



2012 Self-Study

Executive Summary



NORTHEASTERN
STATE UNIVERSITY



*Dr. Steve Turner
19th president of NSU*

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

*Northeastern State University
Executive Summary 2012 Institutional
Self-Study Report Prepared for the North
Central Association of Colleges and
Schools Higher Learning Commission*

Mission & History

Northeastern State University engaged in an extensive, collaborative, and meaningful self-study evaluation in order to prepare for the 2012 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation review. More than 400 internal and external constituencies contributed in excess of 600 pages of data compilation, 400 plus constructive comments, and 300 plus web pages laden with supporting evidence in order to prepare for accreditation by HLC, the accrediting arm of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). This preparation, in itself, is testimony to the university's commitment to shared governance and attainment of NSU's mission statement, which reads:

Founded on the rich educational heritage of the Cherokee Nation, the campuses of NSU provide our diverse communities a broad array of lifelong learning, undergraduate, graduate, and professional doctoral degree programs. Through quality teaching, research and scholarly activities, service to local and professional communities, and high expectations, our dedicated faculty and staff provide a friendly learning environment where students are prepared to achieve socially responsible career and personal goals for success in a challenging global society.

This rich heritage originated in 1846, when the Cherokee National Council authorized establishment of a National Male Seminary and National Female Seminary to fulfill the stipulation in the Treaty of 1835 with the United States that public and higher education be provided for the Cherokees. On March 6, 1909, the

state legislature of Oklahoma passed an act providing for the creation and location of Northeastern State Normal School at Tahlequah, and for the purchase of the building, land, and equipment of the Cherokee Female Seminary from the Cherokee Tribal Government. The normal school's educational program consisted of four years of high school and two years of college level study. In 1919, the name was changed to Northeastern State Teachers College to provide for a four-year curriculum leading to the bachelor's degree. In 1939, the name was changed to Northeastern State College. A constitutional amendment adopted in 1941 created the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, of which NSU and all other state-supported institutions of higher education are integral parts. The system is coordinated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education [OSRHE](#). In the 1950s, NSU emerged as a comprehensive state college, broadening its curriculum at the baccalaureate level to encompass liberal arts subjects and adding a fifth-year program designed to prepare master teachers for elementary and secondary schools. By the early 1970s, the functions of NSU had broadened to include degree options in the field of teacher education at both the baccalaureate and master's degree levels, as well as new programs in liberal arts, business, and selected service areas. In 1974, the Oklahoma legislature authorized the name of the institution be changed to Northeastern Oklahoma State University. The Northeastern Oklahoma State University College of Optometry opened in 1979 and made history when its first doctoral graduates received their degrees in the spring of 1983. The official name

NSU Is Authorized To Grant the Following Degrees

Table E.1

Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Arts in Education
Bachelor of Business
Bachelor of General Studies
Bachelor of Music Education
Bachelor of Science
Bachelor of Science in Education
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Bachelor of Science in Science Education
Bachelor of Social Work
Bachelor of Technology
Master of Arts
Master of Business Administration
Master of Education
Master of Science in Nursing
Master of Science
Doctor of Optometry

Including specialty areas, NSU offers a total 55 undergraduate and 23 graduate degrees, plus a professional Doctor of Optometry

of the university was changed by act of the legislature in 1985 to Northeastern State University.

Campus & Degree Offerings

The university currently enrolls just over 9,400 undergraduate and graduate students on three campus locations. The main campus is in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The Muskogee branch campus opened March 1993, and the Broken Arrow campus, which opened August 2001 relocated from the University Center at Tulsa, a consortium of universities that opened in 1983. NSU offers degree programs in 55 undergraduate and 23 graduate areas, plus a professional Doctor of Optometry (see table E.1).

NSU is one of 25 institutions in [OSRHE](#), the coordinating board for all state higher education institutions in Oklahoma sanctioned with legal authority through the Oklahoma Constitution, Article XIII-A, Section 1. In addition, NSU is one of six state-supported regional universities governed by the [Regional University System of Oklahoma](#) (RUSO).

Overview of the Self-Study Process

The request for continued accreditation officially began in December 2008. NSU established three tri-chairs and nine committee chairs to orchestrate the HLC re-accreditation effort. These individuals developed an organizational structure, timeline, self-study plan, and goals for using the process. The working teams, headed by the nine committee chairs, consisted of a broad cross section of the campus including faculty, staff, students, and in some instances, community representatives.

