

**NORTHWEST**  
NAZARENE UNIVERSITY



# Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

*Nampa, Idaho • September 1, 2019*

*Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*



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## Institutional Overview

Established in 1913, Northwest Nazarene University (NNU) is a nonprofit comprehensive Christian university founded upon a liberal arts philosophy of education. The campus is situated on 90 acres in Nampa, the third largest city in Idaho with over 100,000 residents, and is located 20 miles west of Boise, the state capital. NNU maintains a strong, mutually beneficial and positive relationship with the city of Nampa. The campus, with its 34 buildings, has been carefully planned for maximum use and development. In addition to the Nampa campus, NNU offers face-to-face graduate programs in Idaho Falls (Social Work) and Twin Falls, Idaho (Counselor Education). Programs offered by the University vary from traditional programs to accelerated delivery adult and professional programs and graduate programs, from face-to-face to fully online programs.

As one of eight regional colleges and universities in the United States affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene, NNU is the university for the Northwest Region, which includes Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and parts of Nevada. Approximately 35% of NNU undergraduate students claim “Nazarene” as their church background and the other 65% belong to a variety of different Christian denominations, other religions, or indicate no religious affiliation. While a majority of undergraduate students come from the Northwest Region, students from 32 states and 16 countries attend NNU. Graduate programs include students from 36 states and 17 countries.

NNU’s fall 2018 enrollment of 2,013 students included 1,287 undergraduate students (1,112 traditional and 175 non-traditional) and 726 graduate students. In addition, continuing education enrolled 7,503 students and course of study (ministerial credentials) enrolled 176 students for a grand total of 9,692 students served by the University. Over the past three years, undergraduate and graduate enrollment has remained relatively stable with an enrollment average of 1,321 undergraduate students (1,126 traditional and 195 non-traditional) and 714 graduate students.

NNU is primarily a residential campus with 78% of our eligible traditional undergraduate students living in campus housing and many others living in close proximity to the campus. The undergraduate student population is 57% female; the graduate student population is 70% female. Nearly 80% of our undergraduate student population is white, while 9% are Hispanic/Latino.

NNU employs 120 faculty members, including 109 teaching faculty. Of the 109 teaching faculty, 73 (67%) hold the highest degree in their fields. An additional eight faculty members are enrolled in doctoral programs. Currently, 36 (33%) teaching faculty have Full Professor status, 35 (32%) faculty members have Associate Professor status, and 38 (35%) faculty members have Assistant Professor status. Presently, 45 (41%) faculty members are tenured, 56 (52%) are non-tenured tenure-track, and 8 (7%) faculty members are non-tenured track. The student-to-faculty ratio is 16:1 for traditional undergraduate courses, 13:1 for non-traditional adult program courses, and 13:1 for graduate courses.

NNU offers programs leading to 14 degrees (AA, BA, BS, BSN, MA, MDiv, MBA, MEd, MS, MSN, MSW, EdS, EdD, and PhD). Undergraduate degrees include 43 majors and 8 co-majors covering 66 areas of study. Graduate degrees include 24 areas of emphasis in six departments: business, counseling, education, nursing, social work, and theology. The Center for Professional Development offers two certificate programs and a variety of non-academic, professional continuing education courses and workshops that qualify for professional development credits and/or continuing education units (CEU), depending on the subject matter. NNU also offers concurrent credit for high school students and an online course of study program for Nazarene ordination.



NNU is largely tuition-dependent with tuition and fees representing approximately 59% of its annual revenues in 2018-19. Approximately 13% of the University's annual revenue is derived from gifts, which includes unrestricted contributions from the Nazarene churches located in the Northwest Region (about one-half of the typical total unrestricted giving). The remaining balance of revenue comes from auxiliary enterprises (bookstore, food service, residential life, etc.), investment income, and other miscellaneous revenue. The 2018-19 operating budget for NNU was \$41.4 million. The University's total endowment is approximately \$42 million.

Northwest Nazarene University is consistently recognized for its excellent programs, distinguished faculty, and exceptional student outcomes by multiple organizations that independently evaluate the quality of colleges and universities throughout the nation. In 2019, NNU was again named in the *U.S. News & World Report's 2019 Best Regional Universities in the West* colleges rankings and in the *Princeton Review's Best Colleges in the West* rankings. Additionally, NNU was recognized by *Colleges of Distinction*—an organization that assesses colleges and universities on student engagement, quality of teaching, vibrancy of the college community, and successful outcomes of graduates—as a 2019-2020 “College of Distinction,” “Idaho College of Distinction,” and a “Christian College of Distinction.” Further, *Niche.com* has honored NNU as one of the “Best Christian Colleges in America” and *Zippia.com* has ranked NNU as #2 in Idaho for “Best Colleges for Jobs” based upon job outcomes for graduates. See [growing.nnu.edu/accolades](http://growing.nnu.edu/accolades) for a list of other groups recognizing NNU in a number of areas for providing a quality education.

Additional information about the institution may be found at [www.nnu.edu/about](http://www.nnu.edu/about).

## Preface

### **Institutional Changes since the Year One Self-Evaluation Report in 2017**

The following is a summary of significant institutional changes that have occurred since September 2017 when we submitted our Year One Self-Evaluation Report. These changes continue to shape the University and help us fulfill our mission.

#### **Governance**

In our 2017 Year One Self-Evaluation Report, we reported that the NNU Articles of Incorporation had been revised to reflect how members of the Board of Trustees are elected. Historically, 38 of the 40 trustees were elected by the seven districts of the Church of the Nazarene in the Northwest USA. After the revision, 33 trustees are elected by the districts, while five at-large trustees are elected by the sitting Board of Trustees. In addition, the university president and alumni president continue to serve on the board as ex officio members. The primary rationale for this change is to ensure that the board has the ability to select at-large trustees to address diversity and/or any needed areas of expertise on the board. This new structure is now being phased in over a three-year period, and as of August 1, 2019, four of the five at-large trustees have been elected to the board.

Historically the board's committee structure was aligned with the University's administrative structure with a standing committee connected to each vice president. In an effort to focus more clearly on the University's strategic plan and avoid the lure of micro-managing, in March 2018, the board adopted a new committee structure that is more closely aligned with the University mission and strategic plan. The board's new standing committees are: Audit & Compliance Committee, which oversees fiscal accountability as well as regulatory compliance; Mission Fulfillment Committee, which is focused on curricular and co-curricular student experience; Resource Allocation Committee, which is focused on allocation of the University's resources – fiscal, people, and physical; Sustainability Committee, which is focused on the University's various revenue streams – tuition and fees, fund-raising, and other revenue flows; and the Trusteeship Committee, which is responsible for oversight of shared governance, board and trustee performance, and board orientation and education. There is a sense that this new structure is serving the board well in its work.

In its March 2019 meeting, the board bid farewell to Dr. Randy Craker, who had served as an NNU Trustee for 25 consecutive years and had served as board chair for the last 13 years. In that same meeting, the board elected Mr. Mike Zahare, a 1981 NNU alum who is a lawyer in private practice in Anchorage, Alaska, and who has served on the board for the past 15 years, to serve as the new board chair.

#### **Leadership**

In our Year One Self-Evaluation Report, we shared that the executive leadership structure of the University had been restructured effective May 2017. In the past two years, we have implemented a change from six vice presidents (and related administrative units) to four vice presidents (each with an administrative unit) and an executive director of an office that oversees our missional and ministry alignment. The implementation of this change has been relatively easy and has been well-accepted on campus. Having now concluded two years working within this new structure, the President's Cabinet is currently evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of this structure.

Our Year One Report also noted that we had experienced several leadership transitions in early 2017, including the hiring of two new vice presidents, Dr. Brad Kurtz-Shaw in academic affairs and Mr. Mark Wheeler in external relations, and the naming of two interim deans (Dr. Michael Pitts for adult and

graduate studies and Dr. Duane Slemmer for academic services). Since that report, we have filled our final open executive-level position with the fall 2017 hiring of Mr. Steve Emerson as vice president for finance and operations. Mr. Emerson received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from NNU (BA in business administration and accounting, 1992; MBA, 1999) and came to NNU after a 25-year career in banking. Vice presidents Kurtz-Shaw, Wheeler, and Emerson are serving effectively and are recognized across campus for the strength and expertise they bring to their relevant administrative units. In addition, Dr. Slemmer has been officially named as dean of academic services and is providing effective leadership and service. Dr. Pitts retired in June 2019 and the dean position he held is being revised in light of the academic restructure discussed in the Academics section below.

Since fall 2017, the University also experienced transitions in a number of “middle manager” leadership positions including our associate vice president for marketing and communications, director of campus safety, director of conferences and events, director of facilities, director of human resources, director of information technology, and wellness center director. These positions have all been filled with highly qualified individuals who are providing excellent leadership in these areas. Our associate vice president for enrollment resigned effective August 2, 2019, and a search for a replacement will be undertaken after a brief time of evaluation of the position and structure of the organization unit.

