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Introduction

Northwest Nazarene University has a long and distinguished history as an accredited institution, having been first accredited as a junior college in 1930 and subsequently by six additional specialized accreditation boards. Whether you are a member of the NNU community, an accreditation team member or a casual viewer of the NNU website, this information will give you a general overview of the regional accreditation process and a brief explanation of NNU's preparations for its regularly scheduled Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Higher Education Accreditation

Accreditation in higher education is a collegial process of self-review and peer review for improvement of academic quality and public accountability of institutions and programs. Higher education in the United States is served by eight regional accrediting agencies. This quality review process occurs on a periodic basis, usually every three to 10 years. Typically, it involves three major activities:

- A self-evaluation by an institution or program using the standards or criteria of an accrediting organization
- A peer review of an institution or program to gather

evidence of quality.

- A decision or judgment by an accrediting organization to accredit, accredit with conditions, or not accredit an institution/program.

NNU's Regional and Specialized Accreditations

Northwest Nazarene University has two kinds of accreditation: regional and specialized. Regionally, the University is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) which is an independent, non-profit membership organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as the regional authority on educational quality and institutional effectiveness for 159 higher education institutions in the seven-state Northwest region of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada,

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Oregon, Utah, and Washington. In addition to regional accreditation, several departments or programs are accredited by nationally-recognized specialized accreditation boards including the Association of Collegiate Business Programs, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, the Council on Social Work Education, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, and the National Association of Schools of Music.

Accreditation Reaffirmation

Accreditations must be reaffirmed periodically. Every institution is to conduct a self-study and be visited by an evaluation committee at least every ten years. In addition, each institution is to prepare an interim report and be visited by one or more representatives of the Commission at five year intervals between decennial visits.

NNU's last reaffirmation of accreditation was in 1997 and its last interim evaluation was in 2001. In October of 2006, a 10-member volunteer team from Northwest Council of Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) will visit the campus of Northwest Nazarene University for its regularly scheduled "Reaffirmation of Accreditation."

NNU Preparation Process Overview

Spring 2003

- Naming of accreditation committee chair and membership
- NASCU Accreditation workshop training for 3-4 key AC members
- Development of initial visit preparation calendar

Fall 2003

- September: Faculty Workshop Accreditation and Assessment Training with separate sessions for faculty, and for deans and chairs on self-study process, including:
 - introduction to NWCCU standards and
 - review of concerns from 1996 and 2001 reports and brief plans for addressing those which remain.

Spring 2004

- Beginning of sector and academic school documentation of monitoring of remediation and plans and goals through school minutes, trustee reports, and annual report to NWCCU

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Autumn 2004

- Start of sector and departmental self-studies

Spring 2005

- 2-4 additional AC members attend accreditation workshop in Seattle
- Inclusion of accreditation and institutional vision-related material in sector trustee reports and NWCCU report
- NWCCU pre-visit by Dr. Al Johnson

Autumn 2005

- Presentation of relevant institutional information at faculty workshop
- Continued work on sector and departmental self-studies

Spring 2006

- Dean development of school self-study summaries
- Exhibit room coordinator continues work on exhibit room
- Checking chapter exhibit references against received documents
- Planning for housing and meals and transportation of visiting team members

Summer 2006

- Finalizing of visit team and schedule
- Committee Chair begins to receive and do second revisions of Report Chapters
- February 2006--Draft copies of the entire report were made available to Board, college administration, (deans) chairs and to the library for student access.

Assessment (Claudia—just attach them to the assessment information that's already on our web site.)

Welcome to Team Members

Hello and thank you for setting aside your own immediate tasks to be part of NNU's accreditation reaffirmation process. At the time of this writing, Dr. Vivian Bull has been named chair of your visit team and NWCCU is finalizing hotel and other arrangements. As October 4-6, 2006 draws closer, your team chair, Dr. Vivian Bull and NNU will be providing you with additional logistical information. Until that more detailed information becomes available, here are some basics which are already confirmed:

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- Getting here:
 - If you're flying in, you'll be arriving at the Boise Airport (BOI) located 16 miles east of the NNU campus. NNU will make sure you are met by an NNU van or car for pickup in the downstairs baggage area of the airport and transported to your hotel. The drivers will be carrying letter-sized pieces of yellow paper with "NNU" printed on them in big letters.
 - If you're driving, your team chair will provide hotel information and schedule as it becomes available.
- Hotel arrangements:
 - Hotel reservations are in process.
 - Team members work room will be supplied with work tables and chairs, snacks, and requested office equipment and supplies.
- Visit transportation:
 - During your visit, you will be transported from your hotel to the campus in a University-supplied van. If off-campus interviews are necessary, the University will make arrangements to provide individual transportation for those.
- Campus work and exhibit room:
 - Exhibits and workspace will be reserved in the Wordsworth Room and the President's Dining Room on the north end of the NNU Student Center
- Key contacts:
 - Dr. Mark Pitts, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Accreditation Liaison Officer
 - Dr. Duane Slemmer, Accreditation Self-Study and Visit Coordinator
 - Ronda Seward, Visit Logistics Coordinator
 - Kathy Burns, Exhibit Room Coordinator