

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

**Year Three Self-Evaluation
Committee Report**

**Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon**

May 8, 2014

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities that
Represents the Views of the Evaluation Committee

Table of Contents

Evaluation Committee Membership.....Page 2

Introduction.....Page 3

Standard One:Page 9

Standard Two:Page 10

Conclusions:Page 23

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Oregon State University

Evaluation Report

INTRODUCTION

In early 2014 a four-member Evaluation Committee representing the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) was appointed to assess the Oregon State University's Year Three Self-Evaluation Report (often referred to as the *Report* in this document). On April 10 Committee members participated in an introductory conference call at which Committee operating procedures, assignments, logistics, and schedule were agreed upon. Over the next several weeks Committee members read and assessed the *Report* and supporting documents (accessed through website links in the electronic version of the *Report*) and conducted phone interviews with relevant individuals at Oregon State University (concentrating the calls, as much as possible in the period from April 22 to April 24). Several conference calls provided opportunities for the Committee members to share their analyses and observations and to agree upon the major aspects of the Committee report. Editing, refinement, and approval of the draft report were accomplished by email. This report contains the findings that resulted from that examination of the University.

The Committee extends its appreciation for the University community's participation in the evaluation process. Through the work of the Accreditation Liaison Officer and her office, the Committee readily gained access to information necessary for the completion of its work; and the members of the campus community contacted by the Committee members warmly welcomed and capably assisted them in their work.

Institutional History

Oregon State University (OSU) was founded in 1868 and is the state's Land Grant institution with additional designations as a Space Grant, Sea Grant, and Sun Grant university. It is presently a public university within the Oregon University System. However, it is transitioning to a more independent status. On July 1, 2014 the Oregon University System and the State Board of Higher Education will no longer exist. At that time a Board of Trustees will take over governance oversight of OSU. At the state level, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) will coordinate salient operational aspects of Oregon's public higher education institutions, including community colleges, primarily dealing with state budget requests; allocation of state financial resources; and significant changes to institutional missions.

Recent Accreditation History

Oregon State University's most recent regular evaluation (*Year One Peer-Evaluation*) was conducted in Spring 2012, and it led to reaffirmation of accreditation. An *Ad Hoc Fall 2012 Self-Evaluation Report*, which addressed Recommendation 1 of the *Spring 2011 Comprehensive Peer-Evaluation Report*, was accepted by the Commission in early 2013. The institution was instructed to address Recommendations 1 and 2 from both the *Year One* and the *Ad Hoc 2012 Peer-Evaluation Reports* in its *Year Three Self-Evaluation Report*.

Self Evaluation Report

Oregon State University's *Year Three Self Evaluation Report* was well written and well organized. The evaluation team found the preface to be especially useful in that it highlighted and briefly described significant changes in student enrollment, resources, and governance that have had and will have continuing significant impacts on the institution. The only aspect of the report that the evaluation team found to be problematic was the absence of a section in which evidence for institutional compliance with all NWCCU Eligibility Requirements was summarized. The team did find the evidence, but it was scattered throughout the *Report*.

Eligibility Requirements

Oregon State University appears to meet all NWCCU Eligibility Requirements. However, the evaluation team wishes to note the imminent major change in governance. On July 1, 2014 the Oregon University System and the State Board of Higher Education will no longer exist. OSU will become a university with its own governing board (Board of Trustees), and it will operate in a much more independent status than it has in the past. Some aspects of the details and implications of this change are discussed elsewhere in this Peer Evaluation Report. While the change is not an issue in terms of OSU's present compliance with NWCCU Eligibility Requirements and various sections of the Standards for Accreditation, the institution and the NWCCU need to keep compliance with accreditation Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards in mind as the change takes place.

Recommendations from the 2012 Year One and Ad Hoc Peer-Evaluation Reports

The Year Three Evaluation Team was tasked with reviewing the institutional responses to Recommendations 1 and 2 from both the 2012 *Year One* and *Ad Hoc Peer-Evaluation Reports*.

Recommendation One, Year One Peer-Evaluation Report

As the institution begins its revisions for the next report, it should clarify the definition of mission fulfillment and its connection to the Core Themes indicators, and articulate an acceptable threshold. (Standard 1.A.2)

OSU now has a clearly stated definition of mission fulfillment: “substantial and meaningful progress on its compact with the state, the University’s governing board, its strategic goals and OSU’s core themes” (p. 19 of the *Report*). The institution is committed to a metrics-based approach to articulating an acceptable threshold, and the *Report* (p. 18) illustrates this approach with three “key institutional metrics.” However, with no clearly defined official set of metrics and with incomplete sets of targets for indicators in the Strategic Plan and Core Themes, the definition of an acceptable threshold for mission fulfillment remains somewhat ambiguous.