The comprehensive self-study report focuses on the five fundamental criteria as set forth by HLC. This executive summary addresses significant observations, strengths, and challenges responding to those fundamental criteria. NSU's complete HLC Self-Study Report is available to the general public on the NSU [HLC website](#).

CRITERION 1: Mission & Integrity

Northeastern State University operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Components

- 1a The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.**
- 1b In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.**
- 1c Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.**
- 1d Governance and administrative structure promote leadership and support the collaboration process that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.**
- 1e The organization upholds and protects its integrity.**



NSU derives community leadership capacity, in part, from its strong Cherokee heritage

Strategic Planning

NSU was involved in an ongoing, university-wide strategic planning process beginning in 1999. This process culminated in 2008, when NSU engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning effort designed to address the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community for the next five years. From this planning process, the university created the most recent strategic plan, [Charting the Second Century: 2009-2014](#). This strategic plan focuses on the needs of all constituencies and reflects the dynamics of new and emerging technology, heightened mobility of students, and increasing competition created by an active global economy.

During this planning process, a diverse group of faculty, staff, students, and community members examined the mission statement, vision statement, and strategic goals. They added a focused mission statement recognizing that, “We empower students to be socially responsible global citizens by creating and sustaining a culture of learning and discovery.” The group also agreed that integrity must be the first core value. Then, the group examined projected financial resources, community partnerships, human resources, and conducted surveys of shareholders. The goal was to align all assets to meet the demands forecasted over the next five years.

These forecasted demands included not only “providing our diverse communities a broad array of lifelong learning,” but also exerting community leadership during challenging economic times. NSU derives this community leadership capacity, in part, from its strong Cherokee heritage, and meets the challenges presented by the broad

and diverse attitudes, economics, cultures, music, art forms, and educational learning styles of both traditional and nontraditional students. Through understanding and acceptance of such diversity, NSU truly opens the door to innovation, creativity, and opportunity.

In this quest, the community, faculty, students, and staff support the university. As evidenced in Criterion One, stakeholders and constituencies have a clear understanding of NSU’s mission statement and strive on a daily basis, through clearly defined unit goals, to meet this statement. They understand that attainment of global and unit goals necessitate careful planning, extensive collaboration, and proper alignment of all potential resources, both financial and human.

Dedication to Excellence & Shared Governance

NSU provides the administrative platform necessary for the achievement of the mission, vision, and strategic goals through effective governance and administrative structures that promote effective leadership, support collaboration, and provide for shared governance in university affairs. Shared governance extends far beyond the immediate NSU family, and includes not only internal constituencies, but also the community, regional colleges, and international partnerships.

Shared governance and creation of local and global partnerships is due, in part, to NSU’s commitment to providing a culture of lifelong learning and service to regional, national, and international constituencies. Dedication to excellence is reflected in the university accreditation process, discipline-specific accreditation requirements, planning and financial



NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Our Mission
We empower students to be socially responsible global citizens by creating and sustaining a culture of learning and discovery.

Our Vision
We will be the partner of choice in eastern Oklahoma, embracing the educational, cultural and economic challenges and opportunities of our global society.

NSU employees made a concentrated effort to communicate the mission statement, focused mission statement, vision statement, and values internally and externally.

allocation process, and academic prioritization process. It is also reflected in NSU’s commitment to integrity, the community, and our constituencies located worldwide. These commitments allow NSU to operate with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of the mission through structures and processes that involve the governing boards, administration, faculty, staff, students, and the community.

Mission Statement, Vision Statement, & Values

NSU employees made a concentrated effort to communicate the mission statement, focused mission statement, vision statement, and values internally and externally. This included strategic placement of pocket cards, websites, printed documents, framed posters located in many buildings, and personal contact with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and members of the community. NSU worked to maintain the spirit of shared vision and governance in order to promote the general welfare of the university, local community, and both internal and external constituencies. Of utmost importance is the vision:

We will be the partner of choice in eastern Oklahoma, embracing the educational, cultural, and economic challenges and opportunities of our global society.

This short and simple vision statement requires NSU to listen to all constituencies, both internal and external, in an effort to prepare our students for a technologically savvy, extremely competitive, and shrinking global economy. It also requires NSU to create collaborative partnerships not only regionally, but also nationally and internationally, in order to successfully address the challenges and opportunities to be

faced in future years. We will be a lifelong learning partner in a diverse and ever complex emerging world. To accomplish such, we will maintain a set of cornerstone core values.

Our Legacy

For over 100 years, NSU has met the challenge of providing higher education learning opportunities, economic leadership, and cultural enrichment for northeastern Oklahoma. The collaborative strategic planning processes refined the university’s mission, vision, and values to continue this educational legacy and to expand it as the university community and its regional partners chart the second century to prepare for a technologically advanced and highly competitive global society.

