REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM

To: Notre Dame de Namur University

March 25-27, 2015

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU), originally the College of Notre Dame, was founded in San Jose in 1851. The mission of the university is rooted in the values of its founding religious order, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDs). The SNDs were founded in France in 1804 with a mission to educate poor women who had limited access to education. The mission statement affirms a continued commitment to the Sisters' key mission:

> Founded upon the values of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and rooted in the Catholic tradition, Notre Dame de Namur University serves its students and the community by providing excellent professional and liberal arts programs in which community engagement and the values of social justice and global peace are integral to the learning experience. NDNU is a diverse and inclusive learning community that challenges each member to consciously apply values and ethics in his or her personal, professional, and public life.

The values espoused by the Sisters and articulated in the Mission Statement continue to inspire the university and are expressed in the university's Core Values and the Hallmarks of a Notre Dame Learning Community. In January 2015, for example, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recognized the university for its engagement in community service.

With its 1868 charter, NDNU was the first in California to be authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees to women. The university moved the college to Belmont, its current location, in 1923 and became coeducational in 1969. Graduate programs were added in 1972 and evening degree completion programs for working adults in 1988. To acknowledge its comprehensive character, the institution changed its name to Notre Dame de Namur University in 2001 and is now organized into three schools: the College

of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business and Management, and the School of Education and Leadership.

The faculty list for spring 2015 identifies 68 full-time faculty members, including 64 teaching faculty and 4 library faculty. Fall 2014 headcount enrollment is 1982 students in a range of baccalaureate and master's level programs and one doctoral program. Approximately 60% of the students are enrolled in baccalaureate programs and 40% in graduate programs. In the baccalaureate programs, 16% of the students are enrolled in evening courses. Among the graduate students, 25% are enrolled in education credential programs. Most classes are conducted on the Belmont campus; 5% of the students are enrolled in local off-campus locations (Mission College in Santa Clara and Cañada College in Redwood City) and 3% are enrolled in online programs.

As part of its recruitment effort, the university began offering partnerships in specific degree programs with local community colleges in 2009, accepting transfer credits for General Education and lower division major requirements. NDNU first achieved its status as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), meaning its undergraduate population is at least 25% Hispanic, in 2009, and still maintains that status. In 2010, NDNU launched its Gen 1 program for first-generation students, and a nursing partnership was created with Samuel Merritt University. Online degrees were added in 2012, and a new Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Art Therapy was established in 2013; this program is NDNU's first doctoral program and the first PhD program in art therapy in the nation.

Notre Dame de Namur University was granted accreditation in 1955 following initial Commission action in 1953 to approve a survey of the institution as requested by

the then College. Since that time, NDNU has maintained a consistent schedule of review visits and has been affirmed for reaccreditation.

As noted already, NDNU offers the majority of its classes on the Belmont campus; however, the university also holds classes in two off-campus locations: Mission College in Santa Clara and Cañada College in Redwood City. The university continues to offer online the Master in Public Administration, which was launched in 2012, but has discontinued new enrollments its two other online programs, the Master of Science (MS) in Systems Management and the MS in Computer and Information Science. It is currently exploring other online program possibilities, such as a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program.

B. Description of the Team's Process

WSCUC appointed team members in April 2014. In a letter dated September 11, 2014, the team chair informed members of the overall schedule of the review. The conference call for the Offsite Review (OSR) took place on October 9, 2014, and the Offsite Review was held at WSCUC offices in Alameda on October 27-28. Following the OSR, the formal Lines of Inquiry was sent to NDNU's Accreditation Liaison Officer on November 9, 2014.

The team conference call for the Accreditation Visit (AV) was held on February 27, 2015, and the team conducted its Accreditation Visit March 25-27, 2015, meeting with members of the community, including faculty, staff, administration, students and trustees, including a few alumni who now serve as trustees.

C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor

The NDNU Institutional Report for Reaffirmation of Accreditation (Report) was well organized and clearly presented. The report articulates clearly the commitment to mission, particularly in the areas of community engagement and diversity. The report reflects transparency and integrity in responding to past Commission concerns and demonstrates clarity of vision and a deep understanding of the university's strengths and challenges. A WSCUC Leadership Team consisting of a Faculty Coordinator, the Accreditation Liaison Officer and Associate Provost, and the Co-Chair of the Assessment Council led the self-review with significant involvement from the administration and representatives from the Board of Trustees, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, students and staff. The university participated in a community-wide discussion based on the Review Under the WSCUC Standards in 2011-12 to ensure a comprehensive review of the meaning, quality and integrity of NDNU's degrees. The self-review was also the focus of a two-day May 2013 forum and was further refined throughout the 2013-2014 academic year by the faculty and various governance committees. The Institutional Report includes data and evidence to support the university's assessment of strengths and challenges; most essays include a section on "Lessons Learned and Next Steps" that demonstrates an increased understanding of the current situation and future needs in regard to effectiveness, systems of quality improvement, student learning, and sustainability.

In addition, NDNU provided a clear response to previous Commission recommendations, highlighting the university's work on strategic planning, enrollment management, financial strength, organizational structures, communication, collaboration

and consultation, size of the faculty, program review and assessment, and the role of the Board of Trustees. In response to the Offsite Review and in preparation of the Accreditation Visit, the university provided additional documents and information requested by the team.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

A. Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

In its 1986, 1991 and 1997 actions, the Commission expressed concern regarding the financial situation of the university. In response to the Commission's action, the university implemented a comprehensive strategic planning process in 1997. As part of its reaffirmation of accreditation in July 2006, NDNU was issued a Notice of Concern and was asked to submit an Interim Report on enrollment, finances, and strategic planning in March 2007 and March 2008, with a Special Visit scheduled for fall 2009. Following the Special Visit, the Commission removed the Notice of Concern and requested additional Interim Reports in fall 2010 and fall 2011 and rescheduled the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) to spring 2014 and the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) to fall 2015. In August 2014, the CPR and the EER were changed to the fall 2014 Offsite Review with the Accreditation Visit in spring 2015. In 2011, the Substantive Change Committee granted final approved of the Master in Public Administration and the Master of Science in Management as distance education programs (April 2011) and the Master of Science in Computer and Information Science online program (September 2011). In December 2012 the Commission granted final approval of the PhD in Art Therapy program.

B. Component 2: Compliance with the Standards

NDNU initiated its Review Under the WSCUC Standards under the 2008 Standards and then switched to the 2013 Standards midway through their review, per WSCUC's new format for institutional review. The review reflected wide participation by administration, faculty, staff and students. The "WASC Standards Self-Review Summary" indicates a number of strengths, generally strong compliance, and a few issues requiring continued attention. In addition to its evaluation of this document, the WSCUC visiting team conducted a comprehensive review of compliance with the Standards, initially during the Offsite Review and again during the Accreditation Visit.

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The team did not surface any serious issues with compliance with Standard 1, and we commend the institution for the clarity of and alignment between the university's mission, its stated learning outcomes, and the students whom it serves. (CFR 1.1, 1.2) The university is recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution, recognized for Carnegie Community Engagement (January 2015), and supports the work of the Sr. Dorothy Stang Center for Social Justice and Community Engagement. (CFR 1.1, 1.4) Though sponsored by a religious organization, the university recognizes the importance of academic freedom and functions with appropriate autonomy. (CFR 1.3, 1.5) NDNU makes public data regarding student achievement (CFR 1.2) and has been transparent in its communications with WSCUC. (CFR 1.8)

While the visiting team notes as a positive sign that a new Governance Handbook was recently approved by the board in December 2014, NDNU is encouraged to provide

continued attention to its system for shared governance and communication, particularly regarding the role of the faculty. (CFR 1.5, 1.7) For further comment, see Component 9.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

During the Offsite Review, the WSCUC team found that NDNU, a highly values-driven institution in accord with its Catholic and long-standing heritage of providing access to college for underserved populations, demonstrated a clear and compelling commitment to student learning and teaching. (CFR 2.1, 2.2) NDNU engaged in a comprehensive academic planning process to determine its academic priorities. This included a full analysis of market considerations, faculty interest and expertise, the cost and benefit of each program, and student interest and satisfaction through inventories such as the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The result of this prioritization and self-described "re-engineering" of academic programs was a plan to "guide the nature of the university's academic programs, their interrelationships, and their centrality to mission; the academic levels at which they are offered and their modes of delivery." (Report, 18) At present, NDNU offers the baccalaureate degree in 20 programs, the master's degree in 12 programs, and a doctoral degree in Art Therapy.

