REPORT OF THE SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE COMMITTEE
- Program Expansion -

For use with the following types of changes:

A. Initiating programs at a more advanced degree levels

Statement Regarding the Report

The Commission on Colleges will make its determination on the accreditation of an institution based on the findings contained in this committee report, the institution's response to issues contained in the report, other assessments relevant to the review, and application of the Commission's policies and procedures. Final interpretation of the Principles of Accreditation and final action on the accreditation status of the institution rest with the Commission on Colleges.

Name of the Institution: Southeastern Louisiana University
Date of the Review: February 19-20, 2008
COC Staff Member: Dr. Rudolph S. Jackson
Chair of the Committee: Dr. David R. Hager
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Part I. Overview

A. Description of the Change

Southeastern Louisiana University (SELU) is a public, regional, comprehensive institution that was established in 1925. It was first accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1946 and most recently reaffirmed by the Commission on Colleges in 2005. Since reaffirmation, Southern Louisiana has implemented a doctoral program in educational leadership in a consortium arrangement with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL). As a result, it is currently considered a Level 5 institution – i.e., doctoral granting – by the Commission.

The Ed.D. in educational leadership was approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents in 2006 on the basis of the SELU-ULL consortium that offers and manages the program. The purpose of the program is to provide currently practicing school professionals and aspiring
educational leaders, primarily in the K-12 public systems, to acquire the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and abilities necessary to provide effective administrative and curricular leadership to their systems and facilitate improvement and the development of new programs and processes for the benefit of the students who attend their schools, the parents, and the communities served by their schools.

The program was implemented in August 2006 by the two partner institutions and enrolled the inaugural class of twenty doctoral students, ten each from SELU and ULL. Admissions thereafter were limited to ten new students per semester (fall and spring) from each institution. By fall 2007, a total of 54 students were enrolled in the program and in spring 2008, the number reached 66.

The primary client group for the Ed.D. is K-12 administrators and teacher leaders who are either working in or preparing for leadership positions in Louisiana's school systems, especially in the service regions of the partner institutions. In addition, the program seeks to respond to the needs of educational personnel in other professional areas such as non-profit organizations.

The program requires a minimum of 60 semester credit hours for completion, including a dissertation. Degree candidates typically enroll for six credits per semester, including summer. At this rate they may be able to complete the program’s coursework in 3.5 years, prior to embarking on the dissertation.

Course instruction is provided by faculty from SELU and ULL and delivered through a combination of traditional face-to-face class meetings, compressed video and Internet-based course management systems such as BlackBoard. Each institution is responsible for delivering the program’s core courses and alternates presenting the other courses in the Ed.D.’s curriculum.

B. Rationale for the Change

Southeastern Louisiana University implemented the doctor of education degree with the intention of addressing the need for developing leadership expertise among practitioners. The program is unique in Louisiana due to its non-traditional curriculum, consortium administration, and use of technology for the delivery of the courses.

The initiation of the joint Ed.D. degree in educational leadership by Southeastern Louisiana University and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) provides individuals in their service areas an avenue for professional development beyond the master’s degree. This degree allows those currently engaged in educational practice to gain expertise and credentials in leadership and change strategies in order to enhance their contribution in their current roles in local education systems. The majority of students enrolled in this program are currently employed while pursuing graduate study.

A needs assessment was done by the two host universities as part of the program planning process. A survey of potential employers and educational professionals within the service region of the two institutions solicited input about the need for graduates of the proposed program. Many prospective employers responded that a graduate of the proposed program would be competitive and marketable and enhance performance of administrators already in the system. Positive feedback was received with specific recognition for various aspects of the proposed curriculum. Almost half of the respondents listed the specialization area in technology as an important aspect of this program. A third of respondents identified the
study of change theory and curricular leadership as aspects of the program they believed would better prepare graduates to take on the challenges of educational leadership. The action research project which culminates the program of study, and the distance education delivery of courses were considered as positive aspects of the program design. The needs assessment also revealed a large pent-up demand for the availability of doctoral-level work in education in the service regions of the institutions.

Prior to the implementation of the Ed.D. in educational leadership, SELU and ULL offered two programs in fields related to the new program. These are the Teacher Leader Endorsement and master’s in educational leadership programs.

The following strengths were identified by the two partner universities to support the implementation of the joint doctoral program. The first strength is the adoption of a consortium approach to offer and manage the joint program. The consortium combines the resources of the two institutions and enables them to deliver curriculum and support services to the students pursuing doctoral study in educational leadership. Both institutions were comfortable with a consortium-based program, given their prior positive experience with a jointly-offered nursing program.

Second, the combined faculty resources of the two institutions assure that the students in the joint Ed.D. are exposed to a pool of talented faculty from both institutions. The consortium offers students the opportunities to be exposed to a wider diversity of thought and practice than might be found in a single institution doctoral program. Deliberate efforts are made in the recruitment of new faculty to the program to broaden the program’s areas of expertise and avoid duplication.

Third, both Southeastern and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette participated in a $3.6 million grant from the Wallace Foundation titled the State Action for Education Leadership Project. The Wallace award supported the preparation programs of educational administrators. Through this grant, university/district partnerships were developed, enhancing the communication between the training institutions and the districts. These districts are actively involved in the nomination and selection for candidates for the doctoral program.

