ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY:
THE NEW AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

SELF-STUDY PLAN

SUBMITTED TO THE
NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

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# Table of Contents

- Introduction 1
- Hallmarks of an Effective Self-Study Process 2
- The Timeline for the Self-Study Process 3
- Goals of the Self-Study Process 4
- Organizational Structure of the Self-Study Effort 9
- Addressing the Criteria for Accreditation 14
- Federal Compliance Information in the Self-Study Report 16
- Engaging ASU’s Constituencies in the Process 17
- Leveraging Existing Institutional Assessment Efforts in the Process 19
- Working Outline of the Self-Study Report 21
- Appendix A: Charge to the Steering Committee by President Crow 24
- Appendix B: The North Central Association Higher Learning Commission’s Proposed Criteria for Accreditation 26
PLAN FOR THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION
SELF-STUDY AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

Arizona State University (ASU) is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association, with institutional accreditation reviewed for reaffirmation every ten years. Since the last reaffirmation for ASU took place in 2003, the next reaffirmation of the institutional accreditation for ASU will be in 2013.

On July 1, 2002, during the midst of the previous accreditation process, Dr. Michael M. Crow became the sixteenth president of Arizona State University, and immediately began guiding the transformation of ASU into a new model for American higher education, “the New American University.” This transformation has entailed significant and broad changes in all aspects of ASU, and the decade covered by the 2013 accreditation reaffirmation process subtends that transformation, providing the theme for the ASU Self-Study: “Arizona State University: The New American University”.

HLC provides concepts for the design of the Self-Study process in the Higher Learning Commission Handbook of Accreditation (herein, “the Handbook”). As well, many examples of Self-Study plans from other institutions also are available on the web, and the ASU Self-Study Plan takes advantage of those examples. The ASU Self-Study Plan embodies the four primary principles articulated by President Michael Crow’s charge to the Self-Study Steering Committee in October 2010 (see Appendix A): The Plan (1) must use methods that will engage participation from all constituencies within the communities served by ASU; (2) must leverage and expand upon the already-existing institutional assessment efforts; (3) must draw on the expertise of recognized and credible leaders at ASU; and (4) provide abundant opportunities for input, feedback, and comment on topics addressed by the self-study document and on the document itself. The charge also requires that the ASU Self-Study Report be finalized by November 1, 2012. In that letter, he commits all resources necessary to successfully carry out this charge.

The guideposts of the accreditation process are the Criteria for Accreditation established by HLC. HLC is revising the current criteria (which had been established in January 2005) and has established a preliminary implementation schedule for those proposed criteria; the “beta” version of those revised criteria is provided in Appendix B. The preliminary implementation schedule indicates that, while basing the ASU Self-Study on the 2005 HLC criteria is an option, the document developed would then require a “crosswalk” between the 2005 criteria and the proposed criteria. For this reason, and in the interests of developing mechanisms for ongoing quality assurance and improvement beyond 2013, the proposed criteria provided in Appendix B will be used as the basis for the ASU Self-Study Report. If the proposed criteria are amended or revised during the course of the Self-Study, the Steering Committee will incorporate those changes into the Self-Study effort.
HALLMARKS OF AN EFFECTIVE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

ASU maintains its institutional accreditation through the HLC’s Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ), described in the Handbook. As its name implies, the PEAQ process is intended both to document that the institution has met the established criteria for accreditation, and that the institution continues to improve in its operations. The PEAQ process, listed chronologically, has three elements, as given in the Handbook:

An intensive self-study undertaken by competent and knowledgeable leaders of the institution, culminating in a Self-Study Report that serves as the institution’s application to the Higher Learning Commission for accreditation reaffirmation

An in-depth evaluation conducted during a site visit by an Evaluation Team composed of peers selected by the Higher Learning Commission (with consultation with the institution being accredited), summarized in a report by the Evaluation Team to the Higher Learning Commission

A thorough review of the Evaluation Team report and application materials by the HLC, with final action on the request for accreditation renewal.

Based on the experience of the institutions that have maintained accreditation through the PEAQ process, a set of “hallmarks for an effective process” has been developed. As described in the Handbook, those attributes indicate that an effective self-study process:

1. Fits the distinctive nature of the organization.
2. Achieves stated goals that guide the design and the conduct of the process.
3. Ensures effective evaluation of the whole organization.
4. Promises to have an impact on the organization beyond the Commission visit.
5. Engages multiple constituencies of the organization.
7. Has strong presidential and board support.
8. Draws on the expertise and credibility of recognized leaders throughout the organization.
9. Maintains regular and effective communication links with organizational constituencies.
10. Produces evidence to show that the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation are met.
11. Produces a self-study report that meets the Commission’s needs.
12. Testifies to the organization’s commitment to peer review.

These twelve attributes represent the fundamental design parameters of all elements of the ASU Self-Study process, with several of them reflected in President Crow’s charge to the Steering Committee. All work related to the development of the Self-Study report and all interactions with the Higher Learning Commission by the Steering Committee and by Criterion Teams will incorporate these hallmarks.
THE TIMELINE FOR THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

Based on recommendations from the Handbook, as well as prior experience at ASU and other similar institutions, the tentative timeline for the Self-Study process is presented here. As always, circumstances will dictate changes and re-orderings of these steps, but the tentative calendar nonetheless illustrates the flow of events in the process.