**CRITERION 2:
Preparing for the Future**

NSU’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Components

- 2a The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.**
- 2b The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.**



NSU Study Abroad Programs

The 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), administered to 655 randomly selected NSU students, revealed that by their senior year, five percent of students have studied abroad.

- 2c The organization’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 the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.**

Preparing for the Future

NSU is in many ways a “light on a hill” for an area extending far beyond its traditional boundaries. Although the university focuses resources on a regional population, it also acknowledges the diverse culture of Oklahoma’s 39 federally recognized American Indian tribes. Consequently, NSU remains attentive to the needs reflected in a competitive and changing global economy. NSU focuses on the needs of all students, whether regional or located in places such as Europe, Asia, China, or Afghanistan. To accommodate such varied needs, NSU engages in a dynamic period of strategic planning, which looks realistically at future opportunities in light of the current environment and past history.

The university’s planning documents support these efforts. As evidenced by the current strategic plan, [Charting the Second Century: 2009-2014](#), NSU pays attention to newly emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization while using its rich heritage and culture as a benchmark for the future. As such, the university truly empowers individuals to become socially responsible global citizens by creating and sustaining a culture of learning and discovery. Consequently,

NSU is the educational partner of choice in eastern Oklahoma, embracing the challenges and opportunities of a global society.

The mission statement and goals acknowledge that the university’s most valued commodity is a vast resource of human capital that includes faculty, staff, administration, students, and community constituents. These individuals embrace cherished values as set forth in the [value statements](#):

- » **Integrity** - We model ethical and intellectual development by advancing honesty, human dignity, and accountability.
- » **Excellence** - We pursue continuous improvement individually and as a community.
- » **Collaboration** - We build partnerships to create learning opportunities and promote educational and economic success.
- » **Creativity** - We advance knowledge by exploring new possibilities through critical inquiry and intellectual freedom.
- » **Leadership** - We have a compelling commitment to serve, inspiring and preparing others to do the same.

Providing Quality Education

The [General Education Task Force \(GETF\)](#) survey administered in 2007 set the stage for basic class requirements that would prepare our students for an increasingly competitive global economy. The initiative called [Making Place Matter](#) opened dialogue and collaboration among internal and external constituencies, leading to regional community



NSU implemented Smart Choice, a seamless transition format for students in two-year colleges to pursue a bachelor's degree while taking NSU classes at their home institution.

forums and ultimately a regional partnership for sustainability, the [Northeast Oklahoma Rural Alliance](#).

NSU provides online access and technical support necessary to remain competitive in a global society. For example, the university is converting to an online [Degree Audit Reporting System](#) (DARS), and an online enrollment management system called SunGard Higher Education [Banner](#). NSU is increasing online and blended class offerings to accommodate the diverse needs of both local and remote student populations. NSU provides Internet access to more than 140 databases of electronic books and online tutorials, thereby accommodating the needs of students located throughout the world.

Providing these services requires alignment of budget resources and prioritization of needs. To accommodate, NSU is engaged in a comprehensive [academic prioritization process](#) that focuses on resource acquisition, expenditure reduction, and careful alignment of existing resources with recognized needs. Through shared governance, all colleges, departments, and student organizations create a comprehensive plan to identify new programs, modify curricula, and focus on attaining additional resources to support university needs. Consequently, resources and needs are more efficiently and judiciously aligned in an effort to maintain greatest return on investment.

Community Partnerships that Fulfill Nontraditional Student Needs

NSU creates community partnerships that fulfill both traditional and nontraditional student needs. For example, NSU implemented [Smart Choice](#), a seamless transi-

tion format for students in two-year colleges to pursue a bachelor's degree while taking NSU classes at their home institution. The university opened the [College of Extended Learning](#) to offer accelerated, online, and hybrid classes designed for working adults and other nontraditional students. NSU is a partner in [Reach Higher](#), Oklahoma's Adult Degree Completion Program, a statewide initiative that accommodates adults with 72 college credit hours who want to return to college and earn a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership in as little as two years. These and other such programs target a previously untapped student body. As such, NSU is providing quality education custom tailored to individual student needs, regardless of where the student is located.

CRITERION 3: Student Learning & Effective Teaching

Northeastern State University provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Components

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



The 2011 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) reveals 83 percent of seniors would attend NSU again.