Fourth, Southeastern Louisiana University has made a commitment to hire additional faculty (six in the last two years) and to increase library resources (additional $13,000 for 2006-2007 and additional $10,000 for 2007-2008 for books and journals) to facilitate the establishment of the program. Additionally, the faculty teaching load when teaching in the doctoral program was reduced from three to two three-credit courses per semester in order to provide time for serving on Qualifying Paper and dissertation committees. The doctoral program coordinator is assigned an additional three-credit release.

Fifth, the technology infrastructure and technical capability for distance education are enhanced by using the resources of the two partner institutions. For the joint Ed.D. program, Southeastern increased the technology capability of the College and the University by implementing a compressed video classroom and purchasing new computers. The compressed video classroom is dedicated to the doctoral program and is used to deliver to and receive classes from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Additionally, the capabilities of the classroom are used for the video conferences for the Consortium Council and the Administrative Committee that govern the program. The computers are used primarily for the research courses to enable the doctoral candidates to work on projects
related to writing for research and qualitative methods and to input information into PassPort, the electronic portfolio system.

Sixth, taken together, the two universities that offer the joint doctoral program serve the needs of education professionals and the goals of Louisiana to develop educational leaders across a broad geographical area of the state. The market for the doctoral program may well be statewide due to the nature of its instructional delivery methods and the lack of similar program opportunities in parishes surrounding the service areas of the consortium partners.

Part II. Impact of the proposed expansion on selected requirements in the Principles of Accreditation

A. Assessment of Compliance with Section 1: The Principle of Integrity

1.1 The institution operates with integrity in all matters.

Comment: The committee found no evidence during its review of Southeastern Louisiana University’s (SELU) substantive change related to its expansion of programming to the doctoral level that would indicate any lack of commitment to the principles of integrity expected of member institutions of the Commission on Colleges or its representatives. All of the documentary information reviewed by the committee, including the substantive change prospectus and the program expansion report, were accurate renditions of the activities undertaken by the institution. All of the faculty, administrative staff, and students that were interviewed concerning the joint doctoral program with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette were open and forthright in their responses to questions from committee members. It is the committee’s conclusion that SELU meets the Commission’s expectations of integrity in its actions related to the joint Ed.D. program and in all other matters.

B. Assessment of Compliance with Section 2: The Core Requirements

2.4 The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive, and published mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service.

Comment: The committee’s review found that the institution is in compliance with this core requirement. Its mission is clearly defined, appropriate to the institution, and includes all of the required elements. (See CS 3.1.1 for comments on the current mission.)

2.5 The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.

Comment: Southeastern Louisiana University has a program of institutional effectiveness with a described cycle of six steps. The university uses the Guidelines for Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness that clearly focuses on four main categories of organizational function:
instructional/student learning outcomes, research productivity outcomes, administrative service outcomes, and public service outcomes. The institution uses a systematic and on-going process for assessment, review of results, and continuous improvement of its programs and services. The institution also has a strategic plan, Vision 2010, that identifies priorities and places responsibility for accomplishing these priorities with the vice presidents.

With specific regard to the joint doctoral program, the Major Field Assessment Plan for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership has defined expected instructional/student learning outcomes and the means of assessment for each of the stated outcomes. Southeastern indicates that the doctoral program has not produced any graduates and reports on outcomes for this program have not been filed. [See 3.3.1 for further elaboration of program assessment.]

2.7.1 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification for all degrees that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit.

Comment: Southeastern’s 2007-08 General Catalogue and the Academic Programs page of Southeastern’s Electronic Factbook reveal that the university offers the following:

3. Four programs at the associate level requiring at least 60 semester credit hours;
4. Forty-seven programs at the baccalaureate level requiring at least 120 semester credit hours;
5. Eighteen programs at the master’s level requiring at least 30 semester credit hours of graduate level coursework;
6. One program at the doctoral level requiring at least 60 semester credit hours of graduate level coursework beyond the master’s degree, organized into core course areas and specializations. Note: a maximum of six hours from the master’s degree and 6 hours from post Master’s coursework may be transferred into the program.

The information regarding the doctoral program is located in the 2007-08 General Catalogue and can be accessed at http://www.selu.edu/admin/rec_reg/university_catalogue/current/curriculum/pdf/dr_ed_leadership.pdf

2.7.2 The institution offers degree programs that embody a coherent course of study that is compatible with its stated mission and is based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education.

Comment: The collaborative doctoral program in educational leadership, which involves Southeastern Louisiana University and University of
Louisiana Lafayette, targets as its first priority, K-12 administrators and teacher leaders, but it also accepts candidates from other fields who are seeking preparation in leadership skills. The program does not lead to initial Louisiana administrative licensure. The population for the program was defined as a result of needs assessment in the region, state priorities, and availability of appropriate resources. An assessment of the status of similar programs in the region was conducted and it was found that the University of New Orleans appears to be closing its Educational Leadership program and Xavier University has already terminated its doctoral program in educational leadership. The program, therefore, was designed to fill a need for preparing leaders in education for the region.

The two institutions have worked out a shared schedule of courses with some courses being taught at both institutions and others being taught at only one; for example, of the offerings in the Educational Leadership and Management Core, four courses are offered at Southeastern and 6 at Lafayette with no duplication.