Recommendation Two, Year One Peer-Evaluation Report

As program assessment is systematized and developed, the institution should incorporate evidence of student learning outcomes data throughout the educational experience and within academic programs into the evaluation of both Core Themes and Mission Fulfillment. (Standards 1.A.2, 1.B.2)

Each of the University’s three Core Themes has clearly defined objectives and indicators of achievement. Learning outcomes data (ranging from graduation rates to student participation rates in academic experiential learning to per cent of programs that have enacted change as a result of student learning outcomes assessment) are appropriately incorporated into various indicators of achievement. The integration of the Core Themes into the definition of mission fulfillment ensures that evidence of student learning outcomes is appropriately incorporated into the evaluation of mission fulfillment.

Recommendation One, Ad Hoc Peer-Evaluation Report

The evaluation committee found assessment efforts to be well-organized and moving forward in undergraduate and graduate education and the Baccalaureate Core, but in a fragile state, as some aspects of the system are very new. There has been substantial turnover in staffing related to assessment and some apparent assessment-weariness on the part of faculty. The committee recommends that the University continue to progress in sustaining and enhancing the efforts that have begun (Standard 2.C.2, 2.C.3, 2.C.10).

Oregon State University has responded to recommendations received over the past few years from external reviews. As a result the University’s assessment efforts in graduate and undergraduate education are developing and maturing. Faculty members working on assessment are supported by professional development opportunities offered through the

Center for Teaching and Learning and the annual Assessment Academy. Faculty efforts specifically related to the Baccalaureate Category Review are supported by grants and recognition awards from the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation.

The University requires that at the course level, every syllabus must contain learning outcomes. For courses that comprise the Bacc Core, the learning outcomes instituted for the general education program must be repeated verbatim in addition to any content-specific learning outcomes that a faculty member specifies. An examination of randomly selected syllabi indicates that these requirements are followed.

At the program level, several activities are required. At orientation, students are introduced to the learning outcomes for that program/major. Every academic program/department must now submit an assessment report. Using an Excel template, the department lists program-level outcomes, matched with measures and results. For many academic units, this is a new requirement, so efficacy of assessment activities vary. Measures include indirect ones (exit surveys) to more direct measures, such as written assessments of internships and graded assignments. The Excel spreadsheet allows the department to update the report each year using a different tab, so that progress across several years is evident. All program-level learning outcomes must be assessed during a period of no more than 5 years. Currently feedback is given in writing and in face-to-face meetings, in order to provide departments with support and guidance as many faculty move away from an adherence to historical program evaluation protocols to student learning outcomes assessment. In general, departments are encouraged to incorporate additional direct measures, eliminate heavy reliance on course grades/completions, and to adopt benchmarks after they identify specific direct assessments. At the graduate level, learning outcomes have been identified for Masters level and doctoral level students, with the major difference being in the degree of originality shown in creative scholarship.

The Baccalaureate Core is assessed by category. That is, all courses must meet overall learning outcomes for the category (e.g., Difference, Power, and Discrimination; Synthesis). A sample assessment report posted for the Synthesis Category Review provides examples taken from actual reports to help faculty develop their own assessment plans. Also listed are learning outcomes specific to course content and how the faculty member measures students' progress. Examples include pre- and post-tests, essays graded using a rubric, and clusters of multiple-choice questions focusing on specific learning outcomes.

OSU keeps track of institutional and program-level metrics as well, including number of applicants, demographic information about students, retention and graduation rates, post-graduation employment success, and information from exit interviews.

OSU is involved in collaborative assessment activities with other institutions. In a multistate collaborative, which includes 9 states that are developing methods to use student work for institutional and state-level assessment, student writing samples will be collected beginning in fall 2014 for assessment by a trained faculty review panel. OSU is also participating in the Oregon Degree Qualifications Profile, working with Linn Benton Community College to carry out horizontal alignment of lower division student learning outcomes.

In summary, assessment efforts are well-organized and moving forward, as stated in an earlier review. Progress continues to be made, but some areas are not as well developed as others. Nonetheless, faculty are clearly learning about the importance of assessment for improving students' success and their own satisfaction in what they offer. They are making strong efforts to develop tools and approaches that will allow them to craft revisions to educational programs as necessary. The Committee recognizes the progress made thus far and encourages administration and faculty to continue their steady advances.

Recommendation Two, Ad Hoc Peer-Evaluation Report

The committee recommends that the institution provide evidence that assessment data are used to revise educational programs (Standard 4.A.3).