In addition to the academic prioritization and planning process that affirms the commitment to learning and academic alignment in scope and quality of degree, NDNU has developed Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and Program Level Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that align with the mission of the institution; the university is in the process of fully implementing the review of ILOs and PLOs. Initial evaluation suggests that although there is an overarching institutional structure for assessment, the

undergraduate programs have made more progress in operationalizing these structures, and more attention is needed for graduate, professional, and online programs. (CFR 2.2)

As will be evident throughout this report, the WSCUC team had a concern about faculty sufficiency across programs at both undergraduate and graduate level. (CFR 2.1, 2.4) During the Accreditation Visit, team members noted this concern in terms of the number of faculty in each program, the heavy workload of teaching and advising, support for professional development and renewal with respect to research, teaching, and participating in new initiatives (e.g., community engagement and assessment), and the heavy service expectations for all full-time faculty. Given the relatively small size of the NDNU community and the large aspirations and necessarily shared workload, this finding was a theme across meetings related to many, if not all, institutional operations, from assessment to retention efforts, to governance, to planning, to student support. This was one of the key findings of the visiting team, noted below under recommendations.

NDNU is to be commended for its development of ILOs and PLOs and the work to establish structures and processes to evaluate both academic and co-curricular programs. Whereas the initial evaluation of these processes during the OSR suggested that NDNU was at an emerging stage relative to its academic program review, during the AV the team found more evidence that program review is in fact further along, and that the overall development of assessment is one of the institution's greatest examples of progress since its prior review. A more comprehensive treatment of findings is in Component 6.

With respect to scholarship and creative activity (CFR 2.8, 2.9), the team was pleased that there are some efforts underway to support faculty development, mostly in

the area of community engagement. Overall support for scholarship, however, is apparently of lesser emphasis given financial constraints and other priorities. In terms of support for student learning, the findings were mixed. On the one hand, NDNU has a very strong lived commitment to personal attention for students; clearly teaching is at the heart of this institution. Faculty and staff provide a highly relationship-oriented community. On the other hand, faculty and staff shortages, especially in the student life division, constrain the time and effort that can be dedicated to fully understanding and improving retention and academic progress. Likewise there were comments from students about the inadequacy of technological systems that support learning, such as difficulties with course registration processes, website and online interfaces, resource access, and personalized attention from support service providers. (CFR 2.11, 2.12, 2.13)

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

NDNU leaders serve with integrity, accountability, and high performance, and the leadership team utilizes appropriate, independent audits. The WSCUC team notes that the institution is working well to ensure long-term sustainability, and has not run a deficit in the past five years. (CFR 3.6, 3.4)

As the institution continues to improve and expand, the visiting team notes the need for a continued focus on faculty and staff capacity (CFR 3.1), and ensuring clearly defined governance role and responsibilities for full- and part-time faculty. (CFR 3.10) The team recommends that NDNU seek to ensure sufficient instructional technology resources, training and support. The team also recommends that the university seek greater clarification that the organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear and consistent. (CFR 3.5, 3.7) A more comprehensive treatment of findings is in

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Component 7.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

The visiting team commends the university for the significant efforts and commitment to quality assurance and institutional learning and improvement, such as in developing ILOs, PLOs and rubrics. (CFR 4.1, 4.4) The Institutional Report notes that the institution has benefited from administrative support unit reviews, allowing for conversations on improving development operations. (CFR 4.3) It also notes that faculty members have been engaged in conversations about student performance, setting goals for programs and designing assessment protocols.

NDNU is in the process of approving a new strategic plan and has taken measures for broad input from faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees. (CFR 4.5, 4.6) The Institutional Report notes a renewed campus-wide assessment effort and highlights the creation of the Assessment Council to foster an understanding of assessment and assessment practices.

An experienced Director of Institutional Research (IR) director joined NDNU in January 2015 to provide leadership and improve IR practices and systems. (CFR 4.2) Further attention will need to be paid to NDNU's IR capacity to support assessment, especially given this new leadership in IR, a rather large Assessment Council, and perhaps an over reliance on self-reporting inventories such as the NSSE and SSI.

Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

NDNU completed the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) as part of its institutional report. In brief, the undergraduate program has a highly developed system of outcome determination, review, and continuous improvement; the graduate

division is still formalizing its processes and determining how best to allow for individual program autonomy and still have a consistent process across programs.

With respect to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), in addition to ILOs for undergraduate academic programs, NDNU has also developed them for the First Year Seminar. For General Education there are themes but not outcomes yet, and for Writing Across the Curriculum there are expectations but not outcomes. There are six undergraduate ILOs: written communication; oral communication; critical thinking; quantitative reasoning; mission, values, and engagement; and information literacy. Of these six, all but information literacy have formally approved learning outcomes, and information literacy has informal outcomes. The outcomes are published on the website and in the catalog. There are comprehensive processes in place for their assessment, discussion, and use of findings to make improvements. The graduate division has tentative outcomes yet to be approved across its twelve programs. These include written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, mission and values, and scholarship. Thus far they have completed pilot reviews of the outcomes (between 2012-14) and are determining the degree of coordination with the Assessment Council.

With respect to academic program review, NDNU has a comprehensive structure in place. All academic programs, in both undergraduate and graduate divisions, have Program Level Learning Outcomes. Like the work with the ILOs, the faculty of each program, led by the Assessment Council and the Curriculum Committee, are actively involved in review, assessment, and use of data to make improvements. Assessment of the outcomes is integrated into the program review calendar, and action plans are developed following the review. Although the depth and rigor of the review varies per

program, the structure is an area of strength. The work now is to achieve greater depth and consistency in terms of the rigor of analysis, use of direct evidence, and demonstrable change. For the graduate programs, there is additional effort to coordinate the internal program review with external accreditation (e.g., Commission on Teacher Credentialing and Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs).

More detail about the use of systematic program review and the analysis of student achievement, with demonstrable changes made as a result of assessment, is found in Components 3, 4 and 6.

C. Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees

This Component is divided into two sections: Structure and Capacity.

Structure

Notre Dame de Namur University has carefully monitored the quality of its academic programs. (CFR 2.1, 2.2) As already noted, the university initiated its Review Under the WSCUC Standards under the 2008 Standards and was then switched to the 2013 Standards midway through their review. The review reflects wide participation by administration, faculty, staff and students. The "WASC Standards Self-Review Summary" demonstrates a thoughtful "review of the review" and indicates both strengths and issues requiring continued attention.

In 2008-09, in response to WSCUC's concerns about the number of academic programs offered, NDNU, following advice from a marketing study conducted by Noel-Levitz, LLC, eliminated some degrees, reduced the number of concentrations, and added three minors. Members of the university community also engaged in a university-wide planning process to develop the 2010 Academic Plan. The plan, overseen by the Planning

Council, addressed "big questions," including prioritizing academic program growth, improving academic quality and rigor, and identifying what key performance indicators the university should use. The plan called for the articulation of ILOs, PLOs, and General Education Learning Outcomes. (CFR 2.3) The plan also included measurable outcomes, listing tasks, deadlines, and responsible parties. In 2014, a Task Force on Academic Profile followed up by reporting on implementation of the plan. The university also established a Task Force on Faculty Composition/Excellence, which issued their report in September 2014. The Report noted, "The quality of academic programs is inextricably linked to the quality of its faculty. Faculty excellence is the 'driver' for NDNU's academic profile and reputation." (6-7) (CFR 2.1)

The commitment to the quality of degree programs is highlighted in the university's strategic plan: "The Strategic Plan 2011-2014 begins with academic excellence and the statement that we will pursue our distinctive vision of an 'innovative synthesis of liberal arts learning, professionally-oriented programs, and core values.' Key objectives under this proclamation are to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and reputation of our academic programs...." (Report, 18)

<div align="center">Baccalaureate Degrees</div>

NDNU offers Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Science degrees. "A baccalaureate degree at NDNU is defined as an integrated, structured course of study comprising the major, General Education, and electives. It is designed for completion in four years of full-time collegiate study." (Report, 21)

The university has developed ILOs to produce graduates with "a common core of skills and abilities." (NDNU online Catalog) These core competencies correspond closely with those fostered by accrediting agencies: written communication, quantitative

reasoning, oral communication, critical thinking, and information literacy. A sixth competency, "mission, values, and engagement," reflects the university's commitment to its Vision Statement: "Notre Dame de Namur University will be recognized in the San Francisco Bay Area as a leader in integrating community engagement into high quality academic programs. NDNU's programs will be widely known for their innovate synthesis of liberal arts learning, professionally-oriented learning, and core values." (Report, 2) General Education courses address these ILOs first through foundational courses, starting with a freshman year seminar, and then, for upper level courses, through a "thematic curriculum" focusing on personal and social responsibility; the individual, society and the environment; creative arts; community engagement; and cultural diversity. (CFR 2.2.a)

In addition to the ILOs, each academic program developed PLOs. Every academic program has a multi-year plan to assess learning outcomes. Programs are expected to assess all of their PLOs over a five-year period so that a full set of assessment data is available for program review. The Assessment Council provides a Program Assessment Plan Template to be filled out by each program. Annually, each program is expected to submit a report on their assessment activities to the Assessment Council. In spring 2014, the Assessment Council conducted an assessment of the adequacy of assessment plans and reports submitted by programs and published the results in a document entitled "Summary of Assessment of PLO Assessments." This summary indicates that most programs are tracking well on assessment of PLOs. See Components 4 and 6 for further details.