### **Long-range Planning**

For many years, NNU’s pattern has been to develop three-year strategic plans via a highly participatory long-range planning process. These strategic plans provide an ongoing template for planning, action, and assessment of mission fulfillment. The current plan is the [2018-21 Strategic Plan](#), which has three primary strategic themes, and three strategic initiatives within each of those themes. The three strategic themes are: 1) Improve University Culture, 2) Focus and Enhance Curricular and Co-curricular, and 3) Achieve Sustainable Operational Model.

The development of the 2018-21 Strategic Plan began in August 2016 with the Board of Trustees’ planning retreat, which was also attended by several faculty members and staff representatives. This two-full-day retreat included a review of the landscape of U.S. higher education, the University’s position and condition, and discussions regarding NNU’s future direction. Following the retreat, a plan was drafted and then went through several iterations as a result of reviews by faculty, staff, administration, and board. Although it was initially anticipated that the strategic plan would be adopted in final form in October 2017, actual adoption of the plan did not occur until March 2018; therefore, the period of the plan was shifted to from 2017-20 to 2018-21.

Following adoption of the strategic plan, the President’s Cabinet, in consultation with their direct reports, formulated a detailed list of tactics for each of the strategic initiatives. This process provided a methodology that translates the strategic plan from broad initiatives to practical actions and activities. The campus community has been very receptive to this process, since the tactical plan helps each employee see the behaviors and ways in which each is involved in the fulfillment of the strategic plan’s themes and initiatives. In addition, the tactical plan allows for greater oversight and accountability throughout the planning period. To date, we are making good progress toward the accomplishment of several of the themes and initiatives.

### **Academics**

In an effort to grow enrollment, the University partnered with consultant Ruffalo, Noel, Levitz to conduct a program demand analysis, examining the viability of our present programs, while exploring opportunities to start new programs. Over the past two years, new undergraduate majors have been approved and are now being offered in digital media, health communication, public relations, and worship arts. In addition, new concentrations in artificial intelligence and cybersecurity are being added to the computer science degree, and the nursing program restructured its program so they can now enroll 36 new

students each semester rather than 48 new students each fall, allowing us to nearly double the size of the program. For our graduate programs, new emphasis areas in religion and sports management were added to our MBA program, and an integrated clinical and community practice (ICCP) concentration was added to our social work program.

Concerns about the University's academic structure that were identified by the Academic Program Assessment Committee during our 2016-17 comprehensive program review set in motion a lengthy process to review the present two-college system that had been in place since 2013. Following extensive work by a Cross-College Collaboration Taskforce and the Faculty Policy Council, this spring the faculty voted to change from the two-college system to a seven-college system consisting of the colleges of arts and humanities; behavioral and social sciences; business; education; engineering, mathematics, and science; nursing, and theology and Christian ministries. Each college will be led by a dean who reports directly to the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA). In addition, deans of academic services; graduate and professional studies; bridge academy (concurrent credit); and the honors college will also report to the VPAA. With the exception of the dean of graduate and professional studies position which has yet to be filled, each of the deans were appointed this summer and the transition to the new academic structure is being implemented during the 2019-20 academic year.

### **Facilities**

To prepare for the new student commons building, the University relocated the competition soccer field to the athletics complex during summer 2018. Installation of artificial turf is allowing the facility to not only be used by the men's and women's varsity soccer teams, but also for lacrosse and men's soccer club programs to be launched this fall. Lights are being installed at the facility this summer, which will maximize use of the facility beyond daylight hours.

The University broke ground for the new student commons building in March 2018 and construction has remained largely on track, with anticipated completion of the building in December 2019. This building will replace the current student center and house student life, student government, admissions welcome center, office of university mission and ministry, career center, and campus dining services. The building will also feature multi-use events space, conference meeting spaces, and student gathering spaces. The campus will occupy the building in two phases: a majority of the building will open for campus use in fall 2019, while dining services will transition from the existing student center to the new building during the 2019 Christmas break. The estimated cost for the project is \$16.5 million (\$15 million for construction and \$1.5 million for building maintenance reserve). Presently, the project is in line with the budget.

Plans to repurpose the existing student center are already underway with the renovation project scheduled to begin by June 2020 dependent on fundraising. Multiple departments on campus will utilize this renovated space, including the college of nursing, undergraduate admissions, and multiple offices that currently serve students (student account services, financial aid, and the registrar's office). The projected cost for the renovation is \$7.5-8.0 million, with the University already having received a lead gift of \$3 million.

The University continues to maintain the campus by keeping its deferred maintenance at a healthy level to ensure that the campus is not crippled by deferred maintenance needs; a real risk



for many higher education institutions across the nation. Since 2016, the VPFO has engaged campus leadership to help prioritize the capital expenditure budget to ensure that the greatest facility needs are addressed each year.

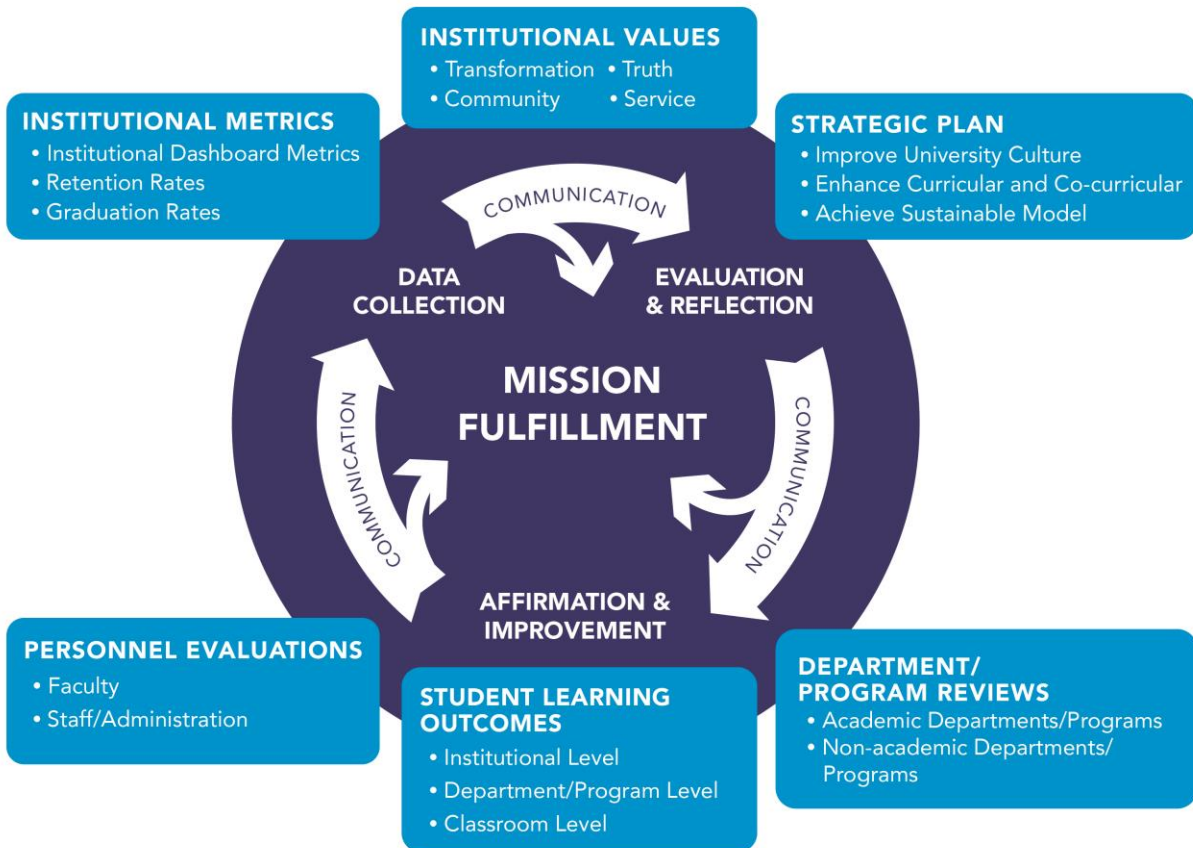
### **Finance**

The University ended both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years in the black on an Unrestricted Statement of Activities basis. While this is something to celebrate, the University also acknowledges that the result was not without the help of non-recurring (one time) gifts from donors. The University is working toward the financial goal of recording 3-4% net income operationally, without the inclusion of non-recurring gifts. Instead of taking an expense-cutting strategy to achieve this result, over the past two years there has been a renewed focus on revenue growth through tuition and fees, strategic moves in admissions and marketing to grow our enrollment, and looking at alternative revenue sources in order to diversify our reliance on tuition and fee revenue. With this renewed focus came a collective effort to re-evaluate the direction of our discount rate. In 2018-19, we received over \$600,000 more in net tuition and fee revenue in our college of arts and sciences (undergrad tuition and fees) largely due to re-establishing our financial aid packages to reduce our discount rate, while still maintaining our enrollment numbers. Our net tuition and fees revenue for all programs at the University increased by \$1.2 million from 2017-18 to 2018-19. We expect to continue to see gains in net tuition revenue due to our new financial aid awarding structure for our undergraduate net tuition and fees. We also expect to realize increases in our graduate programs net tuition and fees due to heightened attention and analysis of the graduate programs' pricing structures.