Aug 2009  Self-Study Coordinator appointed
Fall 2009  Self-Study Coordinator reviews previous ASU Self-Study Report and reports from similar institutions; drafts outline
Spring 2010  Steering Committee (SC) members identified; SC begins planning
Apr 9-13, 2010  Self-Study representatives attend HLC annual meeting
September 2010  President provides charge, goals to SC
Dec 2010 – Mar 2011  Criterion Team Co-leaders selected
March 30, 2011  First organizational meeting of SC and Criterion Team Co-leaders
Apr 8-12, 2011  Self-Study representatives attend HLC annual meeting
Apr-May 2011  Criterion Teams and Resource Team formed, begin gathering data
April 27, 2011  NCA notification of upcoming review, selection of site visit dates
April 30, 2011  Self-Study Plan submitted to Provost for review
May 9, 2011  Forum with senior administrators to introduce Self-Study Plan
June 2011  Self-Study Plan revised as necessary and submitted to HLC
June-Nov 2011  Criterion Teams continue activities, write draft chapters
June - August 2011  Resource Room established
August 2011  “Kickoff” event with University Management Team
December 2011  SC reviews draft reports from Criterion Teams
Jan-Feb 2012  Criterion Teams revise reports following SC review
Mar-Apr 2012  First draft of Self-Study Report; HLC visit publicized community
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2012  Self-Study representatives attend HLC annual meeting
Apr-May 2012  Draft Self-Study Report distributed internally for comments to selected administrators and faculty
May 2012  HLC sends list of proposed Evaluation Team members for review and comment
June-Aug 2012  Self-Study Report edited by SC
Aug-Sept 2012  Self-Study Report available for community; further SC review
Sept-Oct 2012  Focus groups held for comments on report from faculty, staff, and constituents; Self-Study Report revised based on comments
October 2012  HLC notification of Evaluation Team members; Self-Study Report draft provided to Evaluation Team leader
Oct-Nov 2012  Third Party Comment process: Invitation to public for comments to NCA concerning the institution's accreditation
Oct-Nov 2012  SC integrates results from focus groups and Evaluation Team leader comments into Self-Study Report
Oct – Dec 2012  Site visit arrangements made by SC
November 1, 2012  Self-Study Report is finalized by SC
January 2013  Final version of Self-Study Report is provided to Evaluation Team
March 2013  Site visit occurs
April 2013  Self-Study representatives attend HLC annual meeting
April-May 2013  Draft Team Report received and correction of errors of fact
June-July 2013  Institutional response to final Team Report and selection of review process (Reader's Panel or Review Committee)
Aug or Nov 2013  HLC final action; notification of action one week after meeting
GOALS OF THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

1. Goals present in the charge to the Steering Committee

The goals for the Self-Study process were provided in the charge to the Self-Study Steering Committee by President Crow. President Crow’s charge requires that the Self-Study:

1. Provides compelling evidence supporting the renewal of ASU’s accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission based on the Commission’s established criteria for accreditation;
2. Reflects the distinctive nature of the mission, vision and goals of ASU as the New American University;
3. Summarizes the major changes that have taken place at ASU since the last accreditation reaffirmation in 2003;
4. Accurately presents the contexts, opportunities and obstacles that ASU faces in carrying out its mission;
5. Contains background and evaluative perspectives on all operations of the institution;
6. Demonstrates ASU’s compliance with all federal higher education legal requirements;
7. Serves as a baseline for measuring future efforts towards improving and enhancing ASU’s service to Arizona, the nation, and the world.

2. The ASU Self-Study and the HLC “Pathways” Project

The Higher Learning Commission is taking steps to ensure that the activity associated with accreditation represents an ongoing, rather than episodic, set of practices that ensure and advance the quality of the institution. To this end, HLC is developing a set of approaches called “Pathways” to assure that accreditation represents a publicly-accessible assessment of the current quality of the institution rather than a snapshot provided every ten years.

The “Open Pathway” process is applicable to institutions that, like ASU, are already accredited by HLC. This process includes a continually-updated Evidence File that provides the data for an Assurance Argument for accreditation, which is reviewed in the fourth and tenth years of the accreditation cycle. At present, HLC is expected to provide the web-based technology to maintain the Evidence File and Assurance Argument for accredited institutions to ensure that this material remains available as long as the institution maintains accredited status with HLC.

While the “Pathways” mechanism is still under development, the Steering Committee agrees with HLC on the enhanced value of moving from an episodic to an ongoing assurance process. Much of the information to be gathered for this Self-Study can become part of the Evidence File for future accreditation reviews in the Open Pathway process. Thus, in addition to the goals provided by President Crow, the Steering Committee at ASU has also committed the ASU Self-Study process to seek ways of documenting, developing, and incorporating mechanisms into the operations of the institution that will continue to provide ongoing evaluation and assurance that the institution maintains and advances the quality of its programs and services.
3. Strategic planning and the Self-Study process

The accreditation reaffirmation process provides institutions an opportunity to examine how strategic planning for the institution meets the Criteria for Accreditation and how that planning sustains continuous improvement for its educational programs. Strategic planning at ASU encompasses efforts at the level of the Arizona University System (by the Arizona Board of Regents, ABOR), as well as within ASU at the institution level. The Self-Study process will demonstrate how the system-level and institution-level strategic planning initiatives meet HLC expectation and advance the educational quality of ASU.

At the system level, as one of the state public universities of Arizona, ASU is guided by the strategic directions set by ABOR for the Arizona University System. Those institutions have a common set of goals described in the ABOR document, “2020 Vision – The Arizona University System Long-Term Strategic Plan 2009-2020”, provided in Exhibit 1. Each goal has a set of strategies for advancing the institution towards that target. The ASU Self-Study process will document how these goals and processes reflect expectations within the Criteria for Accreditation.

