

# Preparing for Accreditation at Master's Focused Institutions: Assuring Efficiency and Value

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# Achieving Success in Institutional Accreditation: Involving the Entire Campus

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**NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**



# Northern Arizona University Overview...

- ▶ Established in 1899 as Northern Arizona Normal School
  - ▶ 1925 Northern Arizona State Teachers College; Arizona State College at Flagstaff; 1966 Northern Arizona University
  - ▶ Doctoral, research-intensive university
- ▶ 46 masters degree programs (many more emphasis areas), 9 doctoral programs, 16+ certificate programs
- ▶ Fall 2009 total enrollment is 23,600; 5209 (22%) graduate
  - ▶ 31% in Flagstaff, 47% in distance sites in AZ, 21% online
  - ▶ 318 doctoral, 146 first professional, and 4,280 masters students
- ▶ In FY 2009, ~36% of total degrees (n=5063) awarded were graduate (masters, doctoral and first professional)





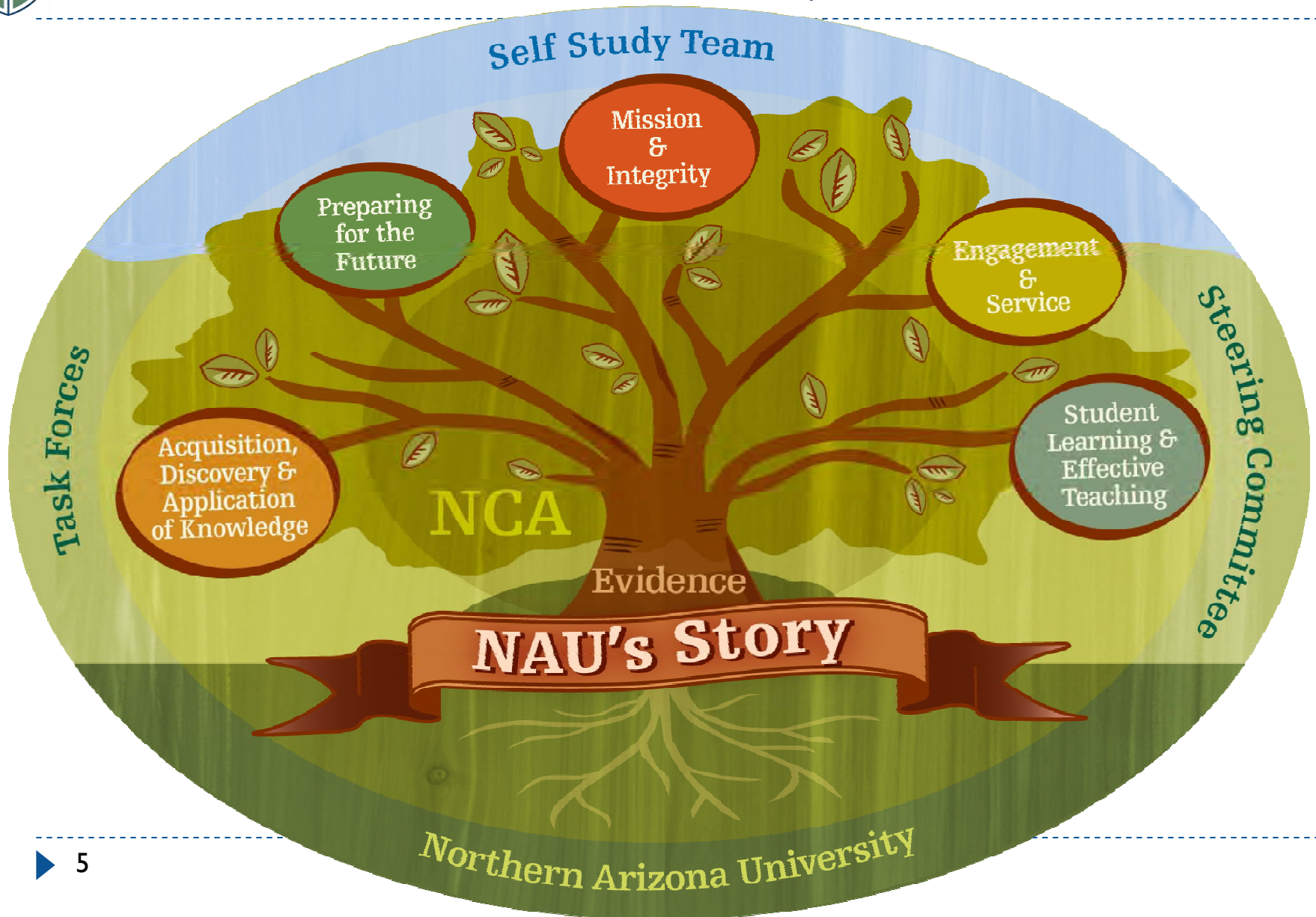
# Accreditation History and Process

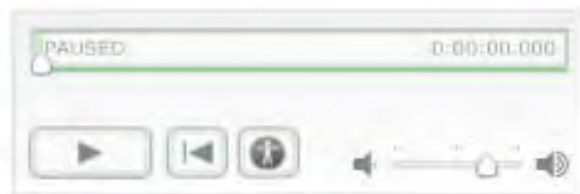
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- ▶ Accredited by North Central Association
- ▶ Last visit in October 2007
- ▶ 10 year full accreditation, met all criteria, no follow-ups
- ▶ Full report from NCA including information on self-study process available on website (<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~nca-p/>)
- ▶ Over 80 individuals participated in self-study process
- ▶ Three tier approach with overlap across tiers:
  - ▶ Self-Study committee (leadership and planning)
  - ▶ Steering committee (included at least one co-chair of each task force)
  - ▶ 5 Task Forces (broad campus representation)



