

# ACCREDITATION REPORT

*Site Visit Team Report*

*for*

*St. Elizabeth University*

*of*

*Health and Social Work*

April 16-22, 2012

## International Evaluation Committee Members

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Final Accreditation Report  
Issued September 30, 2012

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This accreditation review was voluntarily requested by Dr. Vladimir Krcmery, Rector (President) of St. Elizabeth University College of Health and Social Work in Bratislava, Slovakia. Dr. Krcmery requested an international, interdisciplinary team from Western Europe, North American and Central Europe. Dr. West was asked to Chair the international accreditation site visit. Dr. West selected experienced accreditation members based on familiarity with the purpose and functions of international accreditation, prior experience working on international accreditation teams, knowledge of CEE countries, and professional expertise. On December 12, 2011 Dr. West notified the site visit team with a site visit date of April 16-20, 2012.

St. Elizabeth University was founded as a private university in 2002. In September 2003, St. Elizabeth University received accreditation from the National Accreditation Committee of the Slovak Republic for seven programs of study: nursing, laboratory medicine, health administration, dental technology, social work, clinical research and public health. Since then the number of educational programs has expanded. It was the opinion of St. Elizabeth University governing board and administration that an independent external review by an international team would help with the future development of this private university. A rigorous peer evaluation and review was conducted in the framework of self-improvement, consultation, and international collaboration on April 16-20, 2012. Recommendations contained in the prior accreditation report from December 23, 2008 were considered and examined for implementation.

In preparation for the site visit, St. Elizabeth University prepared a self-study progress report based on the December 23, 2008 Final Accreditation Report. The progress report provided evidence, documentation and reports to support progress in addressing actions, observations and recommendations of the last accreditation evaluation site visit conducted October 16-18, 2008. The December 23, 2008 report had 19 specific recommendations. Dr. Dan West conducted an interim site visit and reviewed the self-study report entitled "Action to the Recommendations of International Accreditation Evaluation Team made in 2004-2007." Other appropriate reports and documents were compiled as supporting evidence of progress made since the last site visit. Based on the positive progress on the self-study documentation and progress report, a site visit was confirmed for April 16-20, 2012.

The International accreditation team was composed of six representatives from various disciplines who had experience with accreditation processes, standards, criterion, and protocols. Members selected were from England, Austria, Italy and the United States. A member selected was unable to participate in the site visit due to a major conflict resulting in a five member team.

A preliminary site visit agenda and schedule was developed by Dr. Krcmery and Dr. West prior to the site visit. This agenda was modified prior to the actual start of the site visit. The agenda was finalized with the team members during an introductory

conference. Site visits to academic and clinical locations was established by the committee, roles clarified, assignments acknowledged, and transportation arranged. The results of the interim site visit and review of the progress report was shared with the entire team. The entire team had an opportunity to review the self-study documentation and reports since the last site visit in October 16-18, 2008 that focused on the period 2004 to 2007.

Each member of the accreditation committee received self-study documentation from St. Elizabeth University consisting of: incorporation documents, legal status, annual report, governing board and structure, minutes of meetings, names of academic officials, names of scientific council, survey of program, course syllabi, course content, curriculum sequence, curriculum vitae of all full-time and part-time faculty, faculty scholarship and research summaries, program curriculum and course sequencing, description of all programs of study, characteristics of each program of study, teaching facilities and locations, community and professional affiliations, previous accreditation reports, international activities, listing of Ph.D. students, criteria for rank and tenure, foreign students, scientific and research productivity, hours of study by course and semester, mission and objectives of the school and programs, student profiles by program of study, student academic records, mission statement of the university, other descriptive data concerning the university faculty and students, listing of clinic sites and locations, information on university resources, all budgets, library holdings, and methods of evaluation. Additional documentation and supporting materials were made available to all evaluation committee members prior to the evaluation, during the site visit, at academic locations visited by the site visit team, and during deliberation meetings prior to the exit conference with Dr. Vladimir Krcmery.