Graduate Degrees

The university offers master's degrees, including Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Business Administration, and Master of Public Administration, in twelve programs, and a PhD in Art Therapy. These degrees are "characterized by advanced intellectual rigor most clearly evident in the integration and application of sophisticated knowledge to the discipline or practice." (Report, 23) In spring 2013 the Graduate Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee and the Assessment Council worked on a draft of ILOs and accompanying rubrics for graduate programs. ILOs include critical thinking, written communication, oral communication, scholarship, and mission and values. (CFR 2.2.b) Assessment of ILOs was piloted in some programs in spring 2013 and 2014. The pilot revealed that addressing ILOs across all programs was in some cases duplicating the work done for graduate accrediting agencies. Going forward, the university states, "we will expect each graduate program to demonstrate how these outcomes are reflected in their program learning outcomes or provide justification for why a given ILO is not applicable to the program." (Assessment Webpage) Again, Components 4 and 6 delineate further details.

<p style="text-align:center">Online Courses</p>

As part of its recruitment policy, NDNU began offering online courses in 2012, including the Master of Public Administration (MPA), the Master of Science in Management (later changed to the Masters of Science in Systems Management, MSSM), and the Master of Science in Computer and Information Science (MSCIS). Due to low enrollments the MSSM and MSCIS have since stopped admitting online students. There are still on-campus MSSM students, so this degree will continue to be offered. Regarding the MSCIS, as of spring 2015 "there has not been formal action to terminate the

program." (Assessment of Online Programs, 1) The MPA continues to be offered online through the School of Business.

The university has contracted with a company, Deltak.edu, LLC (Deltak), later purchased by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (Wiley), for the online course management software servicing the online MPA; the system is entitled Engage. The university has produced an Electronic Learning Policy for Technology Mediated Courses and Programs. The policy includes this statement:

> All EL [Electronic Learning] courses and programs shall adhere to the highest standards of educational excellence and academic integrity. Best practices for EL will be maintained. These include, but are not limited to the effective analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation of all EL courses and programs; appropriate deployment and use of EL technologies; and the primacy of instructor to student interaction with regard to continual and timely contact aimed at meeting students' learning needs.

Assessment of PLOs in the MPA is just beginning. No data was collected in 2012-13 due to "staffing transitions," and in 2013-14, "only four classes were sampled to produce data for the six outcomes." (Assessment of Online Programs, 15) Further work by NDNU remains to be done.

Capacity

In part, CFR 3.1 states, "The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity to achieve the institution's educational objectives…." The university clearly recognizes the importance of faculty in assuring the quality of degrees:

> The quality of academic programs is inextricably linked to the quality of its faculty. Faculty excellence is the 'driver' for NDNU's academic profile and reputation. The primary focus of faculty at NDNU is developing and delivering academic program curricula, setting academic standards and assessing student learning, all essential for student success." (Academic Profile Task Force Report, 6-7)

Issues of concern for faculty and staff include the balance of full-time and part-time faculty, workload, and the status of part-time faculty. Component 7 delineates further details.

NDNU has set as its goal a ratio of 70:30 for full-time to part-time faculty. At present this ratio is closer to 50:50, with more than half of courses taught by part-time faculty. "NDNU still faces the challenge of achieving its desired ratio of 70/30 of full-time to part-time faculty." (Academic Profile Task Force Report, 11) In the 2014-15 academic year the university is engaged in searches for twelve full-time faculty positions, including nine tenure-track positions. Although a number of these are replacement positions, this is a positive development.

Several members of both faculty and staff reported to the team that they have reached workload capacity, and in many cases gone beyond it. Each full-time faculty member teaches four classes per semester, does advising, and serves on at least two university committees. The culture of assessment is embedded in the faculty, but assessment is time-consuming and adds to the work level. Faculty place a value on research but are pressed to find time for it. Funding for professional development through participation in disciplinary conferences is extremely low: $300 for attendance, and $800 if one is presenting. (CFR 2.8) Given financial constraints, the university needs to be creative in seeking ways to reduce workloads and support development and renewal, perhaps simplifying the forty-eight page template for program review, reducing the number of committees, councils and working groups from the twenty-four listed in the Governance Handbook, and exploring release time for committee chairs.

The Comprehensive Recommendations of the Faculty Excellence/Composition Task Force notes, "Low salaries cause faculty to carry overloads at NDNU, to teach additional classes at other institutions, or both, limiting their availability for and focus on their work on behalf of their development and the development of the institution." (4) The visiting team observed a connection between lower salaries and its impact on workload. (CFR 2.8, 3.4)

NDNU depends upon part-time faculty to teach more than half of its courses. The visiting team recognizes that the situation of part-time teachers varies from one school to another, that a part-time faculty member in the School of Business and Management may have different financial and professional concerns from a part-time member in the College of Arts and Sciences. At present, part-time faculty have little voice in faculty or university governance, although many of those present spoke about both their commitment and their concerns during the visit. The team encourages the administration and Faculty Senate to explore options for greater regular involvement and support.

D. Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation.

As noted in Component 3, NDNU has taken major steps in creating a culture of assessment and using evidence to drive decision making to ensure the meaning and quality of its degrees. NDNU is to be commended for its well-written description and analysis of its methods for assessment, progress to date, and continued areas of development. The team also notes the use of an electronic webpage to guide the assessment efforts and appreciates the responsiveness of NDNU in providing additional documents prior to and during the visit.

NDNU is an institution committed to student learning, especially of traditionally underserved populations. This commitment to learning, grounded in the heritage of the institution, permeates the Institutional Report and was evident across the meetings during the Accreditation Visit. (CFR 2.3, 2.4) Since its last WSCUC review, NDNU has more fully lived this vision by developing structures and engaging in processes that make manifest its aspirations.

Most of the progress on assessing ILOs and PLOs has occurred in the undergraduate division, as the graduate division indicates its efforts are at the pilot stage. One area for continued work is for the graduate programs to continue to advance an assessment structure that addresses both unique external accreditation (e.g. California Commission on Teacher Credentialing) and NDNU expectations for review.

In 2010, the Assessment Council was established from the prior ad hoc Educational Effectiveness task force; this council includes faculty representing the primary disciplinary areas of the university, as well as academic administrators, a librarian, and key institutional effectiveness personnel. The Assessment Council led faculty and staff in the review and decisions about the ILOs, as well as training about them and methods of evaluation. The institution held annual faculty workshops about learning outcome development, rubric development, and review of artifacts for each ILO. The Assessment Council is central to all assessment efforts on campus, responsible for developing and promoting the campus-wide culture of assessment. This team of dedicated faculty and staff is to be commended for its leadership; and the faculty and staff across campus are to be commended for their substantial work in building a solid culture of continuous improvement. (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.7)

The assessment of core competencies at the undergraduate level, NDNU's six ILOs, is an area of strength, with some additional work needed. NDNU has developed a calendar of assessment, a map for where the ILOs occur in curriculum offerings, and rubrics for assessment. These rubrics align with standard rubrics used nationwide in the areas of core competencies. There is widespread faculty involvement in selecting the artifacts for assessment of the ILOs, as well as actual evaluation. (CFR 2.4) The faculty determined that they would seek a 75% compliance of student achievement for each ILO, an average score of three on a five-point scale. In the annual faculty meetings devoted to assessment of the ILOs, there are both micro and macro level discussions about the evaluation. At the micro level, faculty are trained in the use of the rubrics, artifacts are evaluated, and results are shared. At the macro level, faculty continue to engage in questions about "what is good enough" on each scale, what type of artifacts are collected, and how assessment efforts are used to inform change for the institution. All of this suggests that this is a faculty-led process, that faculty understand and appreciate the data-driven nature of decision making, and that assessment is an integrated part of the academic community. During the Accreditation Visit, faculty were positive about the work that has been achieved and the use of assessment processes to guide curricular decision-making. (CFR 4.6)

Each of the ILOs is evaluated across a span of five years. In reviewing the ILO assessment results, it is clear that the students are attaining the desired learning outcomes, showing development from admission to completion on each outcome, though more work is to be done on quantitative literacy. Moreover, the institution is now at a stage to deepen

the work in terms of making adjustments to assignments for artifact collection and using results to enhance teaching.

NDNU also provided its own evaluation of its assessment, its assessment of assessment. It identified areas for continued improvement, such as the need for more conversations about the rubric levels, the desired levels of achievement, how to use the disaggregated data on the ILOs, and how to better integrate student self-assessment. The team left confident that NDNU has full ownership and integrity in measuring the core competencies of its undergraduate students. (CFR 4.4, 4.6) What is necessary now is to continue to close the loop and tie this substantial work to decision-making related to retention and graduation rates. (CFR 4.3, 4.4) Because the faculty body is small, many faculty are involved in both assessment and retention efforts; NDNU should work to build systems of connection, however, rather than depend on incidental personal connections across these two areas. The recent hire of the Director of Institutional Research is a positive step; this position will be helpful in establishing these bridges to connect performance to academic progress and graduation achievement.

E. Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation.

NDNU has a well-defined and widely agreed upon definition of student success, conceived of in a "whole person" context. The Institutional Report noted that the elements of success include completing a rigorous course of study, finding employment and/or advanced study after graduation, as well as ethical, spiritual, emotional, social, and physical development. These elements of success have been articulated in various institutional documents. In an open forum with students, many easily identified why they appreciate NDNU: because the mission and hallmarks are readily evident, especially

"social justice, community engagement, and a commitment to diversity." (CFR 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 2.13) As also noted in the Institutional Report, NDNU's co-curricular programs attempt to provide opportunities for students to participate in a number of activities and programs helping to develop students as whole persons.

The institution commits itself to retention and success. The Retention Council analyzes persistence data for all student types and provides strategies for improving persistence rates. In 2011 NDNU received two Department of Education grants for Hispanic Serving Institutions, both focusing on retention efforts: one focused on students in the science, technology, engineering and math fields (STEM) and the other on developing a retention and student academic support infrastructure. The grant provided funds to hire a Director of Retention and an Academic Success Center Specialist. In addition, NDNU is providing "success coaching" to newly enrolled first-year students.

NDNU benchmarks traditional freshman retention and graduation against a group of fourteen California private peer institutions, and has improved retention and persistence rates across many populations and across underrepresented minority groups. It is noted that NDNU was recognized in the Chronicle of Higher Education's Almanac as having the fourth best graduation rates of Latino/a students among Hispanic Serving Institutions nationally. NDNU has a four-year average first-to-second year retention rate of 77%, and a two-year average first-to-second year retention rate of 79% (the benchmark for their fourteen-institution cohort was 78%) with a stated retention rate goal of 81%.

Hispanic students at NDNU have generally been retained at a higher rate than the rest of the student population. NDNU's retention rate for commuter students exceeds the retention rate for residential students. Over the last six freshman cohorts, commuters have

been retained to the sophomore year at an average of 87% while residential students have been retained to the sophomore year at 74%. NDNU has also achieved success in retaining non-traditional undergraduates and graduate students. (CFR 2.3, 2.10-2.14)

NDNU students have achieved satisfactory graduation rates. While there were some populations that underperformed, in particular African American students (26%) and males (34%), NDNU's freshman cohort graduation rates are at or just below the median of the fourteen-institution comparison group.

While NDNU has achieved much success in graduation rates for its students, only 28% were able to complete their NDNU degree in four years for the Fall 2009 cohort. The institution is reviewing this finding, seeking to understand the obstacles and impediments faced by that cohort. Reasons cited in the Institutional Report included stop-outs due to financial hardships and family obligations, additional time for remediation due in part to a lowered selectivity rate, and high transfer-out rates.

Finally, NDNU offers a number of additional student success programs, including the Academic Success Center, Writing Center, Tutorial Center, Disability Services, midterm grade reporting, and academic support services for distance education. (CFR 2.6, 2.10, 2.13)

Overall, the mission and hallmarks at NDNU are well defined and widely agreed upon, and there is evidence that NDNU seeks to prepare students for success in the personal, civic and professional lives. The WSCUC team concurs with NDNU's plan to create a more robust alumni database, to better assess student success vis-à-vis career and professional outcomes, and to better connect enrolled students with alumni mentors. (CFR 2.6, 4.1-4.4) The team also agrees that NDNU should continue to improve the

academic profile of incoming students and to evaluate grant-funded positions and activities, determining whether/how to institutionalize and fund them.

Finally, the team encourages the university as it seeks to better understand lagging graduation rates for certain subpopulations and implement measures to address student needs.

F. Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence.

Quality Assurance Processes

In the area of quality assurance processes, NDNU has made impressive strides since its last reaffirmation of accreditation visit and has developed clear structures for assessment, if not also a campus-wide culture of assessment. (CFR 4.6) In the Accreditation Visit, the team sought to confirm the comprehensive nature of review (direct versus indirect evidence, for example, and the use of external review), the widespread use of assessment, and the efficacy of these processes. The team also explored how results are used to inform planning and changes to both academic programs and student support structures. (CFR 2.7, 4.4)

The team found that the structure of program review is well understood and embedded across all academic programs, as is assessment of ILOs. The team evaluated the degree to which the results of these processes inform improvement in the area of retention and graduation rates. Also evaluated was the cross-institutional coordination in these efforts, and the level of faculty involvement. (CFR 2.10)

As already noted, most of these efforts have been more integrated at the undergraduate level than the graduate level. The undergraduate division has fully embraced the assessment of ILOs and the various steps entailed. Both the academic and

the co-curricular programs have developed outcomes and means to assess these outcomes, as well as to use results to inform change. (CFR 2.7, 2.11) The actual depth of use of assessment results varies across programs.

The team recognizes the strong institutional commitment of resources to the assessment endeavor, primarily personnel in terms of faculty development for all the stages of the work: understanding assessment, developing a curriculum map, determining artifacts, developing rubrics, training peers, evaluating artifacts, discussing results, and using results for change. NDNU has clearly shown that it understands both the depth and breadth of this work, and what it takes to create and maintain a culture of assessment. In many ways, this work affirms the learning-centered mission of the institution, an institution that sees itself as a learner just as it celebrates the learning achievements of its students. NDNU is to be commended for its strong commitment to this teacher/learner model. (CFR 4.6, 4.8)

Academic Program Review

Academic program review is an area showing considerable progress, with still more attention needed. Since the last WSCUC visit in 2006, there have been starts and stops in this area, with more focused attention only in the past few years, especially with the establishment of the Assessment Council and the work of the two curriculum committees for undergraduate and graduate programs. With strong administrative leadership, and the guidance of the Assessment Council, the faculty has instituted a complex and comprehensive program review process. (CFR 2.7, 4.6)

In addition to the workshops dedicated to the understanding, development, and assessment of ILOs, the Assessment Council also led annual workshops for program

level outcomes and assessment. Now, all academic programs have comprehensive assessment plans, PLOs, curriculum maps, plans for evaluation of these outcomes, and means to use results. Proposals for new programs are required to include such assessment plans.

In terms of assurance of learning, academic programs are expected to assess each of their PLOs on a five- year cycle. From 2008-2013, most programs chose to evaluate an outcome at the course level; artifacts were gathered and reviewed by the department and reports submitted to the Assessment Council. Thus, there is now a database of assessment projects across disciplines. In fall 2013, the Assessment Council evaluated PLO reports for each individual program and reviewed and evaluated the data and curriculum map. Feedback from the Council was shared with department chairs or program directors, and in spring 2014, each program submitted a new curriculum map and plan for a new cycle of PLO assessment.

For academic program review, there is a forty-eight page pamphlet that guides the two-year process. The work is coordinated by the curriculum committees for undergraduate and graduate divisions, respectively. The process includes a self-study, an initial meeting with the program and the curriculum committee, the selection of an external reviewer, the review by the dean, a further meeting with the curriculum committee, and the development of an action plan. The curriculum committee provides its review to the program and to the dean and provost. Decisions about program changes and/or resources occur with the provost, Provost's Council, and dean.

In general, faculty expressed appreciation for program review, and in many cases articulated internal changes as a result of the process, primarily to courses or program

design. Two prime examples are the development of the doctorate in Art Therapy, and the reorganization of biology curriculum into a Biological Sciences major. Faculty especially commented on the recent addition of external review to the process as another useful and necessary perspective. The quality of the reviews varied by program and division, with graduate programs less developed. Action plans across the institution also varied in depth and quality, and NDNU should seek means to achieve greater depth and consistency in the assessment efforts and resulting action plans.

Overall, NDNU is to be commended for its substantial work in this area. The work that remains for program review falls into two areas for quality control: consideration of means to streamline the process, and means to ensure that the review loop is closed.

In terms of streamlining the process, it became apparent during the review that there is confusion between faculty and administration over who "owns" the program review process; the current process was recognized as overly complex and lengthy, but neither the curriculum committees, nor the Senate of which they are a part, nor the administrators involved felt able to suggest changes. This confusion exemplifies a larger team finding about governance and communication at NDNU, as articulated in Component 9 and the team's recommendations. The institution should consider how to better coordinate the academic program review overseen by the curriculum committees and the assessment efforts overseen by the Assessment Council; it should also consider how to coordinate better the oversight of the program review template between the curriculum committee, the Senate, the provost, and the Provost's Council. For an understaffed and hard-working faculty and administration, steps to consolidate pieces of

the program review might go far, such as reducing the meetings with the curriculum committee, or shortening the overall timeline.