## Part I: Overview of Institutional Assessment Plan

NNU has a robust and multi-faceted institutional assessment plan that is used to assess mission fulfillment in a variety of ways and at multiple levels. As illustrated in the Operational Framework for Continuous Improvement diagram below, the institution systematically collects data related to six primary areas of focus: institutional values, institutional metrics, strategic plan, student learning outcomes, department and program reviews, and personnel evaluations. Each of these areas provide meaningful and useful data that is collected regularly and examined by assigned stakeholders who evaluate and reflect on the data. Through this process, mission fulfillment is either affirmed or improvements are made in an effort to close the assessment loop. In either case, the cycle begins again with the collection of additional data. Communication is essential throughout the assessment cycle as individuals and groups work together to meet the various objectives at established thresholds and benchmarks.

### OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



#### Institutional Values

The institutional values of transformation, truth, community, and service, adopted along with the mission statement in 2009-10, continue to serve the University well and have become foundational as we seek to live out our mission of transforming the whole person and instilling habits of heart, soul, mind, and strength to enable each student to become God's creative and redemptive agent in the world. These institutional values were selected as our core themes for the previous NWCCU seven-year accreditation cycle and as a part of that process, objectives, indicators, and acceptable thresholds were developed for each of the core themes. Each of the institutional values has one or two primary objectives with a range

of three to five indicators that provide data to help measure mission fulfillment. Data related to these objectives, indicators, and acceptable thresholds are reviewed regularly by the Assessment and Accreditation Committee (AAC), as well as by “owners” of the various data sets represented by the indicators.

### **Institutional Metrics**

Administrators use a variety of institutional metrics to measure the health of the institution and guide future planning and initiatives. These metrics reflect a variety of data related to enrollment, retention and graduation rates, academic ratios, budgets and finance, employees, student life, spiritual formation, and donor giving. This data is collected and assessed regularly by the responsible sectors. Subcommittees of the Board of Trustees also review this data during their fall and spring meetings.

Previously, the vice president for finance tracked this data using an “Institutional Balanced Scorecard,” a dashboard tool developed using Microsoft Excel. The University is currently exploring new options to create a more effective dashboard tool to make this data more interactive and readily accessible to the campus community. In addition, the President’s Cabinet recently approved the allocation of resources to create an institutional research position that will support the University’s efforts to centralize the collection of data related to these institutional metrics.

### **Strategic Plan**

As discussed in the Long-range Planning section in the Preface, the strategic plan is a highly participatory long-range planning process for the University that has consisted of a series of three-year strategic plan cycles initiated over 23 years ago. The strategic plan provides an ongoing template for planning, action, and assessment of mission fulfillment.

The most recent [strategic plan](#), adopted in March 2018 to serve the University from 2018-2021, includes the following three strategic themes: 1) Improve University Culture, 2) Focus and Enhance Curricular and Co-curricular, and 3) Achieve Sustainable Operational Model. Each theme has three associated institutional initiatives, and the initiatives each have specific tactics (strategies) with appropriate action plans, metrics, target dates for completion, and individuals accountable to ensure completion of the tactic so the institutional initiatives and themes will be realized. Throughout the year, the President’s Cabinet and University Administrative Team (UAT) review progress toward completion of the strategic plan and take action to ensure completion deadlines related to the timeline are being met or adjusted as appropriate. The Board of Trustees is also advised of progress toward completion of the strategic plan during their fall and spring meetings.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Student learning outcomes are regularly assessed at the institutional level, department and program level, as well as at the individual classroom level.

#### Institutional Level

Student learning at an institutional level is articulated through the University’s undergraduate general education outcomes, which focus on the areas of Christian formation, science, humanities, and intellectual and practical skills. Assessment of the general education program is explained in detail in the [General Education Handbook](#).

#### Department/Program Level

Departments and programs have student learning outcomes specific to their discipline and/or programs. These outcomes are assessed regularly through the collection and review of department-specific data, which is used for program improvement, as well as accreditation and program review purposes. In an effort to systematize this process, this past year, the Academic Council instituted an assessment cycle in

which departments have created individual assessment calendars that ensure they will assess each of their student learning outcomes once every three years. For most departments, this means they will focus on assessing approximately one student learning outcome per semester.

#### Classroom Level

Classroom level assessment occurs in individual classes as faculty and department members evaluate student performance. These assessments may include assignments, presentations, labs, projects, quizzes, exams, etc. This data is not currently collected and reported at an institutional level, but is an important and effective means of assessment for instructors as they seek to enhance student learning, as well as departments as they assess program outcomes.

#### **Department/Program Reviews**

The University periodically conducts comprehensive reviews for both academic and non-academic departments. For the most recent comprehensive review completed in December 2016, an Academic Program Assessment Committee (APAC) and a Non-academic Program and Department Analysis Team (NAPDAT) were formed to examine all of NNU's academic and non-academic programs and departments with a charge to recommend to the President's Cabinet potential changes to increase efficiency and effectiveness within the departments and programs and across the institution as a whole. The work of these groups resulted in two reports, with some of the recommendations resulting in action items included in the current institutional strategic plan.

#### Academic Departments/Programs

This past year, the AAC worked together with the CAS Academic Council to develop an annual review process for each of the academic departments/programs. As a part of this process, departments/programs will assess data they collect, as well as data provided by the director of institutional assessment and research. Departments will submit an annual report to the Academic Council summarizing their assessment activities for the year, including any programmatic changes they have made to "close the assessment loop."

#### Non-academic Departments/Programs

Regular assessment of non-academic departments/programs falls under the responsibility of each of the sector vice-presidents, and as a result, is less systematized than the process used for academic departments and programs. Some of these departments, such as the business office, financial aid, university advancement, and athletics, have annual audits and/or are accountable to external groups that guide their annual assessment. Others prepare annual reports for their sector vice-presidents, which are incorporated into the sector reports presented to the Board of Trustees each fall.

#### **Personnel Evaluations**

The evaluation of employees at NNU is an important part of the overall assessment process to ensure that qualified and competent individuals are positioned to accomplish the mission of the University. While faculty and staff/administration differ in the way they are evaluated, systems are in place for each employee classification to assess their effectiveness in the roles they perform and provide them with valuable feedback to affirm and improve their performance as necessary.

#### Faculty

The University is committed to a comprehensive, ongoing evaluation system for faculty members as described in the [Faculty Policy Manual](#). All first-year faculty members, untenured faculty members, and part-time faculty members are evaluated annually by their department chair or program director. These annual reviews are based on an evaluation rubric developed by the Committee on Rank and Tenure (CRT), which focuses on the areas of teaching, scholarship, service, and mission fit. Faculty with administrative duties are evaluated on those responsibilities as well. Tenured faculty members are

formally evaluated every five years, though many also complete the same annual faculty evaluation as their untenured faculty colleagues. The five-year comprehensive review includes self-evaluation, peer evaluation, evaluation by the department chair and college dean, student evaluations of teaching, and a professional development plan.

#### Staff/Administration

In spring 2019, the institution developed a new staff evaluation tool that links the evaluation process to the campus strategic plan. The new evaluation process includes self-reflection, accomplishments, opportunities for learning and growth, and goal setting that aligns effort to the NNU strategic plan. This summer, the human resources office provided a series of training events for supervisors, managers, and department heads, as well as staff, to create a common understanding of the form flow, process goals, and overall alignment. The evaluation process for 2019 will be completed by October, and evaluations will occur twice per year each fall and spring going forward. We recognize that evaluations, goal setting, and planning are critical elements to our success and growth, and we are committed to identifying and implementing tools that help us achieve a high performance culture.

At the administrative level, the president is evaluated annually by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, with a comprehensive and more formal evaluation occurring in the summer preceding the end date of the president's contract. Vice presidents are evaluated twice per year by the president to set goals and assess if they are fulfilling the expectations for members of the President's Cabinet, as well as to monitor progress on accomplishing their goals. Deans are to be evaluated twice per year by the VPAA. As a part of the evaluation process, a college dean evaluative instrument will be distributed to program directors, department chairs, and selected staff members within the programs or departments each year. Deans will evaluate program directors and department chairs annually using similar evaluative instruments distributed to faculty and staff. As a part of the evaluation process at all levels, data are compiled in appropriate rubrics and shared with deans, department chairs, and program directors to review the information and develop growth plans.

