Rochester Institute of Technology Response to External Reviewers Report:
August 31, 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the MSCHE PRR external reviewers’ reports. The Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) is very pleased with their overall assessment that the scope and context provided in RIT’s report and accompanying documentation satisfactorily demonstrates compliance with the accreditation standards emphasized in the five targeted areas required for the PRR.

We are particularly gratified by the finding and comment that: “…Rochester Institute of Technology has been able to assess and articulate its progress over the last five years in relation to the Middle States standards and the mission and vision as a university. The readers commend RIT for a thorough and well written report. The RIT community must be proud of the magnitude of change and extent of accomplishments realized over this five year period....”
{Readers Report, Section VII, page 8}

We concur with the two suggestions that were noted. Moving forward, as an integral part of our next decennial self-study, RIT will:

- Provide detailed analysis of the assessment of our on-line distance education programs and demonstrate how the outcomes and evidence are in alignment with MSCHE Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (on-line learning) as well as MSCHE Standards 13 and 14.
- Address in depth specific international site assessment data and the evaluation of the efficacy of the educational programs offered at our international sites.

As a clarifying note related to the later suggestion, the planning and systematic approach for assessing international sites is well underway. Academic programs offered at RIT’s international locations in Croatia, Kosovo, and Dubai are considered extensions of programs offered by the RIT “home” college in Rochester, NY. We have taken great care to ensure these programs are subject to the same academic quality standards and processes aimed at establishing program efficacy.

Every RIT program submits an annual program outcomes assessment progress report to RIT’s Assessment Office. This report includes data on program level outcomes and is intended to include data on international sites. The implementation schedule associated with our relatively new program level assessment process did not clearly stipulate when outcomes data from our international locations would be collected nor did we have an integrated assessment tracking system in place at these locations. However, as part of our overall strategy for internationalization, and to provide clarity for both domestic and international accreditation agencies, we have now prioritized a process to collect and disaggregate data and will introduce the assessment tracking system at our international locations over this next academic year.
Further, as noted in the PRR, RIT is also in the process of developing an overarching strategic plan for international education and has established a new office of International Education and Global Programs, led by an Associate Provost for International Education and Global Programs. This office has already been charged to work closely with the Assessment Office to support the development of university level international education outcomes for all RIT programs, regardless of where they are offered. Thus, our evolving perspective and approach to assessing international education program outcomes is oriented toward this broader goal of comprehensive internationalization across the curriculum. We believe this approach, in tandem with efforts to establish institutional goals for international education in general, ensures we have meaningful and actionable insights into the efficacy of programs offered at our international locations.

The entire PRR process has been extraordinarily constructive and affirming for us. All campus constituencies including the Board of Trustees were very engaged in this process.

I can assure you that the report of the PRR reviewers, including their suggestions, will be a guiding document as we plan strategically for the future and respond to the anticipated challenges and opportunities we face.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

William W. Destler Ph.D.
President