



ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

OUR VISION

The DETC is the preeminent accrediting organization for distance education delivered worldwide that sets high standards for academic quality, and inspires teaching, learning, and student outcomes through voluntary assessment and peer review.

OUR MISSION

Assuring high quality distance education through accreditation, peer review, and institutional improvement.

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Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to provide you with an overview of the work of the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) for the 2013-2014 year. During a year of nearly unprecedented challenge and opportunity, the DETC worked diligently and carefully to develop and implement changes on behalf of its accredited institutions. The Commission and the staff convened for strategic planning sessions to address these challenges and plan for the future. In this report, you will find summaries of our most important activities of the year which, driven by our strategic priorities, supported the important work of DETC-accredited institutions in delivering quality distance programs to nearly 2 million students worldwide.

DETC remains committed to serving as an authoritative source of information about distance education quality assessment. Each and every one of you – executive leaders, faculty, volunteers, students, and staff – has been an instrumental part of the many diverse activities that support our mission. The Accrediting Commission is grateful for your hard work and enthusiasm across the full spectrum of DETC's activities and involvement in distance education.

Please read on to learn how the DETC is working to provide professional development and networking opportunities for its institution members and about its tireless commitment to implementing initiatives that strengthen DETC accreditation for its important role in serving students, families, and the public interest.