#### ***Institutional Assessment Plan Summary***

Implementation of the Institutional Assessment Plan continues to be a work in progress. Some of these assessment processes, such as implementation of the strategic planning process and the assessment of the core themes, are systematic and have become a part of the assessment culture of the institution. Others, such as the assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional level are in process, but a complete assessment cycle has yet to be completed. Still others, such as personnel evaluations and academic program reviews, are not new, but the assessment processes have recently changed, which will require campus personnel to embrace and live into these new efforts to assess our institutional effectiveness. We have intentionally called our Institutional Assessment Plan our "Operational Framework for Continuous Improvement" because our desire as an institution is to continually seek to get better at fulfilling our mission. We believe this will happen as we carry out this plan.

#### ***Are your core themes and objectives still valid, and is the institution satisfied that the core themes and indicators selected are providing sufficient evidence to assess mission fulfillment and sustainability?***

While the University's core themes have remained unchanged since they were first introduced in our 2011 Year One Self-Evaluation Report during our previous seven-year accreditation cycle, the core theme objectives and indicators have continued to evolve. Originally, we had a total of 19 objectives and 54 indicators for our four core themes. However, during the previous accreditation cycle and moving into our current accreditation cycle, based on the suggestions of NWCCU evaluation teams and feedback from our own assessment experiences, we have continued to refine our core theme objectives and indicators in an effort to create meaningful and manageable objectives and indicators, leading to a more efficient and effective assessment process.



This past year, subcommittees of the AAC re-examined the objectives, indicators, and acceptable thresholds for each of the core themes to ensure that they are providing the means to effectively assess our core themes. As a result of this process, modifications were made to several of the objectives and some of the indicators were replaced with new indicators that will allow the institution to collect more meaningful and useful data going forward. Additionally, the subcommittees discovered that some of the data for the indicators is not being collected and reviewed on an ongoing basis, so “Oversight” and “Closing the Loop” columns were added to the tables to assign persons/groups to be responsible for collecting and reviewing the data, and create accountability for documenting changes that have been made based on data analysis, evaluation, and reflection. In the revision process, as much as possible, the AAC sought to identify indicators that are based on outputs rather than inputs, as these generally provide more meaningful and useful data. The AAC made progress to this end, but realizes that several of our indicators are still based on input data.

The 7 objectives and 26 indicators currently being used to assess the four core themes are included in Appendix A. The AAC believes these objectives are valid and appropriate to guide the University toward mission fulfillment; however, many of the indicators are focused on traditional undergraduate students and a challenge remains to identify indicators and benchmarks that ensure our graduate students are also fulfilling the mission of the University. As a result, there is still a sense that some of the indicators and acceptable thresholds may need additional refinement; and some indicators still need to be implemented or possibly replaced to strengthen assessment of mission fulfillment and sustainability through our core themes.

Indicators in need of additional refinement or replacement include end-of-course evaluations, Turnitin and Grammarly reports, longitudinal assessment of Cornerstone and Capstone papers, the Christian Life Survey, and students’ participation in mission trips/study abroad/travel abroad. The end-of-course evaluation software the University is currently using does not allow for easy global data extraction and analysis of data. As a result, this coming year, the AAC and deans will be exploring options to possibly make a transition to a new end-of-course evaluations vendor that would provide us with better data and more useful reporting information. Turnitin and Grammarly data is regularly collected; however, reports have not been generated and reviewed regularly. There is some question whether this data is a useful indicator for this objective, so the AAC subcommittee reviewing this core theme recommended that the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) be adopted as a replacement for this indicator. The SAILS would likely be a more effective indicator; however, due to its cost and current budget constraints, this recommendation has yet to be approved. The CAAP exam was previously used as an indicator for the first objective of our Truth core theme, however, a decision was made to no longer administer the CAAP exam to students. The AAC subcommittee reviewing this core theme recommended that we explore the possibility of conducting a longitudinal assessment of papers written in Cornerstone and Capstone to examine students’ acquisition of knowledge across general and specialized academic disciplines. More work will need to be done this fall to determine if this will be a valid indicator for that objective. Although we administered the Christian Life Survey to students this past year, we recently learned that this survey will no longer be available for us to use in the future, so we will be seeking to replace this instrument with something that will provide similar data. Students’ participation in mission trips, study abroad, and travel abroad has traditionally been collected by different offices, which has created a challenge for systematically reviewing this data holistically. A new global education office being established this fall will allow for this data collection and analysis to become more centralized.

The AAC subcommittees also suggested several new indicators for consideration; however, they have not yet been developed and implemented. These include the “Last Semester Survey” and the “Adult Study Survey.” The Last Semester Survey will allow the institution to collect self-report data from undergraduate students in their Capstone course (typically taken during their last semester at NNU) and

graduate students in the last semester of their graduate programs. The primary intent of this survey is to collect self-report data on transformational experiences such as, “I have grown in my ability to articulate my personal beliefs,” “I have grown in my understanding of the Christian faith,” and “I have deepened my understanding and respect for individuals whose backgrounds, abilities, or culture are different than my own.” The Adult Study Survey is an attempt to gather data from graduate students similar to data collected from undergraduate students through the Student Satisfaction Inventory. To date, the AAC has not been able to identify an instrument that effectively collects data on graduate students’ sense of experiencing connectedness and community. As a result, this may become an instrument we develop and administer internally, or it may even become an expanded version of the Last Semester Survey administered to graduate students.

Data for a majority of the indicators used to assess our core themes is being collected and reviewed on a systematic basis. The University has established a rhythm for administering nationally normed student surveys including the NSSE and Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), as well as our internally designed Institutional Ethos Survey administered to campus personnel. Discipline-specific nationally normed tests including Major Field Tests, Praxis, NCLEX, and Peregrine provide valuable data on academic preparedness of our seniors. Assessment of our GE program provides several useful indicators as well. Together, these indicators are providing meaningful and sufficient evidence to assess mission fulfillment and sustainability.

## Part II: Representative Examples of Mission Fulfillment

NNU’s core themes of transformation, truth, community, and service are reinforced with students throughout their journey at NNU. Starting with their first semester at NNU, freshman students are required to take Cornerstone—a class that introduces students to the University’s four institutional values and challenges students to wrestle with these values throughout their NNU career and beyond. Senior students are required to take a Capstone course in their major—a class that brings together the student’s collective educational experiences and causes them to reflect on their personal development related to each of the four institutional values and how their views and perspectives may have changed as a result of these core themes. The Capstone course is most frequently taken during students’ final semester at NNU.

NNU nurtures students to creatively apply their knowledge and skills to the problems they encounter. The University wants students to understand and experience the world, then see themselves as God’s creative and redemptive agents, using their NNU education to bring hope and healing, peace, and justice to the communities in which they live through service to God and humankind.

The two examples we have chosen to share are representative of our continued assessment efforts to ensure that we are fulfilling our mission as we live into our values as a university. These examples focus on several indicators used to assess our objectives related to the core themes of transformation and service.

### Example 1: Transformation Core Theme, Objective Two, Indicators 2 and 3

<b>Objective Two: NNU students will expand their understanding of and respect for diverse perspectives and individuals from differing backgrounds, abilities, and cultures.</b>			
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>
2	Cross-cultural Reflection Papers	Average score of 12 on all cross-cultural reflection papers submitted each year	Director of the Cross-cultural Experience
3	Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey	Students will show statistically significant growth between freshman and senior year	Director of the Cross-cultural Experience, Cornerstone/Capstone Instructors

### *Background*

NNU continues to place an emphasis on helping undergraduate students develop the sensitivity and skills necessary to function effectively in an increasingly culturally complex world by requiring them to engage in a variety of cross-cultural experiences as a part of the [GE program](#). Students fulfill this graduation requirement by completing a combination of level 1, 2, 3, or 4 experiences. Level 4 experiences are the most immersive of the options and provide the greatest opportunity for students to gain sensitivity and develop their understanding of other cultures, as well as deepen their personal understanding of themselves as they interact with people from other cultures. Level 1, 2, and 3 experiences are less immersive, but no less intentional, and seek to fulfill the same overall objectives as level 4 experiences.

The stated outcomes of the cross-cultural program are as follows:

1. Ability to recognize cultural differences and similarities between home and target culture.
2. Ability to compare and contrast values held by the home and target cultures.
3. Personal recognition/experience of areas of tension between the values of home and target culture.

4. Personal experience of resolution of tension or accommodation to the values of the target culture.
5. Growth in the intercultural competencies necessary for meaningful interaction with individuals from target culture.

As a part of the cross-cultural experience requirement for the GE program, depending on the level of the experience, undergraduate students are required to write a 5 to 10-page paper reflecting on each of their cross-cultural experiences. These papers are scored using a rubric that focuses on four key areas worth 5 points each for a total of 20 points, and measures students' acceptance of cultural differences and demonstration of intercultural competence. The threshold target is for students to score at least 12 on their cross-cultural reflection paper.