Lifelong Learning

NSU's mission statement, focused mission statement, strategic goals, personnel policies, and campus culture emphasize effective teaching. The university's mission, "to empower students" through a "culture of learning and discovery," is the same today as it was when NSU was established in 1846. Student engagement and teaching effectiveness are and have always been the pillars of learning and student enrichment at NSU. The university maintains this commitment by listening to students, collaborating with stakeholders in the community, implementing a process of ongoing assessment, and continually striving for improvement.

Assessment

To remain on the leading edge of learning, assessment, and discovery, NSU embarked on a comprehensive evaluation of the strategic plan that led to an updated plan, [Charting the Second Century: 2009-2014](#). This plan places student academic achievement, assessment, academic prioritization, and continuous improvement among NSU's highest objectives.

In tandem with the current strategic plan, NSU was admitted to the four-year HLC Academy on Student Learning Outcomes in 2010. NSU's proposal for the assessment academy is to assess the efficacy of the new general education curriculum that was implemented in fall 2010. Using standardized measures, NSU compared the outcomes for the new general education curriculum to those of the former general education curriculum.

In addition, NSU is embarked on a university-wide academic prioritization process where the colleges and departments are assessing, on an annual basis, all courses and curriculums. These diverse assessment endeavors improve learning outcomes and more closely preparing our graduates with the skills and knowledge to successfully compete in an ever emerging, globally competitive world.

Measurable Goals & Outcomes

As evidenced in the following criteria, NSU is fulfilling its mission statement, and is well on the way to completing the proposal submitted to the assessment academy. NSU is proud to report that the colleges and academic programs developed measurable goals, implemented assessment plans, and modified program and course offerings in response to assessment feedback. The university created assessment tools designed to emphasize student learning outcomes, compiled assessment data, and responded to the changing needs of the student body and community constituents. The forms for collecting program assessment data were revised several times to emphasize student learning outcomes and internalization of knowledge.

In fall 2007, the vice president for academic affairs assembled the [GETF](#) to evaluate and consider the purpose and requirements of the general education program at NSU. The [GETF report](#) offered a positive evaluation of the general education, with 64 percent of the 663 surveyed giving NSU's core curriculum a grade of "B" or better. However, NSU strives for an "A+" grade. To improve, NSU approved and filled the position of director of general education capstone. In addition, NSU participated in several



Computer labs offer a wide variety of software applications, and strategic computer labs are open 24 hours a day to accommodate diverse work and lifestyles of NSU students.

assessment workshops as part of the Council on Instruction Assessment Committee, and reviewed OSRHE's current policy in relationship to NSU's policies and procedures.

Since 2004, degree programs stressed the importance of both proximal and distal outcomes. Many programs implemented departmental evaluation surveys, and with the recent implementation of Banner, NSU will administer a more uniform graduate survey in fall 2011. With this survey, NSU is able to more uniformly gauge the perceived student value and quality of program offerings. Supplementing this uniformly administered instrument, NSU also retains the five-year program reviews, annual assessments for the regents, and individual program capstone classes, assessments, and portfolio requirements.

NSU provides a platform for effective teaching and learning by providing state-of-the-art technology, faculty development grants for improving knowledge, faculty research grants, service learning grants, teaching and learning grants, Fulbright scholarships, and study abroad opportunities. Faculty retention, tenure, promotion, and merit considerations give high priority to teaching, scholarship, and service. Faculty instruction is peer-reviewed and students periodically complete classroom surveys designed to gauge the quality of learning and discovery. NSU offers faculty development and research funds, online development opportunities, and technological support to share and support pedagogical learning and research activities.

Faculty & Student Support

NSU recognizes excellence in teaching through awards such as Circle of Excellence, departmental recognition,

and fellowships. The Northeastern, Academic Times, and college newsletters highlight faculty and student accomplishments on a regular basis. In addition, four faculty were recognized by the state's prestigious DaVinci Institute as DaVinci Institute Fellows, and one faculty was recognized for teaching and scholarship in Oklahoma Magazine representing the Top 40 under 40 list of successes.

NSU requires a two-hour orientation class for all incoming freshmen, and provides advising services, student affairs, student health services, career services, and disability support services. The university also ensures success of students with early alert warning systems that allow prompt intervention with tutoring services, personal advice, and assistance should a student encounter difficulty in class. The Office of Academic Affairs tracks student progress through [First-Year Experience/Enrollment Services](#). In addition, NSU initiated the "[MAP Works](#)," or the Making Achievement Possible program, in 2010 to help incoming freshmen succeed in their first months on campus. As such, NSU is actively engaged in providing students and families the resources needed for student success.