There was some confusion about the exact wording of this recommendation. The wording above was taken by this Committee from the letter dated February 4, 2013 from Dr. Sandra Elman to OSU President Ed Ray. The version of the Recommendation stated and addressed in OSU's *Year Three Self-Evaluation Report* was taken from the report from the Ad Hoc Committee. Unfortunately, a consequence of the institution's use of the "Ad Hoc Report version" of the Recommendation was that the section of the *Year Three Self-Evaluation Report* dedicated to this Recommendation did not contain explicit evidence that assessment data are used to revise educational programs. Furthermore, the issue was not addressed in the remainder of the *Report* since Standard 4 is not a section of the standards addressed in Year Three Evaluations. In telephone interviews the evaluation team did hear accounts of programs that have used assessment data in this way. Excellent examples came from Fisheries and Wildlife, Extension, and Chemistry. Reports submitted by other programs, for example Earth Sciences and Agricultural Business Management, demonstrate attempts at program level assessment that are currently being developed with feedback from assessment personnel and illustrate the attention that is being given to helping programs move forward in their assessment efforts. At present the University is building upon the success in "closing the loop" in the Baccalaureate Category Review and in some, possibly many, educational programs. The institution has wisely chosen to focus on building a strong institutional assessment program, which takes time as noted in the *Report*, and in assisting educational programs to build strong individual assessment processes. OSU is making strides in learning outcomes assessment and

its use in program improvement, but the extent that mature assessment processes are in place throughout the educational programs is an issue to be addressed in a future accreditation review.

Standard One—Mission, Core Themes and Expectations

1.A Mission

Oregon State University operates under a mission statement that was approved by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education 2011:

“As a land grant institution committed to teaching, research, and outreach and engagement, Oregon State University promotes economic, social, cultural, and environmental progress for the people of Oregon, the nation, and the world.

This mission is achieved by producing graduates competitive in the global economy, supporting a continuous search for new knowledge and solutions, and maintaining a rigorous focus on academic excellence, particularly in the three signature areas: Advancing the Science of Sustainable Earth Ecosystems; Improving Human Health and Wellness; and Promoting Economic Growth and Social Progress.”

The OSU mission statement is appropriately grounded in its land grant status and its position as a major public university in the state of Oregon. The statement’s identification of three “signature areas” provides focus and also ties the institution’s mission to its Core Themes and strategic plan. The mission statement is well understood within the OSU community as illustrated by the commonly held and oft-quoted informal, aspirational goal of becoming a “top ten land grant university.”

The University has defined mission fulfillment as “substantial and meaningful progress on its compact with the state, the University’s governing board, its strategic goals and OSU’s core themes” (p. 19 of the *Report*). Associated with these aspects of mission fulfillment are numerous objectives, indicators, and metrics. The *Report* (p. 18) cites three “key institutional metrics” and an analysis that clearly allows evaluation of performance. However, it is not clear whether a complete set of indicators to be used in defining mission fulfillment has been adopted or whether targets or benchmarks have been assigned for all indicators. The lack of clarity about the complete set of metrics related to mission fulfillment and the incomplete sets of targets and benchmarks render the definition of threshold or extent of mission fulfillment somewhat ambiguous.

1.B Core Themes

OSU’s three Core Themes are all related to the mission of the institution, and collectively they encompass the mission. The objectives and indicators related to each theme seem to be appropriate. However, it is not clear from the *Self-Evaluation Report* whether the institution has chosen benchmarks by which performance related to each indicator will be evaluated.

Standard Two—Resources and Capacity

2.A Governance

The system of governance within OSU is effective and widely understood. It provides appropriate opportunities for input from and participation by faculty, administrators and students. It is not as clear that the classified staff have appropriate opportunities for involvement in governance. OSU employees ranging from the President to members of the classified staff see the appointment of a staff member to the Board of Trustees as a very positive step. However, the actual involvement of classified staff in any other aspect of governance seems to vary widely from unit to unit, as do perceptions of the degree of openness of University processes to their involvement. On the other hand, the Provost did point out that there are regular meetings between administrators and classified staff and that there is an annual survey of employees' views of involvement in processes. Given the nature of the "virtual visit," the evaluation team finds it difficult to draw any firm conclusion about the gravity of this matter; so it is simply passing on its observations to the institution.

While the system of governance within the institution has been in place for a number of years with no significant changes anticipated in the near future, OSU's status within the suite of public institutions of higher education in the state of Oregon is in transition. As described earlier in this report, on July 1, 2014 Oregon State University (along with the University of Oregon and, later, Portland State University) will become a fairly independent university under its own governing board. Under this arrangement OSU's Board of Trustees will have all authority necessary and appropriate for operation of a major public university and for compliance with NWCCU standards. However, the legislation that mandated this change also created the Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC) and gave it the responsibility to coordinate and monitor certain key operational aspects of all of Oregon's public higher education institutions—primarily around state budget requests, distribution of state financial resources, and significant changes to an institution's mission. While the role of the HECC is clearly defined (and limited), the details of how it will coordinate state budget requests from and allocate state financial resources to the individual institutions will become evident only as the new system is implemented.

