

Institutional Accreditation

BACKGROUND

Accreditation is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public. Oregon State University is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), one of seven regional accrediting organizations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

NWCCU accreditation is the highest form of accreditation OSU can achieve and communicates how effectively we are fulfilling our mission, the plans that support that mission and the value of our degrees. Accreditation also qualifies OSU and its enrolled students for access to federal funds to support teaching, research, service and student financial aid and facilitates transfer of credits among other accredited institutions.

CURRENT STATUS

In November 2017, Provost Feser convened OSU's Accreditation Steering Committee to:

- Engage the university community in the accreditation process,
- Provide leadership and advice regarding the accreditation process and development of the Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report,
- Review and provide feedback about the Self-Evaluation Report, and
- Serve as liaisons during the accreditation site visit in spring 2019.

In January 2018, our accreditation efforts were officially launched with a kick-off meeting attended by more than 80 individuals across the university.

The immediate focus of the steering committee (and accreditation subcommittees) is drafting the Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report, commonly called the Self-Study Report. The NWCCU prescribes the format and identifies specific standards for the report. The standards are interconnected and build upon each other, providing a framework for continuous improvement within institutions. They also serve as the basis by which institutions are evaluated by peers.

The Self-Evaluation Report must address the following five standards:

- Standard 1: Mission, Core Themes and Expectations,
- Standard 2: Resources and Capacity,
- Standard 3: Institutional Planning and Implementation,
- Standard 4: Effectiveness and Improvement, and
- Standard 5: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability.

Over the next 12 months, hundreds of contributors will gather information, analyze data, draft responses to standards, and prepare for our site-visit. Combined, these standards and their associated objectives and metrics will guide the university's process of self-reflection.

The University Accreditation webpage will be a reference site throughout the process. Additionally, campus forums will be held in the coming months with constituents from across campus invited to learn more about how they can engage in our comprehensive process.

NEXT STEPS

The university is expected to complete the Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report in early 2019. After the report is submitted, NWCCU will convene a team that will visit campus in spring 2019 as part of their review process. A final determination and recommendations are expected from NWCCU in summer 2019. The Academic Strategies Committee will be provided regular updates throughout this process.