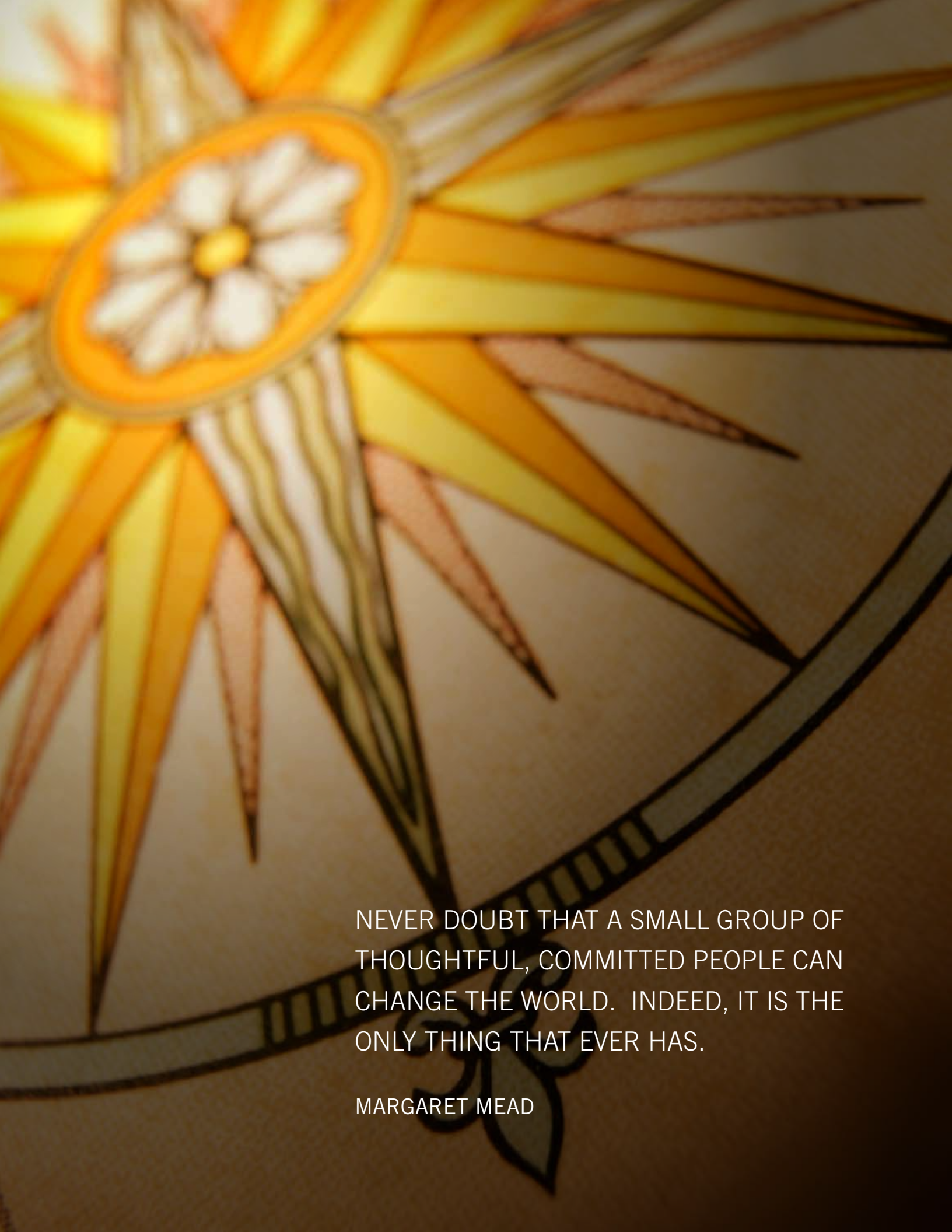
Sincerely,



Leah K. Matthews
Executive Director



*Dr. Leah Matthews
began serving as
DETC's Executive
Director on
April 1, 2013.*



NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF
THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED PEOPLE CAN
CHANGE THE WORLD. INDEED, IT IS THE
ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.

MARGARET MEAD

2013-2014 ACTIVITIES

Founded in 1926, DETC is the nation's only nationally organized accrediting organization holding recognition by both the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation that accredits distance education institutions offering high school education credentials, postsecondary education and degree programs through the doctoral level. No other accrediting organization represents the broad spectrum of distance education providers like DETC does.

The DETC Accrediting Commission convened during the 2013-2014 year to develop and implement key strategic initiatives to advance its mission and vision, to strengthen its presence among higher education communities of interest, and to carry out its important work in accreditation decisions. Our core objective is to provide accreditation processes and activities that assure educational quality and that support our institutions, students, faculty and volunteers. In 2013-2014, DETC pursued that objective by working on behalf of its members in the areas described in this annual report.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization remains an important topic for distance education institutions. Although the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia struck down the distance education portion of the Department of Education's state authorization regulations over three

years ago, state regulators continue to have a heightened awareness of distance education institutions operating in their states without approval. There are extensive differences among state regulatory requirements for distance education institutions to obtain the necessary and appropriate approvals where they operate and/or enroll students. Adding to the confusion are numerous "Dear Colleague" letters issued by the Department of Education that were intended to provide additional guidance and interpretation to states and institutions.

The DETC Accrediting Commission continues to take the ever shifting developments in state authorization very seriously. Over the past year, DETC convened three regional meetings and a special session at the October 2013 Accreditation Workshop that provided strategies for addressing state authorization. Sixty-one DETC institutions participated in these meetings.

DETC will continue to engage in the distance education community on this topic. DETC is a member of the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) and supports the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). Dr. Leah Matthews, DETC Executive Director, is serving as a primary negotiator representing accreditation on the U.S. Department of Education's negotiated rulemaking committee on program integrity and improvement that is addressing, among other regulatory items, state authorization for programs offered through distance or correspondence education.

NEW WEBSITE AND LOGO

After much hard work on a complete redesign from the ground up, DETC unveiled a brand new website and logo in January 2014. To help the users of the website find information more quickly, we improved the overall navigation and design to include a comprehensive search function and sitemap. We added a news room with our current press releases and a section highlighting our events and reports. Future enhancements are planned for the coming year that include an accredited-member section and a resource library and archive.

About our new logo: Our new logo imbeds a compass rose within the DETC abbreviation. We chose the compass rose to symbolize DETC's commitment to charting an exciting new future and direction for distance education accreditation, where accountability meets innovation in creative, meaningful ways that assure a high quality experience for the student.

