

Self-Study PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association, builds its comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation on two major processes:

- Institutional Self-Study
- Peer Evaluation

This Self-Study Plan describes and outlines Webster University's plan to promote continuous improvement and to provide the Commission with evidence that Webster fulfills the HLC Criteria for Accreditation. The process will result in a self-study report, which will serve as Webster's formal application to the HLC.

This document describes and outlines the Self-Study process, goals, expectations, committee organization, and timelines. This document also anticipates the organization (contents and organization) of the final Self-Study.

II. PURPOSES AND GOALS OF THE *Self-Study*

Webster University is a dynamic, multi-campus and international institution. Intentionally this Self-Study process will engage the entire University community, as well as other constituencies, in an open process that leads to continuous improvement while clearly documenting evidence that Webster fulfills the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. The goals of this Self-Study process include:

- a.) The HLC Visiting Team and Commission will have sufficient evidence to recommend re-accreditation without stipulation.
- b.) Webster will complete a thorough, honest and open evaluative Self-Study that corrects and interpret data, makes appropriate judgments and/or findings, and leads to recommendations for continuous improvement.
- c.) Webster will include and involve the entire University in order to ensure the effective evaluation of the institution.
- d.) The process will further enhance our commitment to build a culture of evidence and inquiry for the improvement of learning and teaching at Webster.

III. EXPECTATIONS IN THE *Self-Study* PROCESS

Webster University realizes that the institutional process used to produce its evaluative study is critical. In order to gain the maximum benefit for the improvement of Webster University, our Self-Study process will:

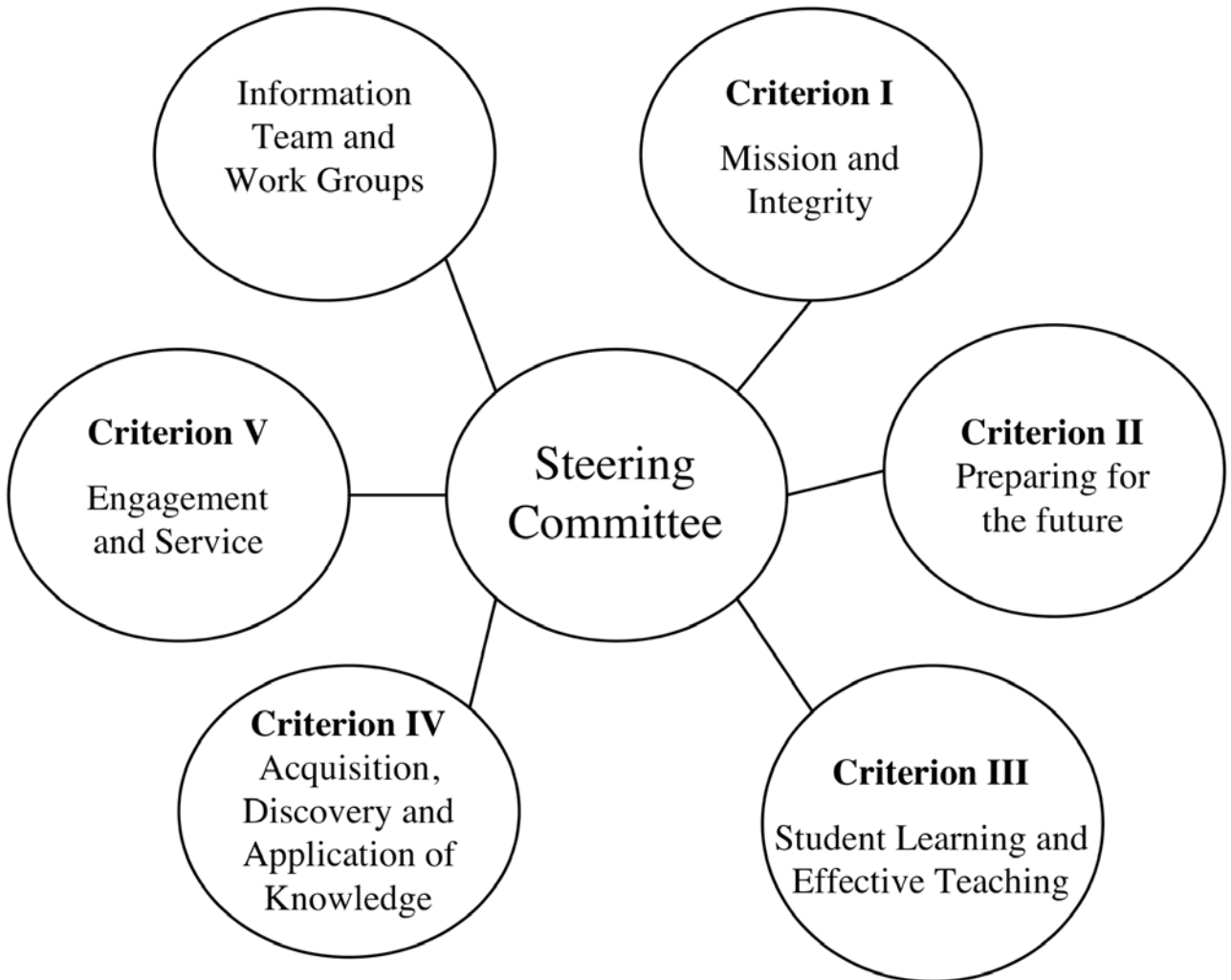
- **Be planned**
Careful organization of the Self-Study process will assure the University's maximum benefit from its investment of resources and commitment.
- **Include the whole university**
The evaluation of each component of Webster University will be used to formulate the evaluation of the University as a whole.
- **Be comprehensive**
The University's Self-Study Report will reflect the entire institution. This requires wide involvement from faculty, students, administrators, staff, alumni, trustees, and external constituents.
- **Produce awareness**
The Self-Study process will strive to produce widespread awareness, across the entire University, of this institutional evaluation. Our administrators, faculty, staff, and students will know and understand "how, why and by-whom" the Self-Study was conducted.
- **Clarify vision**
The Self-Study process will assist our entire institution to clarify and strengthen its collective vision of Webster University, and its future.
- **Permit wide involvement**
The entire Webster University community will acknowledge that they had ample opportunity to contribute to the process and to its results.
- **Build on existing information**
Webster University is extensively engaged in academic assessment, regular self-evaluation, planning, external monitoring, and quality improvement. The Self-Study will rely heavily on these existing evaluation programs. Also, the Self-Study will review these existing evaluative approaches and procedures for improvement.
- **Use technology**
The Self-Study will utilize technology for data collection, communication, networking, and display of evidence.
- **Evaluate.** The Self-Study process and the report will strive to be analytical, self-perceptive, and self-critical for purposes of self-improvement.
- **Describe change**
The Self-Study will describe and assess institutional progress since the last self-study of 1998.
- **Identify strengths and areas of improvement**
The Self-Study will be a candid appraisal of strengths, concerns, opportunities, and challenges.
- **Produce a formal report**
The Self-Study process will result in a formal Report that explicitly documents that Webster University meets the Commission's requirements and criteria for re-accreditation. The Report will also assist the University in enhancing its effectiveness.