Finally, the team members reviewed and discussed accreditation criterion used in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Canada and the United States. Dr. West shared "Criteria for Accreditation" (April 2008, Version 5: March 2009) used by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education. A blended model was agreed to by the site visit team. Dr. West asked if the 2013 Criteria for Accreditation could be used as part of a research study. Dr. Vladimir Krcmery also agreed to use the 2013 CAHME Accreditation Criteria where appropriate. Ultimately the team agreed on the major areas for review at St. Elizabeth University would include:

- I. Mission, Goals and Objectives
  - II. Governance and Administration
  - III. Institutional Support
  - IV. Students and Graduates
  - V. Faculty Research and Scholarship
  - VI. Curriculum, and Teaching and Learning Outcomes
  - VII. Community and Professional Services
  - VIII. International Projects and External Affiliations
  - IX. Resources and Academic Relationships
  - X. Facilities and Technology

This report is based on a review of the self-documentation, progress reports, interim site visit; on-site documentation review; interviews with faculty and students; interviews with the Rector, Deans, Vice-Deans; meetings with administration, board of directors and scientific council; direct observations and impressions by site team members with alumni and various stakeholders; and visits to locations and tour of facilities April 16-20, 2012. Actual site visits and tours were conducted at Bratislava (several locations), Kosice, Michalovce, Bardejov, Zilina, Nova Zamky, Skalica, Piestany, Trnava, Komarno, Partizanske, and Raznava. All programs of study were examined. The team examined full-time and part-time courses of study at the BSa, MSc and Ph.D. levels.

## **II. INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

The Rector of St. Elizabeth University, Dr. Vladimir Krcmery, voluntarily invited an international team of six professionals to conduct an accreditation visit on April 16-20, 2012. A peer review model was used with an emphasis on collaboration and consultation. The international evaluation committee consisted of the following experts:

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It should be noted that Dr. Roberto Cauda declined participation due to a major scheduling conflict. The final team consisted of five members although Dr. Cauda's consultation would be taken under advisement.

### **III. INTERIUM SITE VISIT AND PROGRESS REPORT**

Dr. Daniel J. West, Jr. conducted an interim site visit on October 21-23, 2011 to St. Elizabeth University. The purpose of the interim site visit was to examine evidence, documentation and reports to support progress in addressing the actions, observations, and recommendations of the last accreditation evaluation site visit conducted October 16-18, 2008. A Final Accreditation Report was issued December 23, 2008 containing observations and 19 specific recommendations. All 19 recommendations were carefully examined against supporting evidence.

Prior to the interim site visit, the administration prepared a report entitled "Action to The Recommendations of International Accreditation Evaluation Team made in 2004-2007."

Other appropriate reports and documents were compiled as supporting evidence of progress made since the last site visit. Dr. West was able to review this documentation over the course of 3 days during a visit to St. Elizabeth University College of Health and Social Work, Bratislava, Slovakia.

More specifically, the review included examination of the following:

1. Memorandum of Understanding with Uganda for a teaching program;
2. Minutes documenting that the Scientific Council has reviewed its' responsibility in meeting the University mission;
3. Student evaluations of courses and tabulated results;
4. Responsibilities of the Trustees and Officers of the University;
5. Financial reports with details on expense line items;
6. Photographs of the new building for classes (acquired in 2006 and used in 2007);
7. Increase in the number of computers for student access and use;
8. Faculty lists with addresses and telephone numbers by location;
9. Characteristics of the degree programs of study:
  - Medical Technology (MSc) – Part-time study
  - Medical Technology (PhD) – Full-time study
  - Nursing (BSc) – Part-time study
  - Nursing (Masters) – Part-time study
  - Public Health (BSc) – Part-time study
  - Public Health (MSc) – Part-time and Full-time study
  - Public Health (PhD) – Part-time and Full-time study
  - Rehabilitation & Physiotherapy (BSc & MSc) – Part-time study
  - Social Work (Bachelors) - Part-time and Full-time study
  - Social Work (Masters) - Part-time and Full-time study
  - Social Work (PhD) - Part-time and Full-time study
10. Booklets and other publications in English & Slovak on humanitarian projects;
11. Publications in the social and behavioral sciences;
12. Scientific and non-scientific publications for all faculty (2003-2007);
13. Review of course syllabi for Public Health, Nursing, Medical Technology, Clinical Research, Social Work, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation;
14. Official copies of agreements between St. Elizabeth Cancer Institute, National Institute of Rheumatic Diseases, and other external teaching locations authorized by University administration;
15. Increased handicap accessibility at the University to all floors and classrooms;
16. Enrollment of PhD students in 2006/2007 (N=20);
17. Approvals for full-time study of social work outside of Bratislava in Kosice (2007);
18. Criteria for Rank/Tenure Review in Public Health, Nursing and Social Work;
19. Student access to PhD programmes were they teach and receive compensation'
20. Disciplinary Committee established in 2007 to review student complaints;
21. Student evaluations of faculty;
22. Student projects in Social Work (BSc) and Master Degree programs;
23. Listing and disclosure of members for the Faculty Senate, Council & Board of



