Table of Contents
Western Washington University’s Comprehensive
NWCCU Accreditation Self-Study Report, 2008

INTRODUCTION
Message from the President ...................................... i
Overview of Self-Study Process ................................... ii
Eligibility Requirements ........................................... vi
Glossary ............................................................. ix

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STANDARD ONE – Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness
Mission and Goals ................................................... 1.1
Planning and Effectiveness ....................................... 1.12
Summary and Analysis .............................................. 1.26
Supporting Documentation ....................................... 1.29

STANDARD TWO – Educational Program and its Effectiveness
Overview and General Requirements ............................... 2.1
Educational Program Planning and Assessment ..................... 2.16
General Education Requirements ................................. 2.43
Graduate School .................................................... 2.55
Graduate Faculty and Related Resources ......................... 2.61
Graduate Records and Academic Credit .......................... 2.63
Continuing Education Credit and Special Learning Activities .... 2.67
Non-Credit Programs and Courses ................................. 2.73
College Overviews .................................................. 2.77

STANDARD THREE – Students
Organization ............................................................ 3.1
Mission and Goals .................................................... 3.4
Human, Physical, and Financial Resources ....................... 3.6
Recruitment and Admissions ...................................... 3.20
Financial Aid Programs ............................................ 3.30
Academic Advising Services ...................................... 3.33

Western Washington University, NWCCU Self-Study Report, 2008
MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Western Washington University community, I am pleased to welcome the evaluation committee from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges for our 2008 ten-year accreditation review, and to present the self-study prepared for this review. The executive summary that follows is a convenient guide to the comprehensive self-study.

There is much national interest in accreditation, as the public and government want to know how well we achieve our mission, particularly as measured by student outcomes. I take pride in the fact that every academic department has identified the learning outcomes they hope to achieve and are measuring student success in these outcomes.

Members of the university community at all levels have been integrally involved in preparing the self-study report. I appreciate the effort; it was time and energy well expended. While the report reviews how we have developed since 1998, the process also prepares us well for the future as we continue to build toward becoming the pre-eminent comprehensive university we strive to be. This evaluation provides an excellent opportunity to learn how the Western community can strengthen its mission and programs.

We trust that upon the completion of your review, Western Washington University’s accreditation will be reaffirmed through 2018. I thank the campus and the accreditation team for participating in this process, which will affirm the strong prospects for an extraordinary future for this university.

Sincerely,

Karen Morse, President
Western's NWCCU self-study process began in fall 2006. The University's main goal was to accurately and critically analyze Western's strengths and challenges in the key areas relative to accreditation eligibility requirements and standards, and also to create a useful self-study report that would serve to guide the University in future planning efforts. Since this process occurred during a time of transition to a new Mission and Strategic Action Plan—and also during a time of change in administration at the highest levels—the self-study process took on renewed importance as a measure of progress and as a way to articulate specific plans of action for the University as a whole.

Western aimed to create a self-study with the broadest participation possible from the campus community and to keep this process as open and transparent as possible. To this end, the Executive Planning Group was made up of both administrators and faculty, and these committee members enlisted help and support from a wide variety of faculty, staff, community members, and students. Accreditation team members worked diligently to give guidance and support in the information-gathering process, communicate regularly with campus stakeholders, and provide multiple opportunities for feedback and revision.

**Fall 2006**
- Then Provost Andrew Bodman forms Accreditation Executive Planning Group.
- Executive Planning Group Chair Kris Bulcroft, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE), reports on accreditation process to Faculty Senate.

**Winter 2006**
- January 26: Accreditation Executive Planning Group first meeting.
- February 2006: NWCCU annual meeting and workshop on preparing for self-study attended by Kris Bulcroft and Beverly Jones.
- March 9, 2006: NWCCU preliminary visit to WWU, Albert Johnson.

**Spring 2006**
- Brenda Miller (Associate Professor of English) hired as self-study editor.
- April 20: Executive Planning Group meets to debrief on Al Johnson’s visit, upcoming NWCCU meetings, and a standards matrix.
- August 31: Executive Planning Group receives specifications on format and graphics.
• Accreditation headquarters established in College Hall 237.
• Accreditation Resources website developed and linked from the President, Provost, and VPUE websites (http://www.wwu.edu/dept/vpue/accreditation/).
• Accreditation email established: accreditation@wwu.edu.
• Kris Bulcroft and Brenda Miller report to the Board of Trustees on the progress of the self-study.