Campus libraries, computer labs, and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) provide professional support services and the latest in technology to students, faculty, and members of the community. These services include access to a library collection numbering in excess of 1.2 million physical items and an online supplement of more than 100 scholarly databases, 32,640 electronic journals, and 42,635 electronic books. The computer labs offer a wide variety of software applications, and strategic computer labs are open 24 hours a day to accommodate



NSSE 2011 survey shows 93 percent of NSU students have a positive image of the university

diverse work and lifestyles of students. CTL offers training sessions on software applications that are conducted both in-person and online.

Improvements of Facilities

During the past 10 years, NSU was fortunate to receive significant capital funding from a variety of external sources to directly support student learning. Through a sales tax initiative, the city of Broken Arrow provided funding to establish the first three buildings of the NSU-Broken Arrow campus. The city of Broken Arrow followed with a donation of the land for the campus. A private donor provided funds to construct an athletic practice facility on the Tahlequah campus. A partnership with the city of Tahlequah provided \$2.1 million from a city sales tax for renovation and expansion of the football stadium in Tahlequah. The Tulsa County sales tax initiative, Vision 2025, provided \$26 million for three additional buildings on the Broken Arrow campus. Other facility improvements were made possible from the 2005 State Higher Education Capital Bond issue, providing almost \$24 million, which funded much needed renovations to the existing Science building, provided renovations to create a “one stop” site for enrollment and student support services, and allowed for completion of our Broken Arrow Phase I construction project. Finally, a substantial increase (736 percent increase in one decade) extramural funding through grants, contracts, and collaborations has occurred over the last five years, further adding to NSU’s fiscal well-being.

Beginning in 2005, NSU contracted with Sempra/Honeywell to implement a \$7.7 million energy management program. The program included heating/cooling, plumbing,

and lighting system upgrades for administrative, academic, and athletic facilities. NSU improved overall campus facilities as follows:

- » Constructed a \$10 million science lab facility and completed a \$5.4 million renovation of the existing Science classroom building.
- » Established a Construction Management Consulting Agreement for \$11.5 million in 2006 to address the deferred maintenance concerns of four high need academic facilities. Renovations included roof replacement, exterior masonry repair, new windows, heating and cooling upgrades, flooring, and interior paint.
- » Dedicated \$4.7 million to renovation of an existing building to create the Center for Admission and Student Enrollment, invested \$2 million in renovation of the University Center Food Court, and invested \$3 million to renovate various residence halls between 2007 and 2010.

The total capital investment for the facility renovations and new construction projects for this time period exceed \$40 million in cost. These projects represent NSU’s commitment to ensuring the educational environment has a positive impact on the total student learning experience.

Future Challenges

NSU’s future challenges include the current and projected state of the economy and shrinking state subsidization. To meet these challenges, the university improved collaboration, increased stakeholder partnerships, engaged in an ongoing academic prioritization process, and sought ways to increase enrollment by



STAR & RISING STAR AWARDS

SERVICE, TEAMWORK, ATTITUDE, & RELIABILITY

- Do you know a staff member who exemplifies these traits?
- Nominate them for a **STAR or Rising STAR Award**

Nomination deadline: June 10

- » Pick up a nomination packet in the Office of Human Resources, Administration Building, Room 118 or Broken Arrow Administration Services Room 322
- » For more information, contact Amanda Chapelle at ext. 3230 or chappe02@nsuok.edu

Sponsored by the NSU Staff Council



NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

NSU recognizes excellent accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and community members on a regular basis.

implementing new marketing strategies to attract more nontraditional students. NSU also improved data gathering and assessment tools, thereby ensuring quality student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates fulfillment of the educational mission.

CRITERION 4: Acquisition, Discovery, & Application of Knowledge

NSU promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting creativity, practice, and social responsibilities consistent with its mission.

Core Components

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

Quality Teaching, Research, & Scholarly Activities

NSU's [mission statement](#) guarantees, "Through quality teaching, research and scholarly activities, service to local and professional communities, and high expectations, our dedicated faculty and staff provide a friendly learning environment where students are prepared to achieve a socially responsible career and personal goals for success in a challenging global society." NSU accomplishes this mission through the following actions:

- » Encouraging excellence in acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge
- » Providing faculty development programs
- » Promoting collaboration and partnerships among students, faculty, alumni, the community, and other higher learning institutions
- » Encouraging participation in professional organizations, student organizations, and community service
- » Striving for excellence in scholarship
- » Providing foundations for research that sparks creativity and enriches society
- » NSU celebrates the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge through public celebrations. Faculty, staff, and administration celebrate:
 - » [Circle of Excellence](#) awards for outstanding achievement and dedication to teaching, research, and service
 - » [Model the Way](#) award winners who exemplify service above self, timeless effort to promote the mission of NSU, and a sense of community and collegiality among their fellow employees



Student Community Service
The 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), administered to 655 randomly selected NSU students, revealed that by the time they are seniors, 53 percent of students have participated in community service or volunteer work.

