

Team Report

WASC Senior College and University Commission

SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 2

Northwestern Polytechnic University

April 29-May 1, 2020

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I. INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and Accreditation History

Founded in 1984, Northwestern Polytechnic University (NPU) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) private institution that prepares students in the professional fields of business, information science, computer science, and electrical engineering. Located near the heart of Silicon Valley, NPU has benefited from an early awareness of industry trends and has used this knowledge to offer curricular offerings to meet current and future industry needs. The institution is located approximately 20 miles north of San Jose in Fremont, California. It is presently home to a four-campus site including a main campus, and three satellite buildings, all of which are located within one mile of each other. The University offers five academic degree programs at both the undergraduate (Computer Science and Business Administration and Information Science) and graduate (Business Administration, Electrical Engineering, and Computer Science) levels.

In fall 2016, NPU enrolled over 6,000 primarily international students, during which time it was accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). During that same year, ACICS was found to be noncompliant with federal standards and its status as an accreditor was dropped by the U.S. Department of Education. This resulted in steep and steady declines in enrollment at NPU, which have continued over time, to the point where the University had 58 students when the team visited in Fall 2018 and now has 30 students.

NPU submitted a “Notification of Intent to Apply” for WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) accreditation in 2017 and was granted Eligibility status in October 2017. In November 2018, the first Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV1) was conducted to ascertain the degree to which NPU met WSCUC Standards at a level sufficient for initial accreditation. In

February of 2019, the WASC Commission granted NPU a five-year Candidacy status and scheduled a second SAV visit to address compliance with all CFRs.

B. Description of the Team's Review Process

The second Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV2) team received a link to review NPU's Institutional Report and supporting documents via a secured online Box managed by WSCUC. Unexpectedly, the United States faced a public health crisis fueled by the spread of COVID 19. A priority response to this crisis was to reduce contraction and spread of the disease. As such, all organizations, businesses, and institutions were forced to follow executive orders limiting direct face-to-face contact with co-workers and members of the public. To safely fulfill the commitment to the applicant institution, a risk-free accreditation review process was imperative. Thus WSCUC, in collaboration with NPU, elected to conduct a virtual team visit using the web-based Ring Central video conferencing platform powered by Zoom.

Consistent with protocol, team members reviewed the Institutional Report and completed team worksheets to chart their initial assessment of how well NPU met WSCUC Standards. The institution's strengths, weaknesses, and areas of needed inquiry were discussed during a two-hour conference call meeting. A list of questions was constructed and the team asked NPU to make available a number of additional evidentiary items. Time was also spent receiving guidance on using a virtual platform to conduct the accreditation review. The WSCUC Staff Liaison provided team members with best practice guidelines for conducting virtual visits. The guidelines addressed pre-virtual visit preparation, protocols to follow during and after the virtual visit, and tips on virtual meeting etiquette.

The SAV2 visit was designated to evaluate whether NPU had sufficiently demonstrated that it is foundationally mature and prepared for initial accreditation under the WSCUC Standards.

The SAV2 team also sought to obtain further clarity regarding NPU's response to the WSCUC action letter to NPU President Hsieh dated March 4, 2019.

The virtual visit occurred between April 29-May 1, 2020. A two-hour pre-visit meeting was held via Zoom video conference on April 29, 2020 with all four members (including the WSCUC staff liaison) of the SAV2 team. The purpose of the pre-visit meeting was to review the three-day itinerary, confirm the division of labor, reinforce virtual meeting best practices, and ensure that requested documents were available for review.

The virtual visit meetings ranged from 50 minutes to 90 minutes in duration. Meetings were kept on schedule and guided by a list of pre-determined questions. Virtual team meetings were scheduled during the morning and at the end of each day to reflect upon meeting findings, determine whether additional query or evidence was required, and identify and address any technology challenges.

C. Preparation of the Institutional Report

NPU prepared an Institutional Report under the guidance of the executive vice president, the chief academic officer, and the compliance and assessment coordinator. The Commission Action Letter of March 4, 2019 found NPU to have demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standards 1 and 2 at levels sufficient for Initial Accreditation. The Commission also noted that further work was required on four Criteria for Review (CFRs) across Standards 3 and 4, finding NPU compliant at a level sufficient for Candidacy. As a result, the SAV2 report only addressed those areas of concern specific to the four CFRs.

Resonating throughout the Institutional Report is NPU's desire to show how the WSCUC accreditation process has contributed to its level of institutional maturity and particularly the maturity of its organizational infrastructure; the development and implementation of essential academic policies, procedures, structures, and processes; and the maintenance of high-quality educational and educational support experiences for students.

