

Agreement for Participation in the
Academic Quality Improvement Project
between the
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, Illinois 60602-2504
and
Northern Michigan University
1401 Presque Isle Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) agrees to partner with Northern Michigan University in an alternative accreditation process offered through the Academic Quality Improvement Project (AQIP). This relationship will provide both continuing NCA accreditation for Northern Michigan University and support, encouragement, and recognition for its continuous improvement efforts and accomplishments. The relationship formed under this agreement is contractual only; it is not formed under the Uniform Partnership Act nor is intended to be or give the appearance of a business partnership.

The agreement is effective as of the date it is signed by the chief executive officer of Northern Michigan University.

This agreement states, and also incorporates by reference, from the handout "Understandings and Expectations of AQIP Participant Institutions," formal points of agreement between AQIP and Northern Michigan University that establish the conditions for this accreditation process.

Northern Michigan University agrees

- to commit itself to a systematic initiative to improve continuously its academic and related processes and their results;
- to begin to participate no later than the effective date of this contract, in scheduled AQIP activities which are essential to the operation of this accreditation process; and
- to provide AQIP with regular information and evidence of Northern Michigan University's systematic efforts and accomplishments in continuous academic quality improvement, and to participate in activities required by AQIP for accrediting determinations.

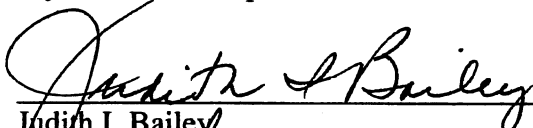
The Commission agrees

- to maintain Northern Michigan University's AQIP participation so long as the institution continues to participate in AQIP activities and provides AQIP with credible evidence justifying continuation;
- to indicate in Northern Michigan University's Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS) under a section titled "Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation," the scheduling of the date for a reaffirmation seven academic years in the future, in 2009-10;
- to transition Northern Michigan University, after notice and consultation, to the traditional accreditation process if (1) the institution so requests, (2) the Commission has evidence that the institution is no longer continuing in its good faith effort to participate in AQIP according to the terms of this Agreement; or (3) AQIP review of the institution's results within the previous five years of partnership indicate lack of progress in

continuous quality improvement and that the institution or the Commission would be better served by a traditional process;

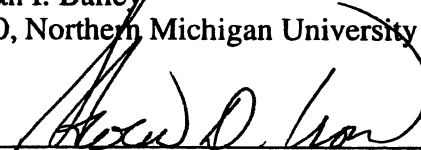
- if the institution has participated in AQIP for five years or more, to schedule the visit within five years of the year it leaves AQIP; and
- if the institution has participated in AQIP for fewer than five years, to schedule the visit either for the year that it was originally scheduled before the institution joined AQIP, 2004-05, or at least one full year after the year the institution ceases to be an AQIP participant, whichever is later.

The Commission continuously re-examines its programs and processes to make changes and corrections where appropriate. In the event the Commission makes changes that will affect this agreement, the Commission agrees to notify participant institutions in advance of implementation and allow a reasonable period of time for institutions to make appropriate adjustments or request transition to a traditional process.



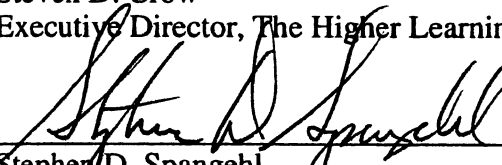
Judith I. Bailey
CEO, Northern Michigan University

12-10-02
Date



Steven D. Crow
Executive Director, The Higher Learning Commission

12-4-02
Date



Stephen D. Spanghel
Director, Academic Quality Improvement Project

12-4-02
Date