action provides advice and counsel to the university, investigates complaints by students and faculty, prepares affirmative action plans, and monitors university equal opportunity progress. The director reports to the general counsel and represents the university before government agencies in employment-related matters. The director also facilitates and recommends education and training for the university community in equal opportunity and affirmative action related subjects.

The Minority and Women Owned Business Task Force meets monthly to review and evaluate our hiring and contracting practices.
Criteria Three and Five detail the programs, initiatives, and achievements of the International Center, the Office of Multicultural Student Services, and the Community Development Office.

A major diversity accomplishment is our policy on minority contracting and services:

> It is the policy of Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) to provide opportunities for minority and women business enterprises to share in IIT’s total expenditures for goods and services. In establishing this policy, IIT is recognizing its responsibilities to the communities it serves and the society in which it conducts business. The use of minority and women business enterprises must be a function of our normal purchasing procedures, just as equal employment opportunity must be an integral part of normal personnel policy and procedures. No potential supplier will be precluded from consideration on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin. IIT firmly believes that, in our free enterprise system, every attempt must be made to utilize fully all of our resources—human as well as economic.

[www.iit.edu/nca/mwbepolicystatement](http://www.iit.edu/nca/mwbepolicystatement)

Since 1997, the Office of Business and Administration has focused efforts on minority hiring and contracting, resulting in significant increases in the number of minority companies sharing in the work of rebuilding Main Campus. The Minority and Women Owned Business Task Force, a group comprised of representatives of minority contractors and local politicians, oversees this process. This group meets monthly to review the university’s progress in this area as well as to identify new opportunities for minority participation.

Our self-study process, in anticipation of the 2006 reaccreditation review, includes an examination of the university’s overall policies with regard to diversity. The following diversity statement was drafted in coordination with the Office of Multicultural Student Services and approved by the University Faculty Council, the President’s Council, the Student Government Association, and the Board of Trustees at their March 2006 meeting.

**Illinois Institute of Technology Diversity Statement**

> Illinois Institute of Technology is a multicultural community that values and respects its members. We take pride in the fact that our faculty, staff, and students come from various backgrounds and all parts of the world, and we welcome their diverse perspectives and contributions. It is our policy to provide a working and learning environment in which faculty, staff, and students are able to realize their full potential as productive members of the IIT community.

> To this end, IIT affirms its commitment to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in employment and education for all qualified individuals regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, applicable veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. Further, IIT is committed to taking affirmative action to increase opportunities at all levels of employment and to increase opportunities for participation in programs and activities by all faculty, staff, and students.
As a first step in implementing the diversity statement, the provost has issued revised faculty search procedures to ensure full consideration of women and minorities. This statement and the proposed implementation plan will be presented to the full university community in fall 2006. www.iit.edu/nca/facultysearchprocedures

1.c. Understanding and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Historically, the university has had no quantitative measurement of mission awareness among its various constituencies, although anecdotal evidence suggests a strong sense of mission among faculty and staff. Since fall 2005, the Board of Trustees workshop, multiple student, staff, and faculty focus groups, and the existence of the Presidential Blog have significantly contributed to overall institutional mission awareness.

The 2010 Plan process enables us to confirm that our institutional decisions are fundamentally mission-driven. The MVV documents include institutional vision statements, the majority of which are derived from institutional strengths, coupled with the aspirations of the mission. These fundamental goals provide the platform for the 2010 Plan and reflect the university’s commitment to excellence in education and research.

The MVV and 2010 Plan work together to define institutional decisions. The FY07 University Operating Plan supports these initiatives with a strong financial strategy developed to achieve these stated goals.

The new mission statement provides us with a special opportunity to communicate the university’s core purposes, fundamental values, and vision for the future to all of our constituencies. Our communications and marketing team will develop a strategy to be implemented in fall 2006 to ensure that awareness of this new mission pervades the institution and that all key internal and external communications consistently reflect the new statement. A brief review of the existing mission statements of academic and administrative units indicates a good fit with our new mission statement, although units will be asked to review their missions in light of the renewed university MVV. www.iit.edu/nca/unitmissionstatements

1.d. The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

As a not-for-profit corporation, we are governed by a Board of Trustees, which has ultimate policy and fiduciary responsibility for the university. As defined in the by-laws, the board delegates certain decision-making authority to the president. www.iit.edu/nca/boardoftrusteesbylaws

Over the past decade, our board has effectively executed its responsibilities and made policy decisions to ensure the university is able to fulfill its mission. Emerging from The...
National Commission process, the board accepted the Commission’s recommendations and embraced the new mission and priorities. The board then organized the IIT Challenge Campaign to raise the resources necessary to implement agreed-upon priorities.