Summer 2006

• Accreditation editing team works to develop “how to write self-study reports” as guiding documents to gather information from individual Colleges, departments, and programs. Western makes these documents available to deans and chairs via hard copy and the Accreditation Resources website. Kris Bulcroft reports on the process at the Deans Council.
• Accreditation Editing Team works with Western’s Publishing Services to develop design standards and print/production timeline for final accreditation report.

Fall 2006

• September 2006: President and Provost provide leadership at Fall Luncheon and Leadership venues regarding accreditation self-study process.

Winter 2007

• January: Workshop on preparing self-study attended by editor, Brenda Miller.
• Individual self-study reports from Colleges, departments, and programs are submitted to the editor.
• Drafts of chapters, by Standard, are submitted by members of the Executive Planning Group to the editor for feedback.
• Accreditation editing team meets during winter and spring quarters with individual authors to revise and edit first drafts.

Spring/Summer 2007

• Editor Brenda Miller works with Kris Bulcroft to edit and revise complete draft of Volume I.
• Clerical staff coordinates collection of exhibit materials from academic departments and programs. Researchers in Office of Survey Research and Office of Institutional Assessment, Research & Testing gather and analyze data and prepare tables.
• Kris Bulcroft and Brenda Miller report to the Board of Trustees on the progress of the self-study and on the role of the Board in the site team visit.
Fall 2007

- September 25: Draft of Volume I is posted and printed in draft form for campus and community review and comment. Hard copies are circulated to colleges and departments, and electronic copies are available for download via the Accreditation Resources website.
- Articles in campus publications explain both how to get the draft and give feedback. A link to a discussion board is added to the accreditation website, for those who wish to post comments publicly. Memos are sent to key constituent groups—such as the Faculty Senate, Associated Students, Professional Staff Organization, SEC, and College Deans—asking for their specific review and feedback. An article appears in the Bellingham Herald about the self-study process.
- October 4: Executive Planning Group meets to discuss release of first draft of self-study and process for feedback and revisions.
- October 12: Executive Planning Group Chair Kris Bulcroft and Self-Study Editor Brenda Miller present first draft to Western's Board of Trustees.
- Accreditation editing team meets with Executive Planning Group members individually, standard by standard, to work on revisions/feedback for the first self-study draft.
- October 31: Public comment period for the first draft is closed. Accreditation editing team continues to work with individuals and constituencies to incorporate feedback and collect additional information.
- November: Editing team oversees preparation of Executive Summary and preparation of final draft for delivery to the print plant.
- December 1, 2007 – Volume I to print shop.

Winter 2008

- January 15, 2008: Volume II to print shop.
- February 14, 2008: Copies ready for distribution to NWCCU evaluation team and campus community.
- February 18, 2008: Leadership Retreat sponsored by Provost to discuss self-study results and prepare for NWCCU site visit. Vice Presidents/Provosts, Deans, Directors, and department chairs in attendance.
- March 2008: Evaluation team site visit organized and travel arrangements for team made.

Spring 2008

- April 7–9, 2008: Evaluation team visits Western; Beverly Jones in charge of logistics and travel for the ten-member team.
Spring-Fall, 2008

- Follow-up session with campus and Bellingham communities on the results of the NWCCU accreditation evaluation. Begin development of action plans based on recommendations.

See Self-Study Process Exhibits for documentation of Western's self-study process.