EXPANSION OF USDE-RECOGNIZED SCOPE TO INCLUDE NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS

In early 2013, the DETC was proud to receive another term of recognition from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) deeming the DETC as a reliable authority as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education the DETC accredits. In January 2014, DETC submitted a formal request to USDE for a change to its scope

to include non-degree (certificate and diploma) programs for Title IV purposes. USDE reviewed the request and determined that only a technical change for clarification purposes was required.

The scope of recognition for DETC ("the agency") listed on the U.S. Department of Education website is

["The accreditation of postsecondary institutions in the United States that offer degree and/or non-degree programs primarily by the distance or correspondence education method up to and including the professional doctoral degree, including those institutions that are specifically certified by the agency as accredited for Title IV purposes."](#)

[Title IV Note: Only accredited institutions that are certified by the agency as accredited for Title IV purposes may use accreditation by this agency to establish eligibility of its degree and/or non-degree programs to participate in Title IV programs."](#)

The DETC sought a change to its scope for several reasons. A new policy being implemented by the Department of Defense will require institutions participating in service member tuition assistance (TA) programs to have Title IV certification. The change to the scope enables DETC-accredited institutions offering non-degree programs to continue enrolling service members wishing to utilize their TA benefit. Furthermore, the scope allows the Accrediting Commission to apply its expertise in evaluating non-degree programs to institutions interested in offering non-degree programs to students making use of their Title IV Federal Financial Aid.

RECOGNITION BY THE COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION (CHEA)

On April 30, 2013, the CHEA Board of Directors voted to grant DETC a second term of recognition for a period of 10 years, through 2023. Recognition by CHEA signals the broader higher education community's acknowledgement of the work DETC and its accredited institutions do toward meeting the educational needs of students. CHEA recognition has three basic purposes:

- To confirm that accrediting organizations have standards that advance academic quality in higher education;

- To confirm that accrediting organizations have standards that assure accountability through consistent, clear, and coherent communication to the public and the higher education community about the results of educational efforts; and
- To confirm that accrediting organizations have standards that encourage institutions to plan for change and needed improvement. *(2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures, p. 2)*

DETC is proud of its recognition by CHEA and values its affiliation with a long-standing tradition that recognition of accrediting organizations is a key strategy toward assuring quality, accountability, and improvement in higher education.



ENGAGEMENT ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MOU CHANGES

The federal government continues to show nearly unprecedented levels of interest in higher education, with particular emphasis on how and where Title IV programs and other federally funded higher education benefits are disbursed. The President's Executive Order 13607, "Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Servicing Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members" led to a policy development that received considerable attention with regard to changes proposed to the Department of Defense's (DoD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Military Tuition Assistance (TA) program. The DETC submitted comments in response to the August 14, 2013 *Federal Register* notice pertaining to Voluntary Education Programs and participated in a number of meetings on this topic that included the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), Council of College and Military Educators (CCME), and the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC).

DETC-accredited institutions have a long tradition of serving the educational needs of military service members. Our programs are an integral part of the broader higher education community's effort to ensure that service members are provided options and access to quality higher education institutions and programs. DETC supports the effort behind the MOU to ensure proper oversight of TA funding but remains concerned about the change requiring institutions to be **"...participating in Federal student aid programs through the Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965"** in order to maintain eligibility to participate in the TA program. (Section 3.b; *Template of DoD MOU Between DoD Office of the USD(P&R) and Educational Institution*)

In 2013, just 14 of DETC's accredited institutions participated in Title IV programs. However, 59 DETC-accredited institutions were listed on the DoD Voluntary Education Website as participants in the DoD Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding. DETC's comments and subsequent meetings with DoD officials did have success in establishing a provision that would permit an 18 month time frame to complete the Title IV application and certification process and not disrupt the education of service members and veterans during that time frame. The DoD indicates that its new MOU will be available in Spring 2014. DETC will carefully monitor this development in the coming months.

STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Provide leadership that supports institutional efforts to meet the diverse distance education needs for students and adult learners.
- Position DETC as a valued and effective resource in distance education quality assessment.
- Advance DETC's accreditation system as a model that effectively links innovation and accountability.
- Explore the possibility of assessment frameworks for non-collegiate education alternatives delivered via distance education.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

DETC has continued its commitment to sound, effective financial stewardship as part of its strategic goal to improve the organization's effectiveness, efficiency and financial strength. By preserving its assets, ensuring compliance with financial reporting and internal control requirements, and balancing its costs and service levels, DETC ensures the sustainability of its accreditation process and the development of new strategies to support its mission.

The financial information presented in the following financial highlights is summary information and presents fairly the estimated financial position of the DETC as of March 31, 2014. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

REVENUES

(FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 31ST)

REVENUES	ACTUAL FY 2013	FORECAST FY 2014	BUDGET FY 2015
Dues and Annual Fees	\$1,679,674	\$1,673,460	\$1,754,231
Application fees	\$53,000	\$86,000	\$78,000
Visitation Fees	\$794,900	\$335,800	\$239,200
Curriculum Fees*	\$0	\$179,400	\$150,000
DETC Meetings	\$179,449	\$248,257	\$220,000
Other Operational	\$72,094	\$11,238	\$9,907
Operational Revenues	\$2,779,117	\$2,534,155	\$2,451,338

* Curriculum fees did not have a budget line item for 2013.

OPERATING EXPENSES

(FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 31ST)

EXPENSES	ACTUAL FY 2013	FORECAST FY 2014	BUDGET FY 2015
Compensation & Related exp.	\$1,144,852	\$1,027,873	\$1,240,597
Outside Professional Fees	\$175,848	\$255,955	\$231,360
Office Related	\$200,459	\$176,883	\$200,024
Accreditation Expenses	\$192,476	\$454,274	\$422,539
Travel & Conferences	\$784,728	\$287,212	\$241,444
Other Expenses	\$0	\$3,964	\$0
Operational Expenses	2,498,363	2,206,160	2,335,964

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

(FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 31ST)

SUMMARY	ACTUAL FY 2013	FORECAST FY 2014	BUDGET FY 2015
Revenues from Operations	\$2,779,117	\$2,534,155	\$2,451,338
Operational Expenses	\$2,498,363	\$2,206,160	\$2,335,964
Change in Operational Assets	\$280,754	\$327,995	\$115,374
Change in Investment Portfolio	\$24,492	\$49,410	\$48,094
Total Change in Net Assets	\$305,245	\$377,404	\$163,468

DETC COMMISSIONERS 2013-2014

MARY ADAMS

President, American Sentinel University

JOSETTE P. KATZ

Professor, Atlantic Cape Community College

ROBERT MAYES, JR.

President, Columbia Southern University

TIMOTHY MOTT

Director, Off-Campus Programs at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College

PATRICK O'MALLEY

Assurance Partner (Retired), PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

WILLIAM A. O'TOOLE

Vice President of Government Relations (Retired), Walt Disney World Resort

JACK NILL

Provost, Global University

ANN ROHR

President, Weston Distance Learning

NANETTE SWARTHOUT

Senior Instructor, Fontbonne University

JUDITH A. TURNER

Vice President and Director of Education, Art Instruction Schools

OFFICERS:

Chair: PATRICK O'MALLEY

Vice Chair: MARY ADAMS

Treasurer: JUDITH A. TURNER

Executive Secretary: LEAH K. MATTHEWS

DETC ACCREDITATION ACTIONS SUMMARY 2013-2014

Institutions Granted Initial Accreditation **2**

Institutions Granted Renewal of Accreditation **24**

Institutions Deferred for Further Review **17**

Institutions Voluntarily Withdrawing from Accreditation **3**

Institutions Ordered to Show Cause **3**

Institutions Changing Name **4**

Institutions Changing Ownership **3**

Institutions Changing Location **5**

Institutions Approved for a New Administrative Site **2**

Institutions Approved to Offer New Courses or Programs **30**

Institutions Denied Accreditation **1**