Strategic planning at the institution-level has guided ASU in its transformation to a model of the New American University. The current five-year strategic plan for ASU (covering fiscal years 2012-2016) provides an internal developed set of benchmarks, including the Mission Statement and specific institutional goals related to 2020 Vision. At the heart of the New American University are a set of Core Values and Design Aspirations. Collectively, these benchmarks undergird all activities at the institution. These items are provided in Exhibit 2. As part of the Self-Study, the process will assess how ASU has measured up to those institutional-level benchmarks, values, and aspirations, as well as document how those have contributed to advancing the quality of the educational programs at ASU.
EXHIBIT 1. 2020 VISION: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ARIZONA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM 2008–2020

MISSION

- To increase the educational attainment of Arizona citizens by producing enough high-quality university degrees for the state to be nationally competitive by the year 2020.
- To increase the prominence of the system’s research enterprise so that it can contribute to the knowledge economy and improve the quality of life in Arizona.
- To provide the educated workforce needed to fill shortages and to stimulate demand for higher paying jobs in Arizona.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. Educational Excellence
   - Align the education pipeline
   - Close opportunity and success gaps
   - Plan for and incentivize higher degree production
   - Minimize financial barriers for low-income families

2. Research Excellence
   - Increase access to new and existing sources of federal and state research support
   - Recruit, develop, and retain top research faculty and faculty teams
   - Promote the transfer of new knowledge into the Arizona and global communities

3. Workforce and Community
   - Expand partnerships with business and community
   - Advance Arizona’s communities through more extensive service and engagement
   - Prepare Arizona’s workforce for the knowledge economy

4. Productivity
   - Productivity initiatives to identify strengths and weaknesses and to develop recommendations for better utilization of resources
   - Comprehensive funding policy review
   - Track the financial strengths of the universities
   - Improve tuition and financial aid policies to align with affordability needs, funding adequacy and share of responsibility for educational costs
EXHIBIT 2. ASU INSTITUTIONAL BENCHMARKS

MISSION STATEMENT

To establish ASU as the model for a New American University, measured not by who we exclude, but rather by who we include; pursuing research and discovery that benefits the public good; assuming major responsibility for the economic, social, and cultural vitality and health and well-being of the community.

ASU GOALS ALIGNED WITH 2020 VISION GOALS

1. 2020 Vision Goal: Education Excellence, Productivity

ASU Goal: Access and Quality for All

- Expand university access to match Arizona diversification and growth
- Improve freshmen persistence to 90 percent
- Enhance university graduation rate to 70-75 percent as soon as possible
- Develop ASU culture that represents a commitment to quality and community outreach
- Enroll 100,000 continuing education and degree completion students (including our contribution to AZUN)
- Enhance linkages with community colleges so as to expand baccalaureate degree production
- Enhance student development and individual student learning

ASU Goal: Establish National Standing in Academic Quality and Impact of Colleges and Schools in Every Field

- Attain national standing in academic quality for each school
- Attain national standing in the value added to our graduates in each school
- Become the leading university academically (faculty, discovery, research, creativity) in at least one core subject within each school or college

2. 2020 Vision Goal: Research Excellence, Productivity

ASU Goal: National Comprehensive University by 2012

- Become a leading center for interdisciplinary science and technology discovery and development
- Become a leading center for discovery and scholarship in the social sciences, arts and humanities
- Enhance research and discovery competitiveness to more than $300 million (in 2006 dollars) in annual research expenditures
- Enhance regional economic competitiveness through research and discovery and value-added education programs
3. 2020 Vision Goal: Workforce and Community Engagement, Productivity

**ASU Goal: Enhance Our Local Impact and Social Embeddedness**

- Enhance linkage to local and regional social and community development groups
- Establish/develop/enhance linkages and partnerships with local, regional and national NGO’s, governments and public agencies, and private sector firms with a focus on community development
- Undertake applied sustainability research that impacts the social, environmental and economic evolution of the southwest
- Provide an objective and ongoing monitoring role for the region’s progress through the ASU Indicators Project

**ASU’S CORE VALUES**

ASU is committed to excellence, access and impact in everything we do. We measure ourselves by the outcomes our students achieve, the accomplishments of our graduates, the research we contribute to the public good, and by the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround us.

**ASU’S DESIGN ASPIRATIONS**

Eight design aspirations guide ASU’s transformation.

1. **Leverage Our Place** - ASU embraces its cultural, socioeconomic and physical setting.
2. **Transform Society** - ASU catalyzes social change by being connected to social needs.
3. **Value Entrepreneurship** - ASU uses its knowledge and encourages innovation.
4. **Conduct Use-Inspired Research** - ASU research has purpose and impact.
5. **Enable Student Success** - ASU is committed to the success of each unique student.
6. **Fuse Intellectual Disciplines** - ASU creates knowledge by transcending academic disciplines.
7. **Be Socially Embedded** - ASU connects with communities through mutually beneficial partnerships.
8. **Engage Globally** - ASU engages with people and issues locally, nationally and internationally.
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SELF-STUDY EFFORT

1. Self-Study Coordinator

In August 2009, Executive Vice President and Provost Elizabeth D. Capaldi appointed Dr. Barry G. Ritchie, Professor of Physics, to serve as Director of the 2013 Higher Learning Commission Re-Accreditation and Self-Study. In this role, he serves as the Self-Study Coordinator. His experience in the past as a department chair, an interim vice president and dean, chair of the Academic Chairs and Directors Council, as well as his scholarly activity as a faculty member, provide a broad working knowledge of the institution for the effort.

The roles and responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator include:

1. Provide day-to-day leadership and oversight of the entire Self-Study effort
2. Develop and monitor organizational structures for the Self-Study effort, including recruiting Steering Committee members and Criterion Team co-leaders
3. Develop background sections and appendices of the Self-Study Report, working with appropriate Steering Committee and Criterion Team leaders
4. Assist Criterion Teams in their efforts as needed
5. Serve as the primary spokesperson for the accreditation effort

Following review of recent accreditation reaffirmation efforts at other large public research universities, the Self-Study Coordinator chose the organizational structure shown in Figure 1 for the ASU Self-Study effort. The duties of the various components are described below.

Figure 1. Organizational Structure for the Self-Study
2. Accreditation Effort Steering Committee

The Self-Study process has a six-person Steering Committee comprised of recognized university leaders, broadly knowledgeable and representative of the four campuses that make up ASU, including representation from the faculty shared-governance body, the University Academic Senate. The Steering Committee is chaired by the Self-Study Coordinator. Each member of the Steering Committee also works with a specific Criterion Team.

