Response to the Findings

The School of Family and Consumer Sciences’ response to the ten recommendations in the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) Report (pp. 9-16) is detailed below.

Program Quality

APRC Recommendation 1: All future decisions about resources to be committed to the School—whether personnel, space, equipment, or budget—should be contingent on clearly benchmarked improvements in quality.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 1: Based on the data presented in the self-study, faculty quality and productivity were well documented. Faculty Curriculum Vitae submitted as supporting documents showed they were engaged in the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. To ensure the School continues to move forward with a vision toward quality and quality improvement, we will engage in an in-depth strategic planning process over the next year (for further details of the plan see Research Productivity section on page 4).

Since 1998, the curriculum was revised for four of the five areas as outlined in the response to the last review. Curriculum was designed based on established educational standards from professional organizations such as American Dietetic Association (ADA), National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Council for the Exceptional Children (CEC), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC), National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA), National Council for Interior Design Qualifications (NCIDQ), American Disabilities Act Federal Code Guidelines (ADA), International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA), American College of Sport Medicine (ACSM) and Foundation for Interior Design Research (FIDER). The HDFS undergraduate program is being revised using National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) standards. During the curriculum development process recommendations from professionals were integrated into each program area curriculum redesign. The next step is to implement a stronger assessment process and use the data for continuous program improvement (for further details of the plan see Curriculum & Assessment Section on page 3).

SFCS Action on Recommendation 1: We agree with the Program Review Committee that benchmarking is essential. We will review the School’s tenure, promotion and retention document and its merit policy to clarify benchmarks for scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching. Protocols to assess student learning will be shared among programs and established for the School. We will consult the Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology as we develop and implement our plan and document quality. During the next seven years, we will annually document the quality of the School’s programs, productivity of the faculty, and document the placement and success of our graduates.
Configuration

APRC Recommendation 2: The provost should develop a process for exploring reconfiguration possibilities. An explicit decision should be made whether to a) affirm the current structure, b) eliminate some of the programs, but retain the school structure; or c) redeploy the programs to other existing areas.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 2: We are concerned that the APRC did not understand the purpose and function of the School and the unit structure. The programs within the SFCS are inherently multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and the School provides a mutually beneficial intellectual environment for faculty members and students. The five program areas empower individuals and families to manage the challenges of living and working in diverse communities and a global society. The program areas focus on nutrition, health, the interior environment, human development, family systems and apparel merchandising and product development as they serve to strengthen the well being of individuals and families across the lifespan. All programs have specific professional practice learning outcomes as well as common outcomes across the programs in the School.

SFCS Action on Recommendation 2: As we move forward, faculty members will continue to investigate and conceptualize the interdisciplinary nature of the programs as well as continue to preserve the unique qualities of each program. We will develop strategies to further strengthen our relationships across campus and help others understand our purpose and function. We welcome the opportunity to re-examine our programs and develop a stronger conceptual framework that identifies our common bonds and program area differences. This re-examination can only make the School stronger. We will provide an initial statement and plan to the Dean by the end of the fall semester 2006.

Strategic Planning APRC Recommendation 3: The School should rewrite its strategic plan and present the plan to the dean for review and approval by April 2005. The revised plan must include prioritization among all items that require resources—it cannot represent every need equally, as the self-study did.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 3: We see strategic planning as essential to program quality. We concur that strategic planning is an exercise that will be a priority of 2004-2005.

SFCS Action to Recommendation 3: This plan will be a school-wide process. Goals, priorities, action tasks, and assessment will be addressed in the plan. A draft of the plan will be submitted to the Dean by fall semester 2005.

Curriculum and Assessment APRC Recommendation 4: The School faculty should undertake a comprehensive review of assessment practices in all program areas. The results of this school-wide review of 13 assessment practices should be included in the next annual report to the SAAC (June 2006). A report on the curriculum—including plans for revisions—should be prepared for the dean’s review and approval by the end of spring semester 2007.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 4: The School has established student learning outcomes for each program area. Assessment protocol integration is at different stages among the programs.

Action to Recommendation 4: SFCS will explore standardization of assessment strategies while ensuring flexibility to accommodate the differences in discipline-specific outcomes and professional practices among the program areas. The program areas will utilize assessment results to drive future curriculum changes. We will consult with the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology for
innovative ideas for assessment protocol development. The documents presented in each of the forthcoming annual reports will provide assessment results and recommended changes based on the results. These reports will be submitted to the Dean by the end of the fall semester 2007.