- » [Outstanding Alumni](#) who exemplify the best of NSU students post-graduation
- » [Kudos](#) awards, which are given by one employee to another in honor of a task well done
- » Prestigious [DaVinci Institute Fellows](#), statewide awards that recognize faculty for excellence in teaching and scholarship
- » Fraternities, sororities, and [student organizations](#) that recognize excellence in teaching and outstanding faculty
- » [Outstanding Senior Awards](#) for deserving seniors each year who are nominated by NSU faculty and staff

Encouraging Acquisition, Discovery, & Application of Knowledge

These and other such awards are recognized at campus-wide meetings, college meetings, and in campus publications such as [The Northeastern](#), [RiverHawks Daily](#), and [Academic Times](#). They are also recognized at the [Annual Honors Awards Assembly](#), [Student Creativity Showcase](#), and the [Honor Your Authors Reception](#). In addition, NSU regularly distributes press releases to local media and hometown newspapers for award winners.

NSU encourages acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by reserving financial allocations for [faculty research](#), faculty development, and for faculty to engage students in inquiry, research and publication. NSU provides financial support for faculty to take sabbatical leave to study, research, write, or travel. NSU also supports inter-

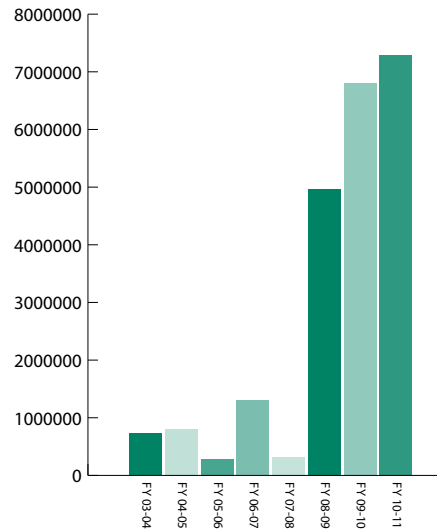
national studies through Fulbright Scholarships and [Study Abroad](#) programs.

NSU encourages students and faculty to become engaged scholars who actively compete for state and national recognition. This not only includes national recognition for athletic competitions, but also academic and skill competitions such as [Research Day at the State Capital](#), [Oklahoma Intercollegiate Legislature](#), [Living Literature Center](#), [Jazz program](#), and [Sequoyah Institute](#). NSU also provides leadership opportunities designed to foster success in a competitive global economy. Some of these programs include the [American Democracy Project](#), the [Oklahoma Campus Compact](#), and the [President's Leadership Class](#).

These and other such events polish student experiences and provide visibility for NSU. For example, NSU has sponsored 268 student research projects and presentations at [NSU Undergraduate Research Day](#) and 872 submissions for [Oklahoma Research Day](#). As such, NSU enjoys a greater student body ratio at Oklahoma Research Day than any other academic institution in the state.

Another example is the [Model United Nations](#) (MUN) program. At MUN conferences, students compete with hundreds, or thousands, of students coming from colleges all across the United States, in addition to a significant number of foreign students coming from abroad. By providing an ethnically and culturally diverse group of informed participants a forum for debate concerning global issues in a context that closely parallels the real world, MUN is a very effective form of active learning and a highly efficient method for teaching students the dynamics of multilateral diplomacy, international relations, and world affairs. In the spring of 2009, four students went to

Extramural Grant Acquisition Chart E.1



NSU extramural grant awards increased by 736 percent in the past ten years.

the national MUN conference in New York City, where they won a [Distinguished Delegation National Award](#).

Faculty and students also acquire knowledge through real-life experiences provided by student internships, volunteering for Katrina, Joplin, and Japan relief efforts, providing free eye exams in regional and international communities where such exams would otherwise not occur, learning law enforcement self-defense tactics through the Collegiate Officer Program, and performing in jazz and theatrical productions. In addition, NSU students participate in [The Big Event](#), a university-wide activity in which students conduct various service projects for individuals and groups in the surrounding communities.