The course of study reflects an appropriate mix of application and theory, covers appropriate topics for educational leadership, provides opportunities for internships to enhance hands-on experience for candidates, offers candidates an opportunity to obtain a specialization and culminates in the dissertation. In the design of the program, local school districts were asked to provide input into the content of the program so that the program would be aligned with the needs of future educational leaders in the region.

2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.

Comment: Between the two institutions involved in the sponsorship of this doctoral program, there currently appears to be an adequate number of faculty available to provide instruction as well as to participate in dissertation committees. In spring of 2008, 15 faculty between the two institutions were identified as doctoral faculty, with seven of the faculty being located at Southeastern and 8 at Lafayette. This has resulted in a student faculty ratio at Southeastern of 5.1 and 4.4 at Lafayette. In recognition of the demands on doctoral faculty, the doctoral faculty at Southeastern teach only two courses a semester, have three hours reassigned for teaching and preparation hours within the doctoral program, three credit hours reassigned for graduate faculty research; and three credit hours are reassigned for research and service expected of tenured and tenure track faculty.

In recognition of faculty loads and in an effort to provide equitable workload assignments, the Consortium determined that no more than half of the courses in the program would be developed and taught by an individual institution. The institutions have chosen only the most highly-qualified faculty to teach the initial offerings in the program. Other faculty members will be brought into the program during subsequent years; they
will receive departmental guidance on working with doctoral students and will be mentored by faculty who have doctoral experience.

2.9 The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. Collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs.

Comment: Southeastern Louisiana University’s Sims Memorial Library provides appropriate access to collections and services to support the student and faculty research needs for the Ed.D. program. Access is provided by way of several paths to Library information networks and via electronic resources and databases. The Library is a member of the Board of Regents LOUIS electronic network that links the Library to shared catalogs, interlibrary loan services and electronic resources of over 40 libraries in the state, essential to a collaborative doctoral program. The Library also participates in an academic Library consortium that further supports adequate faculty and student access. Peer assessments of total library holdings indicate comparable size collections at the university to support the doctoral program. A Library staff person serves as the liaison to the College of Education and the Library has a distance education librarian who can assist offsite students in securing access to collections. There is evidence of cooperative agreements between the libraries of both universities as part of a state wide program in Louisiana that allows seamless borrowing privileges between university libraries. The institution demonstrates compliance in its core requirement for learning resources and services.

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students.

Comment: The university offers a variety of specialized programs, services, and activities for student academic support that are appropriate in satisfying the core requirement, these services are primarily aimed at the undergraduate level. Many of these services, as publicized on the university’s webpage, are available to graduate students and meet the primary and diverse needs of all students who would seek the Ed.D. in educational leadership. The program’s Coordinator of the Doctoral Program provides support for new candidates at the point of registration, during orientations at each site, and during informal advising opportunities. An Action Plan for improving the web sites of the university and individual departments is included in the strategic priorities plan that may improve communication. As the doctoral program continues to evolve, additional and specialized services should be separately highlighted on the webpage and in the doctoral handbook for ease of access, including support for distance learning courses, library instruction, and dissertation research.
2.11.1 The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements:

(1) an institutional audit (or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (or Standard Review Report) guide;

(2) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and

(3) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board.

Comment: Based on a review of available documents and interviews with institutional and program leadership, the committee concluded that Southeastern Louisiana University (SELU) is financially stable and has a sound financial base to support achieving its mission to provide quality programming and services to support the educational, cultural, and economic development of the institution’s service region.

The university is regularly audited as of a system-wide process and its Standard Review Report for the most recent audit, FY 2004 (June 30, 2004), was prepared in accordance with the Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA.

SELU’s most recent management Letter is dated June 30, 2007. One issue was identified for resolution as a result of the audit. It concerned accountability for unlocated movable property, such as computers and related equipment. The institution responded to the issue with the development of new internal controls and training programs for department heads that are designed to assure compliance with relevant statutes and administrative codes and guidelines of the Louisiana Property Assistance Agency (LPPA). is in the process of addressing this issue with new policies and procedures that will account for these items. In 2007, SELU received approval of its Certification of Annual Property Inventory from the LPPA.

Annually, the institution prepares financial statements that are consistent with accepted accounting principles prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The most recent Statement of Changes and Fund Balance and Statement of Current Funds, Revenues, Expenditures and Other Changes was prepared as of the end of FY 2007 (June 30, 2007).
SELU’s annual budget development process includes a planning process, guidance from the provost on the preparation of budget requests, development of initiatives by budget unit heads, review at appropriate levels, prioritization of requests for each division at the vice presidential level, finalization of the institutional budget by the president and vice presidents taking into consideration revenue and required increases such as salary increments and unfunded mandates, and final approval by the governing board. This campus budgeting process has been in place since 1995. In the background of the current process is the institution’s strategic plan, Vision 2010, which provides the basic guidance for the nature, type, and direction of the budget initiatives.

The institution’s FY 2008 operating budget received an infusion of $23M as the result of the state of Louisiana’s commitment to raise all colleges and universities in its system to 100 per cent of their funding formula. After addressing required expenditures for salary increments, retirement contributions, deferred maintenance, and library materials, approximately $16M was available to address recurring expenditures such as new faculty, some of which were directed at bolstering the resources available to support the consortium-based joint Ed.D. program.