Acknowledgements

The following people were instrumental in completing Western Washington University's 2008 NWCCU Self-Study Report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Planning Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kris Bulcroft, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Fasser, Standard One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Trimble, Standard Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Salzman, Standard Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Malory, Standard Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moheb Ghalil, Standard Four and Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Kennedy, Standard Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bela Foltin, Standard Five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Farquhar, Standard Five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rick Osen, Standard Five</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With invaluable support from:

- Marian Alexander
- Melinda Assink
- Barbara Audley
- Linda Beckman
- Rick Benner
- Remigijus Biciunas
- Jerry Bodes
- Stephanie Bowers
- David Brunnemer
- Stefanie Buck
- Rick Bulcroft
- Clara Capron
- Anna Carey
- Ann Carlson
- Kirsti Charlton
- Sarah Clark
- Langager
- Diana Cline
- Renee Collins
- Karen Copetas
- Nancy Corbin
- Tim Costello
- Eileen Coughlin
- Laura Diehl
- David Doughty
- Paul Edgeman

With additional thanks to President Karen Morse, the Board of Trustees, Provost Dennis Murphy, all College Deans—Arlie Norman, Carol Edwards, Ronald Kleinknecht, Brian Burton, Bradley Smith, Stephanie Salzman, Roger Gilman, and Ron Riggins—and all department chairs and program directors across the University.
Western Washington University, in its self study for NWCCU accreditation, has assessed itself against the Commission's essential eligibility requirements and finds itself in compliance with them.

Authority

Western Washington University has authority from the state of Washington to grant degrees. Title 28 B, Chapter 28B.10 in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) grants authority to Western Washington University as one of four regional universities in the state to offer undergraduate and masters-level degrees. See Standard Six.

Mission and Goals

Western’s mission is determined by the Board of Trustees, as part of a campus and community-based process that requires periodic review of the strategic goals and mission of Western Washington University. Western’s current Mission Statement and Strategic Action Plan was adopted in 2006. This published plan acts as a guide for resource allocation and all actions of the University. See Standard One.

Institutional Integrity

Integrity is a core value in Western's Strategic Action Plan, and Western has shown that ethics, codes of conduct, non-discrimination policies, and academic freedom all play important roles in University planning and in day-to-day operations. See Standard One and Standard Nine.

Governing Board

Western has a high-functioning Board of Trustees responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution, and the Board ensures that the institution's mission is being achieved. The Board’s Rules of Operation outline the general powers, duties, and responsibilities of Board members. The makeup of the Board is representative of the public interest and includes a student trustee, who is appointed by the governor, following the recommendation of an on-campus student review committee. See Standard Six.

Chief Executive Officer

The President of Western Washington University is appointed by the Board of Trustees, has a full-time appointment, and is regularly evaluated by the Board. The President serves as the chief executive officer of the University. See Standard Six.

Administration

Western provides the administrative and support services necessary
to achieve its mission and meet its goals. Western is organized into five administrative divisions: Academic Affairs, Business and Financial Affairs, External Affairs, Student Affairs, and University Advancement, and the President is supported by an efficient staff. Routine business is consistently handled in timely and thorough ways, and administrative responsiveness to unanticipated issues and external constituencies has been open, cooperative, and consistently reliable. See Standard Six.

Faculty

Western employs a strong core of full-time, professionally-qualified faculty, and its size is adequate for the institution to fulfill its mission and meet its goals. Faculty workloads reflect Western’s commitment to quality undergraduate education, and faculty are involved in curriculum development, policy development, and institutional planning. Faculty are regularly evaluated according to unit evaluation plans. See Standard Four.

Educational Program

Western is a regional, comprehensive, primarily undergraduate university, with select graduate programs. Programs are offered in keeping with institutional mission and goals. All programs are based on recognized fields of study; are of sufficient length and content; are effective in the use of library and information resources; and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered. See Standard Two.

General Education and Related Instruction

Western requires that all undergraduate students complete a set of General Education Requirements. This is a common set of requirements, with the exception of Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies, where a separate core program is required. According to transfer agreements in the state of Washington, all students transferring to Western with a completed Associate of Arts degree from an accredited Washington State community college are deemed to have completed their General Education Requirements. Approximately 60 credits are needed to fulfill these requirements. Western undertook significant reform of its General Education Requirements in the last decade. See Standard Two.

Library and Learning Resources

Wilson Libraries contain 1.4 million volumes, and currently offer access online, in print—or in both formats—to more than 12,000 journals. The library resources and services are generally adequate to support the curricular offerings of Western’s programs, as well as meet the needs of faculty scholarship and creative activity. More recently, the library has met the challenge of addressing the needs of both the main campus and those programs that are offered in flexible modalities such as the Internet or off-campus. See Standard Two and Standard Five.
Academic Freedom

The Faculty Handbook clearly states, "All the ranked and unranked members of the faculty are guaranteed academic freedom as set forth in the 1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure, formulated by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors." The college Unit Evaluation Plans further support this tenant of academic freedom. See Standard Four and Standard Nine.