The report offers contextual transparency regarding NPU's accreditation history and subsequent challenges to primarily international student enrollment. It speaks of transforming these challenges into opportunities to broaden its reach with new approaches designed to attract and retain more domestic students and secure visibility and partnerships with local businesses and community colleges. The SAV2 team was impressed by the candor and comprehensiveness of the Institutional Report and related appendices and the synergy between these documents and the discussions held with administrators, faculty, staff, and students. It found the report to be a well written and high-quality endeavor that provides clear and complete responses to all items identified in the Commission Action Letter.

D. Commission Action Letter

The March 4, 2019 Commission Action Letter required NPU to provide evidence that it met all four accreditation standards and associated criteria. According to the Commission, NPU showed evidence of the following:

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives: The Commission found that NPU demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 1 at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objective through Core Functions: The Commission found that NPU demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 2 at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation.

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability: The Commission found that NPU demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 3 at a level sufficient for Candidacy and that more work was required on CFRs 3.9 and 3.10.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement: The Commission found that NPU demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 4 at a level sufficient for Candidacy and that more work was required on CFRs 4.2 and 4.6.

The narrative below provides the visiting team evaluation of how NPU has addressed the Commission action items.

SECTION II. EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS

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

***CFR 3.9 Independent governing board with appropriate oversight, including hiring and evaluating CEO:** The current NPU Board structure, membership, and formal committees are still relatively new and some important committees such as audit, finance, and nominations were all formed in May 2018. To date, the finance committee has met twice to review the financial status of the University. The audit committee has yet to meet. It is not clear whether a comprehensive charter for and charge to the new committees have been developed. As the committees continue to meet and develop, the charter for each should be more clearly defined and operationalized, including responsibilities and authority.*

In response to the questions and concerns raised by the WSCUC Commission, the visiting team reviewed the relevant section of the institutional report, together with Board-related minutes and documents, and met with nine of the ten Board members. The team noted a number of relevant actions taken by the Board in response to the Commission Action Letter. The Board formalized the roles and responsibilities of its six standing committees. It reviewed and approved formal charters for each committee and has at least three Board members serving on each one. It developed a formal investment policy for the institution and a formal process for evaluating the president and is at the point of adopting an executive compensation package. It regularly reviews institutional performance on the various indicators related to the University Strategic Plan and assesses that performance against pre-determined metrics. The various committees meet on an as-needed basis.

According to all Board members, the Board functions well, with a major indicator being that no one has resigned. It sees itself as a “sounding board” for the president and stays away from involvement in operational matters or approval of operational plans. There does not appear to be any mechanism established for the Board to engage in its own development or to utilize externally-available resources to assist in its continuing development and maturation. Nor is there a systematic process for Board self-evaluation or a formal process to refresh Board membership, such as a provision for term limits. In regard to institutional governance and decision-making, the Board has yet to determine an appropriate relationship between itself and the newly-established Faculty Assembly.

In summary, while the NPU Board did indeed respond appropriately to the concerns raised by the WSCUC Senior Commission, it still appears to be operating more informally than an

active and engaged Board should. Greater and more systematic involvement in reviewing and approving all of the university's strategic and operational plans, and in guiding the institution forward in a period when important decisions about its future are to be made, is warranted. The team's recommendations in this regard should help the Board operate more effectively and efficiently.

CFR 3.10 Effective academic leadership by faculty: NPU should clarify and formalize the role of both full-time and adjunct faculty in governance structures and decision-making processes.

The visiting team met with full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and the academic leadership in a number of meetings that included discussions about governance structures and decision-making processes. Among the members of the full-time faculty at several of the meetings was the chair of the newly-formed Faculty Assembly. In addition to interviews of faculty and academic leadership, the visiting team examined governance and decision-making documents included as a part of NPU's report.

Since the SAV1 site visit, there has been a significant development by NPU to clarify and formalize the role of the full-time and adjunct faculty in governance and decision-making processes. The *Faculty Governance Policy Statement* was updated in August 2019 to include a newly-developed set of *Faculty Assembly Bylaws*.

The *Faculty Governance Policy Statement* is a comprehensive document that details the role of faculty members in collective decision making, curriculum development, institutional governance, educational and institutional effectiveness, advising, and the development of academic standards and policies. The statement essentially gathered into one document many of the practices that had already been in place before the SAV1 visit in fall 2018. The *Faculty*

Governance Policy Statement does, however, now include the newly-formed Faculty Assembly, established in July 2019, and the *Bylaws* approved in August 2019.

The *Faculty Assembly Bylaws* lay out in typical fashion the articles that govern the Faculty Assembly. The membership includes all full-time and adjunct faculty. The purpose of the Faculty Assembly is to “enable the entire faculty to participate in the formulation of policies or plans that affect the academic programs of the University.” The Faculty Assembly has begun to hold meetings and represents a significant step forward for NPU to formalize the role of the faculty in governance and decision making.