2.11.2 The institution has adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

Comment: Southern Louisiana (SELU) operates and maintains physical facilities on the main campus in Hammond and at off-campus locations in Baton Rouge to serve the needs of its educational programs, including the joint Ed.D.

The institution demonstrated to the Commission’s satisfaction, both during its reaffirmation of accreditation review in 2005 and approval of the substantive change notification related to the Ed.D program offered in collaboration with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) that the institution has more than adequate physical resources to support its mission, academic programming, and support services. The focus of the current substantive change committee with regard to physical resources is the Ed.D and whether the program has adequate physical facilities to support its goals in instruction as well as faculty and student support. As a result of its review, the substantive change committee concluded that the facilities described below are more than adequate to meet the instructional and support needs of faculty and students in the program.

The committee’s investigation notes that the Ed.D. has benefited from capital outlay projects completed at SELU that have improved physical resources at the institution. In 1998, the Cate Teacher Education Center (TEC) received a $7 million dollar renovation and was significantly modernized. The building had more than over 12,000 square feet of space remodeled and expanded by 40,000 square feet.
The Department of Educational Leadership and Technology, which is responsible for the doctoral program, is located in TEC. The facility houses the faculty assigned to provide instruction and student guidance for the Ed.D. program. The department has individual faculty offices, a reception area used by graduate assistants and student workers, offices for the department head and administrative assistants, a conference room, and storage.

The Ed.D. program utilizes state-of-the-art physical facilities including new classrooms and computer labs in the TEC. The four classrooms used most often for doctoral classes have a desktop computer linked to an overhead LCD projector and screens or SmartBoards.

Computer labs, located in TEC 248/249 and 230/231, are available for doctoral student use. The one in 248/249 is used both for classroom learning and students’ general computing needs during scheduled hours. It contains 30 computer workstations, networked printers, projection system, and other peripheral equipment for student use. The other lab in TEC 230/231 has 20 computer workstations, networked printers, projector, and SmartBoard. Software supported in the labs includes Windows XP, MS Office, SPSS, Corel WP, Adobe, Netscape, as well as a multitude of specialized educational software. In addition, a portable cart with 20 laptops is available to support student and instructional needs. Another cart is presently on order. These portable carts can be used in the TEC classrooms in wireless mode.

The doctoral program faculty and students have access to a dedicated compressed videoconference room (TEC 2021). It is used to support technologically delivered instruction provided by consortium member institutions (SELU and ULL) to doctoral students. In addition, a videoconference classroom in McClimans Hall may be used for another course or back up to TEC 2021. The rooms are described as "multi point" rooms, capable of simultaneously conferencing multiple sites. SELU utilizes video over IP, ISDN, and T-1 connections to deliver doctoral classes. Equipment includes a Polycom Codecs and 27 or 32-inch monitors. Selection of sources, including document cameras and PC video output, is accomplished via AMX touch panel controllers. Signals for two satellite downlink sites for C and KU bands and digital reception are disseminated through equipment in TEC 2021.

SELU’s Nursing Center facility in Baton Rouge is used for traditional face-to-face instruction in classes and orientation sessions for the Ed.D. program. The consortium partners utilize the center. It has Internet connected classrooms with laptops and LCD projectors consoles. The facility also includes a conference room for orientation and workshops. Three classrooms at the center are utilized to support doctoral classes.
Wireless Internet capabilities have been installed at both the Nursing Center and the SELU campus.

SELU’s doctoral program faculty receive support for their distance education courses from the Center for Faculty Excellence. Support includes a curriculum specialist, dedicated to the program, who assists faculty in course and curriculum design and opportunities for faculty to develop skills related to teaching with technology. The Center also provides workshops, information sessions, training, seminars, and consultation to improve faculty knowledge and skills. Assistance is provided for course design, adaptation of teaching materials for distance delivery, and multimedia production. In addition, Blackboard LMS is available and utilized by faculty and students to support instruction in the collaborative Ed.D. program. Support is provided by the Center for Faculty Excellence.

7. **Assessment of Compliance with Section 3: The Comprehensive Standards**

3.1.1 The mission statement is current and comprehensive, accurately guides the institution’s operations, is periodically reviewed and updated, is approved by the governing board, and is communicated to the institution’s constituencies.

Comment: The committee reviewed the mission statement, as published in the current Southeastern Louisiana University (SELU) catalog. The statement clearly indicates the institution’s intention to meet the needs of educational development for the region and defines the relevant role and scope of the institution. The mission statement specifies that SELU is committed to graduate education through the master’s degree level and is classified as a Level IV institution by the Commission on Colleges. In August 2006, the Louisiana Board of Regents approved the implementation of the Ed.D. in educational leadership by the SELU and University of Louisiana at Lafayette consortium. As a result of the initiation of this program and subsequent approval by the Commission of a substantive change prospectus that described the program, SELU’s classification was changed to Level V.

Recommendation CS 3.1.1: The committee recommends that Southeastern Louisiana University revise its mission statement to accurately reflect that it offers graduate study through the doctoral level and is designated as a Level V institution by the Commission on Colleges.

