

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, NEASC

STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSES

The institution's mission and purposes are appropriate to higher education, consistent with its charter or other operating authority, and implemented in a manner that complies with the Standards of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The institution's mission gives direction to its activities and provides a basis for the assessment and enhancement of the institution's effectiveness.

1.2 The institution's mission is set forth in a concise statement that is formally adopted by the governing board and appears in appropriate institutional publications.

1.4 The mission and purposes of the institution are accepted and widely understood by its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. They provide direction to the curricula and other activities and form the basis on which expectations for student learning are developed. Specific objectives, reflective of the institution's overall mission and purposes, are developed by the institution's individual units.

STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission and purposes and supports institutional effectiveness and integrity. Through its organizational design and governance structure, the institution creates and sustains an environment that encourages teaching, learning, service, scholarship, and where appropriate research and creative activity. It assures provision of support adequate for the appropriate functioning of each organizational component. The institution has sufficient independence from any sponsoring entity to be held accountable for meeting the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*.

3.1 The authority, responsibilities, and relationships among the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff are clearly described in the institution's by-laws, or an equivalent document, and in a table of organization that displays the working order of the institution. The board, administration, staff, and faculty understand and fulfill their respective roles as set forth in the institution's official documents and are provided with the appropriate information to undertake their respective roles. The institution's organizational structure, decision-making processes, and policies are clear and consistent with its mission and support institutional effectiveness. The institution's system of governance involves the participation of all appropriate constituencies and includes regular communication among them.

3.2 The governing board is the legally constituted body ultimately responsible for the institution's quality and integrity. The board demonstrates sufficient independence to ensure it can act in the institution's best interest. The composition of the board includes representation of the public interest and reflects the areas of competence needed to fulfill its responsibilities. More than one-half of the board members, including the chair, are free of any personal or immediate familial financial interest in the institution, including as employee, stock- or share-holder, corporate director, or contractor. Members of the governing board understand, accept, and fulfill their responsibilities as fiduciaries to act honestly and in good faith in the best interest of the institution toward the achievement of its purposes in a manner free from conflicts of interest.

3.3 The board has a clear understanding of the institution's distinctive mission and purposes. It exercises the authority to ensure the realization of institutional mission and purposes. The board sets and reviews institutional policies; monitors the institution's fiscal solvency; and approves major new

initiatives, assuring that they are compatible with institutional mission and capacity. These policies are developed in consultation with appropriate constituencies. The board assures that the institution periodically reviews its success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its purposes.

3.4 The board systematically develops and ensures its own effectiveness. The board enhances its effectiveness through periodic evaluation.

3.5 Utilizing the institutional governance structure, the board establishes and maintains appropriate and productive channels of communication among its members and with the institutional community. Its role and functions are effectively carried out through appropriate committees and meetings.

3.6 The board appoints and periodically reviews the performance of the chief executive officer whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution.

3.7 The board delegates to the chief executive officer and, as appropriate, to others the requisite authority and autonomy to manage the institution compatible with the board's intentions and the institutional mission. In exercising its fiduciary responsibility, the governing board assures that senior officers identify, assess, and manage risks and ensure regulatory compliance.

3.11 In multi-campus systems organized under a single governing board, the division of responsibility and authority between the system office and the institution is clear. Where system and campus boards share governance responsibilities or dimensions of authority, system policies and procedures are clearly defined and equitably administered.

3.14 Through its system of board and internal governance, the institution ensures the appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives; decision-making aligned with expertise and responsibility; and timely action on institutional plans, policies, curricular change, and other key considerations.

STANDARD NINE: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The institution's financial resources are sufficient to sustain the quality of its educational program and to support institutional improvement now and in the foreseeable future. The institution demonstrates, through verifiable internal and external evidence, its financial capacity to graduate its entering class. The institution administers its financial resources with integrity.

9.2 The institution is financially stable. Ostensible financial stability is not achieved at the expense of educational quality. Its stability and viability are not unduly dependent upon vulnerable financial resources or an historically narrow base of support. The institution's governing board retains appropriate autonomy in all budget and finance matters; this includes institutions that depend on financial support from an external agency (state, church, or other private or public entity).

9.3 The institution's multi-year financial planning is realistic and reflects the capacity of the institution to depend on identified sources of revenue and ensure the advancement of educational quality and services for students. The governing board reviews and approves the institution's financial plans based on multi-year analysis and financial forecasting.

9.5 The institution and its governing board regularly and systematically review the effectiveness of the institution's financial aid policy and practices in advancing the institution's mission and helping to ensure that the institution enrolls and supports the student body it seeks to serve.

9.10 Opportunities identified for new sources of revenue are reviewed by the administration and

board to ensure the integrity of the institution and the quality of the academic program are maintained and enhanced. The institution planning a substantive change demonstrates the financial capacity to ensure that the new initiative meets the standards of quality of the institution and the Commission's Standards.

9.11 Institutional and board leadership ensure the institution's ethical oversight of its financial resources and practices.

9.12 The institution's financial resources and transactions are audited annually by an external auditor in accord with the generally accepted auditing standards for colleges and universities as adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Board policies and institutional practices ensure the independence and objectivity of the auditor and the appropriate consideration of the audit by the governing board. For public and independent institutions part of a larger system or corporation, the audit provides sufficient information about the institution's finances to support a determination regarding the sufficiency and stability of the institution's financial resources. In all cases, the audit and management letter are appropriately reviewed by the institution's administration and governing board who take appropriate action on resulting recommendations or conclusions.

STANDARD TEN: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE:

10.6 The institution publishes a list of its current faculty, indicating departmental or program affiliation, distinguishing between those who have full- and part-time status, showing degrees held and the institutions granting them. The names and positions of administrative officers, and the names and principal affiliations of members of the governing board are also included.

STANDARD ELEVEN: INTEGRITY

The institution subscribes to and advocates high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, prospective students, faculty, staff, its governing board, external agencies and organizations, and the general public. Through its policies and practices, the institution endeavors to exemplify the values it articulates in its mission and related statements.

11.1 The institution expects that members of its community, including the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students, will act responsibly and with integrity; and it systematically provides support in the pursuit thereof. Institutional leadership fosters an atmosphere where issues of integrity can be openly considered, and members of the institutional community understand and assume their responsibilities in the pursuit of integrity.