Now that the Faculty Assembly is in place and has begun to meet, the overlap of its responsibilities with those of some existing committees related to academic matters necessitates an examination of the utility of these committees. Additionally, the Faculty Assembly, as the unified voice and will of the faculty, is in a good position to fuel the drive of the institution to ensure NPU’s curricula keep pace with the evolving nature of the technology industry.

Standard 3 Summary

In summary, the visiting team found NPU to be appropriately responsive to the concerns raised by the Senior Commission in regard to CFRs 3.9 and 3.10. While further work may be required to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of both the Board of Directors and the Faculty Assembly, much has been accomplished at this point. The SAV2 team finds that NPU meets Standard 3 at a level sufficient for initial accreditation.

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

CFR 4.2 Sufficient institutional research (IR) capacity; data disseminated and incorporated in planning and decision-making; IR effectiveness assessed: NPU should enhance its institutional research capacity to provide more sophisticated enrollment and demographic data; an institutional fact book; peer comparisons; and key performance indicators for the institution to support the executive leadership and Board of Directors in making decisions.

The visiting team interviewed the Director of Institutional Research and examined numerous data documents provided in NPU's SAV2 report. Additionally, during interviews with faculty, staff, administrators, and Board members, the team gathered information to make a determination about the capacity and effectiveness of NPU's Institutional Research Office to provide appropriate data and analysis to decision makers.

The institutional research capacity at NPU has continued to develop since the SAV1 visit. Not only has the Institutional Research Office expanded the types of data it delivers to include assessment of key performance indicators; it has also deepened its connections with other areas of the institution, notably the faculty, to provide a framework for the display and connectedness of assessment data to other institutional data.

The Institutional Research Office has identified peer institutions and has provided comparative data. Additionally, the office has provided senior leadership and the Board with data relative to the institution's key performance indicators. Further, the office has developed and distributed a well-crafted institutional fact book.

Institutional Research is well-respected at NPU as an office that provides data through a number of designs, including surveys, interviews, and queries of institutional and external databases. The office often provides well-reasoned analyses of the data it supplies. Its director meets with faculty, staff, administrators, and Board members to explain data and reports. The

office has become a collaborative partner in the assessment of program and institutional learning outcomes and academic program review and in the review and monitoring of key performance metrics related to the University's Strategic Plan.

CFR 4.6 Reflection and planning with multiple constituents; strategic plans align with purposes; address key priorities and future directions; plans are monitored and revised as required: NPU should provide evidence of a strategic plan which is developed, implemented, mature and aligned with academic, enrollment, marketing, and staffing objectives and connected to strategic priorities that link to budgeting and resource allocation.

In response to the questions and concerns raised by the WSCUC Commission, the visiting team engaged in extensive discussions with President Hsieh and institutional leaders, including the Executive Vice President, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, College Deans, faculty leadership, and Director of Admissions. Responses from these discussions were combined with a review of the institutional report and other supplemental documents to assess how NPU addressed Commission recommendations.

The University has a formal strategic planning committee, with the coordination of all strategic planning endeavors being delegated to the Executive Vice President. At this point in these endeavors, there has been a major focus on the alignment of the existing Strategic Plan with all subsidiary and complementary plans and on involving all faculty in planning and implementation discussions. Departmental planning meetings are used to exchange ideas and gather professional input from colleagues. All departments are involved in the strategic planning process and are required to submit individual department plans that align with the Strategic Plan.

NPU's Strategic Plan clearly links with the Academic, Staffing, Enrollment, Marketing, and Budget Plans. An example of this linkage is found in the Educational Excellence strategic goal.

Here, NPU's goal for Educational Excellence revealed strategies for gaining a better perspective on student academic outcomes via assessment and research. A strong model has been developed for conducting academic program reviews, engaging in institutional research, monitoring performance scorecards, and proposing annual projections for each division.

Given the extremely small number of students presently enrolled at NPU, and given the need for a critical mass of students in each of the institution's five degree programs in order to ensure academic quality and sustainability, a major focus for the team both before and during the visit was to determine how NPU was planning strategically for thoughtful and deliberate enrollment growth. After a number of discussions with the institution's leadership and a review of the institution's clearly articulated marketing strategy, the team was able to satisfy itself that such planning was in place.

It became apparent to the team that the both the availability of institutional research data and analysis and the decision-making that has resulted have allowed for a more informed approach to addressing institutional growth. NPU has set enrollment projections of 350 students by 2022 and has a corresponding staffing plan that includes projections for new faculty hires. It has conducted research to gain a better perspective on innovations in the field and has used that information to propose the development of new academic and certification programs to meet the demands of a changing landscape. In addition, NPU is exploring programmatic accreditation for the School of Business and is constructing a new, state-of-the-art facility to better serve its existing and planned student body.