At the completion of the first assessment cycle of this indicator for our 2016 Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report, the students' average scores on the rubric over a period of five years was 10.94, approximately one point below the target. Further, as a part of our ongoing review, the director of the cross-cultural program conducted a study of the data to determine the effectiveness of more immersive cross-cultural experiences (Tier 2-4) compared to less immersive cross-cultural experiences (Tier 1) as reflected by scores on students' cross-cultural papers. This study showed a significant enhancement of cross-cultural literacy when students were immersed in a culture rather than just interacting with a culture. These results were not surprising, but did support anecdotal observations that students more effectively meet this objective for our transformation core theme when they engage in highly immersive experiences.

***Are your indicators, for the selected examples, proving to be meaningful? Do you have too many indicators or too few?***

Using students' cross cultural reflection papers has proven to be an effective means to assess students understanding of and respect for diverse perspectives and individuals from differing backgrounds, abilities, and cultures. Through the years, this has provided meaningful quantitative and qualitative data that has been used to make changes and further strengthen the cross-cultural program, as discussed below.

In an effort to gather additional data to further assess students' cultural competence, the director of the cross-cultural program has been working with Cornerstone and Capstone instructors to implement and administer the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey, a self-assessment tool based on the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) that measures students' cultural awareness and competence. In the most recent review of the core theme objectives and indicators by the AAC transformation theme sub-committee, the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey was added as an additional indicator for objective two. We anticipate the addition of this longitudinal self-assessment data, along with data obtained from the cross-cultural reflection papers, will provide more meaningful information to assess this objective for our core theme of transformation.

***What has the institution learned so far and what changes are contemplated? What has been your progress to date using the data? Do the data tell you what you are looking for?***

One of the lessons learned early on in the process was the need to establish inter-rater reliability among the many faculty members who use a common rubric to score the self-reflection papers since the papers are "owned" by the instructor and course. As a result, the director of the cross-cultural program developed a "course" in Canvas that serves as a tutorial to train regular and adjunct faculty members who are responsible for using the rubric to grade the papers. This tutorial also provides activities that are designed to help faculty guide their students towards successful completion of the cross-cultural experience requirements. In addition, for the past two years, the director has provided an orientation seminar at least once each semester for the faculty who teach these courses in order to review the data collection process and enhance inter-rater reliability. With approximately 30 instructors per year involved

in scoring the students' self-reflection papers, maintaining a high level of inter-rater reliability remains an ongoing challenge due to faculty turnover and the hiring of new adjuncts to teach these courses.

While the initial data provided in the institution's 2016 Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report was primarily "global" in nature, the director of the cross-cultural program also examined the data by programs that offer specific courses that meet level 1 and 2 cross-cultural requirements. The intent was to identify courses where students scored considerably below the target. Several of these programs were identified as having surprising low student averages on the rubrics, most notably education and religion. The director of the cross-cultural program met with the department chairs and faculty in these departments to explore how they might implement changes to enhance the students' cross-cultural experiences in these courses. As a result, the field experience in the education department's Cultural Diversity course was modified to require teacher education candidates to have specific face-to-face interactions with a student of another culture rather than just observing a classroom in general. In the religion department, the cross-cultural requirement for the compassionate ministries course was traditionally fulfilled through a trip to San Francisco. However, with that experience, students seemed to be more focused on experiencing San Francisco in general, rather than intentionally interacting with the unique cultures represented within the city. That trip has now been replaced with a trip to Salt Lake City where students are connected with specific populations that have been identified to provide meaningful cross-cultural experiences for the students in the course. Changes were also made in the Exploring World Religious Traditions course to more intentionally encourage students to encounter diverse cultural experiences by requiring them to visit various places of worship, listen to guest speakers from the different traditions, and in some cases, work alongside people in these churches in service to others. Through these experiences, students in the course have worshipped with members of the Jewish community at Shabbat service and learned about their work with Muslim refugees at the apartment complex beside their synagogue, and they have participated in a Hindu community festival and learned about their work with immigration. Initial student feedback indicates these experiences have been helpful in broadening their understanding of different religious traditions, as well as their grasp of the local community. These examples are representative of a number of adjustments that have been made to cross-cultural experiences associated with programs and courses based on data and feedback collected from students through the cross-cultural reflection papers.

Since the inception of the rubric used to assess the cross-cultural reflection paper, systematic collection of data has proven to be challenging. Therefore, a primary focus over the past two years has been to make structural changes to more efficiently and effectively collect the data for this assessment. With assistance from the instructional design and technology department, the entire process has been moved to Canvas, our campus learning management system. The instructors and students have access to their specific course via Canvas. The cross-cultural reflection paper rubric is embedded into each of the Canvas courses, students submit their reflection papers in Canvas, and instructors score the papers in Canvas using the rubric. All courses that meet the cross-cultural requirement are now maintained in a sub-administrative account so the courses and content can be easily accessed by the director of the cross-cultural program, as well as the Canvas administrator. Now that the system is in place, the next step is to begin extracting and analyzing the data now being collected through these courses in Canvas.

Knowing that students who have more immersive cultural experiences report a significant enhancement of cross-cultural literacy, the institution established a new global education office this summer with a half-time director and administrative assistant focusing their attention on promoting and supporting our mission trips, study abroad, and travel abroad programs. While this function has previously existed on campus in different forms with varying amounts of load over the years, the renewed focus and attention given to this initiative is an effort to help promote and facilitate more students engaging in highly immersive level 4 cross-cultural experiences. We believe this will have a direct impact on helping students gain cultural sensitivity and developing their understanding of other cultures as assessed through our indicators.



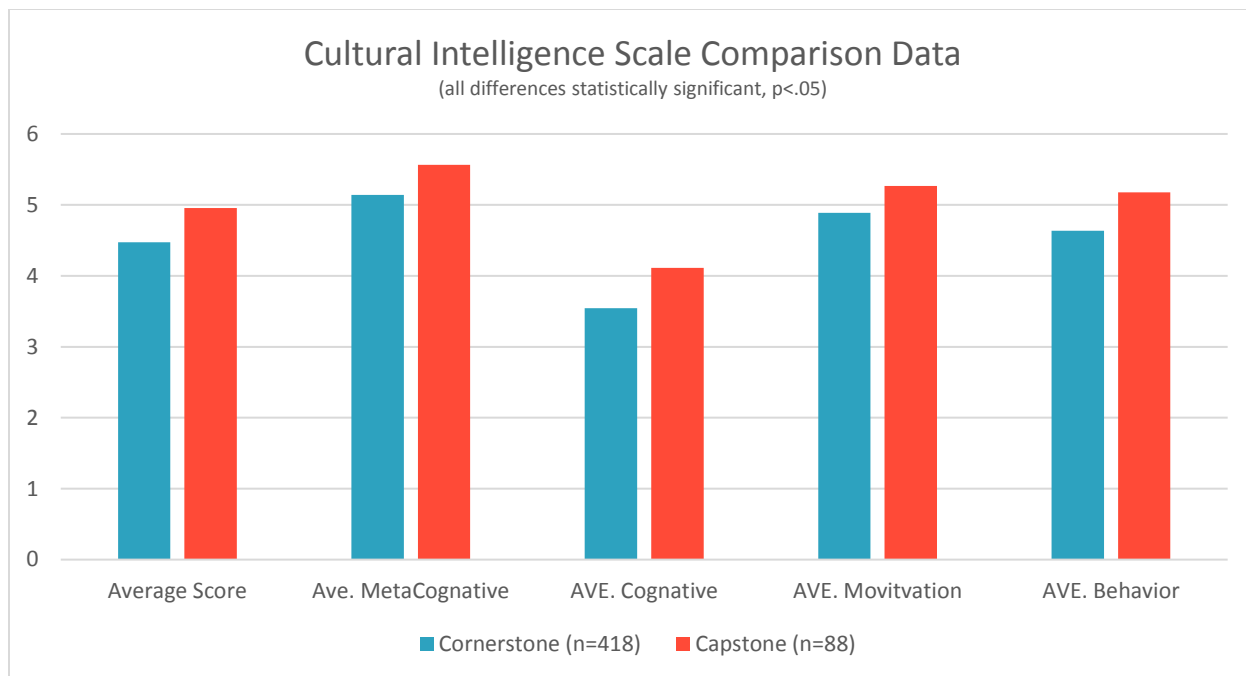
Establishing inter-rater reliability, making adjustments and improvements to students' experiences within cross-cultural courses, systematizing the collection of data for the cross-cultural reflection paper, implementing the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey in Cornerstone and Capstone courses, and opening a global education office are examples of how the University has used data to close the assessment loop related to our cross-cultural experience. As noted, data collected from the reflection paper has played an integral part in providing meaningful and useful information for affecting positive change.

***How are data being collected, analyzed, and utilized, and the findings communicated to constituents?***

Data collection, analysis, utilization, and communication of findings related to our cross-cultural experience has traditionally been the responsibility of the director of the cross-cultural experience. Since the cross-cultural requirement falls under the broader umbrella of the GE program, the GE Council also has a vested interest in collecting and analyzing this data. The AAC also pays attention to the findings since this data is used as an indicator for assessing our core theme of transformation. As explained above, the institution has completed an assessment cycle of collecting and analyzing data, utilizing that data to make improvements, and communicating the findings to constituents as necessary to elicit change.

