NCA and NASM Accreditors’ Reports Are Good News for Oberlin

"They loved us," says Robert Haslip, secretary of the College, speaking of the accreditors from the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities (NCA) and the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). The associations' accreditors' reports are good news for Oberlin and FRM is well established, it should be virtually transparent to everyone on campus," says President Nancy Dye. “At Vassar [where Dye was dean of the college and where FRM has managed the facilities for many years], for example, most people, including many service workers, were unaware...that the director of facilities was not technically a Vassar employee. Understandably," she says, "there will be some anxiety on campus about this change, particularly among service workers.”

The move does not, however, "represent or foreshadow," says Dye, the sort of "fundamental change, restructuring of the accounts-payable function of the office, activities due to better alignment with business issues and more appropriately for the size of the university," says Dye, the College’s vice president for finance, the College is seeking to "organize operations in a way that will encourage new concepts and practical programs for facilities management." The change also "reflects the desire to be more aware of financial concerns in our administrative management," says Evans.

FRM will oversee the administrative responsibilities of purchasing and auxiliary services, construction, facilities planning, and construction oversight. The new organizational structure will include a new executive director of facilities—an FRM person whose selection will be approved by the College, Evans says—and a construction manager who will manage facilities construction.

Lubben hopes to use what he learns in Venezuela for Winter Term and other projects when he returns to Oberlin.

"Once you make a commitment, it's amazing how it can work out," says Lubben, visiting assistant professor of music theory. Lubben vowed he would "go with her wherever she went" when he invited a mathematician from Caracas to come to Oberlin. The mathematician was unable to fulfill the twoday residency requirement of her student visa. Now he will go on a Fulbright fellowship.

With the anticipated retirement of Vice President Donna Raynsford in June, the departments within the Division of Operations, which Raynsford has headed for 10 years, have begun to reconfigure. Restructuring began January 1 and will continue through the summer.

By July the other departments in the operations division—Environmental Health and Safety, the Office of Facilities Planning and Construction, Facilities Maintenance (physical plant), and Facilities Services—will report to a new director of facilities services. The new position will be staffed by an employee of Facilities Resource Management (FRM), an organization based in Connecticut that provides similar services to many colleges and universities.

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The College Restructures Its Operations

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The overall facilities-services contract with FRM will be for five years. Under the terms of the contract the FRM employee and Oberlin’s senior administration will have access to FRM’s expertise in all areas of facilities management.

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Faculty and Staff Notes

Paul Arnold, emeritus professor of art, held this year at Stanford University. Thematic is a series of lectures and a solo exhibition for a major work published in the Winter 1998 period预览的 award. On February 27 Marcia gave a talk, "Rationalism, Religion, and Medieval Visual Savonarole Moment," at a conference on the theme From Alexander to Machiavelli, held at the Clementine Graduate University. President Nancy Dye will speak at the College Club of Cleveland, March 16. Her talk will be "Reflections on Diversity and Affirmative Action on American Campus." Five galleries have scheduled or completed exhibits of photographs—in one- or two-person shows—by Erika Leppmann, visiting assistant professor of art, for this year. One gallery has included that for Brockway Glass and the University of North Carolina. She will receive the medal March 28 at the Yale University School of Far Eastern Languages.

A couple of years after Gary came to Oberlin, says Joseph Palmeri, professor of music, "the brain cell that Gary has to be doing well" and gets satisfaction from "going to the movies and getting something to eat that they can get through it." Jack Smith, former assistant clinical professor of psychology at Case Western Reserve University and author of Car Accident: A Prudential Guide for Injured Persons and the work "Psychological Aspects of Automobile Accident and Mobile Accidents—Mothers, as do the two children and three grandchildren.

Reaccreditation

Continued from page 1
activities. While he had no other advice in its report, the NCA submitted seven "suggestions," which they offered "as a guide as consultants." The "suggestions" are a list of the NCA's 23rd annual conference. About 60 writing teachers from area high schools and colleges attended the conference, which had as its goal to promote dialogue between high school writing teachers and teachers of first-year composition in college.

Faculty Meeting

Continued from page 3
planning document produced last year. In presenting the motions CFC member Jay Caccamo, professor of French, said there were on this committee that is drafting long-range planning motions for building the faculty of the future.

The Observer March 13, 1998

Changes in Appointment

Faculty Meeting...
Ten Years Directing Operations: Donna Raynsford

By Carol Ganzel

Stevenson Hall, The Sperry Neuro-scientific Center, and the Adams-Kent Complex. The TIMARA studios in Bibbins, Helen Suzman Field House, The Peters Hall renovation. These are some of the major building projects for which Donna Raynsford has supervised in her 10 years at Oberlin. Construction was under way on Stevenson when Raynsford arrived, and the task was to start on Sperry. The other three projects she saw through from beginning to end. Someone else, however, will guide Oberlin's next building projects, those environmental studies building and the science complex. "If I got started, I would want to stay until completion," she says, and for the science complex that is at least four years away. Because she isn't sure she wants to stay at Oberlin, she has decided to try something else now, well ahead of the conventional retirement age (55+50). She is moving to Florida where her parents live and where she expects to enjoy golf and the beach. "I hate winters," she admits. She also plans to work part-time, although she doesn't know where she will work or what she will do. "I'm looking forward to the next interesting phase of my life," she says. She won't cut herself off completely from the present phase, however. She wants to come back to see the environmental studies and science building projects.