In 1999, board members held a two-day retreat to evaluate and make recommendations for our emerging interprofessional program, a key component emanating from The National Commission. In 2001, the board held a retreat to study faculty proposals for new priorities in education and research. Board members selected the areas of life sciences, energy and sustainability, and math and science teacher education as new priorities. In 2005 and 2006, the board participated directly in the revision of the mission statement and establishment of the 2010 Plan.

The university’s Board of Trustees consistently and successfully avoids micromanaging the university’s affairs, permitting the president and his senior leadership to propose strategic directions and manage the university’s day-to-day operations. The president, provost, and other administrative leaders meet at least six times each year with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to discuss major initiatives and progress. An executive session precedes the meeting to permit candid dialogue between the Executive Committee and the president. This partnership and supportive environment has enabled the university, through the leadership of President Collens, to make the successful, positive changes presented in this self-study document.

With regard to the academic life of the university, the Faculty Handbook is the reference for governance procedures, which are collaborative and inclusive. Either the administration or faculty may propose policy changes. Following review and discussion, policy proposals and related protocols are then submitted to the University Faculty Council (UFC) and the president for approval. As appropriate, some policy decisions also are submitted to the Board of Trustees for their review and approval.
As documented in Criterion Three, full responsibility for curriculum and academic programs is vested in the university faculty, operating through the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees of the UFC.

The UFC is comprised of representatives selected from all academic units of the university. The president chairs meetings of the full faculty at least twice each year, and with the provost, meets with the UFC when there is an issue to be discussed. Both the UFC and full faculty meetings provide opportunities for collaboration on academic matters. In addition, the president holds University Leadership Meetings with members of the senior academic and administrative teams at least three times each year for planning and other collaborative activities.

Shared governance has led to numerous changes and additions to university programs and structure over the past ten years. After a period of intense dialogue and debate in the mid-1990s, the university established an effective communication process between the faculty and administration. A significant example of this productive dialogue, which took place between 1997 and 2003, is the change from a two-campus academic structure to a more traditional structure under the leadership of a provost. [See Appendix I.]

As further evidence of the improvement in shared governance, UFC leadership and the administration worked together to solve the problem of weak attendance at faculty meetings. Over the past several years, approving new degree programs as well as changes to the Faculty Handbook had become increasingly difficult because of the failure to have a meeting quorum, as required by the Faculty Handbook. As a result of the joint effort, three faculty meetings during the 2005–2006 academic year recorded quorums. Through robust discussion and debate on key proposals by faculty and administration, several important proposals and a number of new degree programs were approved.

1.e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

As part of its routine work, the general counsel's office has procedures in place to assure that the university meets all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The general counsel also provides semi-annual written reports to the Executive Committee on the status of litigation and other significant legal matters.

In light of the national concern over the fiduciary operations of boards and audit firms, we have adopted a number of the recommended accounting and auditing safeguards for not-for-profit entities.

As part of this effort, we implemented EthicsPoint, www.iit.edu/president/ethics.html, an Internet-based program that enables members of the university community to raise concerns, anonymously if they prefer, about ethical and financial matters that they believe should be brought to the attention of university administration.

The Executive Committee, with support from a more detailed examination by the Budget and Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees, reviews the university’s financial status. Among other actions, the board directed the university to enter into a long-term plan for
financial stability that included a mandatory reduction in the amount of the endowment to be used to offset operating deficits. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in Criterion Two.

As an institution of higher education with a strong research focus, we are committed to accuracy and integrity, as highlighted in the values section of our MVV. We have numerous mechanisms and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate presentation and response to the publics we serve. Training on a host of subjects also is provided to students, faculty, and staff to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws. Various departments, including General Counsel, Human Resources, and Student Affairs, sponsor this training.

Our various communication tools, such as the Web; *IIT Today*, our internal newsletter; *IIT Magazine*; and news releases, have an embedded response mechanism for readers. In addition, members of our university community serve in an advisory capacity to ensure each major communication initiative reflects an accurate picture of the university.