

ACCREDITATION REPORT

Site Visit Team Report

for

St. Elizabeth University

of

Health and Social Sciences

December 16-18, 2004

Evaluation Committee Members

Daniel J. West, Jr., Ph.D., FACHE, FACMPE – Chair
Selline O. Okotch, Ph.D., Dean – Team Member
Apostolos Georgopoulos, M.D., Ph.D. – Team Member
Roberto Cauda, M.D., Ph.D. – Team Member
Peter Marks, M.B., Ch.B., MRCP – Team Member

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I. INTRODUCTION

This accreditation review was voluntarily requested by Dr. Vladimir Krcmery, President of St. Elizabeth University on April 26, 2004. An international, interdisciplinary team was proposed and selected to conduct the evaluation. Accreditation review criteria reflected standards from Western Europe, North America, Central Europe and Eastern Africa. St. Elizabeth University was founded as a private university in 2002. In September 2003, St. Elizabeth University received accreditation from the National Accreditation Committee of the Slovak Republic for four programs of study: nursing, laboratory medicine, social work, and public health. It was the opinion of St. Elizabeth University governing board and administration that an independent external review by an international team would help with the future development of this private university. A rigorous peer evaluation and review was conducted in the framework of self-improvement, consultation, and international collaboration from December 16-18, 2004.

An interdisciplinary site visit team was selected to conduct the review. Selection of the site visit team was made by the President of St. Elizabeth University in consultation with the Chairman of the site visit team. Members were selected based on professional qualifications, academic qualifications, scientific expertise, knowledge of accreditation standards and processes, willingness to serve as a member of an international team, familiarity with the Slovak Republic system of university education, and prior working relationships.

In preparation for the site visit each member of the accreditation committee received self-study documentation from St. Elizabeth University consisting of: incorporation documents, legal status, governing board and structure, names of academic officials, names of scientific council, survey of program, course syllabi, course content, curriculum sequence, curriculum vitae of all full-time and part-time faculty, scholarship and research summaries, program curriculum and course sequencing, description of all programs of study, characteristics of each program of study, teaching facilities and locations, community and professional affiliations, previous accreditation reports, international activities, listing of Ph.D. students, criteria for rank and tenure, foreign students, scientific and research productivity, hours of study by course and semester, mission and objectives of the school and programs, student profiles by program of study, mission statement of the university, other descriptive data concerning the university faculty and students, listing of clinic sites and locations, information on university resources, library holdings, and methods of evaluation. Additional documentation and supporting materials were made available to all evaluation committee members prior to the evaluation, during the site visit, at academic locations, and during deliberation meetings prior to the exit conference.

A preliminary site visit agenda was established by the Chair and distributed to all members of the evaluation committee. The agenda was finalized by the committee prior to the start of the site survey. Site visits to academic locations was established by the committee. The Dean was advised of specific site review content, events and times. The Chair requested additional documentation for the site visit team as required to support observations. The major areas for review at St. Elizabeth University included the following:

- I. Mission, Goals and Objectives
- II. Governance and Administration
- III. Curriculum and Teaching
- IV. Faculty and Programs of Study
- V. Students and Graduates
- VI. Research and Scholarship
- VII. Community and Professional Service
- VIII. Resources and Academic Relationships
- IX. External Affiliations

The international accreditation team was composed of six representatives from various disciplines who had experience with accreditation processes, standards and protocols. Members of the committee were from England, Austria, Africa, Italy and the United States.

This report is based on a review of the self-study document and information provided prior to the site visit; on site documentation review; interviews with faculty and students; interviews and meetings with administration, board of directors, executive board, and scientific councils; direct observations made by site team members interviews with alumni; and visits to locations and facilities by members of the site survey team. As stated previously, the on-site accreditation visit was conducted December 16-18, 2004 by the full accreditation team.

II. EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The President of St. Elizabeth University, Dr. Vladimir Krcmery, voluntarily invited an international team of five professionals to conduct an accreditation site visit. The evaluation committee consisted of the following experts:

Daniel J. West, Jr., Ph.D., FACHE, FACMPE, FAAMA
Professor and Chairman
Department of Health Administration and Human Resources
University of Scranton
417 McGurkin Hall
Scranton, Pennsylvania/USA 18510
Tel: +570-941-4126
Fax: +570-941-5882
E-mail: westdl@scranton.edu

Peter Marks, Ph.D., MB, ChB, MRCP, MSc., MA, DCH
Professor
1 Maxted Road
London
S.E. 15 4LL
England
Tel: +447885163086
Fax: +442074044814