- Trustees;
24. Professional service requirements in health and social care;
  25. Study Programme and Yearbook for 2008/2009 examined;
  26. Review of individual faculty files to examine: CV, Presentations, Posters, Book Chapters, Publications, Books, etc. to support scholarship and research
  27. Professional service by Full-time and Part-time faculty;
  28. Evaluations of Department Heads;
  29. Establishment of an Ethical Committee in Cambodia and Kenya instituted in 2007;
  30. Alumni programme (newly established);
  31. Modest increase in grants and external funding;
  32. Establishment of International PhD Programme in Bratislava; and
  33. Mission and vision reviewed and also shared with students and faculty.

As a result of the extensive review, it was determined by Dr. West that sufficient progress was made by the University Administration and Faculty in addressing observations and recommendations made in the Final Accreditation Report dated December 23, 2008 based on the International Accreditation Site Visit conducted October 16-18, 2008.

Based on this interim site visit, after consultation with the Rector, Dr. Vladimir Krcmery, an accreditation site visit and team was approved and announced on December 12, 2011. Site visit team members confirmed acceptance of the assignment via e-mail to the Accreditation Chair, Dr. Dan West (USA).

#### **IV. SITE VISIT**

The accreditation site visit and evaluation at St. Elizabeth University was conducted April 16-20, 2012. April 16, 2012 was used as a general meeting of the site visit team to establish and finalize the agenda, review self-study documents and reports, discuss the interim site visit conducted by Dr. West, and examine current documents. This was a second site visit by this team to St. Elizabeth University. The initial site visit was conducted on October 16-18, 2008 based on study years 2004 to 2007.

The site team met privately to discuss reported outcomes on 19 recommendations given to St. Elizabeth in a Final Accreditation Report issued December 23, 2008. It should be noted that pre-site visit meetings and consultations were held prior to discussing the self-study documentation. The team periodically conferred about findings, strengths, concerns, conclusions and consultative recommendations. Meetings were conducted with University officials, board of directors, administrative vice-presidents, academic deans, program directors, faculty, alumni and students. Site visits were conducted to exam classrooms, laboratories, equipment, libraries, computer facilities, internship locations, and faculty offices. The team visited facilities, faculty and met with students at Bratislava (several locations), Kosice, Michalovce, Bardejov, Zilina, Nova Zamky, Skalica, Kornarno, Trnava, Partizanske, and Raznava. Clinic sites in Cambodia, Uganda, Haiti, Ukraine, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Zambia, Burundi, Sudan, Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Romania, Czech Republic were reviewed on paper by examining

reports, discussions with faculty, students, and university administration. External affiliations exist with 53 projects. Special meetings were held with members of the Rectorate, Executive Board, Academic Senate, Vice Deans, Scientific Council and Program Directors throughout the site visit to confirm reports, evidence and documents. Departments of St. Elizabeth University College of Health and Social Work included: Nursing, Social Work, Missionology, Laboratory Medicine, Public Health, Medical Technology, Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy. All degrees (BSc, MSc & Ph.D.) were reviewed at all locations in addition to full-time vs. part-time courses of study. Members of the site visit team met with students at all major locations where courses were being taught.

#### **IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS**

##### **A. General Information and Requirements**

There has been no major change to the mission and vision of the university. St. Elizabeth University continues to comply with the general requirements of the Ministry of Education and the Slovak Accreditation Commission.