At the time of the Committee's "virtual visit" the individuals who comprise OSU's initial Board of Trustees had been appointed, and the Board had elected its officers and approved its bylaws. Under the establishing legislation, OSU is to operate under existing procedures and processes

unless and until the Board of Trustees enacts new ones. Since the governance policies and practices of OSU under the present OUS Board appear to comply with the relevant requirements of NWCCU Standard Two and since, at least initially, the Board of Trustees will operate under them, the evaluation team found no reason to suspect that compliance with NWCCU standards related to a multi-university governance system or to a governing board will be at risk because of this change.

While the overall governance of Oregon State University will change significantly on July 1, 2014, the institution's administrative structure will not. The University is run by a well-qualified team of administrators with appropriate responsibilities and levels of accountability.

Academic policies, policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources, and a transfer-of-credit policy are all clearly communicated, widely available (largely on websites), and enforced. The only shortcoming noted by evaluators is that there is no mechanism for ensuring the credit hour policy is maintained across courses and over time.

Policies and procedures regarding students' rights and their responsibilities are available in the catalog and on a student conduct and community standards website. An Office of Advocacy and University Ombuds Office provide support and guidance to students with potential grievances.

OSU uses a holistic admissions process to admit applicants. The primary filters for making an admissions decision are the student's preparation and whether the institution can provide the support required for a student's success. Prospective students submit information about their academic credentials (GPA, standardized test scores), but also complete an "insight resume" that focuses on their leadership experience, knowledge about specific fields of interest to them, their experiences in dealing with adversity, community service, how they deal with discrimination, and their ability to set goals and pursue them. This new application process fosters applications from students of diverse backgrounds and students with an awareness of the value of diverse points of view. In parallel, OSU has created support programs and places for such students, including academic support for migrant students and the establishment of cultural centers. These developments are in keeping with the Core Themes, as illustrated by Objectives 1.1 and 1.3 for Core Theme #1.

OSU provides a wealth of opportunities for students to become involved in out-of-classroom activities to support their learning and development. Websites (Dean of Student Life, Student Affairs) describe programs and policies.

The university's policies and procedures for human resources are fully available on the OSU website and are regularly reviewed for compliance and equity. The HR website also provides detailed information on conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination. In addition to providing access to this general information, OSU has safeguards in

place to ensure compliance with mandated security and confidentiality of the human resources records.

Oregon State University operates with integrity and emphasizes the importance of high ethical standards in all aspects of its programs and activities. The University's policies and their implementation exemplify its five core institutional values (accountability, diversity, integrity, respect, and social responsibility), which are reflected in a comprehensive set of policies regarding conflict of interest, intellectual property, and contractual agreements.

OSU Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment Policies, the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Senate website, and the OSU Student Code provide detailed information about the University's policies on academic freedom and responsibility, including the University's expectations and requirements for both faculty and students related to intellectual and scholarly honesty. The *Report* provides specific evidence of OSU's affirmation of intellectual freedom with examples of classes, research, and other activities that demonstrate the promotion of independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

OSU has policies and procedures in place for maintaining oversight and management of financial resources. A significant portion of the relevant fiscal and business policies have been defined by the Oregon University System (OUS), which will be dissolved on July 1, 2014. The transition to the OSU Board of Trustees is underway, and the existing policies and procedures (including those of OUS) will remain in effect until/unless the Board of Trustees changes them after July 1.

2.B Human Resources

Despite significant increases in student population, OSU demonstrates only marginally higher student to faculty and student to staff ratios over the past decade and demonstrates that it is committed to continuing to provide qualified staff in numbers sufficient to support the institution. Procedures and criteria for the selection of personnel are clear and available, as are position descriptions.

All administrators are reviewed by their supervisors on an annual basis. Additionally, senior administrators undergo additional comprehensive evaluations, with substantive input from a wide range of constituencies, at least every five years. Annual evaluations of the President have been a responsibility of the State Board of Higher Education; the process for future presidential evaluations will be determined as part of the new governance structure. Classified staff are reviewed annually in a process governed by the Office of Human Resources that includes goal setting, self-evaluation, and supervisor review.

OSU encourages and promotes employee growth and development on the campus level through a robust range of training, workshops, and speakers as well as professional

development and travel/registration support on the individual campus unit level. Faculty development is specifically supported by sabbatical leave opportunities, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Annual Assessment Academy, and Academic Affairs' Leadership Academy.

The increase in OSU's student population during the last decade has been significant and fulfillment of the state's 40/40/20 educational achievement plan (one that calls for all adult Oregonians to hold a high school diploma or equivalent, 40% to have an associate's degree or postsecondary certificate, and 40% to have a baccalaureate or advanced degree) would suggest that the population will continue to grow. The institution has been able to increase the number of faculty during this time to maintain a relatively steady overall student to faculty ratio across campus. However, the *Report's* Appendix 2.B.1's *Student to Faculty FTE Ratio, 2002-03 through 2012-13*, demonstrates not only wide variations among the colleges, but also wide fluctuations within many colleges during the time period. Without the provision of College Targets for the 2012-13 year it is difficult to determine what the optimal ratio should be. Ideally, input from the Academic Program Reviews and the Baccalaureate Core Category Review will augment the "individual feedback" noted in the *Report* and be used to develop College Targets.