Members of the Steering Committee in addition to the Self-Study Coordinator are:

**Dr. Maria T. Allison**, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate College. Allison is also the University Accreditation Officer and the HLC Accreditation Liaison. She will be working with Criterion Team 5.

**Dr. Frederick C. Corey**, Vice Provost, Dean of University College, and Director of the School of Letters and Sciences. He will be working with Criterion Team 3.

**Dr. Mark Lussier**, President of the Tempe Academic Assembly and Professor of English. He will be working with Criterion Team 4.

**Dr. Eduardo O. Pagán**, Bob Stump Endowed Professor of History, and former chair, Department of Languages, Cultures and History. He will be working with Criterion Team 2.

**Dr. Jean C. Stutz**, Professor of Applied Science and Mathematics. She will be working with Criterion Team 1.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee members, in addition to those spelled out in the charge by President Crow, are:

1. Provide overall leadership to the Self-Study process
2. Assist in the work of the Criterion Teams, including service directly on one of the Criterion Teams serving as a conduit for communication and information
3. Review drafts of the Self-Study Report and coordinate changes
4. Determine the format for the Self-Study Report, based on reviews of similar documents elsewhere
5. Develop, review, and approve introductory and background chapters, appendices, and exhibits for the Self-Study Report
6. Facilitate the communication of the Self-Study Report to the various constituencies of ASU
7. Produce the final version of the Self-Study Report
8. Host the Evaluation Team during the site visit of the Evaluation Team
9. Provide effort for wrap-up and closeout of the accreditation reaffirmation process
3. Criterion Teams

A Criterion Team has been established for each of the five HLC Criteria for Accreditation, with two co-leaders for each team. These ten co-leaders are acknowledged leaders within the ASU faculty with strong communication and organizational skills. They have been chosen to be broadly representative of the academic diversity of the institution, to encompass a working knowledge of all four campuses, and to serve as conduits of information between their teams and the Steering Committee. As noted previously, the activities and products of the Criterion Teams must be consistent with the hallmarks listed above and the goals for the Self-Study articulated by President Crow.

The names of the Criterion Team co-leaders are provided in Table I. The Steering Committee representative identified for each Criterion Team is also indicated. Criterion Team co-leaders have the following responsibilities in addition to those noted below for Criterion Team members:

1. Recruit appropriate members for their teams
2. Organize and lead their team’s efforts
3. Coordinate information requests with the Self-Study Coordinator.

Much of the critical work related to the Self-Study process is carried out by the Criterion Teams. The responsibilities of members of the Criterion Teams are:

1. Act as campus leaders in the Self-Study process.
2. Review HLC materials and Self-Study documents from ASU and similar institutions to identify and utilize best practices for their particular criterion.
3. Gather evidence related to their particular criterion, supporting evaluative statements with evidence.
4. Produce reports that evaluate the University and its programs based on the HLC criteria, reflecting the transformation of ASU into the New American University.
5. Assist drafting the chapter for their Criterion Team in the Self-Study Report.
6. Provide assistance as needed in preparations for, and during, the on-site visit.

As noted above, each Steering Committee member serves on one of the Criterion Teams. The Steering Committee representative will facilitate communication and coordination between the Criterion Team and the Steering Committee, including progress reports on team activity and coordination of information requests.
# Table I: Criterion Team Leadership

| Mission                                                                 | Dr. Robert Clinton, Foundation Professor of Law, Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law  
|                                                                       | Dr. Elizabeth Hinde, Director of Teacher Preparation, Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College  
|                                                                       | Steering Committee: Dr. Jean Stutz  
| Integrity                                                             | Dr. Patricia Friedrich, Division of Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies  
|                                                                       | Dr. William Verdini, Chair, Supply Chain Management, W. P. Carey School of Business  
|                                                                       | Steering Committee: Dr. Eduardo Pagán  
| Academic Programs: Quality, Resources and Support                     | Dr. Duku Anokye, Associate Director, Division of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies  
|                                                                       | Dr. Jennifer Fewell, Professor, School of Life Sciences  
|                                                                       | Steering Committee: Dr. Maria Allison  
| Academic Programs: Evaluation and Improvement                         | Dr. Hilairy Hartnett, Associate Professor, School of Earth and Space Exploration  
|                                                                       | Dr. Chell Roberts, Executive Dean, College of Technology and Innovation  
|                                                                       | Steering Committee: Dr. Mark Lussier  
| Resources and Planning                                                | Dr. Douglas Olsen, Associate Professor of Marketing, W. P. Carey School of Business  
|                                                                       | Dr. Linda Vaughan, Associate Dean, College of Nursing and Health Innovations  
|                                                                       | Steering Committee: Dr. Frederick Corey  

4. Resource Team

In the course of the Self-Study process, Criterion Teams will require insight and background on university procedures, policies, practices, and history of which the team members may be unfamiliar. Evaluative assessments based on the Criteria for Accreditation will also demand access to, and focused analysis of, specific data sets in various offices within the institution.

To facilitate timely response to such needs, a Resource Team will be assembled from persons who are very knowledgeable of specific portions of University operations, capabilities, and activities. Those individuals will be drawn from the ASU institutional offices responsible for specific aspects, as shown in Table II.

Requests for information from the Resource Team will be coordinated through the Self-Study Coordinator.

**TABLE II: RESOURCE TEAM COMPOSITION**

The Resource Team will include a designated representative from each of the offices indicated for responding to information requests from Criterion Teams.

- Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- Office of the Dean of ASU Online
- Office of Educational Outreach and Student Affairs
- Office of Enrollment Management
- Office of the General Counsel
- ASU Online
- Office of Institutional Analysis
- Intercollegiate Athletics Administration
- Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development
- University Office of Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness
- University Technology Office
ADDRESSING THE CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

The primary purpose of the Self-Study Report is to provide evidential documentation that ASU meets all the Criteria for Accreditation, provided in Appendix B. All areas of operations at ASU are covered in this self-study process.