St. Elizabeth University was incorporated as a non-profit organization in Bratislava on October 7, 2002 in accordance with Act No. 213/1997 of the Legal Code as amended. St. Elizabeth University has By-laws, Articles of Incorporation and is registered as a non-profit organization providing generally beneficial services such as education, training, research, scientific and technical services, information services in the field of nursing and social work, provision of social help and humanitarian care. The primary objective of the non-profit organization is operation of the School of Health and Social Work of St. Elizabeth University. The long term objective is the "...education of medical employees especially in the field of public health care and social work, nursing, physiotherapy, laboratory examination methods for domestic, state and church, as well as foreign catholic facilities and state and church social work facilities and missions abroad". Article III of the By-laws further states that the organization:

"...is active in the spirit of the Christian humanism with the Orientation on the basic principles of the Christian healthcare Ethics and disseminates the message of St. Elizabeth, the

native

of Bratislava, to serve the sick and poor irrespective of the race, nationality and religious orientation. Apart from this it also assumes the task to ensure the education, scientific upbringing and scientific research, as well as practical activities of the students of the above mentioned school in all three levels of the higher education and to guide the students of this school for higher education to the principles of the Christian ethics and humanism focusing on protection of life from its conception until dignified natural death, thus

meeting the message of St. Elizabeth, the native of Bratislava, great personality of the European healthcare and social work. The By-laws of the School of Health and Social Work of St. Elizabeth is an inseparable part of these By-laws”.

## **B. Prior Site Visit**

Prior to 2008, the initial international accreditation site visit was conducted on December 16-18, 2004. A report was finalized and issued on April 25, 2005. This report contained 30 recommendations requiring changes to be made at St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Work. The current site visit team received a progress report from Dr. Vladimir Krcmery prior to the site visit along with supporting documentation. This report entitled “Action to the Recommendations of International Accreditation Evaluation Team Made in 2004 – 2007” summarized actions taken to correct the recommendations made during the December 16-18, 2004 site visit. A thorough review of the report and documentation reflected 22 recommendations were “met”, 3 “partially met” and 5 “not met”. Adequate explanations were provided with respect to the “not met” during site survey meetings with the Rector, Vice Presidents and Deans. As a matter of importance, based on the initial site visit conducted on December 16-18, 2004, the site visit team recommended a 3 year accreditation of programs and a new site visit to be scheduled in the Fall 2008.

The last international accreditation site visit was conducted October 16-18, 2008. A Final Report was issued on December 23, 2008. That report had 12 observations and 19 recommendations. Since the last visit an interim site visit was conducted on October 21-23, 2011 at St. Elizabeth University. At that time, 2 of the 19 recommendations were not met. Other recommendations appeared to be partially met.

## **C. Findings and Observations**

St. Elizabeth University College of Health and Social Work has experienced significant growth in student enrollment over the last several years. As a private, Catholic University, St. Elizabeth appears to be meeting a need for adult education, especially among working professionals. Meeting the continuous changes promulgated by the Ministry of Education, as well as new policies and regulations of the newly elected government, will be a challenge. St. Elizabeth has a mission and vision that continues to differentiate itself from other public universities. The mission continues to focus on undergrad and post graduate education. An appropriate governing structure and organizational framework exists that allows for future growth and develop in expansion of majors and degrees. Leadership remains strong with an administrative team of competent managers to support the current organization, locations, facilities, and students.

The University provides educational access and opportunities for all of the Slovak Republic. Affiliation agreements with healthcare providers and social agencies provides applied and integrative experiences for students. St. Elizabeth has numerous cooperative arrangements with NGOs, healthcare facilities, social agencies, public health institutions, local and regional government agencies.

Specific observations include:

1. Strategic expansion of programs to meet educational needs of Slovak students (both traditional and non-tradition) on a part-time and full-time course of study.
2. Adequate educational facilities with major building improvements.
3. Guarantees for all programs of study with an appropriate number of professors, associate professors, and assistant faculty.
4. Strong leadership with the Rectorate, Board of Directors, Academic Senate and Scientific Council.
5. A strong culture of teamwork grounded in core values, an awareness of social issues and a desire to address inequities.
6. The mission and vision appears to be understood throughout the organization and among faculty.
7. University has functional policies and procedures and operating consistency across facilities and locations.
8. A process for handling formal student complaints has been developed.
9. University has a process for evaluating all courses and students at all locations.
10. Statements of no discrimination exist on the basis of gender, age, creed, race, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.
11. A defined policy on academic freedom and academic standards has been promagated.
12. Documented support for faculty development, research/ or scholarship, and service.
13. Evidence of financial and administrative support to ensure quality education.
14. An extensive global outreach process and system that provides opportunities for service, research, scholarship and service.
15. An appreciation for using interdisciplinary teams to address issues of social justice and vulnerable populations.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the recommendations of the previous site visit on October 16-18, 2008, the University has provided evidence indicating it has meet 17 of 19 recommendations. Efforts should be made to expand degree programs to meet unmet needs and provide educational opportunities for adults throughout the Slovak Republic.