The Faculty Handbook describes the process for developing position descriptions, which should include specific allocations of FTE for all responsibilities, including scholarly/creative activity and University service.

All academic and professional faculty with an FTE of .5 or higher are evaluated per the *Guidelines for Periodic Review of Faculty*. The frequency of review is determined by tenure status, type of appointment, and rank and varies from annual to every three years. The review is multi-dimensional and focused on the faculty member's role and responsibility. The review offers an opportunity for feedback as well as the opportunity for remediation plans as needed. Special emphasis is placed on mid-term tenure reviews and reviews for promotion and/or indefinite tenure.

2.C Education Resources

OSU requires that all courses must have assessable student learning outcomes and every program must submit an assessment plan (beginning in fall 2014). All courses, degree programs, and certificates have designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

All course syllabi must provide learning outcomes to inform students about expectations. A review of randomly selected syllabi indicated that these requirements are met.

The academic regulations for undergraduates and expectations for graduate students are articulated and form the basis for determining whether students have fulfilled the credit and degree requirements.

Each degree program must publish its learning outcomes and demonstrate coherent curricular design at inception, during annual assessment activities and reports, and during program review.

Admissions and graduation requirements are published widely. OSU uses a holistic application for the admission of undergraduates. Factors that are considered include test scores, strength of curriculum, academic performance, college preparatory courses, and an insight resume, which includes essays about leadership, knowledge, dealing with adversity, community service, tackling systemic challenges, and commitment to goals. Any prospective student may appeal a negative decision regarding his/her application.

Faculty exercise a primary role in the design, approval, and implementation of curriculum; are involved in the assessment of student learning at the course and program levels; and are actively involved in the recruitment and selection of new faculty.

The use of library and information resources is integrated into students' learning, with the Libraries collaborating with faculty in specific courses and in the creation of workshops and training opportunities for students, faculty, and graduate teaching assistants.

Credit for prior experiential learning is guided by CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning) and NWCCU standards. The total number of credits is limited to no more than 45 (25% of the credits needed for graduation) and must be approved by faculty and the relevant academic unit. Graduate credit is not awarded for prior experiential learning.

Academic regulations govern transfer of credit from a two-year, undergraduate, or unaccredited institution, as well as graduate level coursework. A state-wide agreement in Oregon and articulation agreements establish the way in which associate degrees may be transferred. Faculty oversight of undergraduate general education requirements and graduate courses ensures that the integrity of OSU programs is maintained.

The Baccalaureate Core comprises the general education program, including skills courses (mathematics, writing, speech, fitness); perspective courses (physical science, biological science, Western culture; cultural diversity, literature and the arts, social processes); difference, power, and discrimination; synthesis courses (upper division, multidisciplinary); and writing intensive coursework in a major. Students complete the Baccalaureate Core sequentially to make certain that the skills necessary to attain knowledge and understanding, the integration of that knowledge, and preparation for citizenship are acquired. The Baccalaureate Core courses identify student learning outcomes both with respect to the general education program

and disciplinary content; core courses are reviewed to ensure these learning outcomes are addressed.

Oregon State University does not offer AA or AS degrees, nor an AAS with an emphasis on practical applications to learning. All certificates are obtained in combination with a baccalaureate degree program with assessable learning outcomes.

University graduate learning outcomes have been established, with the difference between Master's and Ph.D. programs in the level of originality required for creative scholarship. They differ from undergraduate programs with respect to depth of study, increased demands, knowledge of the field, and ongoing engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or level of professional practice. Program-specific learning outcomes are in place as appropriate for each discipline.

Admission to graduate school rests on requirements such as GPA, letters of recommendation, a statement of objectives, and standardized test scores (for many programs). Programs may set higher standards; those not meeting the standards may be admitted if the application is supported by the graduate program and approved by the University Graduate Admissions Committee. Graduate credits may transfer with approval of the student's committee, the program/department, and the Graduate School, although the number is limited depending on the level of graduate program. Admission and retention policies and efforts ensure that student qualifications and expectations are commensurate with the institution's mission and program requirements.

Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practica that are central to the specific graduate degree program. Credit is not granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to admission into the graduate degree program.

Graduate programs are tailored to meet the needs of students who are pursuing expertise in research, professional practice, scholarship, and/or artistic creation. A new and exemplary program, Holistic Graduate Education, provides graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in a range of employment options.