Each Criterion chapter in the Self-Study Report will conclude with evaluative statements relative to the criterion that are supported by the evidence provided in the chapter. Additionally, chapters will also present information in keeping with the theme, *Arizona State University: The New American University*, to support evaluative statements regarding ASU’s progress toward the realization of that model. This will require that the benchmarks presented in Exhibit 1 are reflected in the text and are shown to be reflected in the Criteria for Accreditation, as well.

Each of the revised Criteria for Accreditation will be addressed in a chapter devoted to that criterion. Insofar as reasonable, each chapter should be independent of the other chapters of the Self-Study Report without being needlessly repetitive.

Within each of the revised Criteria for Accreditation, HLC identifies “Core Components” and “Subcomponents” that guide a thorough evaluation of the institution’s ability to meet the given Criterion. Those Core Components and Subcomponents (listed with the Criteria in Appendix B) must be individually and specifically addressed in each Criterion chapter. The discussion related to those should be presented in order unless some other reordering proves to be especially advantageous in terms of clear presentation.

The discussion in each Criterion chapter must not neglect mention of challenges and/or areas for improvement. These may have been identified by our ongoing assessment systems, as described below, or through the work of the Criterion Teams. Brief case studies of how such problems are identified and addressed can serve as examples of the continuous improvement mindset of the University.

In reviewing aspects of ASU academic programs related to accreditation, the Self-Study will include the burgeoning online courses and programs being offered through ASU Online, documenting that those programs are of comparable substance and rigor. Discussion of special facilities, such as the ASU Research Park and Sky Song, should appear, as well. Where particular opportunities, achievements and challenges related to online programs and special facilities are identified, those will be included in the Self-Study Report.

Much of the evidence for the Self-Study will be in the form of documents that are referenced by footnotes within the chapters of the Self-Study Report. Those documents will be captured in digital form and stored in the Virtual Resource Room for the accreditation effort. The Virtual Resource Room will become a portion of the web site devoted to the accreditation effort. The Virtual Resource Room will be fully accessible to the Evaluation Team during their site visit. The Self-Study Report itself will be available electronically on the ASU accreditation web site, and links to evidential documentation will be provided within the Self-Study Report to facilitate access to those documents in the Virtual Resource Room. Elements of the Virtual Resource Room should be maintained as part of the Assurance Argument for the transition to the HLC Open Pathway ongoing accreditation effort following 2013.
Following the format of self-study documents at other institutions, individual chapters should follow these general guidelines:

- Chapters should be about 20 pages in length.
- Each chapter should begin with an introductory section addressing the Criterion and how it relates to the ASU Benchmarks. If an overview or descriptive discussion is helpful in framing the evidence presented in the chapter, that can be included in the introductory section.
- The Core Components of each Criterion should be addressed in individual evaluative sections in turn, unless another ordering presents clear advantages in presentation. Within the section for a particular Core Component, the Subcomponents related to that Component will be addressed. If an ordering other than the HLC ordering of the Components is determined to provide a clearer presentation, the Core Components and Subcomponents must nonetheless be specifically stated and addressed. Each section should close with an evaluative statement for that Core Component, marshalling the evidence provided to support that statement.
- When a specific item may impact more than one of the Criteria for Accreditation, the co-leaders and Steering Committee representatives for the impacted Criterion Teams will coordinate coverage of those items, with discussion and concurrence by the Steering Committee.
- Illustrative examples of best practices should be presented. Institution-wide and smaller scale examples are acceptable, provided they are illustrative of general practice. These illustrations should be linked to the evaluative arguments related to Criteria, Components, or Subcomponents.
- All graphic and tabular presentations should be connected to evaluative statements addressing the Core Components and Subcomponents.
- Each chapter should close with a section that reiterates the evaluative statements related to the Criteria for Accreditation and ASU Benchmarks, points out accomplishments and achievements since the reaffirmation of accreditation, and underlines challenges to be addressed.
FEDERAL COMPLIANCE INFORMATION IN THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

The HLC Handbook of Accreditation outlines expectations for the Self-Study Report regarding how institutions accredited by HLC must document the institution’s compliance with particular elements of the federal laws regarding higher education. The Handbook provides the following introductory overview:

The 1992 and 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act, and subsequent changes to federal regulations by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), put into law several requirements for accrediting agencies that seek federal recognition. The Commission has held and will continue to hold federal recognition as an approved accrediting agency. Through this recognition, the Commission’s accredited organizations and some organizations holding candidate status qualify for a variety of federal financial aid programs. Congress will reauthorize the Higher Education Act in 2004, and the Commission may need to revise its Federal Compliance Program to include additional requirements.

Both the self-study report (either in the main body or in an addendum) and the Team Report need a special section entitled “Federal Compliance.” In it, the organization and team are to address the following Commission policies:

- Credits, Program Length, and Tuition (policy I.C.7)
- Institutional Compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (policy I.A.5)
- Federal Compliance Visits to Off-Campus Locations (policy I.C.2)
- Institution’s Advertising and Recruitment Materials (policy IV.B.2)
- Professional Accreditation (policy III.A.1.)
- Requirements of Institutions Holding Dual Institutional Accreditation (policy III.A.3)
- Institutional Records of Student Complaints (policy IV.B.4)

The Self-Study Report will contain a chapter or addendum that specifically addresses ASU’s compliance with these HLC policies and U. S. Department of Education expectations.
ENGAGING ASU’S CONSTITUENCIES IN THE PROCESS AND GATHERING FEEDBACK ON THE SELF-STUDY

As noted in the New American University Design Aspirations presented earlier, ASU is committed to being socially embedded, creating linkages and partnerships that benefit all the constituencies it serves. Those constituencies may be defined as those who have a reasonable standing to place expectations on and receive services from the institution.

