Guidelines and Process for Institutional Mission Statements

An Oregon University System university mission statement is the single most important declaration of the institution's focus for the use of its human, material, and financial resources. It declares, in as simple a manner as possible, the objective for its existence and, thereby, guides decisions and operations and provides a means for assessing success. Creating a mission statement and having it approved by the State Board of Higher Education ensures that each OUS institution contributes effectively to the vision of the Oregon University System to “raise the educational aspirations and achievement of all Oregonians by providing lifelong education and knowledge development through teaching and learning; inquiry and innovation; and the application of knowledge to global, national, state, and local needs.”

The mission statement should reflect the institution’s purpose, identity, responsibilities, and commitments, including the focus of its instructional programs; nature of commitments to teaching, research, and service; and contribution to Oregon and the broader society. In developing or revising the institution’s mission statement, institutions should consider:

- Instructional focus; general education core; intended educational outcomes
- Core themes and signature program areas
- Partnerships
- Role of knowledge creation and application
- Focus of service to the region, state, nation, and/or world, as appropriate
- Connections to state and OUS priorities

The State Board periodically revisits mission statements to ensure that the institution’s mission and priorities are consistent with the state’s changing and evolving educational needs, enable the institution to remain current and competitive in research and innovation, and facilitate the institution’s effective contribution to the social and economic development of the state and the nation.

The process for creating a mission statement and then seeking approval from the Board follows these steps:

1. **Development at the institution**: The institution must demonstrate that the following has occurred:
   a. The President understands the vision and priorities of the Board and has committed his/her institution to the fulfillment of those priorities.
   b. The President, or his/her designee, has engaged the institution's faculty, staff and student bodies, relevant external constituents, and appropriate councils of the OUS in the mission creation process.
c. The mission creation process has included:
   i. An inventory of the institution's human, material, and financial assets and the region's needs relative to the OUS goals as articulated in the OUS Long-Range Plan;
   ii. Identification of how those assets will be applied to the region's needs and OUS and institution’s priorities;
   iii. Direct involvement of faculty, staff, students and the community in the review and revision of mission statement drafts; and
   iv. Identification of how mission fulfillment will be implemented and evaluated in conjunction with the Northwest Commission for Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accreditation review process.

   d. The President serves as final arbiter in the mission statement at his/her institution.

2. Review by the Chancellor: The Chancellor will review the proposed mission statement and work with the President and the campus for revisions, if needed. The Chancellor will then forward his/her recommendation to the Board’s Academic Strategies Committee.

3. Review by the Board’s Academic Strategies Committee: The Academic Strategies Committee will review the proposed mission statement at its next regularly scheduled meeting following receipt of the Chancellor’s recommendation to ensure that the mission statement was developed as described in #1c above and that the mission statement is consistent with Board’s vision for the specific OUS institution.

4. Approval by the full Board: The Academic Strategies Committee will bring its recommendation to the full Board for consideration and approval at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.