As a result of the international accreditation site visit the team suggests that the board of directors, senior administration and faculty address the following recommendations in an

effort to continuously improve the quality of education for students enrolled at St. Elizabeth University:

1. Initiate a strategic planning process involving various constituencies to develop a 3 year strategic plan for the University.
2. The career paths of graduates should be monitored and assessed to include relevant outcome metrics on job placement rates, types of employment setting, salary, job satisfaction, and promotion.
3. Develop affiliation agreements with Universities in Vienna for expanded research and scholarship opportunities.
4. Develop and implement a model for succession planning especially at the senior executive and the Board of Director levels.
5. Collect outcome data that demonstrates the University is meeting educational needs of students.
6. Demonstrate that a process exists to collect meaningful data to evaluate and improve teaching methods throughout the curriculum.
7. Develop outcome indicators and metrics that can be used to improve programs of study and the curriculum.
8. Develop English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language for students in public health and social work.
9. Develop formal affiliation agreements with other EU universities for collaborative study abroad opportunities in the St. Elizabeth network of global programs.
10. Develop a formal process that provides for student accommodations for all types of disabilities in the classroom.
11. Implement study abroad experiences for students in English speaking countries.
12. Consider creating a local advisory board of professionals and consumers at campus locations outside of Bratislava.
13. Some locations need improved facilities and expanded classrooms to meet student academic needs and growth in enrollments.
14. At the various campus locations, consider establishing local student government councils.
15. Experiment with distance learning courses and hybrid courses in public health, social work, and nursing.
16. Consider developing Russian and English language courses as electives.
17. Prepare a leadership development program for managers, program directors and faculty who want to develop stronger management skills for leadership positions.
18. Consider a faculty exchange program to universities English speaking countries, develop co-teaching opportunities, new course development and expanded research.
19. Involve alumni and practitioners in appropriate areas of the University.
20. Use competency based education as a basis to develop the curriculum, course content, learning objectives, teaching and assessment methods.
21. The University will evaluate course instrumentation and the curriculum and use the results to improve quality of teaching and the learning environment.
22. The University will develop a method to evaluate external projects in other countries, as well as a process to ensure sustainability of efforts in other countries.

## VII. ACCREDITATION DECISION

### A. Programs

The site visit team recommends that the following bachelors degree (BSc), master degree (MSc) and doctorate degree (PhD) programs at St. Elizabeth University be accredited:

| Name of Program                        | Type of Program | Mode of Program | Accreditation |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Public Health                          | BSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | BSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Public Health                          | MSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | MSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Public Health                          | Ph.D.           | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | Ph.D.           | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Health Administration in Public Health | MSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | MSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Nursing                                | BSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | BSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Nursing                                | MSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | MSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Nursing                                | Ph.D.           | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | Ph.D.           | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Dental Technology                      | BSc             | Full-time       | Yes           |
|  | BSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Medical Technology                     | BSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Medical Technology                     | MSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |
| Radiology Technology                   | BSc             | Part-time       | Yes           |

|                                |       |           |     |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------|-----|
|                                |       |           |     |
| Social Work                    | BSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                | BSc   | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Social Work                    | MSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                | Msc   | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Social Work                    | Ph.D. | Full-time | Yes |
|                                | Ph.D. | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Clinical Research              | MSc   | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Clinical Research              | Ph.D. | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Rehabilitation & Physiotherapy | BSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                |       | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Tropical Infection Control     | MSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                |       | Part-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Missionology                   | BSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                | MSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Sociology                      | BSc   | Full-Time | Yes |
|                                | MSc   | Full-time | Yes |
|                                |       |           |     |
| Psychology                     | BSc   | Full-Time | Yes |
|                                | MSc   | Full-time | Yes |

**B. Length of Accreditation**

The accreditation team recommends accreditation for 5 years for all programs through 2016.

**C. Progress Report**

The team recommends a self-study progress report be completed in 4 years (2015) with an interim site visit.

**D. Next Site Visit**

The team recommends a site visit in Fall, 2016 or Spring, 2017.