As the largest state-supported institution of higher learning in Arizona, ASU recognizes its critical role in improving the well-being of the people of the State of Arizona, its primary body of constituents. All those who call on the faculty, staff, and students of ASU to develop and apply their knowledge and skills to problems they face represent another constituency. Both are explicitly or tacitly recognized in the ASU Benchmarks. These groups form the external constituencies of ASU.

There are also internal constituencies within ASU, as well. For example, the faculty and the staff also represent constituencies with their own expectations for ASU as a workplace and a platform for personal development.

Going beyond these identifications of external and internal constituencies, opportunities for “third party” comment directly to HLC also must be provided as the Evaluation Team site visit approaches, as required by federal law and by HLC. Those third parties are identified by HLC in their “Third Party Comment: Policy and Procedures” document (HLC Policy IV.A.8) as:

- Students--prospective, current, and former students/alumni
- Financial supporters--taxpayers, parents, general donors, churches, denominations
- The local community--government, civic groups, religious community, neighbors, area businesses,
- Elementary/secondary schools, other postsecondary institutions
- The state or national community--state government, sponsoring corporations
- Others--contractual partners, employers of graduates, parties to articulation agreements, etc.

Because of its commitment to being socially embedded, ASU has many direct connections to all these constituencies, represented by the active participation of ASU personnel on governing boards, advisory committees, and other bodies promoting the welfare of those constituencies. To engage all these constituencies, the Self Study Coordinator and the Steering Committee will utilize those connections, working with the ASU Public Affairs office to craft a Communication Program that will use effective mechanisms to ensure opportunities for input, comment, and suggestions during the Self-Study process. The mechanisms of this Communication Program may utilize, for example, official press releases, internal e-mail distribution, the ASU web site, the student newspaper, the alumni magazine, and local newspaper and radio outlets.
During the data-gathering phase of the Self-Study, it is expected that Criterion Teams will interview selected constituents to gather information relevant to their chapters, and the information gathered during those interviews will form part of the data used in the chapter produced. Criterion Teams will also hold public presentations on the results of their efforts as presented in a draft of the Self-Study Report to gain additional feedback and comment prior to finalizing the Self-Study Report. These presentations will be announced in advance through the Communication Program.

As the time for the site visit of the Evaluation Team approaches, public notices will be provided to ensure all constituencies are aware of the purpose of the site visit, the dates of the visit, and the current accreditation status of ASU. An invitation to send public comments directly to HLC (with a deadline of no less than one month before the site visit) will be provided with that announcement.
LEVERAGING EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT EFFORTS IN THE PROCESS

ASU has established multi-faceted assessment systems for its operations, academic programs and services. These include, for example, systems designed to meet standards present in specialized academic accreditation agencies for professional programs, ongoing Academic Program Review processes, and standards of best practice for business systems and data security. These assessment systems will be leveraged and built upon for the Self-Study.

The systems currently in place include four distinct and interrelated aspects that inform decision making throughout the institution, and that drive continuous improvement for all university operations and services. As shown in Figure 2, those four components are:

1. **Academic Program Assessment.** Ongoing academic reviews and assessments of student learning and program quality in all graduate and undergraduate majors, minors, and certificates. These utilize multiple direct and indirect measures, including external peer review and standards compliance.

2. **Non-academic & Co-curricular Assessment.** Places particular emphasis on the assessment of student learning that occurs through the delivery of services offered by those units in addition to customary measures of student satisfaction.

3. **Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment.** Measures student learning across the curriculum, utilizing standardized assessment techniques as well as course-embedded ones.

4. **Institutional Effectiveness.** Measures the effectiveness of the units that provide the infrastructure and environment in which learning occurs at ASU. These processes include periodic reviews of research centers and institutes.

**FIGURE 2. ASSESSMENT FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AT ASU**
The leadership of the institution has communicated the importance of maintaining an assessment system that serves multiple needs beyond those presented by HLC or specialized accreditation requirements. This has created a culture of performance assessment that pervades the institution. The scale of ASU necessitates the generation of substantial amounts of information to inform course-level instructional strategies, support curriculum planning on multiple levels, provide justification for the allocation of resources, support short- and long-term institutional planning, and inform leadership about progress toward achievement of institutional goals.

Faculty, administrators, and staff who have assessment responsibilities are encouraged to incorporate assessment activities into the normal policies and procedures. Information collected and compiled by units such as the University Office of Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Analysis provide a feedback loop to direct the institution’s drive to embody excellence and guide its ongoing efforts to attain the vision animating “The New American University.”
WORKING OUTLINE OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

The Self-Study Report will be structured around the proposed North Central Association Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation provided in Appendix B.

The Self-Study Report will have three major parts. The first part will provide an executive summary, background on the transformation of ASU into the New American University, and a background of ASU’s accreditation history (including responses to specific items in the 2003 Evaluation Team report, as necessary).

The second part forms the major section of the Self-Study Report, and it will be comprised of individual chapters devoted to each of the criteria and its associated components.

The third part will provide a formal request for reaffirmation of ASU’s accreditation, and appendices that document compliance with federal laws and requirements.

In more detail, a working summary outline of the report appears here, detailed down to the section level. Within those sections will be additional divisions that further break down and evaluate the processes and operations of the institution, organized by criteria and components.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Part I: Background
  Preface: ASU’s Transformation into The New American University
    The New American University
    History of ASU
    Major Developments since 2003
    Overview of ASU – 2013

Accreditation Background
  Goals of the Self-Study Process
  Summary of Accreditation History
  Responses to Concerns and Observations of 2003 Self-Study
  Significant Changes and Challenges since 2003 Self-Study
  Statistical Snapshot - Decadal Comparisons: 2001 vs. 2011
  The 2013 Self-Study Process
  Purposes of the Self-Study
Part II: ASU and the Criteria for Accreditation

