MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents

From: Board Office

Subject: Accreditation Report for Programs in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management, Iowa State University

Date: February 12, 2001

Recommended Action:

Receive the report on re-accreditation of the programs in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management, Iowa State University.

Executive Summary:

On January 17, 2000, the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) granted full accreditation to Iowa State University's programs in Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management. This accreditation extends through January 2008. The programs were found to be in compliance with all standards after the institution responded to concerns noted by the Site Visitation Team.

The report of the Site Visitation Team noted eight program strengths: (1) an updated curriculum; (2) relevant planning documents; (3) quality of leadership; (4) collegiality and team spirit among faculty; (5) strong student support services; (6) significant endowment funds; (7) ability to make strategic uses of funds; and (8) excellent library resources and support.

The significant concerns identified by the Site Visitation Team included: (1) declining enrollment (a decrease of 28.1 percent between 1996 and 1998); (2) absence of industry advisory board; (3) minimal implementation of computer elements in classes; (4) high percent of new and part-time faculty; (5) poor tracking methods for retention rates and alumni data; (6) no increase in operating funds for many years; and (7) student perception of reduction in computer access.

The Department has satisfactorily addressed all the concerns. The Department will submit its next annual report to ACPHA in August 2001. The next full review of the program will occur in Fall 2007.

Background and Analysis:

One method of measuring quality of academic programs is to have them accredited periodically by appropriate professional/state agencies. This process is consistent with the Board of Regents' Strategic Plan, Key Result Area 1.0.0.0, Quality. More specifically, the goal of accreditation matches Objective 1.1.0.0, "to improve the quality of existing and newly created educational programs."

The Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management (HRIM), last accredited in 1992, offers a Bachelor of Science degree, and graduate programs at the Master of Science and Ph.D levels. At the time of the self-study (Fall 1999), the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students was 189, a decline of 28.1 percent from 263 in Fall 1996. The number of FTE faculty in Fall 1999 was 14, eight of whom advised students. The curriculum includes a 400-hour work experience in the industry.

The self-study noted that 80 percent of the students transfer into the program. That includes those who transfer from other institutions (approximately 50 percent) as well as students on campus who initially began their academic studies in other programs. Throughout the report, recommendations were made regarding recruitment and retention of students. It should be noted that the Department now has a new chairperson and enrollments are increasing. In Spring 2000, HRIM enrollment was 153; in Fall 2000 enrollment increased to 160; and in Fall 2001, the enrollment was 175, a 14 percent increase over Spring 2000.
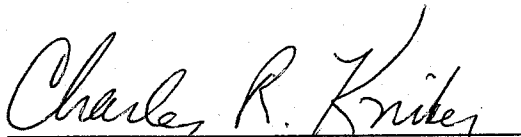
In its response to the site visit report, the Department agreed that declining enrollment was a major concern. The Department, however, differed in what strategies might be more effective in reversing the decline. HRIM faculty identified high school students as the primary focus of recruitment efforts rather than community college transfer students, as recommended by the Site Visitation Team. Specific strategies to recruit new students now include:

- New program brochures;
- A postcard promotional mailing sent to 5,000 high school juniors and seniors who expressed an interest in this area, in conjunction with their ACT or SAT exams;
- In Spring 2000 phone calls and follow-up calls were made to all prospective students;
- Promotional mailings about program and suggested faculty guest lecturers were sent to all high school business teachers (approximately 500), family and consumer science teachers, and guidance counselors in Iowa; and
- Partnerships with the Iowa Hospitality Association and Iowa Lodging Association.

Additionally, the Department responded in the following ways:

- An Industry Advisory Board, already begun at the time of the review, has been enlarged to involve both graduates of the ISU program as well as nationally prominent leaders. For example, the president and chief operating officer of Carlson Hotels, Worldwide; a senior vice president for human resources with McDonald's Corporation; the president and CEO of Tone Brothers, Inc.; and the vice president of Heart of America Restaurants and Hotels have agreed to participate.

- Internally, the Department faculty has recognized the need to track the progress and retention of individuals in the program. The College of Family and Consumer Sciences has also developed strategies for more efficiently and accurately tracking student progress.

- Graduates of departmental programs are now surveyed every year. In addition, the Department now surveys graduates who are one year and those who are five years beyond degree completion.

- The Tearoom, which provides practical experience for students, has benefited from an external gift that allows for modernization of the facility.

- Computers are used as part of every course taught in HRIM. Word processing and e-mail use are required in all courses. Spreadsheets are used extensively in cost control and accounting courses. Web-based materials are a component of eight courses and this Spring the first HRIM on-line course was initiated. Faculty are increasing the use of computers in the design of their courses.

A copy of the self-study, the Site Visitation Team report, and the letter of re-accreditation are on file in the Board Office.

Charles R. Kniker

Approved: _____
Frank J. Stork

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