Moving forward, data related to the cross-cultural reflection paper is now being collected in Canvas through a more streamlined process. In recent years, we have seen an increase in the number of courses (now more than 30) that have been approved to provide a level one or two cross-cultural experience for students. While there are successes to be celebrated, work remains to create a holistic culture of assessment where all of the faculty who teach these courses that offer a cross-cultural experience embrace and participate in the process by scoring all of the self-reflection papers using the assessment rubric. Additionally, leaders of international trips are more frequently adding course credit to these international trips so students participating in these trips may satisfy part or their entire GE cross-cultural requirement. Although these trips and the associated course offering are highly encouraged, this presents a challenge to ensure that students write the required reflection paper associated with the cross-cultural experience and that faculty and leaders of these trips accurately score these papers using the rubric in order to provide comprehensive and valid data.

Data for the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey is being collected through Cornerstone and Capstone courses. We have not been using this scale long enough to collect sufficient data to conduct longitudinal analyses comparing the same students' scores as freshmen and seniors; however, initial independent t-tests comparing current freshmen students in Cornerstone with different senior students in Capstone courses suggests there are significant growth differences in each of the sub scores, as well as the overall scores as illustrated in the chart on the following page.



As indicated by the relatively low “n” for Capstone students in our initial analysis, a point of emphasis this coming year is to have more of our senior students complete the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey. As we continue to administer this instrument and complete a four-year cycle, we will be able to conduct longitudinal analysis by comparing results for the same students from their freshman to senior year, which should provide data that are even more meaningful.

Given the fact that the director of the cultural experience position has a quarter-time load and the primary emphases these past two years have been to make structural changes related to data collection, ensure inter-rater reliability on the scoring of the cross-cultural self-reflection papers, and implement the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey in Cornerstone and Capstone courses, little time has been left to focus on data analysis, utilization, and dissemination of findings. As a result, these important parts of the assessment process have been limited. Seeing this as a weakness and important need, the institution has recently hired a half-time staff-level person to work on administrative tasks associated with the cross-cultural program, as well as assist with data collection and analysis. Providing this added level of support will allow the director to spend additional time closing the loop on the assessment of our cross-cultural experiencing by focusing on data analysis, utilization, and dissemination of findings.

In summary, data related to students’ cross-cultural experience is being collected regularly. Work has been done to provide a more streamlined process by integrating the collection and assessment process using Canvas, the University’s LMS. Preliminary analysis of data related to students’ cross-cultural self-reflection papers indicated that, overall, students are close to the target score of 12 across the experiences. Further, the antidotal information and tone of the papers is extremely powerful in validating that students are going through a transformation by enlarging their worldview through these cross-cultural experiences. In addition, the implementation of the Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey is now providing another means to assess students’ cultural competence. These indicators and the data they represent, effectively serve to validate one aspect of how we are using assessment to contribute to the transformation of students.

Links to artifacts supporting the content in this section are provided in Appendix B.

**Example 2: Service Core Theme, Objective One, Indicators 1 and 2**

<b>Objective One: NNU students will engage in service to the community in which they live.</b>			
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>
1	Cornerstone Service Project	At least 90% student participation in Cornerstone service project	Cornerstone Director, University Service Coordinator
2	Capstone Paper	90% of capstone students score exemplary or target as assessed by rubric (Gen Ed assessment)	Capstone Director

For this example, we would like to highlight our initial efforts to fulfill our service core theme objective through indicators one and two: the Cornerstone service project and the Capstone paper.

**Background**

Throughout the institution’s previous seven-year accreditation cycle, we struggled to identify meaningful objectives and indicators that effectively assessed our core theme of service as evidenced by the fact that the objectives and indicators used to assess this core theme changed from our 2011 Year One Self-Evaluation Report to our 2012 Year Three Self-Evaluation Report, and they were changed yet again in preparation of our 2016 Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report. As we compiled and examined the data for our 2016 Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report, we realized that the indicators were all based on inputs and did not provide data that was as beneficial as we had hoped. While the indicators were based on data we had available and could be gathered for the report, the data was not being collected and analyzed on a systematic basis. Therefore, assessment of our service objectives felt contrived and artificial since the data was gathered primarily to provide evidence for the report. In addition, for several of the indicators, it became evident that collection of the data was very cumbersome and the “cost/benefit” was not worth the value the data provided.

The challenges we had working with our Service core theme objectives and indicators were confirmed by the NWCCU evaluation committee during our 2016 Year Seven Comprehensive Review when they shared the following insights in their Peer-Evaluation Report:

*The Evaluation Committee feels that, while Service is evident at many levels throughout the university, after reviewing documentation and discussing this theme with various constituents, there does not seem to be a unified understanding of the definition, scope, and expectations. Therefore, the consistent evaluation of this theme is lacking.*

*The Evaluation Committee believes that NNU is interested in continuous improvements, and Service is an intrinsic value among this community. Moving forward, this value can be implemented more fully by defining service goals for the appropriate constituencies across campus, and then identifying appropriate data sources that will adequately capture the full picture of service across the university.*

University leadership took this feedback to heart. In fall 2017, the President’s Cabinet created a new half-time university service coordinator position within the office of university mission and ministry to promote and help centralize service-learning opportunities throughout the institution. Over the past two years, the university service coordinator has been integral in helping launch new community engagement initiatives and supporting service-learning by working with faculty, staff, and community agencies to provide volunteer and service-learning opportunities for the campus community. A recent partnership with Because International, a local non-profit organization who designed “the shoe that grows,” as well as

a chaplain-initiated prison ministry and a concerted effort to improve the service-learning component embedded in the Cornerstone class taken by first-year students are representative of some of these new community engagement initiatives. The bi-annual NNU Serve Day led by the Student Government Association (SGA) continues to be a long-standing tradition that also provides opportunities for members of our campus to meet specific needs in the local community.

Beginning in fall 2018, the VPAA, AAC, and Faculty Development Committee instituted a professional development day each fall and spring on student holidays that faculty are strongly encouraged to attend. One of these days each year has been dedicated to provide activities focused on how we can strengthen assessment campus-wide. To address the need to have a unified understanding of the definition, scope, and expectations of service, the bi-annual faculty assessment workshop in spring 2018 was dedicated to examining our service core theme and defining service within the context of our campus community. Through a series of activities led by the AAC service theme subcommittee, the faculty defined service as, “giving ourselves to God and humankind in academic and extracurricular ways.” Departments were then challenged to explore what service could look like within their department and work time was provided to establish departmental goals that would allow departments to live into the service theme. While this definition provides a sound basis for us moving forward, more continued work needs to be done to distinguish between the various types of service taking place at NNU (i.e., service-learning, volunteerism, internships, field experience, community service, and community-engaged learning).

As we entered a new accreditation cycle, identifying clear and meaningful objectives and indicators for our service core theme once again became a priority. Since the University’s beginning, service has been a significant and vital part of the fabric of our institution, and as confirmed by the peer evaluation committee, we knew that service was “happening,” we just lacked the measures to accurately reflect and assess it. The AAC service theme subcommittee once again re-examined the objectives, indicators, and acceptable thresholds and led a focused effort to identify new ones that would provide beneficial data. Ultimately, this led to a complete overhaul of the objectives and indicators for the service core theme as the subcommittee proposed changes to more accurately and effectively assess our service core theme by recommending we adopt one primary objective with four indicators that include the Cornerstone service project, the Capstone paper, the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

***Are your indicators, for the selected examples, proving to be meaningful? Do you have too many indicators or too few?***

NNU emphasizes the practice of servant leadership and teaches the importance of a life of servanthood as modeled by Jesus Christ. During their time at NNU, we want students to see themselves as God’s creative and redemptive agents, using their NNU education through acts of service to bring resources, hope, and healing to the communities in which they live. As mentioned, the service core theme now has one primary objective used to operationalize the core theme of service. This objective focuses on the institution’s goal for students to live out their values and calling through participating in service within the local community and beyond as they have opportunity.

This objective has four indicators with quantifiable thresholds that serve as benchmarks used to measure the institution’s progress toward fulfilling our mission as it relates to the core theme of service. While the use of these indicators is still relatively new, early indications are that they are sufficient, manageable, and will provide valuable feedback that is useful.

***What has the institution learned so far and what changes are contemplated? What has been your progress to date using the data? Do the data tell you what you are looking for?***

As the AAC service theme subcommittee sought to determine potential indicators that could be used to assess the service theme objective, one activity that was identified to deliver this experience in a meaningful way to students was through the Cornerstone service project. Cornerstone is a course that a majority of students take during their first semester at NNU. This past year, to emphasize the significance of the service project within the class, the course description for Cornerstone was changed in the University catalog to read:

*In Cornerstone, students engage with the four interrelated NNU values of Truth, Transformation, Community, and Service through direct experience and reflection on that experience. Students will begin to develop habits for success in college life; engage with the NNU community beyond the classroom; and work with an off-campus partner organization serving the local community.*

During spring 2018, the Cornerstone co-directors convened a task force that was asked to conduct a comprehensive review of Cornerstone, including its service component. The university service coordinator was an integral member of this task force. He brought a new vision of community-engaged learning and invested in building relationships with several community service providers in Nampa. To further facilitate this relationship, he hosted a lunch with those providers and Cornerstone leaders to propose a new model of partnership between Cornerstone and the Nampa community.