Chapter 1: Mission
ASU as a model for a new type of American research university: The New American University
Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR)-approved mission, vision, and goals statements
Core institutional values for ASU
Definition of ASU design aspirations
Core component 1-A: ASU’s mission documents are clear and guide its operations.
Core component 1-B: ASU addresses the diversity of its learners, its other constituencies, and the greater society it serves
Core component 1-C: ASU is committed to broad public interests.
Summary of evidence for Criterion 1

Chapter 2: Integrity
Core component 2-A: ASU follows established polices sufficient to carry out ethically its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions.
Core component 2-B: ASU presents itself clearly and completely to the public with regards to its programs, requirements, costs to students, faculty and staff, control, and accreditation relationships.
Core component 2-C: The Arizona Board of Regents is sufficiently autonomous to assure ASU’s integrity.
Core component 2-D: ASU has disseminated statements supporting academic freedom for students, faculty, and staff, and honors those statements in practice.
Summary of evidence for Criterion 2

Chapter 3: Academic Programs – Quality, Resources and Support
Introduction: Academic program planning at ASU
Core component 3-A: ASU’s academic programs are appropriate for higher education.
Core component 3-B: The exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to ASU’s educational programs.
Core component 3-C: ASU has the faculty and staff resources to fulfill its mission.
Core component 3-D: ASU provides support for student learning and effective teaching.
Summary of evidence for Criterion 3
Chapter 4: Academic Programs – Evaluation and Improvement

Core component 4-A: ASU takes responsibility for the quality of its programs.
Core component 4-B: ASU’s goals for student learning are clearly stated and processes of assessment are in effect.
Core component 4-C: ASU’s goals for student persistence and completion of academic programs are clearly stated and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

Summary of evidence for Criterion 4

Chapter 5: Resources and Planning

The strategic planning process at ASU
Planning at college and academic unit levels
Participation in state, regional, and national planning activities

Core component 5-A: ASU’s resource base supports its current educational programs and plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
Core component 5-B: ASU’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes.
Core component 5-C: Allocation of resources aligns with ASU’s mission and enhances its capacity to fulfill that mission.
Core component 5-D: ASU engages in systematic planning.
Core component 3-E: ASU works systematically to improve its performance.

Summary of evidence for Criterion 3

Part III: Summary and Conclusions

A Decade of Progress
Formal Request for Continued Accreditation

Appendices

Federal Compliance Information
ASU Organizational Chart
ASU Campus Map
List of Colleges and Schools (with academic units)
List of Academic Programs
List of Specialized Accreditations
APPENDIX A: CHARGE TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE BY PRESIDENT CROW

The text of the letter appointing members of the Steering Committee, establishing its charge and setting the goals for the Self-Study are provided here for reference.

Based on the recommendation of Professor Barry Ritchie, who is directing Arizona State University’s effort to secure reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and the concurrence of Executive Vice President and Provost Elizabeth Capaldi, I am appointing you to serve on the Steering Committee for that effort. This appointment begins immediately and ends with the final decision of the North Central Association on our application for continued accreditation, expected in early Fall 2013.

The Steering Committee is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. The Steering Committee will develop a self-study document by November 1, 2012 that:
   a) Provides compelling evidence supporting the renewal of ASU’s accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission based on the Commission’s established criteria for accreditation;
   b) Reflects the distinctive nature of the mission, vision and goals of ASU as the New American University;
   c) Summarizes the major changes that have taken place at ASU since the last accreditation reaffirmation in 2003;
   d) Accurately presents the contexts, opportunities and obstacles that ASU faces in carrying out its mission;
   e) Contains background and evaluative perspectives on all operations of the institution;
   f) Demonstrates ASU’s compliance with all federal higher education legal requirements;
   g) Will serve as a baseline for measuring future efforts towards improving and enhancing ASU’s service to Arizona, the nation, and the world.

2. The Steering Committee will submit a prospectus and plan for the reaffirmation effort to the Provost by April 30, 2011 for review, comment and approval. The plan will include an outline of the self-study document, a proposed timeline and budget, and a description of mechanisms that will:
   a) Engage participation from all constituencies within the communities served by ASU;
   b) Leverage and expand upon the already-existing institutional assessment efforts,
   c) Draw on the expertise of recognized and credible leaders at ASU, and
   d) Provide abundant opportunities for input, feedback, and comment on topics addressed by the self-study document and on the document itself.
3. The Steering Committee Chair, Barry Ritchie, will serve as the conduit between
ASU and the Higher Learning Committee for all official communication with re-
spect to the reaffirmation of ASU’s accreditation.

4. The Steering Committee will host all visits of representatives of the Higher Learn-
ing Commission until the final decision on the renewal of ASU’s accreditation is
made in Fall 2013.

I greatly appreciate your service to our institution in this important endeavor. ASU’s
continued accreditation will provide our constituents assurance that we are respond-
ing credibly and competently to the challenges and aspirations of a growing state in a
world economy, and inspire in those same constituents confidence that we will con-
tinue to do so in the future with integrity and competence.

To carry out this charge, I pledge my support, and I commit to make available the
appropriate institutional resources and services needed to bring this effort to a suc-
cessful conclusion.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Crow
President
APPENDIX B: THE NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION’S PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

The North Central Association’s Higher Learning Commission is revising the Criteria for Accreditation.

Within each Criterion are “Core Components”, which are statements that identify focus areas specific to that Criterion.

Most Core Components also have “Subcomponents” (italicized and indented below), which are intended to delineate aspects of a Core Component that should not be overlooked when assessing whether an institution satisfies that Core Component. The Subcomponents are not intended to be comprehensive, and institutions likely will provide additional information to show that they satisfy a particular Core Component.

The “beta” revision of the Criteria is presented here. These Criteria will continue to evolve to a final version during the timeline of the Self-Study Process at ASU. The Self-Study Report will reflect the final version of those Criteria.

**Criterion One: Mission**

The institution’s mission is clear, articulated publicly, and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

1-A. The institution’s mission documents are clear and its mission guides its operations.

