TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

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“GOOD CAUSE” REPORT

On-Site Reaffirmation Committee
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First Monitoring Report
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Second Monitoring Report
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Texas Tech University
“Good Cause” Report
Texas Tech University has been continuously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1928. In December 2005, Tech received reaffirmation of accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Following reaffirmation of accreditation, President Wheelan requested that Tech prepare a First Monitoring Report to address four recommendations. The First Monitoring Report provided specific examples related to each of the four recommendations and a CD of the reports prepared by the academic colleges and departments in their compliance with the recommendations. The Second Monitoring Report addressed more specific issues related to these four recommendations. The four recommendations from the Second Monitoring Report were:

**CR 2.12 (Quality Enhancement Plan), Recommendation 4.** The institution should document the specific steps taken to implement the assessment plan associated with the QEP.

**CS 3.3.1 (Institutional Effectiveness), Recommendation 7.** Also, the report should include how results of the assessment are used to improve each academic unit.

**CS 3.4.1 (All Educational Programs), Recommendation 8.** Further, the report should demonstrate how learning outcomes are connected to the academic programs.

**CS 3.5.1 (Undergraduate Programs), Recommendation 9.** Finally, the report should demonstrate how the university knows that students have attained the general education competencies.
The Second Monitoring Report demonstrated Texas Tech University’s compliance with these recommendations and our commitment to the Commission on Colleges *Principles of Accreditation*.

Pursuant to the request from President Belle Wheelan in her letter of January 19, 2007, the “Good Cause” Report is being submitted if needed following the Commission’s review of the Second Monitoring Report. The “Good Cause” Report is to be considered if the institution has not remedied deficiencies at the conclusion of the two-year monitoring period. As indicated above, Texas Tech University has attempted to document its compliance with the Commission of Colleges *Principles of Accreditation*. This report addresses the three conditions that are to be considered for extending the institution’s accreditation for “good cause.” Those three conditions are:

1. *The institution has demonstrated significant recent accomplishments in addressing non-compliance*;

2. *The institution has documented that it has the potential to remedy all deficiencies within the extended period as defined by the Committee on Compliance and Reports*;

3. *The institution provides assurance to the Commission that it is not aware of any other reasons why the institution could not be continued for “good cause.”*

This report addresses each of the three conditions to show good cause for extending SACS accreditation for Texas Tech University.

**Recent Accomplishments in Addressing Non-Compliance.** The four recommendations each address issues related to planning and assessment to improve programs and services within the university. In 2001, Tech initiated its current strategic
planning and assessment process. This process requires strategic planning and annual assessment reporting for all areas and units of the university. The comprehensive and integrated approach to planning has required both procedural and cultural changes within the university. Although procedural changes were implemented quickly, cultural changes take more time. Today, planning and assessment are now better understood to be central to decision-making and resource allocations within the university. All colleges and their academic departments are engaged in using their plans to implement strategies for improvement and to assess their effectiveness. The annual assessment reports serve as the instrument for evaluating program improvements and also for documenting the improvements that are obtained each year.

During the past year, Chancellor Kent Hance of the Texas Tech University System asked the university to develop plans to reach 40,000 (headcount) students and $100 million in annual research expenditures by the year 2020. These two targets are consistent with the university strategic goals to increase student access and diversity and to expand research productivity. The challenge is to increase enrollment by 12,000 students and research expenditures by $52 million over the next 12 years. Tech is in the early stages of the planning required to reach these two targets and will develop the basic objectives and strategies related to these target values during the current academic year. The process being implemented is intimately connected to the on-going strategic planning and assessment efforts of the university. Area and unit strategic planning and annual assessing of our progress will be central in achieving these targets as well as maintaining our efforts on other important strategic goals such as building human resources, improving campus infrastructure, and promoting engagement and partnerships.
Outcomes assessments of student learning within the academic and general education programs were included in the annual assessment reports in 2006. The data generated through the program-level assessments of student learning are now impacting the review of curricula and the teaching/learning process. The academic departments’ strategic plans and annual assessment reports now are required in the six-year review of graduate programs, ensuring that program reviews are focused on the departments’ planning and assessments.

The initial recommendation from the On-Site Committee noted that planning and assessment were uneven within the university. To better coordinate planning and assessment activities throughout the university, Planning and Assessment Liaisons recently were appointed within each academic and support area. The Liaisons are responsible for providing oversight and guidance of the planning and assessment process within their areas. The use of Liaisons to coordinate and facilitate these activities within each area provides a more distributed effort across the university and also ensures full participation of all areas in the strategic planning and assessment process.

In financial planning, the university now ties allocation of resources to area and unit strategic plans. For example, in the most recent request for funding allocations (FY08) from the state-supported Higher Education Fund, the Provost required that all requests specifically identify strategic goals to be impacted by new funding allocations. This requirement allows for direct assessment of the outcomes from these allocations because the strategic benchmarks associated with each goal can be monitored for expected improvements.
As a final point, Tech has worked to ensure that those responsible for strategic planning and assessment are well prepared to lead the university in this undertaking. Dr. Gilmour Reeve, Director of Strategic Planning, completed the three-stage Planning Institute sponsored by the Society for College and University Planning in May 2007. The three-stage Institute includes workshops on foundations of integrated planning, and knowledge and strategic applications for integrated planning in higher education.

**Potential to Remedy All Deficiencies.** Texas Tech University has made significant strides in addressing the deficiencies identified through SACS reaffirmation of accreditation. The initial report of the On-Site Committee identified more than 20 recommendations prior to reaffirmation. Following notice of reaffirmation, only four recommendations needed to be addressed in the First Monitoring Report, demonstrating that Tech had remedied all other deficiencies. Although the Second Monitoring Report still addressed the four recommendations (as presented in the introduction to this report), the focus of each recommendation was narrowed considerably. That is, Tech provided sufficient documentation in its First Monitoring report to address most of the previous concerns. Also, the documentation included in the First Monitoring Report clearly demonstrated Tech’s commitment to the *Principles of Accreditation* and to ensuring that all areas of the university are meeting the standards for accreditation.

The materials included in the Second Monitoring Report highlighted specific examples of the use of planning and assessment to improve programs in the academic units. The examples included departmental assessment reports and evaluative feedback from academic deans. Also, the newly developed ethics survey for incoming students was presented to document that Tech’s QEP “*Do the Right Thing: A Campus Conversation on*
Ethics was proceeding with its assessment of expected outcomes by establishing baseline data on students’ attitudes and values toward ethical behavior.

Does Tech have the potential to remedy all deficiencies? The answer to that question is yes. Tech has continued to resolve issues identified in the recommendations and has been able to narrow any deficiencies with the Principles of Accreditation. Tech is fully committed to satisfying all recommendations and to maintaining accreditation with SACS Commission on Colleges.

Assurance to the Commission that the Institution Is Not Aware of Any Other Reasons Why the Institution Could Not Be Continued For “Good Cause.” Texas Tech University has not made substantial changes in its mission, programs or services nor had any reductions in its financial resources since it received reaffirmation of accreditation in December 2005. The Texas Tech is not aware of any other reasons why the institution could not be continued for “good cause.”