A review of the budgetary plan shows a clear strategy for allocating funds toward various marketing and enrollment initiatives. These initiatives include providing scholarship incentives

to attract local students, purchasing potential lead databases, and marketing the institution through various media platforms. Budgetary allocations are also planned to support the development and implementation of new or restructured academic programs.

According to the current staffing plan, NPU intends to increase its adjunct faculty pool six-fold to 38 by 2022 while increasing its full-time faculty from 4 to 7. The team recommends that, as the institution pursues its academic excellence goal, the staffing plan should include deliberate measures to attract and hire more doctorate-level, demographically and experientially diverse faculty members from a range of higher education institutions to strengthen its educational excellence potential.

Overall, NPU has done an excellent job of aligning its strategic, academic, staffing, enrollment, marketing, and budgetary plans in a manner that promotes a consolidated review of and approach to institutional decision-making. However, in order to attain its ambitious enrollment projections, the institution will need to vigorously pursue marketing and enrollment strategies that complement those projections and clearly reflect and implement a well-defined branding of the institution's mission and vision. In addition, a clear and comprehensive approach to offering financial incentives and academic support will be helpful to attract and retain students, especially domestic students.

Standard 4 Summary

In summary, the visiting team found NPU to be appropriately responsive to the concerns raised by the Senior Commission in regard to CFRs 4.2 and 4.6. The University has developed a solid Institutional Research operation. It has well-crafted strategic and operational plans that have been well aligned with each other. It has an enrollment plan poised to turn around the

institution's enrollment declines by increasing especially its domestic student population. The SAV2 team finds that NPU meets Standard 4 at a level sufficient for initial accreditation.

SECTION III. PREPARATION FOR REAFFIRMATION UNDER THE 2013 STANDARDS

NPU currently offers five academic degree programs preparing students in the fields of business administration and information science, computer science, and electrical engineering. The 2018 Institutional Report showed that NPU established core competencies and institutional learning outcomes that were mapped throughout its undergraduate and graduate programs. The corresponding SAV1 onsite visit revealed that faculty members and deans were working collaboratively to develop program learning outcomes that mesh with industry standards and expectations.

NPU continues to enhance the meaning, quality, and integrity of its degree programs by conducting research on industry trends and using that information to guide the development of new courses and curricula. In addition, NPU seeks to improve the quality and integrity of existing programs by pursuing professional recognition and accreditation, particularly of its business program. The faculty, staff, and administration continue to demonstrate their commitment to meeting all standards of WSCUC accreditation. In addition, NPU has put into place a well-crafted set of policies, procedures, and practices that provides a clear indication that it is capable of meeting and sustaining the efforts needed for continuing accreditation. The University has linked strategic, academic, staffing, marketing, enrollment, and budgetary plans to reach its deliberately-structured enrollment goals. It should be well prepared to seek and secure reaffirmation of accreditation at the end of its initial accreditation period.

SECTION IV. FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NPU continues to show its commitment and dedication to the WSCUC accreditation process. It has made tremendous strides in building an academic infrastructure that is mature and stable enough to recover from the enrollment losses of recent years. The institution has provided appropriate and detailed responses to the Commission Action Letter and has proven itself capable of transforming itself into one that has the potential of becoming an exemplar to others. As the institution moves forward, the team encourages it to continue refining its brand and wishes it continued growth and success.

Commendations

The team commends Northwestern Polytechnic University for the following:

1. Its highly developed, well-structured, and integrated planning processes, its overarching Strategic Plan, and its complementary and supportive subsidiary plans.
2. The intense involvement of faculty--both full-time and adjunct—in university governance, planning, and decision-making.
3. The high-quality academic support services provided to meet the diversity of student needs.
4. The infrastructure that has been put in place to ensure and oversee orderly and deliberate growth.
5. Its well-functioning and integrated Institutional Research endeavors that provide relevant data and reports to academic and administrative departments and the Board of Directors. While increasing its capacity to advanced levels, Institutional Research has become a collaborative partner in the assessment of program and institutional learning

outcomes and in academic program review. The Board is commended for regularly reviewing and monitoring key performance metrics related to the University's Strategic Plan.

6. The academic preparation of students to meet evolving industry requirements and expectations.

Recommendations

The team recommends that Northwestern Polytechnic University:

1. Continue to mature its governing Board so that the Board may fulfill its designated role in guiding the institution. The Board should ensure that it is involved in reviewing and approving all of the university's strategic and operational plans; that it determines an appropriate governance relationship between itself and the newly-established Faculty Assembly; that it brings to bear appropriate external resources to help in further Board development and enhancement; that it structures and implements a formal process of systematic self-evaluation; and that it institutes a process to refresh Board membership, such as establishing a provision for term limits [CFR 3.9].
2. Recognizing the importance of the newly-established Faculty Assembly, reform and reconfigure its committee structures to maximize efficiency and streamline committee participation [CFR 3.10].
3. Use the institution's formal processes more intentionally to support the faculty's demonstrated leadership in the development of flexible and innovative courses and programs that respond to the needs of a changing workforce and student population

and that sustain and enhance a quality curriculum that is reflective of the character of NPU [CFR 3.10].