Student Achievement

Western has identified and published expected learning outcomes for all major fields of study for all degree programs and Academic/Student Affairs enrichment programs.

The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Testing (OIART) has worked closely with academic Colleges and departments to provide the foundations for meaningful and rigorous outcomes assessment. See Standard Two.

Admissions

Western publishes its admission policies in the catalog, in print and in online form. This document is available to prospective and current students. The admissions policy reflects the University’s commitment to enroll students with diverse interests and backgrounds who demonstrate ability, motivation, and creativity. Western adheres to its admissions policy, and Washington State residents generally are given admission priority. See Standard Three.

Public Information

Western’s catalog is published annually and provides students with information about the admissions process, academic program requirements, students’ rights and responsibilities, financial aid, academic and co-curricular offerings, student support resources, and policies and procedures. Also, the Office of Public Information works in concert with all divisions of the University to ensure that timely and accurate information is available to the public. See Standard Two and Standard Three and Standard Nine.

Financial Resources

Western has a strong and stable financial base, and the institution manages, allocates, and increases financial resources in alignment with the University’s mission and strategic goals. Strong planning processes are in place that include input from a wide variety of constituencies. See Standard Seven.

Financial Accountability

Western maintains a strong focus on both internal and external controls, with oversight by a state audit agency. Western responds to audits in a timely and effective manner. See Standard Seven.
Institutional Effectiveness

Western’s Strategic Action Plan is a guiding document that assists in the planning and budgeting processes. Academic program assessment is conducted in a systematic and purposeful way, as mandated by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and internal program assessments are frequently conducted to provide decision-makers with data necessary to make strategic decisions regarding fiscal allocations, personnel, and program change. See Standard One, Standard Two, Standard Three, Standard Seven, Standard Eight, and Standard Nine.

Operational Status

Western is currently regionally accredited by the NWCCU and has been since 1921.

Disclosure

Western has disclosed and will continue to disclose to the NWCCU any and all information it needs to carry out this evaluation and accreditation functions.

Relationship with the Accreditation Commission

Western accepts the policies and standards of the NWCCU and agrees to comply with these standards and policies. The University agrees that the Commission may make known the nature of any action it takes regarding this evaluation as part of the accreditation process.

GLOSSARY

SPECIALIZED TERMS
AND ACRONYMS

AAC ............................................................... Academic Advising Center
ACC ............................................................. Academic Coordinating Commission
ADCAS ......................................................... Alcohol and Drug Consultation and Assessment Services
ADMCS .......................................................... Admissions and Administrative Computing Services
AIC ................................................................. Academic Instructional Center
ALL ............................................................. Academy for Lifelong Learning
AMSEC ......................................................... Advanced Materials Science and Engineering Center
A.S. ............................................................ Associated Students
ASSE ............................................................ American Society of Safety Engineers
ATUS ........................................................... Academic Technology and User Services
BFA .......................................................... Division of Business and Financial Affairs
BMAR .......................................................... Backlog of Maintenance and Repair
BRAIN ......................................................... Biomedical Research Activities in Neuroscience
CAFR ........................................................... Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
CAPP ............................................................ Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning
CAS ........................................................... College of Arts and Sciences (restructured into two new colleges: CHSS and CST, see below)
CASAS ........................................................ Crime and Sexual Assault Support Services
CASE .......................................................... Council for the Advancement and Support of Education
CATL ........................... Committee on the Assessment of Teaching and Learning (subcommittee of ACC)
CBAC ......................................................... Capital Budget Advisory Committee
CBE ............................................................ College of Business and Economics
CEM ........................................................... Certified Emergency Manager
CCTST ........................................................ California Critical Thinking Skills Test
Administrative Divisions at Western Washington University

Academic Affairs
External Affairs
Business and Financial Affairs
Student Affairs and Academic Support Services
University Advancement