Successful Grant Acquisition

NSU also plans for and supports extramural grant acquisition. Since 1991, extramural grant allocations increased by an unprecedented 736 percent (see Chart E.1). These grant allocations grew from \$1 million in FY 1991-1992 to \$8 million in FY 2010-2011, a eight-fold increase. In FY 2010-2011 extramural grant allocations in only one year grew by 129 percent.

Challenges increase when a university turns more and more attention to diversity and unique needs of individual students. NSU recognizes that the influx of nontraditional and international students changes the dynamics of the learning environment, making acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge even more challenging. The stories of how NSU integrates learning, knowledge, leadership, service, and collaboration into the learning process exemplify how the university develops and prepares students and faculty for the challenges encountered in the 21st century.

CRITERION 5: Engagement & Service

As called for by its mission, NSU identifies its constituencies and serve them in ways both value.

Core Components

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

Preeminent Provider of Quality Education

NSU is dedicated to lifelong learning and being the preeminent provider of quality education both in northeastern Oklahoma and throughout the world. As such, NSU consistently strives to serve the educational, cultural, and economic needs of its students and the community. Whether shaking hands in Tahlequah or in Afghanistan, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and community members alike are proud to be members of the NSU family.

This culture of being NSU ambassadors first began with the rich heritage and partnership with the Cherokees in



NSU's dedicated faculty and staff provide a friendly learning environment where students are prepared to achieve socially responsible career and personal goals for success in a challenging global society.

1846 and extends to today's international partnerships in China, Thailand, Belize, the United Kingdom, and other remote parts of the world. The [mission statement](#) confirms this heritage and culture:

Founded on the rich educational heritage of the Cherokee Nation, the campuses of NSU provide our diverse communities a broad array of lifelong learning, undergraduate, graduate, and professional doctoral degree programs. Through quality teaching, research, scholarly activities, service, and high expectations, our dedicated faculty and staff provide a friendly learning environment where students are prepared to achieve socially responsible career and personal goals for success in a challenging global society.

The [focused mission statement](#) further adds "We empower students to be socially responsible global citizens by creating and sustaining a culture of learning and discovery."

This heritage and culture provides the university with the capacity and commitment to engage with identified constituencies and communities. Most recently, NSU conducted surveys and investigated needs in a comprehensive planning effort that led to the current strategic plan, [Charting the Second Century: 2009-2014](#). This plan is a dynamic working document that will assist the university in data-driven decision making for the next three years.

Collaboration & Community Support

Through collaboration with both internal and external constituencies, NSU leads the way on varied and valued initiatives. NSU is committed to reaching families in the state through extensive online, blended, and in-person class offerings. This is accomplished through shared input,

shared involvement, shared commitment, and shared governance. NSU solicits input from advisory boards and different organizations when making critical decisions, and the faculty, staff, and students understand and actively contribute to successfully accomplishing the initiatives.

One such example of outstanding support is the [NSU Foundation](#). This foundation solicits and accepts contributions from NSU supporters. The contributions provide support for scholarships, capital improvements, faculty endowments, and programs at NSU. For example, 5,938 contributions totaling \$1,606,270 were made to the foundation in 2010. Even during this economic downturn, the Foundation's total endowment is within 1.7 percent of its historic high prior to the recession in 2007. Of the \$1.6 million, a historic high of \$502,782 were earmarked for NSU student scholarships. Such generosity reflects overwhelming satisfaction of alumni, faculty, and community members through their support of NSU.

The contributions to the Foundation support a broad array of NSU projects. Some [noteworthy projects](#) include the:

- » Second Century Square, an outdoor gathering and performance space located between the University Center and the College of Business & Technology
- » Redmen Heritage Wall, honoring our university's sports legacy and located between Haskell Hall Annex and the John Vaughan Library
- » Capitola "Cappi" Wadley Reading and Technology Center, being constructed on the third floor of the College of Education's Bagley Hall
- » Multipurpose Events Center for basketball games, concerts, and performances, as well as the only storm



Support from the NSU Foundation was instrumental in the completion of Second Century Square project that preserves NSU's heritage, culture, and traditions.

shelter in Cherokee County, to be built just south of the Doc Wadley Football Stadium

- » Health and Wellness Center, providing fitness, training, and health-related services to NSU students, employees, and the surrounding communities, to be built on the northwest corner of Oklahoma and Crafton
- » Embrace the Vision Campaign for the Oklahoma College of Optometry, to fund a new Lesley L. Walls Vision Clinic on the NSU-Broken Arrow campus, upgraded surgery and advanced care clinics on the Tahlequah campus, endowed scholarships and faculty positions, an equipment replacement fund, and planning and design for new and renewed facilities

