



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 are necessary requisites for an institution seeking accreditation.

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 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 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 as well as community representatives 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 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 timeline.
 - d. The President serves as final arbiter in the mission statement at his/her institution.
2. First review by the Chancellor: The President forwards the proposed mission statement to the Chancellor for review. Within 30 days of receipt of the proposed mission statement, the Chancellor will provide comments and/or suggested modifications to the President.
 3. Review by OUS Inter-Institutional Councils: Incorporating any needed changes from the Chancellor's review, the President sends the proposed mission statement to the OUS Presidents' Council, Provosts' Council, and Administrative Council. Delivery to the Councils presumes action at the next regularly scheduled meeting of each. Each Council reviews the mission statement based on the following criteria:
 - a. Has the institution provided satisfactory proof that the mission creation process has followed the institutional guidelines described above?
 - b. Does the proposed mission statement advance the goals and guiding principles of OUS and the Board as articulated in the OUS Long-Range Plan?
 - c. Does the supporting evidence demonstrate that the institution has appropriate resources to accomplish its mission?

Each Council will provide the Chancellor its recommendation of "acceptance," "acceptance with revisions," or "rejection."

4. Second review by the Chancellor: Within 30 days of receipt of the councils' recommendations, the Chancellor will reconsider the proposed mission statement and will then forward his/her recommendation to the Board's Academic Strategies Committee.
5. Consideration 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.
6. 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.
7. Alignment with NWCCU accreditation process: Following NWCCU accreditation action, the university will provide the Board a copy of the Commission's report and evidence that the mission statement assessment has been completed along with a timeline for making any necessary amendments or revisions.