"Not only is Donna very good at what she does," says President Nancy S. Dye, "but she has also been a true pleasure to work with. I asked her to stay on a while longer, but unfortunately she determined to retire. I'll miss her."

While new buildings are conspicuous parts of her work, planned maintenance may be Raymond's more important legacy to Oberlin. When she came here in 1988, there was a "significant backlog" of delayed maintenance projects, and she drafted budgets to "seriously address" them. She not only got money from the trustees for maintenance but also separated the maintenance from the improvement budget, because, as she said at the time (Observer, March 1, 1989), "maintenance work should not be competing against program improvements for the same funding source." The result was a "significant increase in the budget available for more than 20 roof repairs, numerous electrical upgrades, some new fire detection systems, and repairs of building exteriors—such as replanning panels on the King Building. Her other budget innovations included significant amounts for energy conservation and for meeting the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ninety-nine percent of the projects she oversaw were completed on time and within their budgets—often under budget, she says. For this accomplishment, she credits the operations division staff. "You're only as good as the people you work with."

"Beyond building and maintaining Oberlin's physical plant, Raynsford initiated several programs for employees, offering prizes for money- or energy-saving suggestions and recognition for perfect-attendance records. Where some department heads had verbally recognized long-term service in five-year increments, she began, awarded plaques to the honorees, a program that now includes all employee groups except the faculty."

Raynsford serves as president of College Properties of Oberlin, Inc., a subsidiary of the College that holds real estate within and around Oberlin. Its portfolio exceeds $1.5 million. Outside the College she is on the board of directors of the Elvira Memorial Hospital Regional Healthcare System, and she served for several years on the Erie Shores Girl Scout Council's board.

When Raynsford came to Oberlin, the local press made much of her being the Colleges' first female vice president. She was then the only woman on the College's senior staff, where women now outnumber men. More recently, in 1988 when Raynsford was named to a vice presidential position in a higher education institution she is her post-highschool formal education: just one year at Katherine Gibbs School in Boston, where she earned secretarial certification. She was a secretary for more than 10 years, first at the American Bridge Division of US Steel in Pittsburgh and then at Cornell University. "If a young woman starting on her career were to ask me how she could reach what she wants, Raynsford says, "I would definitely not recommend my route." She says she traveled that route successfully only because she worked with people who gave her opportunities. She credits particularly Cornell's administration for planning and facilities, nominated her for her Oberlin position—Raynsford says she would never have applied for a vice presidential position herself.

Raynsford would hardly have been able to use the opportunities given her, however, if she had not used her secretarial work to educate herself. At US Steel she was introduced to the "construction arena" and learned some of "the language of construction." She then went to Cornell as secretary to the director of electrical engineering, a field in which she did not understand the language. "I typed Greek symbols all day long," she says. When Cornell organized a new construction department two years later, she asked for a transfer and became secretary to the director, Matyas. After that, "I never really changed positions," she says, "but she was given more responsibility and more responsibility." In 1985, still working for Matyas, she named director of capital projects. The projects included Cornell's center for performing arts, designed by Sterling & Wilford of London, and earlier, the university art building designed by I.M. Pei.

Carol Ganzel is editor emerita of the Observer.

Faculty Meeting

College Faculty Create Teach Committee, Award

About 50 faculty members gathered for the March 3 College Faculty meeting, where discussion, often heated, centered on proposed budgetary procedures. A chairman of the College Faculty (CFC) to eliminate summer stipends for untenured professors in favor of a research-portfolio plan; council's motion to establish the Committee on Teaching and council's motion to establish the Teaching Excellence Award. After much argument, the first issue was put on the agenda of the April College Faculty meeting, when more faculty members would have the background necessary for informed debate. Also with much discussion the CFC's first motion passed unanimously, and the second motion carried over opposition.

Faculty stipends followed the presentation of the report of CFC actions (mostly personnel) by CFC members. The report dealt with personnel and the evaluation of chemistry. Argument centered on whether the stipends, having been mandated by the Tenure Report of 1984, should now be eliminated. In order to get new faculty recruitment is under way—and whether the CFC acted in accordance with policies of faculty governance in not bringing the matter to the College Faculty before making a decision.

Debate on establishing the Committee on Teaching included the motion to include professional staff on the committee, a request that the Committee on Discretionary Plans and Policies Committee might instead carry out the functions of the proposed committee, and an ad-hoc motion that the Committee on Teaching not turn to machines and new tools rather than people as primary pedagogical resources.