4. Independent of accreditation status, vigorously pursue marketing and enrollment strategies that complement the institution's ambitious enrollment projections and clearly reflect and implement a well-defined branding of the institution's mission and vision. Achieving appropriate levels of course and program enrollments will support the institution's educational model of project-based learning and student-to-student collaboration and interaction [CFR 4.6].
5. Put in place a faculty staffing plan that is well articulated with its enrollment plan and brings to the institution a cadre of highly qualified and demographically and experientially diverse faculty with doctorates from a range of higher education institutions [CFR 4.6].
6. Given the university's solid financial position and the stated desire to reconfigure its student demographic profile, develop and implement a comprehensive program of academic support and financial resources to attract and retain domestic students [CFR 4.6].

Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) Form

The IEEI requests brief narrative information for each degree program, for general education (if applicable), and for the institution as a whole. The IEEI provides a comprehensive overview of the institution's assessment processes that teams, the Commission, and the institution itself may use to evaluate educational effectiveness.

*The relevant definition of "program" as presented in the glossary of the 2013 *Handbook* is "a systematic, usually sequential, grouping of courses that forms a considerable part, or all, of the requirements for a degree in a major or professional field."

How can institutions use this exhibit? Institutions will want to be explicit about expectations for student learning and to ensure that every degree program has in place a quality assurance system for assessing, tracking, and improving the learning of its students. This exhibit can assist institutions in determining the extent to which they have assessment systems in place, and what additional components or processes they may need to develop. Institutions may draw upon or reference this document in preparing institutional reports.

Why is WSCUC interested in this information? An institution committed to student achievement and educational effectiveness will have in place a system for collecting and using evidence to set standards of student performance and to improve learning. The indicators asked for in this exhibit reflect how an institution approaches quality assurance and improvement systematically. Institutions submit the IEEI to WSCUC as follows:

- **Reaffirmation and Seeking Initial Accreditation:** The evaluation team will review the institution's IEEI to help understand how comprehensively and successfully the institution addresses both the quality of its students' learning and the quality of the learning and assessment infrastructure. Teams and institutions are encouraged to treat this exhibit as a developmental document: the institution can indicate what activities it already engages in and what remains to be done.
- **Mid-Cycle Review:** Institutions submit an update of their IEEI with the Annual Report in the year of the institution's Mid-Cycle Review as a set of indicators related to educational effectiveness and student achievement.
- **Interim Reports:** Institutions submitting Interim Reports concerned with educational effectiveness submit an updated IEEI with their report when requested by the Commission.

What 2013 Standards are addressed by this exhibit?

The indicators listed in this exhibit collectively demonstrate an institution's commitment to quality assurance and improvement of educational results over time (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4). Specific standards related to academic quality and effectiveness are addressed by the IEEI as follows:

- Educational objectives are widely recognized throughout the institution, are consistent with stated purposes, and are demonstrably achieved (CFR 1.2) □ All degrees have clearly defined levels of student achievement (CFR 2.2)
- Undergraduate programs ensure the development of core competencies (CFR 2.2.a)
- Graduate programs establish clearly stated objectives (CFR 2.2.b)
- Student learning outcomes and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and, as appropriate, institutional level (CFR 2.3)
- Learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty, who take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the achievement of these standards (CFR 2.4)
- The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance (CFR 2.6)
- All programs offered by the institution undergo systematic program review, which includes analyses of student achievement of the program's learning outcomes; retention and graduation rates; and, where appropriate, results of licensing examination and placement, and evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional organizations (CFR 2.7).

Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Category	(1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed? Yes/No	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published (e.g., catalog, syllabi, other materials)?	(3) Other than GPA, what data / evidence are used to determine that graduates have achieved stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)?	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?	(5) How are the findings used?	(6) Date of the last program review for this degree program.
At the institutional level:	Yes	The ILOs are published in the catalog in the introduction section and also on the web site under About/Overview tab. http://www.npu.edu/aboutnpu	For direct assessment NPU uses faculty administered signature assignments which hierarchically link to the ILOs Non-direct assessment is done by various surveys of student satisfaction, graduate survey, employer survey, etc. Retention rate and placement rate data is also taken into account.	The data is first reviewed by the Compliance and Assessment Coordinator, then reviewed by the deans and CAO, and then the full-time and adjunct faculty.	The findings are used for improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results. ILO #1 Written Communication Example: Faculty have decided to use APA style in student work as a standard	The ILO initial program review is scheduled for 2021