Continuing education programs are selected and offered in service of the mission and goals of the institution. Three areas (Advancing the Science of Sustainable Earth Ecosystems, Improving Human Health and Wellness, and Promoting Economic Growth and Social Progress) are emphasized, as are the links to OSU's core themes.

All continuing education and special learning programs and courses are subject to the same review and implementation processes set up for curriculum approval, monitoring, assurance of quality, and student achievement for degree programs on campus.

Professional and Continuing Education coursework and credit for some comply with the guidelines of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training. CEUs are awarded in recognition of successful completion of a program.

The institution maintains records describing the number of courses and type of learning offered through non-credit instruction.

2.D Student Support Resources

OSU offers a full complement of student support services at its campuses in Corvallis and at its branch campus in OSU-Cascades, as well as for students enrolled in e-learning. More than 89 offices and distinct programs provide assistance to students for academic, social, emotional, and other needs. The *Report* outlined these programs with respect to access, community, health and wellness, leadership and citizenship, academic success and support, and transition out of the university. This framework captures the importance of integrating and coordinating services for student support. All programs are available to OSU students; in addition, additional resources are available to students on the Cascades and Ecampus. Particularly noteworthy are the programs for “holistic graduate education” and support for migrant students (College Assistance Migrant Program). The Holistic Graduate Education program provides graduate students with critical and timely instruction through workshops, courses, and a graduate certificate in college and university teaching. Topics include responsible conduct of research, diversity awareness, data management, communicating one’s science, course development and intellectual property. The College Assistance Migrant Program is federally funded and offers a series of events, a newsletter, a leadership institute, and membership in clubs and organizations, all focused on improving educational opportunities for students from families who are migrants or seasonal workers.

The campus Department of Public Safety and the Oregon State Police work together to provide a safe campus. The University is compliant with Clery Act reporting requirements. OSU alert notifications are sent as needed via e-mail, text messaging, and voicemail.

The Enrollment Management Task Force has created an enrollment management plan in response to burgeoning enrollment at OSU. The University performs a holistic evaluation for undergraduate admission, including test scores, academic achievement, and an assessment of non-cognitive attributes such as creativity, motivation, leadership, and service to others. Graduate student admission is based on minimum admission requirements. Orientation activities are offered to undergraduate and graduate students (OSU-Cascades requires degree-seeking students to attend orientation), and the New Student Program and Family Outreach office supports new students and their family members in the transition to college

OSU states that “as a rule, students are allowed to graduate from a program if the program is eliminated while they are enrolled,” but no evidence is provided in the text or links of the self-evaluation report.

The General Catalog is available online and sections may be downloaded as a pdf. It contains the comprehensive information required by NWCCU Standards.

Requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered are provided in brochures available from the Admissions website and on the web pages for the College of Business, Engineering, Education, College of Forestry: Forest Engineering Program, and College of Science: Health Professions, as required.

Oregon State maintains student records securely using the Student Information System and an electronic database for digital images of documents. Students are notified annually regarding the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act requirements.

Financial aid is available to students as grants, scholarships, employment and loans. More than \$247 million was disbursed in 2012-2013 to more than 19,000 students. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships assists students with loan counseling, money management educational programs, and loan counseling. Students are notified of their repayment obligations and student loan default rates are calculated.

Oregon State follows a common model for undergraduate academic advising. A centralized office, the University Exploratory Studies Program, serves undeclared students and students changing their majors. Some colleges provide advising using professional advisors who work with advisors in individual departments and other colleges use a single centralized office. Advising is coordinated by three university-wide bodies: the Council of Head Advisors, the Academic Advising Council, and the First-Year Advising Council. The University attempts to advise students at various levels in their education: as prospective students during recruitment events, orientation for new students, and advising for current students. Beginning in fall 2014, freshmen will be required to meet with an advisor at least once each quarter, using a common advising syllabus. More advanced students meet with an advisor as determined by their colleges and departments. Oregon State should consider whether this structure fulfills the needs of all their sophomore-level students, given the attrition of 8-10% of the cohort during and right after the students’ sophomore year.

Graduate level advising also combines centralized and decentralized approaches.

The University has invested in advising technology, which allows advisors to spend more time focused on students’ developmental advising needs and students to monitor their own progress more efficiently.

Co-curricular offerings are plentiful and overseen by appropriate offices (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, the Graduate School).

Auxiliary Services provide rich living-learning experiences for students, with an emphasis on diversity and academic success. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities to influence these services.