3.2.8 The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead the institution.

Comment: Southeastern maintains a formal system for classifying positions and filling them. The process begins with a comprehensive position description; such descriptions are reevaluated whenever a position becomes vacant or on a five year review cycle, whichever comes first. Hiring procedures are clearly indicated on the Human Resources website.
The majority of Southeastern’s academic administrators (President, Provost, Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, Academic Department Heads and Director of the Sims Memorial Library) have faculty rank and hold tenure status. The University of Louisiana System Board Rules (Section II.F) outlines the qualifications for academic administrators, and the University of Louisiana System maintains recruitment procedures for filling administrative positions at the dean or higher levels. Personnel files of academic administrators contain vacancy notices, employment applications, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and curriculum vitae at the time of appointment. This supporting evidence indicates that they have acquired the necessary administrative skills and experience to make them effective leaders of the university.

The process for hiring academic administrators is comprehensive and inclusive, including national searches; academic credentials of applicants are verified and leading candidates are brought to campus for interviews. After a final recommendation is made to the Provost and the President, the final candidate’s application package goes to the University of Louisiana System Board for final review and confirmation. A similar process is followed for non-academic senior management positions (Vice President for Administration and Finance, Vice President for University Advancement, etc.)

Evaluation procedures are in place for all administrative and academic officers; the university maintains a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for the evaluation of the President and Vice Presidents. Performance goals and indicators are established at the start of each academic year. Toward the end of the year, input is solicited from a variety of constituencies which may include but not be limited to Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Heads, etc. The employee’s supervisor conducts the final evaluation. In addition, a Presidential Review Committee is appointed each year to administer the presidential evaluation procedures described in the policy manual; results are shared with the University’s President as well as the President of the University of Louisiana System. Full information regarding Policy and Procedures for Evaluation of President and Vice Presidents appears at http://www2.selu.edu/documents/policies/admin_eval_policy.pdf

Oversight of the doctoral program is provided at the College of Education and Human Development level by the Dean of the College, the Department Head for Educational Leadership and Technology, the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program, and the Doctoral Program Advisory Committee. Information regarding evaluation of deans, department heads, and other administrative roles is available at the following site: http://www2.selu.edu/sacs/documents/360assessment_eval0304.pdf

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs (including student learning outcomes for educational programs) and its administrative and educational support services, assesses whether it achieves
these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

Comment: The committee’s review indicates that the institution identifies expected outcomes (student learning outcomes) for its educational programs.

The doctoral program in Educational Leadership is distinguished by having eight student learning outcomes. At this time, assessment of these outcomes has not occurred. The program assessment process indicates that in the Fall 2008 an assessment report will be presented. The office of Institutional Research and Assessment acknowledges that the major field assessment of the doctoral program is in place and assistance from this office to the department has occurred. This assessment will also occur on a yearly basis. Assessments of the doctoral program have been indirect using market surveys, feedback from school district, curricular feedback from faculty and students.

Work is being conducted on developing curricular maps that align course syllabi with the student learning outcomes of the program. In addition, program projects and research courses are also being aligned with student learning outcomes. Program assessment through the use of Pass-Port is evidence of course assignments and artifacts aligned with student learning outcomes.

3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration.

Comment: Institutional documentation (SELU University Curriculum Council Guidelines and Procedures for Submitting Catalogue Changes) outlines the process by which the department proposes courses/curricula changes and the approval process. Changes proceed through a departmental committee and the department head before being submitted to the university committee. In addition, close collaboration between the ULL and the SELU campus regarding curricular proposals is made through a joint curriculum committee (a working group made up of faculty from both campuses) to the Consortium Council. Each campus is responsible for specific content areas within the curriculum and so is responsible for creating and having courses approved for those areas.

3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies that are consistent with its mission.

Comment: The admissions policies of the program are consistent with the mission of the institution to "lead the educational, economic and cultural development of southeast Louisiana" (SELU web page, http://www.selu.edu/about/overview/index.html). The program provides a doctoral program for educators in the region, with admissions policies that encourage applicants from the area school administrators.

3.4.4 The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to
the institution’s own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution’s transcript.

Comment: The doctoral admissions process (program information brochures and recruitment materials) and the Program Handbook outline the process for accepting transfer credit. A maximum of twelve hours can be transferred into the program and must adhere to the time lines to count for credit toward the degree. Transfer credit is accepted into the categories of the core areas (Educational Leadership & Management, Instructional leadership, or Specialization Coursework) but is not used as a one-for-one substitution for specific courses. Transfer credit is accepted based on individual goals and consultation with the program director/advisor.

3.4.9 The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

Comment: The institution provides academic support for students in the Writing Center, Center for Faculty Excellence, Library, and CEDSAR. In addition, the faculty provide some measure of technical support services through the student orientation and program handbook. Support for the Pass-Port (e-portfolio) process is provided through the CEDSAR Assessment Coordinator. Statistical support is provided to the student through the faculty methodologist.

3.4.12 The institution’s use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology.

Comment: Currently, technology is incorporated in the course delivery, course assignments and the curriculum by the faculty. The technology used enhances access and facilitates communication between the faculty and the student(s). While each campus in the consortium uses different course management systems, the students have (or can obtain) support from either campus as needed. Training for the SELU course delivery system is provided by the faculty teaching the classes that utilize the system and by an online tutorial. Courses that use the compressed video system are supported by each campus, having a technology assistant at each class meeting. Technology infrastructure also supports students’ access to the library databases, e-mail and file storage for each student. The Center of Faculty Excellence supports faculty technology integration through seminars, workshops, and other training opportunities. Technology is also used to collect portfolio pieces for the student (Pass-Port).