**Research Productivity APRC Recommendation 5:** School documents for merit and for promotion and tenure should be reviewed and revised where necessary to better align rewards and recognition with research productivity. The PRC strongly recommends that the School consider differentiated allocation of effort across program areas, so that those areas with the greatest potential to achieve national recognition through grant-funded research, for example, have higher allocation of effort to research. The review and revision should be completed by the end of spring semester 2006.

**SFCS Response to Recommendation 5:** We based the current documents on the template developed by the Office of the Provost and do agree that the merit, tenure and promotion documents should be continuously assessed, revised, and implemented. This is an on-going process that we embrace as we strive for continuous improvement.

**Action to Recommendation 5:** We have committees charged with assessment and revision of merit, tenure and promotion documents. The committees will continue to assess the documents and make recommendations to insure documentation of faculty productivity. As a School, we will investigate differentiated allocation of efforts across program areas so see if higher allocations for research productivity are warranted. These reports will be submitted to the Dean by the end of the spring semester 2006.

**Space, Equipment and Technology APRC Recommendation 6:** Following directly from the strategic plan, requests for space, equipment, and technology access should be enumerated and prioritized. Rationales for the prioritization should be closely linked to issues of enrollment and faculty productivity. These priorities should be prepared in a written report for review and approval by the dean by the end of spring semester 2006. In the near term, a hold should be put on renovations of the School’s spaces until issues of strategic planning, research productivity, curriculum, and configuration have been addressed.

**SFCS Response to Recommendation 6:** The Self-Study Report outlined the current status of the School and identified changes made since the last self-study, and projected future needs. There were no guidelines that stated that prioritization should take place. Strategic planning is the process that requires such decisions to be made. To assist in strategic planning for space, we will refer back to the May 29, 2002 School of Family and Consumer Sciences Capital Request submitted to the Office of Capital Planning. This document outlines needs for each of the program areas.

**Action to Recommendation 6:** Discussion and prioritization will be addressed in the preliminary strategic plan. This is an on-going process and a draft will be submitted to the Dean in September 2006.

**Faculty Development APRC Recommendation 7:** The School should assess its mentoring program in order to ensure the success of probationary faculty and faculty seeking promotion from the rank of associate to full professor. A plan for faculty development should be presented to the dean for his review and approval by the end of spring semester 2005.

**SFCS Response to Recommendation 7:** SFCS has supported mentoring as an essential component of faculty development. A mentoring plan is in place and probationary faculty members are participating in that program. We agree that some type of plan needs to be developed to assist associate professors in their movement to professor level.
SFCS Action to Recommendation 7: The mentoring plan for non-tenured faculty will be evaluated and changes will be made based on this assessment. Individual plans to assist associate professors wishing to move up to the rank of Professor will be developed. A draft of the plan will be submitted to the Dean by the end of the spring semester 2007.

Accreditation for Interior Design APRC Recommendation 8: FIDER accreditation should be one of the many decisions that are addressed in the revision of the strategic plan. This is a weighty decision, with many pros and cons, and one that will undoubtedly affect other programs in the School through resource commitments necessary to attain accreditation.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 8: FIDER Accreditation is an internal issue that will be addressed as part of strategic planning and is a process that evolves over time. FIDER encourages integration of professionals and does not insist or dictate the number of full-time tenure track faculty needed for accreditation. FIDER looks at curriculum, integration of the design process, and student outcomes.

SFCS Action to Recommendation 8: The Interior Design Program will develop a five-year plan. They will investigate moving forward for FIDER Accreditation. We have requested a faculty line for the Interior Design program.

Enrollment Management APRC Recommendation 9: A plan for addressing enrollment management should be prepared for the dean’s review and approval by May 2007.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 9: Enrollment management in all programs across campus should be a priority. As a school we see enrollment management as essential and will address this issue in our planning documents. We look forward to being proactive in this area.

Action to Recommendation 9: Enrollment planning will be an ongoing process and faculty will be involved in the assessment of enrollment patterns and needs. We will address this process in each annual report.

Communication and Collegiality APRC Recommendation 10: In future dealings with the PRC, the administration, and the university faculty governance process, it is strongly recommended that the School make a more diligent effort to provide full and comprehensive information. The Provost is the only person in a position to investigate claims of inappropriate behavior and/or poor communication, and the PRC recommends that he do so.

SFCS Response to Recommendation 10: We disagree that the School withheld information from the APRC. The faculty and staff were open to the review. The review documents provided information that aligned with the Program Review Guidelines. We ask the PRC members to solicit information in a direct and explicit manner.