In February 2005, Eastern will be visited by a site team from the North Central Association (NCA), our regional accrediting body, whose last visit took place in 1995.

In preparation for this visit, Eastern has established a Self Study team, which began its work in July with an orientation for committee members. President Hencken and Provost Lord invited Dr. Robert Augustine, Dean of the Graduate School, and Dr. Jill Owen, Professor of Physical Education, to co-chair the Self Study.

Dr. Augustine notes that “The Self Study gives the people of Eastern the opportunity to examine ourselves and our University and to make it even stronger for the coming decade. It is our opportunity to showcase Eastern for the great institution that it is.”

NCA describes accreditation as “the assurance to the public that an institution meets clearly stated requirements and criteria” and that “there are reasonable grounds that it will continue to meet these standards.”

With the Self Study, Eastern has the opportunity to chart its progress over the past 10 years, to create a future in which it can continually perform better than in the past, and to remain current and competitive in all aspects of higher education.

The Self Study will include an assessment of the following aspects of the institution: formal educational activities, governance and administration, financial stability, admissions and student personnel services, institutional resources, student academic achievement, institutional effectiveness, and relationships with constituencies inside and outside of the institution.

Spring 2005 marks the first time institutions will be able to be accredited (Continued on page 2)
Self Study cont.

Based on the new criteria established by NCA. The Self Study Steering Committee has been designed around the five new criteria with each criterion having its own subcommittee and chair. The new criteria and the subcommittee chairs are:

**Criterion One**: Mission and Integrity, chair Dr. Reed Benedict, Professor, Sociology and Anthropology

**Criterion Two**: Preparing for the Future, chair Dr. Cheryl Noll, Professor, School of Business

**Criterion Three**: Student Learning and Effective Teaching, chair Dr. Shane Miller, Associate Professor, Speech Communication

**Criterion Four**: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge, chair Dr. Linda Simpson, Associate Professor, School of Family and Consumer Sciences

**Criterion Five**: Engagement and Service, chair Dr. Linda Morford, Professor, Educational Administration

More information on the Self Study and the criteria may be found at Eastern’s web site: www.eiu.edu/~acaffair/NCA/. Members of the Self Study will also be available to speak to departments, committees, or councils.

Steering Committee members are pictured. Back row: Reed Benedict, Linda Morford, Shane Miller, and Linda Simpson. Front row: Cheryl Noll, Bob Augustine, and Jill Owen. Dr. Mary Herrington-Perry will also play an integral part in this process.

Major cont.

Both direct and indirect measures. At the graduate level, 11 programs are employing direct measures solely while 15 programs are using both direct and indirect measures. One of the examples of evidence that can be used to support information in the NCA Self Study is that “assessment of student learning includes multiple direct and indirect measures of student learning” (Higher Learning Commission/NCA). This emphasis on multiple measures indicates the importance of assessing not only student work but also of collecting information from students, alumni, and employers through surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

Over the years departments have made great strides in establishing learning outcomes and in using multiple measures. At the undergraduate level, 73% of programs are using tests and exams; 68% are using portfolios or other written work; 34% are assessing skills through oral presentations; 31% are employing student teaching or internship evaluations; 37% are using interviews or surveys; and 29% have identified hands-on activities or labs as assessment sites.

At the graduate level, 82% of programs are using a test or exam to assess student learning; 58% are employing papers, a thesis, or portfolio; 31% are using surveys or interviews as assessment measures.

Assessment plan summaries, responses, and a list of measures employed by each program are available on the assessment website (www.eiu.edu/~assess); follow the assessment in the major link.