3.6.1 The institution’s post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master’s and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs.

Comment: The doctoral program in educational leadership at Southeastern offers 60+ hours of coursework; all of the core courses in the program are new at the doctoral level; options for specializations can include existing courses from other programs, but a specialization is limited to 6-9 hours; the specialization in technology consists only of
courses at the doctoral level; the specialization in Administration of Exceptionalities draws upon courses at the 600 level. The program notes that other specializations may be developed in the future. A review of syllabi and program requirements in the post baccalaureate work at the institution indicates that progressively more advanced content knowledge is required as students proceed through the master’s programs and enter the doctoral program.

3.6.2 The institution structures its graduate curricula (1) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) to ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.

Comment: The doctoral program is structured as follows: 9-12 credit hours in a research core that addresses research design, quantitative methods, qualitative methods and writing for research; an educational leadership and management core of 21-24 hours addresses such topics as leadership theory and practice, educational management, ethics and law, politics and community relations, change theory and other related content; the instructional leadership core of 6-9 credits addresses such topics as critical analysis of current research on effective educational practice, educational evaluation, and other special topics. Candidates also receive additional content knowledge by selecting a specialization field such as educational technology or administration of exceptionalities in which they accumulate 6-9 credit hours of content knowledge.

The doctoral program requires field-based practicum experiences moving from an emphasis upon action research to organizational analysis and problem solving and culminating in a practicum designed to focus on implementation and administration of organizational improvements. Candidates utilize data collection techniques and procedures as well as data analysis and interpretation. The specific content of the practica is determined by the instructor in consultation with the students to meet specific needs.

The program culminates in the completion of a dissertation that requires candidates to complete 2 doctoral dissertation seminars, each 3 credit hours, in which candidates deal with both the theoretical and practical aspects of designing dissertation research and defending the design in a proposal hearing; the second seminar is designed to assist candidates in writing their proposal and obtaining the necessary approvals through the university’s IRB for their dissertation research design and process. In the final dissertation course (ED/EDLD995) candidates are assisted through their dissertation writing and completion processes; class sessions focus on problems and issues arising from the writing of the dissertation.

3.6.3 The majority of credits toward a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree are earned through institution offered by the institution awarding the degree. In the case of graduate and post-baccalaureate professional degree programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortia arrangements, the
student earns a majority of credits through instruction offered by the participating institutions.

Comment: The institution permits no more than 6 credits from a master’s degree for transfer into the doctoral program and no more than 6 post-master’s credit for a total of 12 hours maximum.

3.6.4 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its graduate and post-graduate professional programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs.

Comment: Current requirements for admission to the Graduate School and to the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Southeastern Louisiana University conform to commonly accepted standards and practices.

Currently, the University Requirements for Admission to the Graduate School are as follows:
1. Bachelor’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution or its foreign equivalent;
2. Minimum 2.5 grade point average for all undergraduate work attempted, or a minimum of a 2.75 for all undergraduate upper-level work attempted;
3. Satisfactory scores on the required standardized tests;
4. Meet all other requirements of individual degree programs;
5. Satisfactory academic standing at the last institution attended;
6. Recommended for admission by degree program graduate coordinator;
7. Approval for admission by the Graduate Dean

Specific Admission Requirements for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

1. Master’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution or its foreign equivalent;
2. Minimum graduate grade point average of 3.25;
3. GPA of at least 3.0 on the last 60 undergraduate hours;
4. A formal letter of application;
5. Names, addresses (office and email) and telephone numbers of three individuals and (1) letter of recommendation from a University professor, each of whom can attest to the candidate’s ability to successfully complete a doctoral program;
6. A Professional Resume;
7. Have satisfactory standing in the last institution attended;
8. Verification of at least three (3) years of appropriate professional experience;
9. Minimum score of 1000 on the GRE (Verbal and Quantitative) with a minimum of 450 on the Verbal portion and 450 on the Quantitative portion;
10. For applicants whose native language is not English, a score on the English proficiency examination (TOEFL) of at least 24 on each of the components (Writing, Reading, Speaking, and Listening).
3.7.1 The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the guidelines listed below. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

Comment: The doctoral faculty all have earned doctorates in their fields, which are also related to specific course content offered by the program. Doctoral faculty meet the criteria set out by the institution for graduate faculty (Checklist for Hiring Full-time Faculty in Regular Positions, Tenure Track and Instructors). The qualifications for doctoral faculty also include an active scholarly research program. Promotion and tenure guidelines outline requirements for faculty related to teaching, research and service. Some of the doctoral faculty do not have experience at a doctoral level and the program offers mentoring (informally) and training regarding student advisement, qualifying paper, and dissertation support.

3.13.1 The institution complies with the policies of the Commission on Colleges.

Comment: Evidence of compliance is indicated by the University’s recent successful reaffirmation visit in 2005. Further confirmation has been documented in interviews with university administrators at both campuses offering the consortium Ed.D. program. The university indicates that its officers continue to update their processes in accord with current policies and procedures of SACS through its correspondence and attendance at annual SACS conferences and through its SACS liaison officer. A news release announcing the successful reaffirmation is included on the webpage of the university as further documentation of its success in achieving compliance with the Commission.