In fall 2018, each section of Cornerstone was assigned a different community partner from the local community (Nampa) with whom they worked for the duration of the semester. Students then completed an “issues and actions assignment” in which they researched the problem or issue their particular community partner is working to address, and then researched how the problem/issue has been (or is being) addressed by other communities. The students discussed the research articles with each other and then presented information to their community partner. Throughout the semester, students were actively engaged in working with their community partner. To help facilitate this, students spent some class sessions off-campus onsite at the community partner location. Following completion of the community-engaged learning project, students wrote a paper reflecting on their experiences. Near the end of the semester, each of the classes participated in a Cornerstone service project exhibition in the Leah Peterson Learning Commons where the students created “poster presentations” that they shared with the campus community. At the end of the course, students also completed a survey in which they rated the value of the issues and action assignment and the community-engaged learning paper, and were given opportunity to answer open-ended questions offering additional feedback related to the value of the service project experience and offer suggestions for future improvement. These activities were a significant enhancement over what has previously been done and provided a more intentional and comprehensive learning experience for the students.

Cornerstone also works to create a shared vocabulary for understanding service by having every section read or view Samuel Wells’ work on service. Wells points out that defining service simply as “working for” people is problematic; he proposes that we also think of service as “working with” and, most of all, as “being with” people. This model assumes that the greatest problem people face is not limitation, such as poverty, but isolation, disconnection from others. First-year students, like the community populations they engage, struggle with isolation. Therefore, their community-engaged learning work helps them as much as it helps those to whom they go. By emphasizing the mutual benefit of service as overcoming the isolation of both parties, this model reduces the arrogance that can accompany service attempts. Further, Wells emphasizes that “being with” service is modeled on Jesus’ Incarnation, God coming to be with us. It thus resonates deeply with NNU’s theological convictions.



The current threshold for the Cornerstone service project as an indicator is input-based (at least 90% student participation in Cornerstone service project). Since 100% of the students are required to participate in the community-engaged learning as a part of the course, this threshold is not particularly meaningful. The end-of-course survey may be able to provide more meaningful and useful data as a means to assess the effectiveness of the Cornerstone community-engaged learning project. As a result, we anticipate that the survey will be adopted as the primary assessment tool for this indicator. If that is the case, some modifications may need to be made to the survey questions to ensure we are collecting appropriate data.

The AAC service theme subcommittee also identified the Capstone paper as an effective indicator to assess the service theme objective. All Capstone courses, regardless of discipline, require students to write a culminating paper related to the values of the University. These Capstone courses use a common assessment and rubric that focuses on students' understanding, growth, and application of the University values. The assessment requires students to demonstrate a deep understanding of the University values by explaining what the values mean, why they are significant, and how they shape a thoughtful Christian worldview. Students are also asked to discuss ways they have experienced the University values through campus life, general education, and their major, and explain how the values apply to their life and future career path.

This final assignment of a student's undergraduate academic career at NNU provides an avenue for students to reflect on the University values of transformation, truth, community, and service. Specifically related to the service theme, students share how they have engaged in service to the community in which they live and provide examples demonstrating their growth in this area during their years at NNU. In 2017-18, the first year the common rubric was used to assess the Capstone papers, 94% of students earned a score of exemplary or target. This past year 92% of students earned a score of exemplary or target. While this represents a slight decrease, it is still a very strong number. It should be further noted that none of these Capstone students the past two years participated in a service project when they took Cornerstone since the service project component has only been in place for the past two years. We are anxious to see how the Cornerstone service project will affect these scores in the future as we continue to monitor this indicator.

***How are data being collected, analyzed, and utilized, and the findings communicated to constituents?***

In Cornerstone, data for the end-of-course survey is collected at the end of the semester in Google Drive using a common Google Form that is embedded in Canvas as an assignment in each of the Cornerstone courses. Collecting the data through the Google Form allows for analysis of all the courses as a whole, as well as by individual course. The end-of-course survey uses a 5-point Likert scale, with 1-being least valuable and 5-being most valuable. The focus of the Cornerstone course has changed significantly over the past four years based on survey results and feedback with the primary focus of the course now being the four university values, with the community-engaged learning component as our chief means for students to experience those values.

In the most recent survey, the issue and action assignment received a rating of 3.47 (n=206), and the community-engaged learning reflection received a rating of 3.60 (n=206). Since this was the first year of collecting data since implementing the new community-engaged learning model, this provided useful baseline data for future years, but overall, the students generally reported these experiences as being valuable. Students open-ended comments related to the value of the experience were also consistently positive. A number of students also provided valuable suggestions on ways to improve the experience, including more contact with partners and providing better transportation options for those who do not have vehicles.

As mentioned earlier, in fall 2018, Cornerstone instructors implemented the community-engaged reflection paper assignment as a common assessment. The paper provides students with the opportunity to write about their experience with their community partner and reflect on the value of the experience as it relates to the value of service. The paper was initially evaluated using the GE outcome aligned to the Cornerstone courses; however, instructors realized that the approved GE outcome did not align with the common assessment and that the outcome needed revision. As a result, the instructors met and established interrater reliability related to scoring students at minimum, target, and exemplary for the GE outcome using the common assessment rubric available. After the common assessment was graded, the individual instructors completed the GE Course Assessment Form and submitted it to the CAS GE Council.

Based on feedback received from the Cornerstone instructors, the GE Council worked with the Cornerstone instructors to design a new common assessment, the “values paper,” which will be implemented in Cornerstone courses this fall. The GE Council revised the GE outcome for Cornerstone and adopted the same rubric that is used to score the Capstone papers, which could provide opportunities for longitudinal analysis by comparing student scores on Cornerstone and Capstone papers in the future. Before scoring the values papers this fall, the Cornerstone instructors plan to meet again to establish interrater reliability using the new rubric. Similar to last year, once the individual instructors have finished scoring all of the students’ papers, instructors will complete the GE Course Assessment Form and submit it to the CAS GE Council for their review and dissemination.

While the Capstone paper is not new, having instructors score them using a common assessment rubric has only been done for the past two years. Students submit their papers in Canvas and the instructors score the papers using the common rubric embedded in each of the Capstone courses in Canvas. As a part of the GE assessment plan, once instructors have completed scoring each of the papers, overall class results are compiled in a report that is submitted to the Capstone director, who reviews each individual report and compiles an annual Capstone Assessment Report at the end of each academic year that is submitted to the GE Council for their review and dissemination.

At the end of each academic year, the Capstone director collaborates with the Capstone instructors and assesses how the class is doing overall in relation to addressing a student’s journey through the University values. In summer 2018, Capstone courses were assessed, issues were identified, and changes were made to address the concerns and improve the experience for students as noted in the [2017-18 Capstone Assessment Report](#). Plans for additional improvements are being made based on the results from the [2018-19 Capstone Assessment Report](#).

In summary, the institution has made significant progress in identifying a new objective, themes, indicators, and benchmarks that will enable us to effectively assess our service core theme. While still in their infancy, indicators one and two have already yielded useful information as discussed above that has allowed us to adjust the courses to enhance the students’ experience in the courses and more effectively assess their understanding of service and how they are exemplifying this value during their time at NNU.

Links to artifacts supporting the content in this section are provided in Appendix C.

### **Part III: Preparing for the Year Seven Evaluation**

As NNU approaches the midpoint of our seven-year accreditation cycle, we have taken numerous steps to create and support a sustainable and effective assessment process as explained throughout this report. The administration, faculty, and staff of NNU are committed to its mission and vision, and its values (core themes) drive institutional decision-making at all levels.

Looking ahead to our Year Seven Evaluation in 2023, the University will continue to implement the Institution Assessment Plan described in Part I of this report. Institutional priorities include completion of the GE assessment plan cycle and the academic program assessment plan cycle. In addition, by 2023 the University will have completed our current strategic plan and will have launched a new three-year strategic plan that we will be living into at that time.

As mentioned earlier, the University is committed to establishing a more formalized institutional research person/office that will enable the institution to centralize our collection of data. Data collection and analysis is currently being spread across many areas of campus, which has created challenges related to data integrity, as well as making data readily available and easily accessible. This person/office will also be integral in the continued development and design of institutional dashboards and other resources used by decision makers to make data-driven decisions.

In recent years, the University has been limited by its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which has resulted in inefficiencies in office workflow and restricted access/use of data throughout the institution. The IT department is currently leading a campus-wide effort to select and implement a new ERP system. While this transition presents challenges in terms of both financial costs and human capital, we believe the investment will be well worth it in terms of improved systems, processes, and data management.