The Department of Athletics is organized under the Athletic Director who reports directly to the University President. The Senior Associate Athletic Director for Finance and Business Affairs meets monthly with the Assistant VP/Controller and OSU Business Affairs personnel; internal random audits are conducted as well. An Athletic Advisory Committee comprises faculty, students, and alumni to ensure involvement at all levels. Student athletes are admitted to the university by the Office of Admissions, as are all other students, but their applications are flagged for “athletic interests.” Student athletes who do not meet the admission requirements may appeal to an Athletic Admissions Committee, an Academic Affairs committee composed of representatives from Academic Affairs administration, faculty, and staff. The university “gives special consideration to a small number of applicants in this admission process.” It appears that any applicant denied admission may submit an appeal through a process labeled “Extended Admissions.” The committees that grant appeals (Athletic Admissions Committee and the Undergraduate Admissions Committee) consider academic qualifications of applicants as well as whether OSU can provide for the success of the applicant student through advising, academic support, and other services. The Faculty Senate appoints members of these committees and several individuals serve on both committees to ensure that the philosophy guiding decisions is equitable. Clear records of appeals decisions should be maintained so that OSU can demonstrate that all appeals are handled similarly.

Students must authenticate securely to access online courses. The costs for authentication and Blackboard use are contained in the tuition charges and fees, although off-campus proctoring may have charges determined by the proctor. Students are informed in advance about the possibility of extra proctoring costs.

2.E Library and Information Resources

OSU Libraries provides staff, collections, digital assets, and access points at the main and satellite libraries that support the institution’s mission and core themes and meet the instructional and research needs of the university. It also manages the OSU Press and the ScholarsArchive@OSU institutional repository.

There is extensive involvement in planning for the continued development of library and information services that most effectively meet the needs of OSU’s students, faculty, and staff. For example, the Library’s Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with a wide variety of constituencies, including the OSU Libraries and Press faculty and staff, OSU Faculty Senate

Library Committee (which includes student representation), leadership teams from various campus divisions and offices, and Undergraduate Education Council members. The Committee compliments OSU Libraries for the quality and usefulness of the *2012-17 Strategic Plan*.

OSU Librarians partner with faculty across the university to incorporate information literacy into the curriculum, designing online learning tools, creating inquiry-based assignments, teaching classes (both in-person and online), providing individual research consultations, and developing curricula. They also offer specialized one-credit courses (ENG 200 and HIST 499/599) and workshops on a variety of topics, including the Research Skills Workshop series (which has been so well-received that the Research Skills team created online versions that can be accessed and completed independently).

OSU Libraries conduct ongoing and systematic evaluation of their resources and services through a variety of assessment activities ranging from embedded surveys on the website to targeted focus group interactions to the use of benchmarked, formal survey instruments, e.g., LibQual+. There is demonstrated evidence that feedback from these assessments results in action taken to respond to concerns. The newly created position of Assessment Librarian further demonstrates the library's commitment to the value and practice of assessment.

2.F Financial Resources

Even though the period from 2003 to 2013 was very challenging for OSU, the institution remained financially stable, a situation that is projected to remain for the foreseeable future. The major challenges were a student increase of 49%, a substantial increase in online educational offerings, and one biennium in which state appropriations decreased by 15%. Fiscal health was maintained through a variety of carefully considered actions including fundraising, targeted recruitment of non-resident and international students, increased institutional financial assistance, and an institution-wide reallocation process.

Projected annual increases in income and expenses for the next several years range from approximately 5% to 12% for the Education and General budget. Projections for F & A recovery from grants and contracts is projected to be down a bit, but the present projections may be too low if ongoing negotiations for an increased F & A recovery rate are successful. Fund balances at the end of the next few fiscal years are projected to be in the 8%-9% range.

Policies, guidelines, and processes are in place for financial planning and budget development, with appropriate opportunities for input from at least most members of the university community. Faculty, including Professional Faculty, have appropriate opportunities for involvement primarily through the Faculty Senate. However, information gathered from several interviews leads the Committee to believe that a significant segment of the classified staff feel that they have little or no opportunity for involvement in financial planning and

budget development and, furthermore, that they are not informed about the status of these efforts.

Both financial planning and budget development are integrated with academic plans, the state's 40/40/20 plan, and OSU's nine-year enrollment target. Furthermore, the PSM Corporation has recently been contracted to assist with additional planning integration at OSU.

OSU has an appropriate accounting system, uses generally accepted accounting principles, and has appropriate internal controls. The institution undergoes an annual audit by an independent CPA firm, and it received a clean audit opinion in its most recent review (2012-2013 finances). In addition, an RFP is currently out for an external financial advisor, who will provide 3rd party oversight of financial operations.

OSU's capital budget is tightly tied to the institution's strategic plan, academic priorities, and the campus master plan. In recent years it has focused on alleviating the pressure placed on infrastructure and space by the growth in student enrollment and research over the past decade. Recently constructed and under-construction facilities have addressed needs of the expanded and more diverse student body as well as the infrastructure needed to recruit and retain high quality faculty. The institution has been rather conservative about taking on debt to finance new buildings; as a result its debt ratio is 4.5%, well below the 7% cap mandated by the State Board of Higher Education. The debt ratio may rise over the next few years because of the anticipated new construction, but it is projected to remain well below the 7% cap.