3.14.1 A member or candidate institution represents its accredited status accurately and publishes the name, address, and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with Commission requirements and federal policy.

Comment: The committee reviewed the institution’s website and catalog to determine how Southeastern Louisiana University represents its accredited status with the Commission on Colleges and whether it publishes the name, address, and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with applicable requirements and policies. The committee found that the institution lists the Commission and its address and telephone number on its website as required. The web page subheading entitled Southeastern’s Accrediting Agencies and Institutional Memberships lists the Commission contact information with a subsequent link to the Commission itself and the Principles of Accreditation. Although it appears that there is intent to comply with the standard, the statement
that is published on the website does not accurately follow the phrasing required by the Commission. In the current university catalog, the accreditation status is reported but not the contact information.

**Recommendation 3.14.1:** The committee recommends that Southeastern Louisiana University utilize the required language published in the Principles of Accreditation to represent its status with the Commission on Colleges.

**D. Assessment of Compliance with Section 4: Federal Requirements**

4.1 The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.

Comment: The institution has a system of accountability for evaluating student achievement to include measures for student retention and progression, course completion, state licensing examinations and for evaluating the expectation of accreditation agencies and academic program reviews. These procedures are in compliance with the Commission’s requirement.

Further, it has procedures in place for tracking job placement rates and employee satisfaction. These measures are in place as part of its Office of Institutional Research and Assessment that produces reports related to course completion rates and other survey data as needed.

4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies.

Comment: The institution publishes its academic calendars in its annual Registration Guide made available by its office of Records and Registration which is accessible via its webpage. Other information readily available on the web includes the university’s academic calendars by semester and its exam schedules. The Office of Records and Registration also posts separate notices concerning academic advising and satisfies the standard in the publication of this information as required by the Commission.

4.4 Program length is appropriate for each of the institution’s educational programs.

Comment: Program length is consistent with other doctoral programs in education/educational leadership (60 credit hours beyond the master’s [http://www.Ed.D.consortium.org/curriculum.html]). The program requires a residency (nine credit hours for two consecutive semesters). Students are required to complete the program within six years from the date they are admitted to candidacy.

4.5 The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints.

Comment: Although the university has clear procedures for reconciliation student complaints in general as communicated in its General Catalog
and the Student Handbook, the procedures and policies for doctoral student complaints have evolved based on the type of complaints that have occurred.

A process for grade complaints and appeals has been recently developed jointly for the campuses by the Consortium Council, according to interviews.

Procedures for filing academic complaints in general at the institution are outlined in the Catalog, including the appeal process and how to originate complaints. Non-Academic complaints are outlined in the general Student Handbook and there are specific policies regarding harassment contained within. The university has a Judicial Affairs office that handles student complaints and student’s rights and conduct are described in the Student Code of Conduct.

4.6 Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution’s practices and policies.

Comment: The university complies with the Commission in accurately representing its practices and policies, according to documentation and interviews with university officials who are responsible for reviewing recruitment materials. The Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management is responsible for and oversees the production and dissemination of recruitment materials.

There is a system of accountability in place in that the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management reports directly to the Provost and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a reporting structure which assures a high level of visibility for Ed.D. recruitment practices.

Within the doctoral program, the coordinator creates recruitment materials and insures their accuracy. With the growth of the program, these materials are being revised and updated. The website is kept current and is the primary source for recruitment information, although PowerPoint presentations and other promotional packages are used to market the program along with faculty members in the field who recruit students.

4.7 The institution is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments.

Comment: A review of documentation and interviews with the Assistant Vice President for Operations and Former Director of Financial Aid regarding the university’s adherence with Title IV of the 1998 Higher Education Amendments confirms that the university is in compliance with this Federal requirement.

Part III. Observations and Comments
Observations and Comments:
The committee offers the following observations and comments as a result of the review of the substantive change related to the joint Ed.D in educational leadership.

1. Faculty Workload Implications of Enrollment: As of the spring 2008 semester, the joint Ed.D. program has an enrollment of 66 students and may admit up to ten from each of the two partner institutions each fall and spring semester. Those currently enrolled are progressing through the coursework component of the program, a few have reached either the stage of preparing their Qualifying Paper, and none are yet at the dissertation stage. The program’s faculty and the administrative councils should consider the implications of the current and projected enrollment on faculty workload. For example, dissertation guidance is a complex and time-consuming responsibility, particularly for faculty members who may not have had extensive experience in this area of scholarship. Enrollment trends should be critically reviewed in light of their workload implications for faculty during the culminating program experiences that will be required of all students who complete coursework.

2. Faculty Scholarship: The committee noted that there appears to be some variation in the scholarly productivity among the faculty supporting the educational leadership doctoral program at Southeastern Louisiana University, especially in terms of publication and research grants. Faculty should be strongly encouraged, through policy and incentives, to develop and maintain an active record of scholarship that includes publication, as well as presentations, and securing grants that provide opportunities for doctoral students to participate in meaningful research projects and provide support for graduate assistantships. Such activity would enhance the reputation of the program and assure that all doctoral faculty are active contributors to the literature of the field and thus serve as role models and effective research mentors for students in the program.