Roberto Cauda, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor
Universita Callolica Del Sacro Cuore
Istituto Clinica Malattie Infettive
Largo A. Gemeli 8
Italy
Mobil: +39-335-619-1069
Fax: +39063054519
E-mail: rcauda@rm.unicatt.it

Ferenc Rozgonyi, M.D., Ph.D., DSc.
Director and Chairman
Semmelweis University
Institute of Medical Microbiology
P.O. Box 370
H – 1445 Budapest
Hungary
Tel/Fax: +36-01-210-2959
E-mail: rozfer@net.sote.hu

Apostolos Georgopoulos, M.D.
University of Vienna
Dept. of Medicine I, Division Infectious Disease
Allgemeines Krankenhaus
Waehringer Guertel 18 – 20
1090 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43-140-400
E-mail: apostolos.georgopoulos@meduniwien.ac.at

Mrs. Selline O. Oketch, Ph.D.
Dean
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
P.O. Box 621 57
00200 City Square
Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254020891601-6, 254 020 890376, 0743 788 122
Fax: +254 020 891 084
E-mail: sellineoketch@yahoo.com

III. SITE VISIT

The accreditation site visit and evaluation was conducted at St. Elizabeth University on December 16-18, 2004. This was the first international accreditation site visit ever conducted at St. Elizabeth University. Pre-site visit meetings and consultations were held prior to the actual review and post-site meetings were held after the site visit. The site visit team met privately to discuss self-study documentation submitted in advance by the University, School and Programs. The team periodically conferred to review findings, strengths, concerns, conclusions and consultative recommendations. Meetings were conducted with academic officials, faculty, students, graduates and with members of the scientific council. Site visits were conducted to classrooms, laboratories, hospitals to verify resources and teaching facilities. The team visited facilities, faculty and programs at Presov (School of Health) and Nove Zamky (Nursing Program). Clinic sites in Cambodia, Uganda, Africa and the Ukraine were not visited but discussed and reviewed as part of the overall scope and mission of the university. The seat of St. Elizabeth University is in Bratislava and the site visit team examined the Rectorate and programs in Nursing, Laboratory Medicine, Clinical Research, Public Health and Social Work. Special meetings were held with the Executive Board, Deans, and Scientific Council to assess governance and administration. Departments of St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Sciences included Social Work, Theoretical Discipline, Missionary Work, Nursing, Public Health, Clinical Research and Laboratory Medicine.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

A. General Information

St. Elizabeth University was incorporated as a non-profit organization in Bratislava on October 7, 2002 in accordance with Act No. 213/1997 of the Legal Code as amended. St. Elizabeth University has Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and is Registered as a non-profit organization providing generally beneficial services such as education, training, research, scientific and technical services, information services in the field of nursing and social work, provision of social help and humanitarian care. The primary objective of the non-profit organization is operation of the School of Health and Social Work of St. Elizabeth University. The long term objective is the "... education of medical employees especially in the field of public health care and social work, nursing, physiotherapy, laboratory examination methods for domestic, state and church, as well as foreign catholic facilities and state and church social work facilities and missions abroad". Article III of the Bylaws further states that the organization:

"...is active in the spirit of the Christian humanism with the orientation on the basic principles of the Christian healthcare ethics and disseminates the message of St. Elizabeth, the native of Bratislava, to serve the sick and poor irrespective of the race, nationality and religious orientation. Apart from this it also assumes the task to ensure the education, scientific upbringing and scientific research, as well as practical activities of the students of the above mentioned school in all three levels of the higher education and to guide the students of this school for higher education to the principles of the Christian ethics and humanism focusing on protection of life from its conception until dignified natural death, thus meeting the message of St. Elizabeth, the native of Bratislava, great personality of the European healthcare and social work. The Bylaws of the School of Health and Social Work of St. Elizabeth is an inseparable part of these Bylaws".

B. St. Elizabeth University

St. Elizabeth has a President, Board of Directors, Academic Senate, Scientific Council, Vice Presidents, Financial Director and Deans of Departments. Each department has a Chief, Secretary, Location, Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors. The main campus is located in Bratislava with satellite facilities in other cities such as Presov and Nove Zamky. Missionary and humanitarian activities are located in Uganda, Cambodia and Ukraine. There is a Faculty of Health and Social Work in Presov and a Faculty of Nursing in Nove Zamky. The University has primarily focused on a part-time student market.