With respect to the second area of recommendations, closing the loop, some faculty and deans noted that the academic program review process did not have clear and consistent pathways of decision-making once the review is completed. In some cases the review was sent forward to the provost, in other cases to the dean, and in other cases to the Provost's Council. Some faculty questioned why trustees are involved in reviewing action plans as well. (CFR 3.8, 3.11) In some cases, the curriculum committee was informed of the response to its findings; in other cases it was not. In many cases, programs were left wondering how necessary action items might be integrated into budget decisions and strategic planning. Thus, NDNU should build on the fine work achieved thus far in creating a program review structure, and make every effort to increase communication pathways between the relevant bodies and to use the findings and data to inform decisions at the program, school, and university level. (CFR 4.3)

Findings of program review seem to be most used by programs themselves, most often to inform curricular change. In the past six years, most undergraduate and graduate programs have implemented or designated capstone courses, final theses, or performances to serve as culminating experiences. The assessment plans are beginning to show movement toward assessing all or most PLOs through these courses. Many programs additionally use survey data and some use nationally normed tests such as the major field tests from the College Board.

The WSCUC team commends these substantial steps taken to establish an infrastructure for institutional and program level assurance of learning. There has been a

clear institutional commitment to establish the Assessment Council, which serves as the control center for these efforts. The team also affirms the self-reflection of the processes themselves and the identification of further work to be done. All of these are important tasks and indicate a level of commitment and awareness that is commendable. (CFR 4.6) Of special note is the issue of faculty capacity; given the desire to sustain this work and to maintain a faculty-led approach, at the same time the institution has questions of faculty sufficiency, it is imperative to develop a comprehensive plan for faculty workload. (CFR 3.2, 3.4)

General Education Review

During the Offsite Review, the team noted that little had been developed to assess undergraduate general education. As noted, NDNU did complete the development of ILOs and has an integrated structure for assessing each ILO. In many ways, this structure forms the cornerstone of general education assessment. During the visit, members of the NDNU faculty and administration acknowledged that they are still working on comprehensive review structure for general education. Although they had begun work on general education review seven years ago when a team of faculty attended an Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) summer institute on general education, the work was put on hold to focus on ILO development and assessment. Now, they will again have a team attend the 2015 AACU summer institute, with the intention of developing a plan. This will include identifying themes for review, connecting the work to the ILO assessment work, and developing a timeline for review. The Assessment Council will do the initial work, with review by the curriculum committees as well. The WSCUC team encourages the continued work in this area, and that there be clear

communication and coordination between the two faculty committees, as well as the faculty-at-large, so as to streamline efforts.

Student Life

Although always recognizing the importance of student life in the student's holistic learning experience, NDNU has more formally implemented co-curricular assessment in the past few years. Its approach is to link the outcomes in this area to institutional core values. It has embedded the use of national surveys to track student achievement and engagement, such as the NSSE First Year and Senior Surveys, and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey. During the visit, the WSCUC team found that the student life area has developed a review plan for each office, and a calendar of review. Given the finding that many co-curricular areas are understaffed, the team encourages the university to undertake a review that also includes attention to capacity. (CFR 2.11, 2.13) This is an area for continued work.

Use of data and evidence

NDNU has made progress and has marked, but mixed, success in using the results of assessment and data collection to inform decision making and improve student learning. Thus far, results are used by those closest to the work. ILO assessment impacts the courses in which the artifacts are collected. Program review results are used widely at the program level. Less clear is how these results are aggregated and shared for larger institutional purposes such as retention and academic progress. Equally unclear is how the composite findings are used as part of the institutional data collection to support and inform decision making, planning, and improvement of academic programs. (CFR 4.2, 4.3) For example, it is not clear how assessment of ILOs, or composite program review

findings are used by the Retention Council. Also not clear is how institutional initiatives, such as HSI status, inform the general education ILO review or program level review. The hire of a new Director of Institutional Research can help with bringing clarity. NDNU might benefit from having forums related to these issues, such as its re-energized plans related to retention and the First Year Seminar and the concomitant impact on program-based activities.

G. Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment.

Financial Viability and Sustainability

NDNU has made significant strides toward financial sustainability since the last reaffirmation of accreditation review with strong financial management, effective fiscal discipline, clear data-driven planning, sound enrollment forecasting models, growth in endowment, and successful attainment of grants. The visiting team commends the institution for all the hard work, effective leadership, and great progress achieved for this financial turnaround. While the fixed physical capacity at NDNU and limited human and financial resources present challenges, the team recognizes that the board and leadership of the university are committed to increasing enrollment, improving retention, expanding advancement, and diversifying revenue sources to ensure long-term sustainability.

NDNU student enrollment increased approximately 37% from fall 2008 to fall 2014 (total headcount from 1,478 to 1,982). For the success in increasing enrollment while lowering the undergraduate discount rate and improving the academic profile of entering traditional undergraduates, NDNU received the Marketing and Recruitment Excellence Award from Noel Levitz in 2013. Net operating revenue increased from $25.5 million in FY 2009 to approximately $39.4 million in FY 2014. Also, in fall 2011,

NDNU received two major federal grants totaling $6.1 million to support Hispanic and low-income students.

NDNU's overall financial position has improved and stabilized as indicated by the Composite Financial Index (CFI), which increased from a low of - 0.7 in FY 2009 to 4.4 in FY 2014. All financial ratios and indicators of financial health have improved, including coverage and liquidity ratios (1.03 and 3.41, respectively). As of June 30, 2014, NDNU had a cash and cash equivalents balance of $15.3 million, a substantial increase from $5.8 million at June 30, 2011. NDNU has functioned without a deficit for the past five years and has unqualified independent audits. In 2013, the university took advantage of its strengthened financial position to refinance approximately $15 million in debt from an approximate all-in-rate of 6.3% cost of funds to a 3.5% all-in cost of funds, resulting in a net financing cost reduction of approximately $320,000 per annum or total savings of approximately $5.9 million for the term of the loan. (CFR 3.4)

Furthermore, NDNU restored the quasi-endowment and successfully attained grants to support institutional priorities. NDNU's endowment grew from $11.3 million in FY2006 to $19.7 million in FY2014. As of March 2015, the advancement office reported that NDNU has fundraised $2,746,150 (cash only) for FY 2015, which was an all-time high for contributions. In addition to the cash contributions, a philanthropist announced in November 2014 a $6 million challenge grant to begin the $20 million seismic retrofit of Ralston Hall, a historic landmark on the NDNU campus, and an anonymous donor contributed $1.35 million to the Ralston Hall renovation. In February 2015, the Fletcher Jones Foundation awarded NDNU a $400,000 grant to help fund the university's first classroom expansion in 49 years. Under new leadership, NDNU's advancement office

has built a healthy pipeline of prospects for gifts and contributions of approximately $20 million as of March 2015. NDNU should continue to engage foundations, strengthen alumni connections, and attract corporate partners to increase funding of NDNU's endowment as well as grants for campus renovations/expansion and support of university programs.

Faculty and Staff Adequacy

NDNU has made progress in investing in faculty and staff to ensure that they are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity to achieve the institutional educational objectives, with much work still to be done. Part of this work has been through increasing full-time faculty positions from 57 in fall 2009 to 64 in spring 2015 as well as ongoing searches for full-time faculty. NDNU has also supported faculty and staff through moderate increases in salary (between 1-3.9% per year over the past four years), subsidizing the vast majority of the increase in health and wellness benefits since FY 2006-2007, and providing a non-discretionary 7% contribution of base salary for a 403(b) plan of eligible employees.

However, challenges remain in "achieving competitive faculty salaries" and staff salaries, which are generally at 90% of market value. (Report, 70) Throughout the visit, team members encountered a faculty that was extremely committed but also reportedly overworked. The team's understanding, corroborated by faculty perception, is that it was not uncommon that programs were subsisting on one or two full-time faculty (ranked or not), even in programs with over 100 students, and at both undergraduate and graduate levels. This has an impact on faculty sufficiency, advising, and campus-wide involvement in critical initiatives such as the First Year Seminar and efforts to increase retention.

(CFR 3.1, 3.2) There was also some confusion about how faculty lines were allocated. Given the impressive integration of program review across the institution, NDNU should seek means to use the findings from this structure to inform a comprehensive faculty plan.