A failed amendment to the CFC motion to establish the Teaching Excellence Award would have added the $1000 discretionary fund to the presidency of the receiving faculty member. Argument against the main motion included the opinions that teaching is too hard to judge at the level of excellence, that a faculty award would make unhappy than happy the awards, and the existence of the award would undermine the sense of the awarding and could instead diminish it. Argument for the motion included the opinions that the award would have high status and the idea is "innovative" and "worthwhile." In his report, Ackermann said that both motions derived from Broad Direction for Oberlin's Future. That the administration was "looking for a way to encourage the teaching of excellence at the level of faculty, rather than the individual," he said, and that the award would be "a strong statement of the College's commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarship."
Observations

E xcept for five years in New York City, he came to Oberlin on a short-term appointment with only an M.A., and seven years later, well into middle age, was granted tenure. Without a Ph.D. Theology didn’t really have a choice: Anyone with a smidgen of French took his courses, as one student evaluation had it, “a genius in action.” When Sykszaiki spoke about war or politics or idolatry, you could look into his eyes—unequivocally large and probing—behind his thick glasses—and know he wasn’t just getting this stuff from books.

In those now ancient days, courses focused on major topics and were serious about their world. For one France 105 course, vanishingly quick-witted New Yorker Vinicius Rossi—we read A la recherche du temps perdu in a seminar, in another, all of Montaigne’s—says, For a required religion course I took “Old Testament Literature,” and we started with Genesis and ended with Zechariah and the Apocalypse. Surveying the entire Bible, in fact, was the Rev. Dr. Richard Speirs May, was the Old Testament editor of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, it was a little like learning from God himself.

In “Shakespeare” students gradually were fed this lecture text of Kenneth Clark. Last month he brought out a mass study of the Italian Renaissance painter Guido Reni.

B ut doublet tongues are great and rec- ence this at every college, no matter how small or grand. Like Virgil with Dante, such masters lead us slowly up out of the intellectual darkness—and then we leave them behind with scarcely a backward glance, let alone a proper thank you. I can’t let that happen with Maria Calish.

Prof. Calish taught the richest, most rewarding literature course I ever had in any liberal art's career: “The Intellectual History of the Middle Ages.” Many people know a little about the thought and literature of the modern world, but Calish introduced her students to Augustinian apologetics and philos- phy, Bedell’s Ecclesiastical History, the biographical considerations of Auclain, the sobering theological intellects of Anselm and Bernard of Clairvaux, the romances of Christian de Troyes, Abelard’s razor-sharp mind, the ecstatic visions of the Victorines, St. Thomas Aquinas’s rigorous scholasticism, and that summa of medieval culture, Dante’s Divine Comedy.

I realize now that she could scarcely have been more than 30, but there was no doubling her vast learning even then. She spoke machine gun fast in a brassy voice, and you had to focus up to keep up with her plum-packed lectures. Gnosticism, Avian- na, The Other World. Universals. Andreas Capella’s Ars Moriendi. Love of Hroswitha’s. And her assignments! Read E.K. RAND’s Founders of the Middle Ages, Read M.L. WYLER’s Theology and Literature in Western Europe, A.D. 350-900. Read Charles Homer Haskins’s Renais- sance of the Twelfth Century. Read the end- less literature.

Exhilarating hardly describes Calish’s class, but a course, nonetheless, good, isal- most as everwaste as a ballet. Once it’s over, it’s over. Or so I thought until last month, when Yale brought out the first vol- ume in its new series “The Yale Intellectual History of the Western World.” The publications of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400- 1400, by Maria Calish (490) is dearly based on the class I took some years ago, and should instantly become the standard introduction to its subject. Calish’s prose is hardly sparkling, and she can be acutely de- manding at times, and her theology (espe- cially more than most of us ever will), but between the covers of this hefty, dense writer volume is a whole world of cult- ture and wisdom. I’ve read both the hard- book and my copy is already slipped with stars, checks, underlinings and all the other ornamentation of intensive study. What’s more, every so often a phrase or sudden- ly delivers a minor epiphany, and can hear Calish’s voice and feel myself—for a brief, moment—swimming away in my col- lege notebook. It’s a good feeling, especially on a cold, gray winter morning in February.

Michael Dirda ’70 is a writer for the Washington Post and editor of its Book World, which published this essay in the February 15 issue. Dirda appears here by permission of TWP Bookword and the Washington Post Writers Group.
Advice and Suggestions

In our capacity as consultants, we offer the following suggestions:

1) The strategic plan is a rich source of commonly agreed upon goals. We believe that a high priority should be given to the development of an action plan, a process that the team understands has been initiated.

2) Because it is both a College of Arts and Sciences and a Conservatory of Music, Oberlin is a more complex institution than most liberal arts colleges. Close attention to the interface between the two segments is essential.

3) Integration of assessment into planning both at the institutional and departmental levels should be an organic and increasingly efficient practice.

4) Oberlin faces a period of increasing faculty turnover due to retirements. The college should be attentive to the need to mentor new faculty to the college's environment and expectations, including such matters as the relative priorities of teaching and scholarship and the importance of the role of faculty in institutional governance.
5) There is pervasive emphasis on community in the strategic plan. All constituencies should be sensitive to the fact that there are divergent concepts of community at Oberlin.

6) The cultural diversity requirement in course work seems to be redundant and in some instances reinforces cultural backgrounds. The team believes that the expectations of this requirement should be reevaluated.

7) Consideration should be given to including the Experimental College in Oberlin's assessment program.