The University has several recognized Departments with designated Faculties as follows:

- Department of Social Work (Bratislava)
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 7 Professors
 - 18 Associate Professors
 - 14 Assistant Professors

- Department of Theoretical Disciplines
(St. Elizabeth Cancer Institute, Bratislava)
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 6 Professors
 - 9 Associate Professors
 - 6 Assistant Professors

- Department of Missionary Work
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 4 Professors
 - 5 Associate Professors
 - 10 Assistant Professors

- Department of Nursing
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 17 Professors
 - 15 Associate Professors
 - 11 Assistant Professors

- Department of Laboratory Medicine
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 14 Professors
 - 13 Associate Professors
 - 5 Assistant Professors

- Department of Clinical Research (In Process)
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Secretary
 - 12 Faculty

The Executive Board has 5 members, there are 30 members of the Scientific Council, 4 Vice Presidents, 1 President of the University and 1 Financial Director. The University has been accredited by the National Accreditation Committee of the Slovak Republic in 2003 as follows:

Programs	Degrees		
	BSc	MSc	Ph.D.
Nursing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Medical Technology	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Work	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public Health	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clinical Research	No	Yes	Yes

Humanitarian projects and missions are primarily focused on health and social work in third world countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeastern Asia. In 2004 there were 1546 students in BSc/MSc programs of study and 41 students in Ph.D. programs. Tuition is 200 USD per semester. Each year over 1000 student applications have been received. The University has developed a Joint Program of Public Health in Tropical Infection Control leading to a Master Degree (MSc). This program of study supports humanitarian projects and requires 2 academic years of study (4 semesters).

C. Observations

St. Elizabeth University is a very young private university with a main location in Bratislava. The need for private universities in the Slovak Republic is evident along with public universities. St. Elizabeth has a very clear mission and purpose that differentiates itself from other more established universities. However, given the number of universities in the Slovak Republic competition for quality students will be an issue in the future. A novel feature is that students contribute to their education by paying tuition each semester. Such an approach underscores the importance of meaningful contribution and investment in educational endeavors.

The mission focuses on graduate and undergraduate education in the applied health professions and sciences. Curricula appear to be well conceived and developed with detailed syllabi, course content, acceptable course sequencing, and assignment of qualified faculty. Programs of study are structured and organized. Evidence of student, faculty and course evaluation exists.

This new private university is legal in form and structure according to Slovak Republic laws. Leadership exists in the current administrative and management team. Governance is evident in the board of directors and scientific council. A focus on humanitarian efforts and missionary work makes St. Elizabeth University unique. There is a strong sense of culture among faculty and students. The mission, purpose and goals of the University are clearly stated understood throughout the organization and among faculty and students. The leadership and vision provided by Dr. Vladimir Krcmery is positive, focused, and directional. Under the direction of Dr. Krcmery this University should be able to enhance quality education, advance research and scholarship, facilitate international collaboration and address humanitarian issues of significance.

Evidence of financial and administrative support exists along with acceptable facilities, equipment and supplies to ensure quality education. The University is academically organized and appears to be functional in form and structure. Given the short period of operation as a University it is difficult to assess if the mission, goals and objectives are being realized; however, the educational goals are appropriately focused on teaching, service, scholarship and research. Current outcome assessment and evaluation data was not available given the short period of operation.

Specific observations include:

1. Program leadership exists along with qualified faculty to teach subjects.
2. Faculty have practical experiences and background to bring into the classroom setting.
3. Students appear to have access to faculty, both part-time and full-time.
4. Students, in appropriate areas, have input into University activities and policies.
5. There is a method and process for evaluating all courses and faculty.
6. A method exists to handle student complaints.
7. Curriculum appears designed to prepare students for their careers.
8. Faculty appear to incorporate contemporary topics into course content.
9. Curriculum includes a body of knowledge, understanding, skills and values relevant to designated programs of study for BSc, MSc, and Ph.D. degrees.
10. Curriculum includes relevant and realistic integrative and applied experiences throughout the program of study.

