

SEVEN-YEAR ACCREDITATION CYCLE
Northwest Nazarene University

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Report Name	Year 1 Report	Year 3 Report and Visit		Year 5 Report	Year 7 Report and Visit
Report Scope	Standard One	Update Standard One; Add Two		Update Standards One and Two; Add Three and Four	Update Standards One – Four; Add Five
Action	Submit Report. Reviewed by team. Findings to Commission.	Submit Report. Team Visit for Standards One and Two.		Submit Report. Reviewed by team. Findings to Commission.	Submit Report. Team Visit for Standards Three – Five.

The five standards for accreditation are best understood within the context of the seven-year accreditation cycle. Although each is to be addressed during different stages of the cycle (Standard One in year one, Standard Two in year three, Standards Three and Four in year five, and Standard Five in year seven), the standards are interconnected and build upon each other in a recursive cycle of continuous improvement. For that reason, as an institution focuses on a given standard(s) for its Self-Evaluation Report, it does so in light of the standard(s) that have already been addressed, with the result that the information and analysis of previously addressed standards may be updated, expanded, and modified to produce a cohesive report.

Design and Function

The five standards for accreditation are statements that articulate the quality and effectiveness expected of accredited institutions, and collectively they provide a framework for continuous improvement within institutions. The five standards also serve as indicators by which institutions are evaluated by peers. The standards are designed to guide institutions in a process of self-reflection that blends analysis and synthesis in a holistic examination of:

- The institution's Mission and Core Themes;
- The translation of the Mission's Core Themes into assessable objectives supported by programs and services;
- The appraisal of the institution's potential to fulfill the Mission;
- The planning and implementation involved in achieving and assessing the desired outcomes of programs and services; and
- An evaluation of the results of the institution's efforts to fulfill the Mission and assess its ability to monitor its environment, adapt, and sustain itself as a viable institution.

Standards

Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

The institution articulates its purpose in a mission statement, and identifies core themes that comprise essential elements of that mission. In an examination of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations, the institution defines the parameters for mission fulfillment. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

Standard Two: Resources and Capacity

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution demonstrates the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures that promote effective management and operation of the institution.

Standard Three: Planning and Implementation

The institution engages in ongoing, participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to the achievement of the intended outcomes of its programs and services, accomplishment of its core themes, and fulfillment of its mission. The resulting plans reflect the interdependent nature of the institution's operations, functions, and resources. The institution demonstrates that the plans are implemented and are evident in the relevant activities of its programs and services, the adequacy of its resource allocation, and the effective application of institutional capacity. In addition, the institution demonstrates that its planning and implementation processes are sufficiently flexible so that the institution is able to address unexpected circumstances that have the potential to impact the institution's ability to accomplish its core theme objectives and to fulfill its mission.

Standard Four: Effectiveness and Improvement

The institution regularly and systematically collects data related to clearly defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and formulates evidence-based evaluations of the achievement of core theme objectives. It demonstrates clearly defined procedures for evaluating the integration and significance of institutional planning, the allocation of resources, and the application of capacity in its activities for achieving the intended outcomes of its programs and services and for achieving its core theme objectives. The institution disseminates assessment results to its constituencies and uses those results to effect improvement.

Standard Five: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Based on its definition of mission fulfillment and informed by the results of its analysis of accomplishment of its core theme objectives, the institution develops and publishes evidence-based evaluations regarding the extent to which it is fulfilling its mission. The institution regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact its mission and its ability to fulfill that mission. It demonstrates that it is capable of adapting, when necessary, its mission, core themes, programs, and services to accommodate changing and emerging needs, trends, and influences to ensure enduring institutional relevancy, productivity, viability, and sustainability.