Another example of community support is the involvement and generosity of Tulsa County voters. Broken Arrow voters approved funds to construct initial classrooms, the library, and the administrative building on the Broken Arrow campus. Then, in the [Vision 2025 Higher Education Project](#) (Phase II), Tulsa County voters approved funding for the science building, new library facilities, and an expansion of classrooms. These expanded facilities allow NSUBA to better serve students in the greater Tulsa metropolitan area, potentially accommodating 8,000 students annually. Through this initiative, NSUBA provides a well-educated workforce to increase metropolitan Tulsa's economic growth, and thus increase incentives for new employers to establish businesses in the region.

These and other such contributions are evidence that NSU has the capacity and commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities. for

example NSU led the way in Making Place Matter, an initiative designed to make a difference in the lives of the people and communities it serves. From this initiative and a combination of focused regional summits, NSU created the [Northeast Oklahoma Rural Alliance](#), a partnership of vested stakeholders who continually address the future needs of northeastern Oklahoma.

Another example of NSU's commitment to partnerships is the Eastern Region Healthcare Coalition. This coalition implemented a culturally sensitive medical laboratory science program that addressed clinical workforce shortages within the region, and was the first program in the state that stressed cultural competency as well as practice competency in a needed health professions occupation. NSU also leads the way in creation of the [American Indian School of Health Professions](#), a collaborative partnership aimed toward developing culturally sensitive healthcare practitioners in healthcare workforce shortage areas.

Further partnerships include:

- » [Oklahoma Small Business Development Center](#) (located on the Broken Arrow campus), which provides counseling, financial procurement assistance, and training for new or current business owners
- » [Oklahoma Center for Rural Development](#) (located on the Tahlequah campus), which provides geographic, demographic, economic, and growth information about Oklahoma communities and the state itself
- » [Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance](#), a statewide network of manufacturing extension agents and applications engineers, offers free technical assistance and business advice to Oklahoma manufacturers



NSU provides a culture of lifelong learning for our graduates, employees, and the community.

- » [Oklahoma Institute for Learning Styles](#), which examines and conducts research, provides training, and tests learners to determine individual learning styles
- » [Smart Choice](#), an alliance with regional community colleges provides a seamless transition for students graduating from the community partner who wish to complete their baccalaureate degrees

Community Involvement

NSU faculty, staff, and administrators serve on regional and state boards, maintain memberships in professional organizations, perform in theatrical and musical productions, make presentations, consult on community development projects, and provide professional expertise for vested stakeholders and members of the media.

NSU is the cultural center for the region. For example, the [Sequoyah Institute](#) strives to develop, foster, and provide cultural enrichment beyond the classroom. The institute promotes the experience and understanding of the fine arts through the [Galaxy of Stars Series](#), including [Beyond the Stage](#) and [Learning LIVE](#), lectures, and the [Stars in the Summer Series](#), featuring [Downtown Country](#) and [River City Players](#). The Sequoyah Institute also provides a forum for international cultural enrichment by bringing in groups such as the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, a group that has earned national and international recognition as one of Russia's leading ensembles.

NSU engages the community by sponsoring a variety of athletic events. During homecoming, NSU literally paints the town green, sponsoring parades, breakfasts, reunions, lectures, a tailgate party, and an open house for alumni

at the president's home. Of course, the event culminates with a football game, all highlighting campus life and school spirit at NSU to the fullest.

NSU sponsors a wide variety of professional and student organizations that are active in the community with service and learning projects. The university also offers internships, research opportunities, and employment referrals that benefit stakeholders locally and around the world. These and other such programs lead to enhanced collaboration and sustainability of current and future partnerships.

Challenges associated with engagement of constituencies and communities necessarily create opportunities. As NSU addresses the challenges of outreach and associated funding, the university opens new avenues of extramural funding and shared partnerships designed to pool valuable and limited resources. As such, NSU stands ready to accept the challenges and open the door to opportunities created by a dynamically changing environment.

CONCLUSION

The Northeastern State University Higher Learning Self-Study Report details the university's strengths and challenges. It more fully provides evidence that NSU is a connected and distinctive institution that understands and promotes a valued mission statement firmly rooted in a proud heritage of learning, prepares for the future, provides quality student learning and effective teaching, promotes a life of learning for all members of the NSU family, and identifies constituencies to engage and serve in a way that both value and cherish. In essence, NSU provides the power of learning to change lives and, thereby, change the world.