11. The complement, involvement and qualifications of faculty are sufficient to ensure integrity of the curriculum and quality of education.
12. The University has clear admission criteria.
13. The University has criteria for grading, awarding degrees and specifying content in the curriculum.
14. University organization allows for identification and resolution of problems and issues.
15. Faculty governance exists within all academic units/departments.
16. Faculty responsibilities are designated and evaluated on a consistent basis.
17. Criteria exists for promotion of faculty.
18. Faculty have demonstrated research and scholarship reflected in their CVs.
19. Some faculty have a well documented record of scholarship and/or professional achievement; other faculty need to develop a stream of research appropriate to the stage of their academic career.
20. The site team noted high levels of faculty enthusiasm and camaraderie.
21. Scientific and research productivity appears strong for some faculty in a young and newly established private university.
22. Principles of academic freedom are clearly understood, supported and appreciated by faculty and administration.
23. Appropriate policies and procedures exist to guide students and faculty.
24. The mission of the University is clearly stated.
25. The University embraces diversity and multiculturalism.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Process and outcome evaluation should be systematically conducted to measure attainment of goals, objectives, and mission of the University.
2. Key benchmarks (metrics) should be established for purposes of quality improvement, measuring progress, and setting future direction.
3. The University should continuously assess the external environment for opportunities and threats and develop a strategic planning process that incorporate multiple stakeholders.
4. The level of financial support required to sustain future development and make improvements to facilities and equipment is unclear.
5. Current allocated space for the university appears adequate for the present enrollment but future demands for space require enrollment management and faculty planning.
6. The number of computers and computer laboratories should be increased; faculty and student access to the internet should be expanded especially for research and scholarship.
7. Programs of study should specify competencies to be acquired and outcomes to be achieved in addition to areas of knowledge to be acquired.
8. Articulation agreements should exist in writing with health services organizations and agencies external to the University.
9. Information about the University and programs of study needs to be disseminated to the general public, employers, and other interested parties as part of an overall marketing plan.
10. Reasonable accommodation for disabilities should be encouraged, supported and documented.
11. The University will demonstrate efforts to recruit well-qualified students so that the mission is achieved.
12. Efforts should be made to increase enrollment of full-time and part-time students especially in locations outside of Bratislava.
13. Methods and processes to improve academic quality should be measurable and subject to outcome evaluation.
14. Diversity management and multiculturalism should be part of the curriculum in all programs of study, especially given the mission and objectives of the University.
15. Career and academic advising should be documented in the academic record.
16. Student retention and attrition should be monitored especially with part-time professional students, as well as services to support adult learners.
17. Career paths of graduates should be monitored, especially in Presov and Nove Zamky, as a basis for continuous improvement and to determine use of education in the profession.
18. The University should gather outcome data on job placement rates and other indicators related to the workplace and adult satisfaction with their education.
19. A process for handling formal student complaints should exist, along with grievance procedures and dispute resolution methods.

20. Faculty must demonstrate how courses are evaluated and feedback integrated into the curriculum, and how evaluation data is used to improve and/or modify course content and methods.
21. All course syllabi should state course behavioral objectives, reading requirements, performance expectations, grading criteria, and course requirements.
22. The curriculum for all programs of study should include integrative and applied experiences that demonstrate students' ability to draw upon and apply covered material throughout the program of study.
23. Faculty should participate in defining faculty needs and in recruiting faculty to teach in programs in accordance with University policy.
24. There should be a systematic plan for faculty development in teaching, scholarship and research.
25. Faculty will demonstrate a record of scholarship and/or professional achievement appropriate to the stage of their academic career.
26. Faculty should demonstrate how they draw upon community and professional service activities in their teaching.
27. Departments and academic programs should assess and re-evaluate how outcome assessment data is being used for continuous quality improvement in the quality of education for students.
28. All faculty research should be reviewed for the ongoing protection of human subjects and human rights.
29. Educational activities in third world countries should be evaluated to demonstrate how they relate to mission and to demonstrate effectiveness and appropriateness.
30. Both the vision and mission of the University should be clearly articulated and understood by all employees and students.

VI. ACCREDITATION DECISION

The site visit team recommends that the following bachelors degree (BSc), master degree (MSc) and doctorate degree (PhD) programs at St. Elizabeth University be accredited:

Name of Program	Type of Program	Mode of Program	Accreditation
Public Health	BSc	Full-time	Yes
Public Health	MSc	Full-time	Yes
	MSc	Part-time	Yes
Public Health	Ph.D.	Full-time	Yes
	Ph.D.	Part-time	Yes
Nursing	BSc	Part-time	Yes
Nursing	MSc	Part-time	Yes
Nursing	Ph.D.	Full-time	Yes
	Ph.D.	Part-time	Yes
Medical Technology	BSc	Part-time	Yes
Medical Technology	MSc	Part-time	Yes
Medical Technology	Ph.D.	Full-time	Yes
Social Work	BSc	Full-time	Yes
	BSc	Part-time	Yes
Social Work	MSc	Full-time	Yes
	MSc	Part-time	Yes
Social Work	Ph.D.	Full-time	Yes
	Ph.D.	Part-time	Yes
Clinical Research	MSc	Part-time	Yes
	Ph.D.	Part-time	Yes
Rehabilitation & Physiotherapy	BSc	Part-time	No
	MSc	Part-time	No
Tropical Infection Control	MSc	Full-time	No

The team further recommends accreditation for three years. It is recommended that the next site visit for accreditation be tentatively scheduled for accreditation evaluation in the Fall of 2008. New programs of study in international settings should be evaluated after two years of operation.