3. Library: The committee has the following comments and observations concerning library support for the doctoral program. First, in an effort to assure that the Sims Memorial Library has the appropriate resources to support the Ed.D. program, the doctoral faculty should continue to work directly with the library’s staff to build the collections that support the program. Since the Ed.D. is a joint program and courses are held at both campuses, on-site access to core materials and adequate technologies may be necessary at both locations to support distance education library services.

Second, although the Sims Library offers many services to all patrons that benefit from the doctoral program, it has not yet specifically tailored its services and hours of operation to meet the needs of doctoral students. It is suggested that the library staff work directly with doctoral faculty in order to determine how best to develop its services to be responsive to the needs of the Ed.D. program’s students and faculty.

Third, even though members of the professional library staff currently serve double duty as in-house librarians and liaisons to academic disciplines, there may be a need to appoint a subject specialist who is devoted to the doctoral program (at least on a part-time basis). Among other duties that would support the Ed.D. program such as collection development, this staff position could be charged with designing and performing specialized library services that may be needed to address unique demands generated by the program.

Fourth, there may be a need to increase the number of core books and journals to support the research curriculum of the doctoral program. Although the Sims Library has begun
efforts to increase the size of its research-related collections, it has not fully assessed the quality of its core collections in relation to the research needs of the program. The Sims Library Director has recently purchased software to assist with efforts to assess the quality of the collection along this dimension. The results of this assessment should be applied to enhancing the research materials collection held by the library.

Finally, it is suggested that a plan be developed by the two university libraries that support the doctoral program consortium that would insure that all Ed.D. students have passwords that allow them access to the library collections at each site, in all formats and in a seamless manner.

4. Assessment: The committee suggests that the requirements for electronic assessment through the use of Pass-Port should be included in the Doctoral Student Handbook, website, and in course syllabi in order to better inform students of these processes. In addition, the communication of assessment results should be structured in a process that involves both campuses of the consortium.

Although data generation is evident, it is suggested that there should be more evidence of assessment results being used to make adjustments or improvements in student academic attainment. The assessment of outcomes is a part of procedures but should be documented and communicated more effectively. The methods used specifically by the doctoral program indicate that student achievement is primarily monitored on an individual basis in consultation with the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program and advisement by faculty or as part of course requirements on syllabi.

Interviews with doctoral program officials revealed that procedures for outcome assessments measuring doctoral student achievement are under development to insure that both universities of the consortium use similar measures for effective comparison; however, the program is still maturing and very little data have been compiled at this stage. More formal evaluation of the program and its students’ success at various levels of course completion should be instituted to generate data for effective decision making as students progress in order to insure program accountability and improvement. The committee suggests that the doctoral program measure more effectively student achievement.

5. Program Publications and Related Materials: The committee suggests that the program handbook be dated so that students can keep up with the changes in policies and procedures, as they progress toward degree completion. The program administrators may also want to consider a statement in the recruitment materials concerning the potential changing nature and refinement of requirements and assessment mechanisms as the program matures.

Because there is often a time lag between a new policy being implemented or a current policy revised and its publication in the university’s catalog, the committee suggests that program faculty and administrators consider developing means that would assure doctoral students are informed, in a timely manner, of any policy changes that affect them. The Doctoral Candidate Handbook could serve this function if its contents were more comprehensive and it was revised more frequently in order to keep it as current as possible. For example, the process for addressing written student complaints should be disseminated to doctoral students and kept current in the Handbook.

In addition to making the Doctoral Candidate Handbook as comprehensive as possible, it is suggested that it be searchable, dated, and regarded as the official guide to students
entering the program. It is also suggested that links to the website for general academic support resources/services be included on the homepage for the Ed.D. program under the heading “Policies and Information,” and a reference to these services should be included in the Doctoral Candidate Handbook.

6. Recruitment Materials: Recruitment materials should be reviewed each time there is a program policy change in order to insure that the publications and web sites accurately reflect the program. In addition, it is suggested that there be an effort to jointly develop recruitment materials by the two universities in a timely manner and that these are readily available to specific minority audiences of Southeastern Louisiana, in order to increase diversity representation in the program. Such action is consistent with the university’s mission to contribute to the educational, economic and cultural development of southeast Louisiana, which includes multicultural audiences. The program might also consider adding a statement to the recruitment materials regarding the potential changes and refinements to requirements and assessment mechanisms, as the program matures.
APPENDIX A

Roster of the Substantive Change Committee

Dr. David R. Hager, Professor of Higher Education and International Studies, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, Chair

Dr. Karen I. Adsit, Director, Walker Teaching Resource Center, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Dr. Charles R. Duke, Dean, College of Education, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina

Dr. Janice R. Franklin, Dean, Library and Learning Resources, Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama

Dr. Eli Eric Pena, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, Brownsville, Texas
APPENDIX B

List of Recommendations Cited in the Report of the Substantive Change Committee

CS 3.1.1, Recommendation 1:
The committee recommends that Southeastern Louisiana University revise its mission statement to accurately reflect that it offers graduate study through the doctoral level and is designated as a Level V institution by the Commission on Colleges.

CS 3.14.1, Recommendation 2:
The committee recommends that Southeastern Louisiana University utilize the required language published in the Principles of Accreditation to represent its status with the Commission on Colleges.