The University's record in fundraising over the past eleven years is quite impressive. The Campaign for OSU was started in 2004 with a goal of raising \$625M by 2015. By January of 2014 over \$1B had been raised. The proceeds from the campaign were used to construct new facilities, provide student scholarships, enhance faculty support, and create 77 new endowed faculty positions. In addition, the University's endowment (managed by the OSU Foundation, Inc, an independent non-profit corporation) grew from \$336M in 2000 to \$477M in 2010. Clearly the success of this capital campaign was crucial in OSU's remarkable growth and development over the past fifteen years.

The financial situation described and analyzed in the preceding paragraphs is the one in place at the time of the evaluation team visit. However, on July 1, 2014 OSU becomes a university with its own Board of Trustees, which will have governance oversight authority. At the same time the State Board of Higher Education will be replaced by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), which will—among other things—coordinate state budget requests from Oregon's public institutions and distribution of state financial resources. The development of OSU's budget request for the next biennium is taking place under a process defined by the HECC. Although the HECC has less stringent guidelines for the process than the State Board of Higher Education has had, the process within OSU is very similar to the one which has been

used by the institution in the past. Deviations from past practice include the involvement of the OSU Board of Trustees and an interactive, iterative process with the HECC. Although the HECC is just getting started and is not yet officially in place, it is the opinion of OSU's Vice President for Finance and Administration that the HECC is focused on higher education aspects of the state's 40/40/20 plan, on an outcomes-based emphasis in both budget preparation and allocation, and on submitting a collective public university request to the governor.

2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure

In addition to the main campus, OSU has satellite locations, including OSU-Cascades, throughout the state. OSU has responded to the significant and rapid increase in the size of its student population with an impressive series of construction projects encompassing curricular, co-curricular, laboratory, residential, administrative, and cultural needs. While this entire record of development is noteworthy, the evaluator particularly compliments the New Classroom Building (which promises to be a state of the art facility that will combine general purpose and classroom space into a destination for curricular and co-curricular learning, study, and engagement) as well as the impressive range of building projects developed in recognition and support of the OSU community's diverse backgrounds (including the Eena Haws Native American Longhouse, the Lonnie B. Harris Black Cultural Center, the César Chavez Cultural Center, and the Asian & Pacific Cultural Center).

OSU has established and promulgated regularly reviewed policies and procedures covering issues associated with hazardous or toxic materials and provides training on safe handling and disposal of these materials.

The institution operates under the regulatory framework of a *Campus Master Plan*, developed with the city of Corvallis. The OSU Space and Capital Review Board makes recommendations addressing campus space needs and serves as a body to review issues that arise over space requests. The OSU Classroom Committee serves in an advisory role to the Provost and Vice President for Finance and Administration on classroom investment decisions. The institution has established a goal for annual deferred maintenance.

Most research laboratories at OSU are equipped through grant funding, while technology for classrooms and the associated teaching labs are largely funded through a portion of the Technology Resource Fee. The Information Services budget is supported by a combination of general funds, significant recharge fees, and the Technology Resource Fee. Property management policies and procedures are codified and enforced by a central Inventory Control unit.

Information Services is responsible for provision and management of technology systems and infrastructure in support of the academic and administrative functions of OSU. For example, Information Services hosts and maintains the Banner ERP system as an administrative tool and the BlackBoard course management system as an academic tool.

Information Services provides instruction and support for technology and technology systems through one-on-one consultations, help desk services, classroom and online training, and workshops. Information Services has committed to increase its training and support that is available on demand, regardless of location, through documentation, webinars, and other online resources.

Technology planning at OSU incorporates a wide variety of staff and constituencies. Teams have been formed to focus on Instruction, Administration, and Infrastructure to provide counsel to the Vice Provost for Information Systems on strategic choices and directions. Input also comes directly from the Provost's Council, the Faculty Senate Computing Committee, and the IT Coordinating Committee, with representation from each college and major division.

In addition to incident-based update and replacement events, OSU has two annual instances that generate technology reviews: the yearly allocation of Technology Resource Fees and the annual Service Level Agreements between Information Services and its desktop computing support clients. Core network and technology infrastructure are reviewed regularly and supported through reserve funds, operating funds, and long-term capital investment as needed. A 4-5 year replacement cycle is typical.

Conclusions

Commendations

1. The Committee commends Oregon State University for its fundraising, particularly its extraordinarily successful capital campaign, and its wise investment of those funds in accommodating the needs of a rapidly growing student population.
2. The Committee commends Oregon State University for its recruitment and support of a diverse student body through a variety of approaches including a holistic approach to admissions, the construction and opening of cultural centers, and migrant student support programs.

Recommendation

1. The Committee recommends that Oregon State University further refine its articulation of an acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment. (Standard 1.A.2)