As stated in the Institutional Report, balancing the needs to increase direct compensation for current employees with the need to increase the number of full-time faculty and staff with other needs throughout the institution will be critical to sustain NDNU's mission in the long term. (CFR 3.1) Especially given the increased competition in the Bay Area for talent, NDNU's Executive Director of Human Resources is understandably most concerned about staff turnover. Furthermore, a challenge consists of supporting faculty to be engaged and actively focused on the demanding work of increasing enrollment, managing retention, launching strategic initiatives, and ongoing assessment within the institution while trying to address compensation. Similar to the need for full-time faculty, NDNU has a shortage of staff in many areas, most notably offices related to student life. Student life directors and staff demonstrated a deep commitment to student development and establishing best practices across all areas, but limited resources, in terms of personnel, operating budgets and continued professional development, are impeding their ability to further develop programs. NDNU should continue to address challenges stated in the Institutional Report: "increasing faculty diversity, maintaining increasingly competitive salaries and benefits, maintaining reasonable workloads while accommodating student enrollment growth, maintaining small class sizes, and continuing investment in staff and faculty development programs." (Report, 71) (CFR 3.3, 3.10, 4.6)

Strategic Planning and Alignment of Resources

In an effort to improve the strategic planning process and alignment of resources with mission and educational objectives, NDNU has "revamped and formalized its financial budgeting/planning processes so that the Budget Council and Planning Council work together more formally throughout the academic year." (Report, 71) And since then, NDNU has continued to explore alternative processes for strategic planning. In September 2014, the Institutional Strategy Steering Commission (ISSC) was created to ensure that the Board of Trustees actively participate in the strategic planning process. The ISSC, composed of representatives from the board, administration, faculty, as well as a student representative, received formal input from the Planning Council and worked to focus the new NDNU strategic plan on the highest priority initiatives. Also, to ensure continuity, the ISSC overlapped in membership with the Planning Council and the Budgeting Council. The strategic planning process is currently ongoing at NDNU, but the draft of the new strategic plan shared with the visiting team outlined three core strategic initiatives with specific goals and targeted measurable outcomes. The strategic plan is designed to address the following four priorities of the institution: differentiation, value proposition, flexibility, and strong balance sheet. (CFR 3.7, 4.6)

In terms of budgeting and allocating resources, NDNU uses a "pay as you go" model to prevent deficits and focus on the bottom line. Also, to ensure strong cash flow, "NDNU includes depreciation and amortization in the Operating Budget and uses the depreciation to fund capital improvements and investments." (Report, 71) The finance team and Budget Council review predictive financial models and enrollment forecasts on an ongoing basis to inform financial decisions and make necessary adjustments to budget.

NDNU has also created a contribution analysis, utilizing credit hour generation per class as the fundamental revenue driver, which provides detailed reporting on the net revenues associated with various programs, schools, and departments across the institution; and this analysis is used to inform the budgeting decisions. This form of resource-based budgeting yields information about the fiscal contribution of each academic program and other revenue/cost centers to the university and helps provide valuable data to support decision making and planning. NDNU's financial analysis, forecasting/projection, and budgeting processes seem strong and well developed. There is an evident culture of utilizing data for making decisions and improvements, particularly in budgeting and resource allocation. (CFR 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.6)

Ongoing Challenges

NDNU stated in the Institutional Report that further improvements need to be made to ensure financial sustainability by "diversifying revenue sources, upgrading infrastructure, and managing the capacity of the existing financial constraints against demands for funding salary and benefits, technological infrastructure, and physical plan upgrades." (Report, 64-65) A key challenge for NDNU is growing programs and resources given the physical constraints to the campus (a city-imposed limit of 1,500 FTE students on the Belmont campus) and an aged physical infrastructure that needs significant renovations and upgrades. The university's strategic plan and budget have prioritized the ongoing needs to address deferred maintenance issues on the campus and to update the physical infrastructure to accommodate for increased enrollment and expansion of student services. NDNU identified challenges in instructional technology (IT) and physical infrastructure such as "online access/connectivity issues" and "parking

availability." (Report, 50) Also, the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSI) highlighted areas for improvement in "course registration processes, website and online interfaces, resource access, and personalized attention from support service providers." (Report, 51) Strategically allocating resources to make the best decisions around capital expenditures to support NDNU's mission and student success will be very important in the coming years. (CFR 3.1, 3.5)

As a tuition-driven institution, NDNU needs continued growth in enrollment and increased retention rates for long-term financial sustainability. To address the capacity constraints and diversify revenue sources, NDNU originally launched three online master's programs (Master of Public Administration, Master of Science in Systems Management, and the Master of Science in Computer and Information Science) and also has three offsite programs at Cañada College, Mission College, and Samuel Merritt University (for completion of a degree in nursing). As noted, two of the online programs are being discontinued, with only the MPA continuing. NDNU now plans to launch an online Master of Business Administration. While partnering with Wiley (which acquired Deltak, NDNU's original partner) to launch online programs is understandable given NDNU's physical limitations and resource constraints, the team recommends that university leadership strengthen technology and adopt best practices in hybrid and online education. It will be important for NDNU to develop a strategic approach to online education consistent with the mission of the institution, including providing adequate faculty development and student services infrastructure to ensure the success of its online programs. (CFR 3.5, 4.7)

Furthermore, in the initial draft of the new strategic plan shared with the team,

NDNU anticipates forming innovative partnerships to test out new financial and educational models. The team commends the entrepreneurial spirit of thinking about the changing landscape of higher education in the twenty-first century and exploring new financial models to ensure sustainability. This work will be critical given that NDNU's core revenue source of on-campus undergraduate programs is declining. As articulated by NDNU's Vice President of Enrollment, the Strategic Enrollment Plan (2014-2016) is outdated, and there is a continuing need to stay vigilant and monitor closely the changes in enrollment to proactively adjust marketing and pricing strategy. The team affirms the efforts of the institution to continually learn and improve and reflect on ways to be adaptive given the changes in enrollment trends and in demands in higher education. (CFR 4.6, 4.7)

Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

NDNU highlighted three key areas of changes in higher education that the institution is preparing to address: demographics, the financial model of higher education, and delivery models. As a mission-focused institution providing "access to education for those who might not be otherwise privileged," NDNU stated that it will continue to focus on serving Latino/a students, first generation students, and low income students. Demographic trends point to the fact that a growing population of low income and Latino/a students is in need of access to higher education. (Report, 74) (CFR 4.7)

As for the financial model of higher education, the institution identifies that its "financial model on which small, private, non-elite colleges have operated over the past several decades is fragile." (Report, 75) Given that price elasticity is increasing among students and their families, and that universities are relying on tuition discounts to attract

students, as well as the decline in public contribution and families' inability to pay escalating prices, universities like NDNU face increasing challenges to growing enrollment. Strategically, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) recommended "that NDNU's tuition and fee increases purposefully be set lower than market, that enrollment management be properly funded to permit full resource utilization and that the university retain sufficient resources for sustainability and unanticipated events." (Report, 75) As discussed previously, NDNU faces distinct challenges in enrollment growth, so the institution is seeking to diversify revenue sources through development efforts, auxiliary income through facilities rental, evaluating summer programs, other new program offerings, and exploring new strategic partnerships as articulated in its preliminary strategic plan.

Finally, as previously discussed, NDNU continues to explore online programs to address the changing delivery models in higher education; additionally, courses across the institution are being offered in a hybrid format with online components combined with in-class learning, particularly in the School of Business and Management. While the Institutional Report anticipated growth in the number of online students from "approximately 30 to 123 in the next three years and then growing to 20% of student enrollment within five years," this needs to be revisited given the discontinuation of two of the three online programs and potentially adding the online MBA program. (Report, 76) The team recommends that NDNU faculty and administration collaborate on planning for how best to invest in and expand online programs and hybrid learning opportunities to support adult learners and working students.

The team commends NDNU for thoughtfully reflecting on the changing

environment in higher education and for starting the necessary discussions with its board and various stakeholders to plan strategically for responding to these changes. Focusing NDNU's strategic initiatives on efforts to address differentiation, value proposition, flexibility and financial sustainability makes sense given the university's competitive position and its physical and fiscal constraints. While there is significant work to be done, it is apparent that NDNU is a learning organization that is focused on increasing its effectiveness as a university and strives to better serve its students and community by adapting to the changing environment.

H. Component 8: Optional Essay (not done)

I. Component 9: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

NDNU provided a good summary of the findings, interpretations, conclusions, and plans as a result of its self-study and Institutional Report. The process which led to the creation the report has in the institution's own words resulted in "tangible and cultural changes on the campus" including tightening up of policies and processes and the creation of the Academic Program Terminology document. In identifying its strengths, the university was also able to identify more clearly those areas where improvement is needed; for example, enrollment growth is a strength, but it reveals a need for space planning to accommodate a larger number of students and programs.

During the visit the team heard a number of concerns regarding overall governance and communication at the university. There is a fairly widespread perception that decisions are often made outside of the governance structure that appears in print. Whether this be true or not, the team recommends that university leadership address this perception. Moreover, the concerns related to governance that were expressed by faculty,

staff, students, and administrators were not just about the administration, but about faculty governance and committee structures as well. As noted previously, the program review process lacks clear steps about the communication, action plan development, and resulting decisions made. The recent addition of the Provost's Council, while applauded by some, has raised concerns by others in terms of actions that seem to bypass the Senate. Some faculty expressed concern that the trustees play a role in academic program review. The role of recent task forces, such as the strategic planning group, might conflict with the roles of pre-existing faculty committees. There are also concerns about the effectiveness of the current structure of the Faculty Senate and its intersection with other faculty committees: what items are under the purview of the Senate, and how items flow from committees to the Senate or vice versa. The team recommends clarifying whether the Senate is a decision-making group with its own initiatives and autonomy, or a place for voicing concerns and reacting to other bodies. The role of the substantial number of part-time faculty in faculty governance also needs clarification. Given the workload challenges already detailed in this report, the administration and faculty should work together to improve the effectiveness of and communication across all governance structures.