IV. TIMELINE OF *Self-Study* ACTIVITIES

TASK	DATE (subject to change)
Initiate planning the self-study process (Academic Affairs)	March-June 2006
Notify Commission of Self-Study Coordinator, preferred dates for the visit, and any proposed in the statement of Affiliation Status	Spring 2006 Confirmed September 2006
Self-Study Coordinator and key administrators attend HLC Annual Meeting and Self-Study Workshops	April 2006
Academic Affairs reviews Self-Study preparations and planning	Summer 2006
Self-Study Process, timelines goals are approved (Administrative Council)	October 2006
Self-Study Plan submitted to Commission staff for approval	October 2006
President appoints Steering Committee; Steering Committee begins meetings	October 2006 Fall 2006
Select Sub-Committee Chairs; committees begin work	Fall 2006 October/November 2006
Develop Self-Study Website	October-November 2006
Open Forums for faculty, staff, and students with kick-off reception, and regional meetings for extended campuses	Fall 2006
Present goals and objectives of Self-Study and HLC requirements to Colleges/Schools, Faculty Senate, Student Leadership, WSA, Extended Campus leadership, and Board of Trustees	October-December 2006
Criteria Sub-Committees meet to confirm goals, objectives, and timelines of Self-Study plan (revise as needed)	November 2006
Sub-committees gather data, interview, analyze, and develop initial reports for submission to the Steering Committee	Fall 2006-Spring 2007
Chairs participate in the Self-Study Coordinators Workshops and other programs at the HLC Annual Meeting	April 20-24, 2007
Working committee prepare draft reports for submission to the Steering Committee	May-June 2007
Campus-wide updates and input requested	April 2007
University writing team prepares draft Self-Study report, in consultation with team chairs	Summer 2007
Steering Committee analyzes information prepared, completed studies, reviews rough draft of Self-Study report	Summer 2007
Steering Committee circulates and receives reactions to draft report from campus and local community	September-October 2007
Editors compile final Self-Study Report	October-November 2007
Executive Vice President sends comments on proposed team members to the Commission	When requested
Self-Study document completed and submitted to Board of Trustees, President, Vice Presidents, Deans, and University constituents	Fall 2007
Coordinator completes duplication of Self-Study Report, completes Basic Institutional Data Forms (IS Forms). Self-Study Report distributed electronically to all internal constituents	January 2008
Coordinator completes preparations for Team Visit, including Third Party Comments.	Spring 2008
Coordinator sends one complete set of evaluation materials to each member of the Evaluation Team and to the Commission staff liaison	When requested Spring 2008
Begin preliminary campus preparation for visit	Spring 2008
Webster Comprehensive Evaluation site visit	March 31-April 2, 2008
Site Team Report, Webster Response, Readers Process, Commission Action(s)	Follow according to HLC Procedures

V. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERS

The University-wide Self-Study will be conducted through the work of a Steering Committee and its five subcommittees, each assigned to one of the HLC Criterion and its core components. Additionally, an analytical and research team will assist the committees with their data needs. This organization can be visibly presented with the following organizational graph:



a.) **STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Self-Study Steering Committee is responsible for the self-study process, its coordination, and the completion of the self-study report. The design of the Webster Self-Study Plan, as approved by the Administrative Council, defines calendar and timelines, the University's goals, the diverse committees and/or work groups, the committee assignments, and includes a working outline of the anticipated contents of the final self-study report. Membership on the Self-Study Steering Committee includes:

- James Staley, Chair and Coordinator
- James Brasfield
- Bill Lynch
- Kathy Marlock
- Laura Rein
- Deborah Dey
- Grant Chapman
- Melanie Gottlieb
- Writer TBA

b.) **CRITERION SUB-COMMITTEES**

Five sub-committees will examine the HLC criteria, core components and examples of relevant evidence. The sub-committees gather and evaluate data, interview members of the University Community, assemble evidence relevant to the HLC core components, and write a report. The chairs of each of the five sub-committees also serve on the Self-Study Steering Committee. The members of the Criterion Sub-Committees are [membership subject to change]:

Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

- Bill Lynch, Co-Chair
- James Brasfield, Co-Chair
- Ryan Elliott
- Tom Lauer
- Karen Luebbert
- Peter Sargent
- Gwyneth Williams

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

- Deborah Dey, Chair
- Benjamin Akande
- Carolyn Corley
- Larry Haffner
- Dan Hitchell
- Michael Hulsizer
- Betsy Schmutz
- Russ Viehmann
- Dan Viele

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

- Kathy Marlock, Co-Chair
- Laura Rein, Co-Chair
- Debra Carpenter
- James Evans
- John Ginsburg
- Gloria Grenwald
- Terri Jones
- Patricia Masidonski
- Kate Parsons
- Barbara Stewart