In spring 2019, the University engaged with Ruffalo, Noel, Levitz to lead the institution in a strategic enrollment planning initiative. This comprehensive initiative will engage campus leaders at many levels as we create a multi-year, data-informed enrollment plan by analyzing key metrics such as market demand, market need, student recruitment, student persistence and completion, and academic and co-curricular offerings. The intent is to establish key metrics to guide planning, assess progress, and create buy-in among campus stakeholders. We anticipate this initiative will serve the University well as we create a sustainable enrollment plan to guide the institution in the years to come.

To ensure sustainability as a University, we will continue to closely monitor our resource allocation and budgeting processes. In light of continuing financial pressures, we need to continue to make strategic investments in areas that are central to our mission and strengths, while potentially reducing funding in other areas. The University has also placed an intentional focus on exploring opportunities for revenue enhancement. In February 2018, the president appointed a New Revenue Streams Task Force under the direction of president emeritus Richard Hagood that was given the charge to identify various initiatives that have the potential to generate new revenue streams that will benefit the University. This task force developed a report that was shared with the Board of Trustees sustainability committee in fall 2018. They identified three to four potential revenue generating options for each of three levels of risk—low, medium, and high. Some of the low-risk recommendations have already been implemented and the President's Cabinet is presently conducting further analysis on some of the medium and high-risk recommendations for potential implementation. Additionally, beginning in February 2018, the VPAA and academic deans have dedicated time each week to explore new program development as a means to grow enrollment and generate additional revenue with a goal of expanding or launching at least two

programs each year. The initial results of this work are shared in the Academics section in the Preface of this report with additional new programs still being considered.

Further implementation of each of these initiatives will enhance the vitality of the institution and strengthen our ability to serve the students of NNU. As we prepare for our Year Seven Evaluation, we understand that we will be operating under new NWCCU Standards at that time. In the coming months and years, we will stay abreast of the changes in standards and ensure that we are satisfactorily meeting those standards as we position the University to continue to fulfill our mission in the ever-changing landscape of higher education.

### **Conclusion**

In this Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report, we have provided evidence that we have an effective and comprehensive assessment plan and are implementing multiple assessment procedures and practices in an effort to continually improve. Key campus stakeholders are involved at all levels of assessment and decision-making as we have lived into a new era of shared governance. The two specific examples provided in this report are representative of the vitality of our assessment processes and are being replicated in many other areas throughout campus as well. As we build upon the initiatives, activities, and practices described in this report, the University will be well positioned to demonstrate how it has focused its resources and efforts on fulfilling its mission as we prepare for our Year Seven Evaluation.

**APPENDIX A: Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators**

**Core Theme One: Transformation**

<b>Objective One: NNU students will grow and develop in their ability to articulate personal beliefs and practices, in their personal expressions of Christ-like character, and in their understanding of the Christian faith.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Introduction to Christian Theology Paper	80% of undergraduate students can articulate their own beliefs and practices in writing as assessed by a rubric (Gen Ed assessment)	GE Council	
2	Capstone Values Paper	90% of capstone students score exemplary or target as assessed by a rubric (Gen Ed assessment)	Capstone Director	
3	End-of-course Evaluations	Average evaluation scores at least 4 out of 5 of identified questions	Deans, Director of Institutional Assessment	
4	Last Semester Survey	80% of students agree or strongly agree with exit questions*	Department Chairs, Deans	

<b>Objective Two: NNU students will expand their understanding of and respect for diverse perspectives and individuals from differing backgrounds, abilities, and cultures.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Students' participation in mission trips, study abroad, and travel abroad	Participation by more than 10% of students in level 4 cross-cultural experiences or study abroad programs	Global Studies Office, Director of the Cross-cultural Experience, Chaplains	
2	Cross-cultural Reflection Papers	Average score of 12 on all cross-cultural reflection papers submitted each year	Director of the Cross-cultural Experience	
3	Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey	Students will show statistically significant growth between freshman and senior year	Director of the Cross-cultural Experience, Cornerstone/Capstone Instructors	
4	NSSE	Undergraduate students will score at or above the national and CCCU averages	Director of Institutional Assessment	
5	Student Satisfaction Inventory	65% of students express they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied"	Assoc. VP for Student Life, Director of Institutional Assessment	



**Core Theme Two: Truth**

<b>Objective One: NNU students will acquire a broad base of knowledge across general and specialized academic disciplines.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Discipline-specific nationally-normed tests (Major Field Test, Praxis, NCLEX, Peregrine)	% determined by disciplines with 100% of departments or programs with above a 50th percentile cohort score.	Department Chairs, Deans	
2	Student Satisfaction Inventory	65% of students express they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied”	Assoc. VP for Student Life, Director of Institutional Assessment	
3	Department/Program Assessment Annual Reports	100% of all departments will have current (up-to-date), measurable learning outcomes and submit an annual departmental assessment report which includes recommendations for improvements and/or changes.	Department Chairs, Deans	

<b>Objective Two: NNU students will be able to identify, locate, analyze, evaluate, use, and share information effectively and responsibly.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	ENGL1030/1035 Final Paper	80% will demonstrate target or higher on the Final Paper assessment	GE Council	
2	Culminating discipline-specific (e.g. Capstone) projects	100% will complete at least one discipline-specific assignment/project	Department Chairs	
3	NSSE	Undergraduate students will score at or above the national and CCCU averages	Director of Institutional Assessment	
4	Turnitin/Grammarly Reports	90% of originality reports with “24% or less” similarity (currently 93%)	Librarians	
	or			
4	Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS)	80% of undergraduate students will demonstrate an increase from the Cornerstone to Capstone assessments.	Librarians	

**Core Theme Three: Community**

<b>Objective One: NNU campus community members experience an environment that teaches, challenges, and encourages each other through intellectual, social, and spiritual practices.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Christian Life Survey	Undergraduate students score at or above the peer institution averages	Office of University Mission & Ministry	
2	NSSE	Undergraduate students will score at or above the national and CCCU averages	Director of Institutional Assessment	
3	End-of-course Evaluations	The mean score reported by students is a 4 or better (5 point Likert Scale)	Deans, Director of Institutional Assessment	

<b>Objective Two: NNU campus community members will create a positive institutional atmosphere where members feel connected and valued.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Institutional Ethos Survey	75% of faculty and staff agree or strongly agree with identified questions	President's Office	
2	Student Satisfaction Inventory	Undergraduate students score at or above the national and peer institution averages	Assoc. VP for Student Life, Director of Institutional Assessment	
3	Adult Study Survey	Graduate students score at or above the national average and peer institution averages	Dean of Graduate Studies	

**Core Theme Four: Service**

<b>Objective One: NNU students will engage in service to the community in which they live.</b>				
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Acceptable Threshold</b>	<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
1	Cornerstone Service Project	At least 90% student participation in Cornerstone service projects	Cornerstone Director, University Service Coordinator	
2	Capstone Values Paper	90% of capstone students score exemplary or target as assessed by rubric (Gen Ed assessment)	Capstone Director	
3	Student Satisfaction Inventory	65% of students express they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied"	Assoc. VP for Student Life, Director of Institutional Assessment	
4	NSSE	Undergraduate students will score at or above the national and CCCU averages	Director of Institutional Assessment	

## **APPENDIX B: Artifacts for Transformation Core Theme, Objective Two, Indicators 2 and 3**

- Cross-cultural Reflection Paper Artifacts (Indicator 2)
  - [Cross-cultural Reflection Paper Rubric](#)
  - [Cross-cultural Analysis by Tiers](#)
  - [Home page for Instructor Orientation for the Intercultural Labs Canvas Course](#)
  
- Cultural Intelligence Scale Artifacts (Indicator 3)
  - [Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey \(based on the Cultural Intelligence Scale\)](#)
  - [Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey Raw Data](#)
  - [Intercultural Self-Assessment Survey – Data Analysis](#)

## **APPENDIX C: Artifacts for Service Core Theme, Objective One, Indicators 1 and 2**

- Cornerstone Course Artifacts (Indicator 1)
  - [Cornerstone Common Assessment Rubrics](#)
  - [Cornerstone Survey Data Summary](#)
  - [Cornerstone Survey – Raw Data](#)
  - [Community-engaged Learning Reflection Paper Example – Minimum](#)
  - [Community-engaged Learning Reflection Paper Example – Target](#)
  - [Community-engaged Learning Reflection Paper Example – Exemplary](#)
  - [Cornerstone Syllabus Template](#)
  - [Issue and Action Assignment](#)
  
- Capstone Course Artifacts (Indicator 2)
  - [Capstone Assessment Report – 2017-18](#)
  - [Capstone Assessment Report – 2018-19](#)
  - [Capstone Values Paper Common Assessment and Outcome](#)
  - [Capstone Values Paper – Minimum](#)
  - [Capstone Values Paper – Target](#)
  - [Capstone Values Paper – Exemplary](#)