Looking to the future, the university articulated seven next steps that will be the focus of further discussion and planning:

- Size restrictions: NDNU must grow in creative ways that do not infringe on campus enrollment restrictions (on-line, off campus, etc.).

- Student Learning: NDNU will continue to strengthen assessment of student learning across all programs.

- Diversity and Inclusive Excellence: NDNU will dedicate additional attention and resources to support a culture of inclusive excellence, working in particular with faculty and staff populations.

- Faculty and Staff: NDNU will appropriately expand the size of its staff and faculty.

- Governance, Operations, and Planning and Budgeting: NDNU will continue to enhance and sharpen policy documents, handbooks, and processes to ensure effective shared governance and data-driven decision making.

- Resources: NDNU will continue to practice fiscal discipline while working to diversify revenue sources.

- Student Needs: NDNU will continue to monitor curricular, co-curricular, and administrative services in order to ensure continuous improvement.

The team appreciated the opportunity to discuss these topics in greater detail with the NDNU community during the Accreditation Visit.

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS AS APPROPRIATE (None)

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

Commendations

1. The team commends the substantial amount of work done to "right the ship" financially, including enrollment management, advancement initiatives, and securing the HSI/STEM grants. And the team acknowledges the important work that has been accomplished in data-driven planning and decision-making. The turnaround is impressive.

2. The team commends the significant and good work that has gone into preparing the Institutional Report and responding to prior Commission concerns. The team appreciates the candor and thoroughness evident in the self-evaluation.

3. Across stakeholders, community members articulated very clearly a common sense of mission and purpose. The focus on students, the commitment to access for underrepresented populations, and the emphasis on community engagement, are exemplary.

4. The team affirms the increase in the use of data and external consultants across the institution, such as in program review, peer analysis, and market studies. The university is to be congratulated on securing external partnerships and recognition, including the Carnegie designation and being named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

5. The team commends the university for significant progress made on assessment and the sincere commitment to building a culture of continuous improvement. This is one of the university's greatest emerging strengths.

6. The team affirms the entrepreneurial spirit of thinking about the changing landscape of higher education in the twenty-first century. The team also congratulates the university on the partnerships with community colleges, the emergence of the first PhD program in Art Therapy in the United States. The team encourages the continued development of online and hybrid programs, and the thoughtful exploration of other innovative opportunities articulated in the preliminary strategic plan.

Recommendations

The team recommends that the NDNU community:

1. Continue to strengthen governance. At the institutional level, this includes increased transparency and clarifying decision-making structures and processes. At the faculty level, more clarity is needed about how faculty members work together to exercise academic leadership within faculty governance.

2. Focus on issues around capacity. Improve the sufficiency of faculty and staff to support programs and operations, with attention to hiring, compensation, retention, and professional development. (CFR 3.1, 3.3) The success of NDNU has been grounded in the substantial individual and collective efforts of all members of the community; every effort should be made to affirm and support this work. The team also recommends that the university audit the number of committees, councils, and commissions to streamline decision making and improve efficiency. (CFR 3.7)

3. Work to strengthen communication across the institution to include all constituencies. Community is an important aspect of NDNU's core values. Clear communication will create greater trust across the university.

4. NDNU has made great progress in creating the foundation for financial stability. Given the fixed capacity and limited resources, it is necessary to further increase and diversify revenue. It is also necessary that the institution continue to deliberate and carefully prioritize allocations to human and physical resources to insure long-term sustainability.

5. Strengthen technology, including improvements to the technology infrastructure and system, faculty and staff development for instructional technology, best practices in hybrid and online education, information literacy, and preparing students for the twenty-first century workforce.

6. The commitment to diversity is articulated in the hallmarks and mission and evident in the student population. Planning and hiring at all levels, curricular and co-curricular programming, and assessment should better reflect this commitment.

7. Continue the commitment to educational effectiveness and assessment in curricular and co-curricular programs. The progress in assessment is noteworthy in terms of both the work itself and the cooperative and comprehensive nature of faculty involvement. While the culture of assessment is pervasive, it is necessary to refine structures and deepen the use of direct measures of learning across programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level. It is also necessary to ensure continuous improvement by closing the loop; action plans should be comprehensive and based on data and annually reviewed by faculty and administration to inform further planning and resource allocation.

8. Strengthen retention efforts to improve student persistence and graduation rates through the integration of student services across curricular, co-curricular, and administrative units. Complete the process mapping initiative to prioritize the work of the Retention Council.

APPENDICES

A. Federal Compliance Checklists
    a. Credit Hour Review
    b. Marketing Review

          c.   Student Complaints Review
          d.   Transfer Policy Review
B. Off-Campus Locations
C. Distance Education

FEDERAL COMPLIANCE CHECKLISTS

a- CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? X YES ❐ NO
	Where is the policy located? Faculty Handbook; Catalog
	Comments: NDNU is in full compliance and has a comprehensive policy on credit hour, with policy addressing expectations for on campus courses in traditional and service-learning formats, respectively, as well as distance, online and hybrid courses.
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? X YES ❐ NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES ❐ NO
	Comments: NDNU has both regular and periodic review with multiple systems of review: program chair and dean conduct regular reviews, and Curriculum Committee does during new course evaluation and regular cycle of academic program review, every five years.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES ❐ NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? Three
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Both
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate and graduate
	What discipline(s)? Business, Psychology
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ❐ NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? More than 10
	What kinds of courses? Independent study, internship, lab, senior seminar, community engagement
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate
	What discipline(s)? English, Biology, Psychology, History, Business, Communication
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ❐ NO
	Comments: NDNU has multiple methods of review and affirmation of compliance; takes ownership of compliance at faculty and administrative level
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Six
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Traditional, online
	What degree level(s)? Undergraduate, graduate

	What discipline(s)? History, Biology, Business, Psychology, English, Communication
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? X YES ❒ NO
	Comments: NDNU is in full compliance. A review of syllabi, catalog, website and program materials confirms compliance.

Review Completed by Frances Sweeney
11 April 2015

b- MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.	Verified Yes/No
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?	YES
	Comments: NDNU has a statement of compliance for its recruitment and admissions practices. It is also a member in good standing with National Association for College Admission Counseling, and adheres to its "Principles for Good Practice."	
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree?	YES
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree?	YES
	Comments: NDNU lists degree completion cost in Catalog and on website and admission materials.	
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?	YES
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?	Yes
	Comments: NDNU Catalog includes information, by program of potential careers for its graduates. It also uses a senior survey to provide information to current students about likely plans for graduates.	

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Frances M. Sweeney
Date: 27 March 2015

c-STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?	YES
	Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where?	YES
	Comments: NDNU has a policy for student complaints found in its website, under Higher Education Opportunity Act Disclosure page. It also has a Student Complaint Procedure Notice found on its website, on the Student Conduct/Student Development page, and in the Student and Faculty Handbooks.	
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? For student-related issues, students refer to the Dean of Students. For issues related to faculty, staff, or administration, they refer to the Student Ombudsperson. In both cases, students can make an oral report first, and it is followed by written information and investigation by the appropriate bodies, either the Dean of Students or the program chair or supervisor (for staff). FERPA policies are followed as well. In every case, there is a timeline of investigation and resolution, as well as communication with the student. For cases of possible sexual misconduct, NDNU also as a Sexual Misconduct policy which it follows. Students are also informed of the use of WASC office should they have additional concerns not addressed by the institution.	YES
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	YES
	Comments:	
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? Where? Dean of Students; Student Conduct/Development Office	YES
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly: Dean of Students; Student Conduct/Development Office	YES
	Comments:	

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)
See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Frances M. Sweeney
Date: 1 April 2015

d– TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit?	YES
	Is the policy publically available? If so, where? Website and Catalog, under Admissions and Registrar	YES
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education?	YES
	Comments: NDNU has clear, detailed and cogent policies for awarding transfer credit, as well as specialized categories such as military credit, intersegmental general education transfer curriculum, middle college or running start programs, CLEP and advanced placement, credit by examination, and transfer work after matriculation.	

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

（1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and

(2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Frances M. Sweeney
Date: 8 April 2015

OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS REVIEW – TEAM REPORT APPENDIX (2013 Standards)

Institution: Notre Dame de Namur University
Type of Visit: Accreditation Visit
Name of reviewer/s: Ann McElaney-Johnson
Date/s of review: March 25, 2015

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all visits in which off-campus sites were reviewed[1]. One form should be used for each site visited. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report.

1. Site Name and Address
    Cañada College
    4200 Farm Hill Boulevard
    Redwood City, CA 94061

    Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a regional center or off-campus site by WASC)

    Courses in the evening undergraduate programs in Business Administration, Psychology and Human Services are offered off-site at Cañada College and Mission College. Only 5% of total FTE take courses at the off-site campuses. NDNU courses are taught by NDNU faculty who travel to the off-site locations.

2. Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

    I reviewed all materials in the Institutional Self Study. I conducted a site visit to Cañada College to assess support services, library resources, and classroom and office space. Cañada College has excellent facilities. I met with three faculty members who teach in the off-site programs to discuss student support and sufficiency of resources. The facilities serve their needs well.