For general education if an undergraduate institution:	Yes	<p>The general education learning outcomes are published in the catalog under the general education requirements section for each individual undergraduate program.</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>NPU uses faculty administered signature assignments for direct assessment.</p> <p>Non-direct assessment is done by various surveys of student satisfaction, graduate survey, employer survey, etc. Retention rate and placement rate data is also taken into account.</p>	<p>The data is first analyzed by the Compliance and Assessment Coordinator with the assessment dashboard built using Microsoft Power Business Intelligence (PBI)/LiveText for signature assignments, other data is handled with Excel spreadsheets.</p> <p>Then the full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, dean interpret the evidence during the GE program review cycle, faculty trimester meetings, ad hoc meetings, and curriculum committee meetings.</p> <p>Aggregated results are further analyzed and reviewed by the deans, CAO, and Assessment Coordinator.</p> <p>Recommendations and actions items, such as those found in program review reports are followed up upon with consensus with the senior administration.</p>	<p>The findings and action items are used for improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results.</p> <p>Improvement adjustments are disseminated and implemented by the Schools of Business and Engineering jointly with other departments as needed, including Finance for budgetary support.</p> <p>ILO #4 Information Literacy Example: The librarian has hosted student workshops addressing library resources and proper approaches to citations.</p>	<p>The initial review has not yet been done. It is scheduled for fall 2020.</p>
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<p>List each degree program: 1. Bachelor of Business Administration and Information Sciences (BBAIS)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The PLOs are published in the catalog under each programs section and on the program's web page. https://www.npu.edu/academics/school-of-business/bachelor-of-business-administration-and-information-sciences</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>NPU uses faculty administered signature assignments for direct assessment. The results are shared with students.</p> <p>Non-direct assessment is done by various surveys of student satisfaction, graduate survey, employer survey, etc. Retention rate and placement rate data is also taken in to account.</p>	<p>The data is first analyzed by the Compliance and Assessment Coordinator with the assessment dashboard built using Microsoft Power Business Intelligence (PBI)/LiveText for signature assignments, other data is handled with Excel spreadsheets.</p> <p>The full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, dean then interpret the evidence the during the BBAIS program review cycle, ad hoc meetings, and curriculum committee meetings. Results may also be reviewed with the full Faculty Assembly.</p> <p>Aggregated results are further analyzed and reviewed by the deans, CAO, and Assessment Coordinator.</p> <p>Recommendations and actions items, such as those found in program review reports are followed up upon with consensus with the senior administration.</p>	<p>The findings and action items are used for improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results with inter-departmental support and Finance will include budgetary support.</p> <p>Critical Thinking Example: Instructors have changed student assignments to include more comparison analysis.</p>	<p>Completed on August 22, 2018</p>
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2. Master of Business Administration (MBA)	Yes	<p>The PLOs are published in the catalog under each programs section and on the program's web page. https://www.npu.edu/academics/school-of-business/master-of-business-administration</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>NPU uses faculty administered signature assignments for direct assessment. The results are shared with students.</p> <p>Non-direct assessment is done by various surveys of student satisfaction, graduate survey, employer survey, etc. Retention rate and placement rate data is also taken into account.</p>	<p>The data is first analyzed by the Compliance and Assessment Coordinator with the assessment dashboard built using Microsoft Power Business Intelligence (PBI)/LiveText for signature assignments, other data is handled with Excel spreadsheets.</p> <p>The full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, dean then interpret the evidence during the MBA program review cycle, ad hoc meetings, and curriculum committee meetings. Results may also be reviewed with the full Faculty Assembly.</p> <p>Aggregated results are further analyzed and reviewed by the deans, CAO, and Assessment Coordinator.</p> <p>Recommendations and actions items, such as those found in program review reports are followed up upon with consensus with the senior administration.</p>	<p>The findings and action are used for improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results with inter-departmental support, including Finance for include budgetary support.</p> <p>Oral Communication Example: The capstone has increased the number of presentations over the trimester.</p>	<p>The initial review is in progress and is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2020.</p>
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3. Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS)	Yes	<p>The program learning outcomes (PLOs) are published in the university catalog and on the website near the top of the section/page related to the program.</p> <p>https://www.npu.edu/academics/school-of-engineering/bachelor-of-science-in-computer-science</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>Assessment of learning outcomes is conducted via signature assignments administered in selected courses, which address targeted areas for assessment (specific PLOs). Student, graduate, and employer surveys are also used for indirect assessment of student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>The instructors are tasked with administering the signature assignments, interpreting the evidence, and completing the assessment by using rubrics designed for the learning outcomes. Results are collected and aggregated via LiveText. The surveys are distributed by the academic administrative team. All results are reviewed and analyzed by the Program Review Committee (PRC) and Assessment Coordinator. They are presented to the faculty and used to derive action plans for improvement.</p>	<p>Some findings are used by the instructors to improve students' performance through continuous formative assessment and feedback cycles.</p> <p>The outcomes from the assessment and analysis of the results are used to improve curricula, pedagogy, processes, structures, services, and learning results for the students. They are also used to derive action plans for improvement and institutional budgeting.</p> <p>Assessment of student learning outcomes is currently in progress. Though program review for BSCS has not yet been completed, preliminary use of results includes changes to the methodology and curriculum.</p> <p>For example, the faculty have decided to use APA style in student work as a standard. The librarian/learning resources manager also implemented activities and workshop to strengthen information literacy skills.</p> <p>It is expected that once program review is completed there will be more significant changes to improve alignment of resources, additional library resources, teaching</p>	<p>The results from assessment of each PLO is analyzed at scheduled intervals prior to the program review.</p> <p>The initial program review for BSCS is scheduled to be completed in spring 2020.</p>
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strategies, and student learning activities.