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- Grant Chapman, Chair
- Ray Angle
- Albert Cawns
- Christine Eason
- Ted Hoef
- Scott Jensen
- Gary Kannenburg
- David C. Wilson

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service

- Melanie Gottlieb, Chair
- Colette Cummings
- Mary Ann Drake
- Brenda Fyfe
- Jennifer Jezek-Taussig
- Matt Nolan
- Randy Wright
- Jennifer Willis

c.) **INFORMATION TEAM MEMBERS**

Members of the Self-Study Information Team will assist the analytical work of the Steering Committee, and the work of the Criterion Sub-Committees. The Information Team Members will prepare an inventory of informational and data resources for the Self-Study process, as well as assist in the creation and materials of a Resource Room for the Team Visit. The members include:

- Kathy Marlock, Chair
- Susan Halloran
- Christine Kemmerer
- Rita Kosemund
- Don Morris
- Mary Petersen
- Curt Vehlewald
- Dan Viele

d.) **WORK GROUPS**

Federal Compliance Work Group

- Jon Gruett, Chair

Extended Campus Advisory Council

- Hoot Gibson, Chair

Internal Communications (Website, Newsletters)

- Office of Public Affairs
- Carey Smith

VI. WEBSTER UNIVERSITY *Self-Study* REPORT 2007-2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS (PROPOSED)

I. Introduction

- President's Letter
- Overview
- Webster University: Special Qualities and Distinctions
- Accreditation History
- Self-Study Plan
[Scope, Process, Timeline, Organization]
- Summary 1997-98 Visit
- Responses to Challenges Cited by 1997-98 Team
- Significant Changes Since Last Comprehensive Visit
- Request for Continued Accreditation and Change Requests
- Federal Compliance

II. Criterion One-Mission and Integrity

[Webster operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of our mission through structures and processes that involve board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.]

Core Components

- 1a. Webster's mission documents are clear, and articulate publicly our organization's commission
- 1b. In our mission documents, the University recognizes the diversity of our learners, or other constituencies, and the greater society it serves
- 1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the University
- 1d. The University's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the University to fulfill its mission
- 1e. The University upholds and protects its integrity

Conclusions, Interpretations, and Judgments

III. Criterion Two-Preparing for the Future

[Webster's allocation of resources and our processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate our capacity to fulfill our mission, improve our quality, and respond to our future challenges and opportunities.]

Core Components

- 2a. Webster realistically is preparing for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends
- 2b. Webster's resource base supports our educational programs and our plans for maintaining and strengthening our quality in the future
- 2c. Webster's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement
- 2d. All levels of planning align with Webster's mission, thereby enhancing our capacity to fulfill that mission

Conclusions, Interpretations, and Judgments

IV. Criterion Three-Student Learning and Effective Teaching

[Webster provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling our educational mission]

- 3a. Webster's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible
- 3b. Webster values and supports effective teaching
- 3c. Webster creates effective learning environments
- 3d. Webster's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching

Conclusions, Interpretations, and Judgments

V. Criterion Four-Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

[Webster promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in way consistent with Webster's mission.]

The Core Components

- 4a. Webster demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning
- 4b. Webster demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs
- 4c. Webster assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society
- 4d. Webster provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly

Conclusions, Interpretations, and Judgments

VI. Criterion Five-Engagement and Service

[As called for by our mission, Webster identifies our constituencies and serves them in ways both value]

The Core Components

- 5a. Webster learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations
- 5b. Webster has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities
- 5c. Webster demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service
- 5d. Internal and external constituencies value the services the University provides

Conclusions, Interpretations, and Judgments

VII. SUMMARY

- Summary of Evidence that demonstrates fulfillment of Criteria
- Summary of areas that need strengthen
- Summary of recommendations for institutional action
- Executive Summary of Self-Study Findings
- Affiliation Status

VIII. List of Appendices

- Web based data and exhibits
- Exhibits List
- Abbreviations and Acronyms