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[1] See Protocol for Review of Off-Campus Sites to determine whether and how many sites will be visited.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFR 1.2, 3.1, 3.4, 4.6)	The offering of off-site courses fits well with NDNU mission and provides access to additional students seeking a degree. Business model works efficiently.	None needed.
Connection to the Institution. How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFR 1.2, 2.10)	Visible presence established in off-site location, both physically and through technology.	None needed.
Quality of the Learning Site. How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFR 1.7, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4)	Excellent physical environment. Students' needs are met well. A full-time staff person from Cañada works to ease transition for students taking courses on campus (NDNU is one of several universities using these well-resourced facilities).	None needed.
Student Support Services. CPR: What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? *EER:* What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFR 2.11-2.13, 3.5)	Off-site facility provides sufficient student support resources. When a certain office is not available, NDNU brings staff to the off-site location.	None needed.
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty are involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFR 2.4, 3.1-3.3, 4.3)	NDNU faculty teach the courses at Cañada College and Mission College. Faculty commute back and forth. Assessment of student learning is integrated into overall assessment plan.	None needed.
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1-2.3, 4.6) [Also submit credit hour report.]	NDNU faculty oversee all aspects of curriculum and assessment.	None needed.
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFR 2.6, 2.10)	We did not see data on these students.	None needed.
Student Learning. CPR: How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? *EER*: What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFR 2.6, 4.3, 4.4)	NDNU uses same process as is used on main campus.	None needed.

Quality Assurance Processes: CPR: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? *EER:* What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFR 4.1-4.7)	Assessment of student learning is integrated into overall assessment plan. Full-time faculty oversee all aspects of the courses offered at off-site locations.	None needed.

Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: Notre Dame de Namur University
Name of reviewer/s:
Date/s of review: March 2015

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all comprehensive visits to institutions that offer distance education programs[2] and for other visits as applicable. Teams can use the institutional report to begin their investigation, then, use the visit to confirm claims and further surface possible concerns. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report. (If the institution offers only online courses, the team may use this form for reference but need not submit it as the team report is expected to cover distance education in depth in the body of the report.)

1. Programs and courses reviewed (please list)

   In Spring 2012 NDNU leveraged existing on-ground programs to launch two online programs, the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and the Master of Science in Management (MSM)—renamed the Master of Science in Systems Management (MSSM).). For both programs Deltak helped convert existing courses to an online format. In Fall 2012, NDNU launched a third online program, the Master of Science in Computer and Information Science (MSCIS).

   Due to low enrollment the MSSM and MSCIS stopped admitting students and are being taught out.

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

   Only the Online MPA program is still running.

3. Nature of the review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

   The Institutional Report, The Assessment of Online Programs (dated March 20, 2015) and during the site visit, the MBA and Online Committee were interviewed.

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[2] See Protocol for Review of Distance Education to determine whether programs are subject to this process. In general only programs that are more than 50% online require review and reporting.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFR to assure comprehensive consideration)	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?	NDNU's programs, both online and on ground, incorporate elements of ethics and social justice into coursework and projects. NDNU partnered with Deltak/Wiley to deliver the MPA, utilizing their Engage LMS (Learning Management System) to conduct classes, minimizing NDNU's upfront investment cost in launching and running the online program. There is a 50-50 share of the revenue.	None needed.
Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?	Online students have links to and can use campus resources (e.g., Academic Success Center, library services, counseling services) in the Engage platform. Online students are invited to Commencement, Discussion Panels, Distinguished Speaker Events, Academic Honor Societies, awards ceremonies, etc. Online students are required to interact with their fellow classmates and instructors throughout their degree programs. Course assignments and activities are structured to promote this interaction.	None needed.
Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	The learning platform (Engage LMS) and academic infrastructure of Engage are conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students. They utilize Discussion Forum Questions, and work on teams and review each other's work. They use open-access discussion and submission forums and group wikis, synchronously and asynchronously (over Skype, the Engage messaging system, Weekly Help and Discussion Forums, web-enabled virtual screen sharing technologies and social media interfaces). The Engage LMS technology is adequately supported by a partnership with Deltak/Wiley.	None needed.

	To ensure continuity of service "The course management system (Engage) is hosted in a Tier 4 data center with multiple Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and redundant power. To enable reliability and uptime, each system providing a service is allocated multiple resources to reduce the likelihood that any single failure would cause a service outage."	
Student Support Services: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?	Support services are usually provided online or by phone for online students as opposed to in-person for the on-ground students. Capacity is adequate. Deltak/Wiley provides a number of student services for online students (e.g., response to incoming call and emails within 48 hours; training students how to navigate the online platform; dedicated 24/7 Personal Support Center; and proactive student outreach through emails and campaigns to include reminders regarding financial aid, graduation application process, pertinent University deadlines, such as registration and invoice due, etc. Degree planning and advising is also provided through Deltak. Based on responses to the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, Academic Advising for online programs was rated by enrolled students slightly lower (4.60 and 4.18) than Onsite (5.35 and 5.24). NDNU notes that the lower scores in online vs. onsite (in general) may be attributed to the following factors: 1. Newness of the program 2. Graduate Director role transitions 3. Advisor transitions 4. Transitions at Deltak/Wiley	None needed.

Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?	NDNU has full-time, "core" and part-time adjunct faculty. Over the last year there has been a mostly upward trend in the ratio of Full-Time to Part-Time faculty teaching in the online program. They have met the stated goal of maintaining a roughly 1:1 ratio between FT and PT faculty teaching in the online MPA program. Online instructors who teach both online and onsite courses are integrated into the academic life of NDNU by virtue of the on-campus teaching they do. Online faculty who only teach in the online program are invited to participate in university and School of Business and Management meetings and events. All online faculty are oriented and supported in their online teaching efforts by the Engage LMS process as offered by Deltak/Wiley and SBM Faculty. There is also interaction with the MPA Program Director to ensure courses meet programmatic, curricular, logistical and other needs. Curriculum development for online courses is the sole responsibility of faculty. Faculty assess student learning in the online MPA program the same way they assess student learning in the on-ground MPA program.	Specific support and training opportunities for faculty should be spelled out more clearly.
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)	Program requirements, learning outcomes, courses, curriculum and concentrations are identical to those of the on-ground MPA program, developed and approved through "a joint effort of the Graduate Business Programs Director, graduate MPA faculty, the SBM Dean, the Graduate Curriculum and Admissions Task Force, the Graduate Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee, and, in some cases, members of the NDNU Senior Administration (i.e. Associate Provost, Provost and President) and the NDNU Board of	None needed.

	Trustees." Online courses are designed jointly by faculty and Deltak/Wiley personnel and are ultimately approved for "go-live" implementation by the Graduate Business Programs Director in consultation with Deltak/Wiley. Syllabi, assignments, grading, course flow, Engage technology modules used, workload and other academic, technical, and logistical aspects are examined for their suitability, rigor, content, and pedagogical appropriateness. NDNU has set a standard of 60 hours of student engagement per unit of credit, and all online courses carry three units of credit and must demonstrate that they meet the requirement of 180 hours of student activity time (i.e. online lectures, readings, tests, projects, studying, synchronous meetings, etc.). Course syllabi demonstrate how Course Learning Outcomes map to MPA Program Learning Outcomes.	
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?	Enrollment and retention data for the online programs from inception through Spring 2014 are included in Appendix E (p.20) of the "Assessment of Online Programs" report. Graduation rates in the online programs have not been separately tracked. The data on retention appears appropriate, but further tracking is required	NDNU needs rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions online offerings. Graduation rates in the online programs need to be separately tracked. The data on retention needs a context as well.
Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?	Student learning in the online MPA program is assessed in the same way that student learning is assessed in the on-ground MPA program. PLO assessment averages were identical for online and on-ground modalities in one PLO (#4). PLO assessment averages were substantially the same for online and on-ground modalities for three PLOs (PLOs #s 1, 2 and 5).	None needed.

	PLO assessment averages were higher for the on-ground modality than the online modality in one PLO (PLOs #3). In one particular course (Government, Budget and Finance), PLO assessment averages for the two PLOs assessed in this course (PLO #4 and #5) were higher for the online course than they were for the corresponding on-ground course. Preliminary analysis appears to support the notion that Program Learning Outcomes were achieved comparably across the online and on-ground modalities.	
Contracts with Vendors. Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on *Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations?*	NDNU contracts with Deltak to deliver fully online programs. NDNU's relationship with Deltak is fully compliant with WSCUC's Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations Policy.	None needed.
Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?	Deltak/Wiley helped modify end-of-course evaluation survey to include student response evaluation items that are comparable to other institutions offering online MPA programs. They drafted a comprehensive "Online Tracking Issues" to identify pedagogical, logistical, administrative and programmatic aspects of the online program needing improvement. The graduate business programs (MPA, MBA and MSSM) are currently going through the Academic Program Review process.	None needed.