4. Master of Science in Computer Science (MSCS)	Yes	<p>The program learning outcomes (PLOs) are published in the university catalog and on the website near the top of the section/page related to the program.</p> <p>https://www.npu.edu/academics/school-of-engineering/master-of-science-in-computer-science</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>Assessment of learning outcomes is conducted via signature assignments administered in selected courses. Capstone courses and projects are used as a key part of the learning outcomes assessment for the graduate program. Other designated courses are used to conduct more targeted areas for assessment (specific PLOs). Student, graduate, and employer surveys are also used for indirect assessment of student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>The instructors are tasked with administering the signature assignments, interpreting the evidence, and completing the assessment by using rubrics designed for the learning outcomes. Results are collected and aggregated via LiveText. The surveys are distributed by the academic administrative team. All results are reviewed and analyzed by the Program Review Committee (PRC) and Assessment Coordinator. They are presented to the faculty and used to derive action plans for improvement.</p>	<p>Some findings have been used by the instructors to improve students' performance through continuous formative assessment and feedback cycles. Improvements in student's performance have been noticed in the results for assessment efforts in subsequent terms.</p> <p>The outcomes from the assessment and analysis of the results are used to improve curricula, pedagogy, processes, structures, services, and learning results for the students. They are also used during the program review self-study process to derive action plans for improvement and institutional budgeting.</p> <p>Upon completion of the self-study for the MSCS program review, the review committee, faculty, students, and external advisors identified various areas/plans for improvement. These plans and budget were submitted to the institutional planning team for approval.</p> <p>Some plans of actions that did not require management budget approval had been implemented by faculty to improve student learning during the course of the</p>	<p>The most recent program review for MSCS was completed in the 2018 summer trimester.</p>
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					<p>review process, such as updating course contents, introducing new courses, and including more hands-on exercises and providing TA to assist students in the classroom.</p>	
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5. Master of Science in Electrical Engineering (MSEE)	Yes	<p>The program learning outcomes (PLOs) are published in the university catalog and on the website near the top of the section/page related to the program.</p> <p>https://www.npu.edu/academics/school-of-engineering/master-of-science-in-electrical-engineering</p> <p>Course learning outcomes are published on the course syllabi. In many cases, the learning outcomes are also mapped to the weekly activities outlined on the syllabus.</p>	<p>Assessment of learning outcomes is conducted via signature assignments administered in selected courses. Capstone courses and projects are used as a key part of the learning outcomes assessment for the graduate program. Other designated courses are used to conduct more targeted areas for assessment (specific PLOs). Student, graduate, and employer surveys are also used for indirect assessment of student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>The instructors are tasked with administering the signature assignments, interpreting the evidence, and completing the assessment by using rubrics designed for the learning outcomes. Results are collected and aggregated via LiveText. The surveys are distributed by the academic administrative team. All results are reviewed and analyzed by the Program Review Committee (PRC) and Assessment Coordinator. They are presented to the faculty and used to derive action plans for improvement.</p>	<p>Some findings are used by the instructors to improve students' performance through continuous formative assessment and feedback cycles.</p> <p>The outcomes from the assessment and analysis of the results are used to improve curricula, pedagogy, processes, structures, services, and learning results for the students. They are also used to derive action plans for improvement and institutional budgeting.</p> <p>Assessment of student learning outcomes was in progress. However, due to low enrollment in the program, more data would be needed. Though program review for MSEE has not yet been completed, preliminary use of results includes changes to the methodology and curriculum.</p> <p>For example, courses have been updated to integrate more current technologies and provide students with skills that are in demand. Curriculum was revised to update the areas of interest and add a course related to the Internet of Things (IoT).</p> <p>It is expected that once program review is</p>	<p>The results from assessment of each PLO is analyzed at scheduled intervals prior to the program review.</p> <p>The program review for MSEE is planned for the 2020 fall trimester.</p>
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					<p>completed there will be more significant changes to improve alignment of resources, additional library resources, teaching strategies, and student learning activities.</p>	
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FEDERAL COMPLIANCE FORMS