- ▶ Select Slides from the Presentation at HLSC PEAQ Share Fair
- ▶ (Butcher, Nolan & McCarthy, 2009)





Over 80 members from our campus community have worked together to produce the self-study report for a comprehensive review. The President, Provost, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies, and the Vice President for Planning, Budget, and Institutional Effectiveness have designed a three-tiered organizational strategy for the self-study.



**The first tier—the self-study team**—provide leadership and direction for the self-study process and planning for the site visit scheduled for October 22-24, 2007 from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association as well as coordinating and directing many other events involved in the self-study process. **The second tier—the steering committee**—includes members from throughout the university community. Among the various responsibilities for the steering committee includes collaborating with the self-study team in preparation and planning for the report as well as providing direction and oversight to task force membership. **The third tier—the five task forces**—includes a wide representation of the campus community. Some of the responsibilities for the task forces include assessing the strengths and challenges of the institution, formulating an outline of themes for the self-study report, and reviewing various drafts of the self-study report.

### Summary of Key Points

# Strategies Promoting an Efficient Self-Study at NAU

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- ▶ Strategy must fit the institution
- ▶ Find out what worked/did not work for your peer institutions
- ▶ Strong leadership with focus on obtaining the best possible outcome
- ▶ Well-respected & talented individual in charge of self-study
- ▶ Self-study would be an important self-evaluative exercise that would guide the institution in the future
- ▶ Template to gather information from committees; one person in charge of writing provides for single coherent voice
- ▶ Broad campus participation at all stages of self-study
  - ▶ Engaged entire campus including internal and external stakeholders who must have knowledge of mission, vision and strategic directions
  - ▶ Used multimodal strategies to disseminate information and obtain input – online course, forums, fairs, freebies, etc.



# Promoting Institutional Change

(Pugliesi & Haeuser, 2009)

- ▶ Organizing self-study and reformulating strategic planning simultaneously
- ▶ Self-study provided opportunity for meaningful institutional evaluation and investment of resources and energies
- ▶ Engaging many different groups in identifying “Distinctive Identity Markers” for the institution
  - ▶ Process affirmed commitment to core mission components
- ▶ Purposeful assessment of successes and improvements (SWOT analysis)
- ▶ Celebration and Communication: Published self-study and new strategic plan at the same time through “Celebrate NAU Day” and other events





# Celebrating the campus community



**Campus Picnic**  
11 AM - 1 PM  
*University of Northern Arizona*

**NAU Across the State**  
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
*At the Mesa Building, Room 1117*

**President's Forum**  
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
*At the Mesa Building*

**President's Reception**  
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM  
*At the Mesa Building*

Personal's new:  
Reference Center  
Research  
Development  
Franke  
Business  
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ation visit  
/celebrateNAU

# Celebrate NAU!

Wednesday  
August 29, 2007

# Various fair promotions





# Role of Graduate Dean at Northern Arizona University

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- ▶ Previous position was Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education
- ▶ Position split into 2 full-time positions in Fall 2007-Vice President for Research and Graduate Dean
- ▶ Graduate Dean part of Deans' group reporting to Provost
- ▶ NAU Mission - Provide an **outstanding undergraduate residential education** strengthened by research, graduate and professional programs, and sophisticated methods of distance delivery.
- ▶ As the first full-time Graduate Dean I saw my role as:
  - ▶ becoming highly visible and promoting graduate education
  - ▶ serving as chief advocate for graduate education and
  - ▶ enhancing resources for graduate education
  - ▶ being part of the university strategic planning and budget





# Graduate Dean in Self Study Process

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- ▶ To be seen as a leader and provide leadership in the accreditation preparation process, graduate deans must:
  - ▶ Have the big picture
  - ▶ Share a broad perspective
  - ▶ Be highly visible
  - ▶ Serve as an institutional citizen
  - ▶ Have connection with all units/colleges on campus
  - ▶ Be actively involved in student learning
  - ▶ Become stars of assessment – a natural fit





# Acknowledgements and Sources

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- ▶ A special thanks to Karen Pugliesi, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Coordinator/Chief Architect of the NAU 2007 NCA Self-Study for providing me with insights and materials for this presentation.
  - ▶ Other sources:
    - ▶ Pugliesi, Karen and Haeuser, Patricia. (April, 2008). *Aligning self-study and strategic planning to promote institutional change*. A collection of papers of self-study and institutional improvement, Vol. 4. North Central Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.
    - ▶ Butcher, Karen, Nolan, Walter & McCarthy, Stephanie (2009). *Connecting resources and producing synergy: A campus-wide self-study*. A PowerPoint presentation at the HLSC PEAQ Share Fair.
    - ▶ For more information on the self-study, visit our website:  
<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~nca-p/>
  - ▶ THANK YOU!
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