   1. *The institution has statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, and institutional priorities that together clearly define its mission.*

   2. *The mission documents are current and delineate the institution’s responsibilities for the transmission, discovery, creation, and application of knowledge.*

   3. *The institution’s academic programs, services, and enrollment coincide with its mission statements.*

   4. *The institution’s planning and budgeting priorities coincide with and support the mission.*

1-B. The institution addresses the diversity of its learners, its other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

   1. *The mission documents address the institution’s role in a multicultural society.*

   2. *The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to diversity as appropriate within the mission and for the constituencies served.*

1-C. The institution demonstrates commitment to broad public interests.

   1. *Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.*
2. The institution identifies and engages with its external constituencies and communities. It responds to their needs and expectations within its capacity.

3. The institution recognizes the role and value of an institution’s publicly available resources, such as galleries, libraries, museums, archives, natural preserves, clinics, etc.

**Criterion Two: Integrity**

The institution fulfills its mission ethically and responsibly.

2-A. The institution establishes and follows policies for fair and ethical practice pertaining to its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions.

2-B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, costs to students, faculty and staff, control, and accreditation relationships.

2-C. The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous from any superordinate or related entity to allow it to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure the integrity of the institution.

   1. The governing board considers the need to preserve and enhance the institution for the longer term.
   
   2. The governing board considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies.
   
   3. The governing board and administration preserve their independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, and other external parties.
   
   4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management and leadership of the institution to the administration and academic matters to the faculty.

2-D. The institution has disseminated statements supporting academic freedom for the institution’s students, faculty, and staff, and honors those statements in practice.

2-E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

   1. The institution has processes to provide effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
   
   2. Students have access to guidance in the ethical use of research and information resources.
   
   3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

2-F. The institution ensures that its contractual partners behave ethically and responsibly in relation to any action taken on behalf of the institution.
Criterion Three: Academic Programs – Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides high quality academic programs, wherever and however its offerings are delivered (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements).

3.A. The institution’s programs are appropriate for higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree awarded.
2. The institution clearly differentiates its learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution’s programs are consistent in content and requirements across all modes of delivery and all locations.

3-B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education provided is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution clearly articulates the purposes, goals, and content of its undergraduate general education program or requirements.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptive to changing environments.
4. The institution’s curriculum reflects the diversity of the world in which its students will live and work.
5. The faculty and students, as called for by the institution’s mission, advance scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of new knowledge.

3.C. The institution has the faculty and staff resources to fulfill its mission.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members and effective structures to carry out the non-teaching roles of faculty.
2. Faculty members are appropriately qualified, including instructors in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. The institution has processes and programs for assuring that faculty members remain current in their disciplines.
4. Faculty members are evaluated regularly in accordance with established policies and procedures.
5. Faculty members are accessible for student inquiry and mentoring.
6. Staff providing student support services are appropriately qualified.
7. The institution supports professional growth opportunities for its faculty and staff.
3-D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides support services commensurate with the needs of students admitted.
2. The institution has a process for placing entering students in the courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides learning support and instruction as called for by the academic needs of its students.
4. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
5. Students and faculty have access to the infrastructure necessary to support learning and teaching (e.g., technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections) and those resources are sufficient to support the institution’s mission and programs.
6. Students have access to guidance in the use of research and information resources.

Criterion Four: Academic Programs – Evaluation and Improvement

The institution assures the quality of its academic programs and evaluates their effectiveness through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4-A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular review and evaluation of its academic programs.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcribes, including what it accepts in transfer or awards for other forms of prior learning. The institution refrains from the transcription of credit that it will not apply to its own programs.
3. The institution ascertains that programs designed to prepare students for advanced study or employment in fact accomplish these purposes.
4. The institution maintains specialized accreditation as appropriate to its educational purposes.
5. The institution assures that any dual credit courses or programs for high school students it offers are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to the higher education curriculum.

4-B. The institution’s goals for student learning are clearly stated and processes of assessment are in effect.

1. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through the assessment of student learning.
2. The institution assesses the learning goals that it claims for its programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

4. Assessment methodologies and processes reflect good practice.

4-C. The institution’s goals for student persistence and completion of academic programs are clearly stated and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

1. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through attention to its persistence and completion rates.

2. The institution collects information on student persistence and completion of programs.

3. The institution uses information on student persistence and completion of programs to address deficiencies in its persistence and completion rates as warranted.

4. Processes and methodologies for gathering and analyzing information on student persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to use measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

### Criterion Five: Resources and Planning

The institution’s resources are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5-A. The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has financial resources, personnel, and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

2. The institution has a well-developed budgeting process.

5-B. The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes.

1. The institution’s governance and administrative structures appropriately engage its internal constituencies, including the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

2. The governing board is knowledgeable of and accountable for the institution’s finances and its academic and business operations.

3. The governing board understands and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities to the institution.

4. The governing board functions effectively as a board.
5-C. Allocation of resources is aligned with the institution’s mission and enhances its capacity to fulfill that mission.

1. The institution’s planning processes are linked with its budgeting process.
2. The institution evaluates its operations.
3. The institution ensures that the priority for its unrestricted revenue is to sustain the quality of the institution and its academic programs, ahead of other institutional claims or disbursement to any superordinate entity.

5-D. The institution engages in systematic planning.

1. Current good practice informs the institution’s attention to organizational and educational improvement.
2. The planning process gathers input from all constituent groups.
3. All levels of planning align with the institution’s mission and enhance its capacity to fulfill that mission.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity.
5. Institutional planning takes into account emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.
6. The planning process addresses the possible impact of fluctuations in enrollment, the economy, and state support or other major sources of institutional revenue.

5-E. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution delivers programs and activities of demonstrable value to its students and stakeholders. Documented evidence of performance routinely informs the institution’s processes for evaluation, planning, and improvement.
2. The institution increases its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.
3. The institution derives learning and knowledge, both organizational and individual, from its operational experience.