OVERVIEW

There are four forms that WSCUC uses to address institutional compliance with some of the federal regulations affecting institutions and accrediting agencies:

- 1 – Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form
- 2 – Marketing and Recruitment Review Form
- 3 – Student Complaints Form
- 4 – Transfer Credit Policy Form

During the Accreditation Visit, teams complete these four forms and add them as an appendix to the Team Report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about any of the matters in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

Credit Hour - §602.24(f)

The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

(1) The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-

- (i) It reviews the institution's-
 - (A) Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution awards for courses and programs; and
 - (B) The application of the institution's policies and procedures to its programs and coursework; and
- (ii) Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

(2) In reviewing and evaluating an institution's policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments, an accrediting agency may use sampling or other methods in the evaluation.

Credit hour is defined by the Department of Education as follows:

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

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

Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)

Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor's degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master's degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

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? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Where is the policy located? The credit hour policy is published in the NPU catalog under Academic Information section. It is also posted on the website under NPU Policies (https://www.npu.edu/about/npu-policies) Comments: Refer to Section 6: Attachment 21
	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)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Periodic review of credit hour assignments is undertaken during the course syllabi review, requirement for make-up class sessions, and new course approval process.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? N/A
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? N/A
	What degree level(s)? N/A
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO N/A
	Comments: NPU does not offer online and/or hybrid courses.
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) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? Four (4)
	What kinds of courses? Curricular Practicum Training (CPT) courses
	What degree level(s)? Bachelor's and master's
	What discipline(s)? Business and Engineering
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: A minimum of 45 hours for a one-unit CPT course; a minimum of 90 hours for a two-unit CPT course. A weekly and an end-of-term report is required from the students.
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Five (5)
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? BBAIS, BSCS, MSCS, MSEE, MBA
	What degree level(s)? Bachelor's and Master's
	What discipline(s)? Business and Engineering
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: NPU complies with credit hour minimums derived from common standards in higher education and U.S.E.D requirements. Program lengths for each of the five programs offered at NPU are included in the respective curricula published in the NPU catalog and on the website.

Prepared By: Ms. Monica Sinha, Director of Admissions and Special Projects

Review Completed By: Dr. Nelly Mangarova, Chief Academic Officer

Date:02/14/2020

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.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? Yes, the policy is easily accessible. Student grievance policy and procedure is published in the NPU catalog and on the website. Comments: Website URL: https://www.npu.edu/about/npu-policies
Process(es)/procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: Students can submit their complaint using the NPU Grievance Form. The complaint may be sent via email to the compliance team or delivered in-person to the administrative staff. The intake personnel will review the form within five (5) business days of receipt. Depending on the type and complexity of the grievance, the appropriate party will adjudicate the matter or assign the matter to a grievance committee. If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Comments:
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? The records of student complaints is maintained by the compliance team. Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: The compliance team maintains an internal policy and a grievance tracker to monitor student complaints. Comments:

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Prepared By: Ms. Monica Sinha, Director of Admissions and Special Projects

Review Completed By: Mr. Mark Schultz, General Transactions and Corporate Counsel

Date: 02/14/2020

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.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Comments:
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The information on typical length of time to degree is published on the catalog under each program curriculum. This information is also posted on the website - https://www.npu.edu/academics
	The information about the overall cost of the degree is published in the NPU catalog under Estimated Total Charges for On-time Completion of Entire Educational Program on each of the five programs offered at NPU. This overall cost of the degree is also posted on the website – https://www.npu.edu/admissions/tuition
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The information about the kinds of job for which NPU graduates are qualified is published in the catalog under Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) – 2010 & 2018. The placement rates are posted on the website – https://www.npu.edu/academics/retention-rates

*§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.

Prepared By: Ms. Monica Sinha, Director of Admissions and Special Projects

Review Completed By: Mr. Paul Choi, Executive Vice-President

Date: 02/14/2020

TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY 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.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	<p>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Is the policy publically available? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? The policy is published in the NPU catalog under Transfer of Credit from Other Institutions. This policy is also posted on the website under NPU policies: https://www.npu.edu/about/npu-policies</p> <p>Refer to Attachment 6 - 21 Credit Hour Policy</p>
	<p>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? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
	Comments:

*§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.

Prepared By: Ms. Monica Sinha, Director of Admissions and Special Projects Review

Completed By: Dr. Judy Weng, Registrar and Senior Academic Advisor

Date: 02/14/2020