CCSU Reaccredited by Regional Association
By Carl R. Lovitt, Provost

Last October, a visiting team from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which accredits all postsecondary institutions in this region, spent three days conducting a comprehensive on-site evaluation of CCSU. During its visit, the NEASC team met with students, faculty, administrators, staff, alumni, trustees, and community members. They analyzed copious materials in a dedicated Documentation Room, and they surfed our Web site. Roving team members observed classes in session, conducted random interviews, and explored our campus.

In January 2009, the visiting team submitted an extensive report summarizing the conclusions from its evaluation to the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, which would be responsible for the final decision about institutional reaccreditation.

On the whole, the NEASC team expressed strong approval for the state of the university. According to the report, the climate of the campus is “collaborative, open, optimistic, and eager to move forward with the new strategic plan.” The report describes the “well-qualified faculty, administration and staff” as “focused on meeting students’ needs and continuing to improve the educational and extracurricular experiences for students.” The report concludes that “Central dedicates resources and passion to creating quality academic programs that meet the needs of its primary audiences” and “offers numerous comprehensive and special student support programs to ensure their academic success.”

Confirming CCSU’s emphasis on involvement with the local community, the visiting team found that the “focus on community engagement in Central’s courses and programs is pervasive, with students affirming that it leads them to become more active community participants.” The visiting team also found that “Central’s mission is embraced by all stakeholders.”

The report characterizes Central’s physical facilities as a “major strength of the campus” and commends the university for its “professional oversight of this valuable resource.” The report singles out CCSU’s sustainability efforts for special commendation and praises “the ambitious agenda to increase the ‘green’ nature of the campus over the next 10 years in addition to extensive programming already underway.” The report also praises CCSU for its efforts to ensure the safety of the university’s citizens.

In addition to enumerating the institution’s strengths, the NEASC report identifies four areas in which the university must make improvements in the coming years. These areas consist of instituting a more systematic assessment of student learning, implementing periodic reviews of all academic programs, consistently evaluating the teaching of all part-time faculty, and ensuring that all CCSU students benefit from quality academic advising. CCSU has already taken decisive steps to improve its performance in each of these areas.
The overall conclusion of the NEASC report is that “Central is a successful institution; one which has adapted to a changing external environment and which has implemented key institutional priorities in areas such as academic programs, facilities and athletics.”

Based on the strong positive evaluation by the visiting team, the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education formally renewed CCSU’s accreditation in April 2009.