

Criterion 1: Mission

1.A. *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*

1. *The mission statement at Navajo Technical University (NTU) was developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.*

The current mission statement

(http://www.navajotech.edu/academics/catalog/undergraduateCatalog_2016-2018.pdf, p. iv) was first drafted after a series of meetings with different stakeholder groups: Students, Faculty, Administrators, and Community. It was drafted originally by members of the Committee on Institutional Development (CID), after meetings with the stakeholders, then modified after review of stakeholders, and then submitted to the Board of Regents for approval. Approval occurred by [Board Resolution on June 12, 2012](#). Later the Mission Statement was made part of the charter of NTU by the Navajo Legislature and signed into Navajo law by the President of the Navajo Nation.

2. *NTU's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.*

NTU currently provides several university readiness programs. The largest are the dual credit programs in place with high schools serving Navajo students. This effort is designed to help prepare students better for eventual entry into college. There is also an extensive cafeteria of courses to help students build college-level skills along with an active Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math lab on campus that works with challenged students to bring their skills in math, English, and other courses up to a college level.

The college currently offers: 23 certificate programs, 3 Associate of Science programs, 14 Associate of Applied Science programs, 4 Bachelor of Science programs, 3 Bachelor of Applied Science programs, 1 Bachelor of Arts program, Bachelor of Fine Arts program, and 1 Masters Degree program. These programs fulfill the call in the Mission to "*provide university readiness programs, certificates, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees.*"

These programs have a range of courses where students do research, participate in community engagement activities, and participate in service learning opportunities as part of their work. There are also a number of clubs and organizations on campus engaged in activities ranging from the famous Navajo Nation fairs to collecting toys for students at Christmas time to doing various activities for veterans. A number of faculty and staff are engaged in research projects at any one point in time. An example is one [research project](#)

currently underway in an effort to better understand strategies that can be used to increase student engagement. Another involves research into [Dimensional Accuracy of Additive Polymers in Objet 30Prime](#). A student research fair is also held every year where research projects and posters are presented. Many of the projects are related to environmental/cultural preservation, some of which are important to Navajo Nation communities. This is just a small sample of projects that demonstrate that *Students, faculty, and staff will provide value to the Diné community through research, community engagement, service learning, and activities designed to foster cultural and environmental preservation and sustainable economic development.*

The University is committed to a high quality, student-oriented, hands-on-learning environment based on the Diné cultural principles: [Nitsáhákees](#), [Nahátá](#), [Íina](#), [Siihasin](#). Faculty are encouraged to develop high quality/student-oriented, hands-on-learning environment in their classrooms. Automobile Technology students work on fixing automobiles, Advanced Manufacturing Technology students learn how to use robotics by working with robots, and Early Childhood students get experience working with young children in classrooms. Clinical service examples range from student experiences in the nursing field to a wide range of internships, externships, and experiences in the classroom for Early Childhood teaching candidates. The *Diné cultural principles* are imbedded in the culture of the university, ranging from cultural events put on by the Navajo Culture, Language, and Leadership instructors and students to the way assessment is put together with thinking, implementing, evaluating, and rethinking as part of the circle of institutional growth. ([Annual Report 2014-15](#))

3. *The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.*

NTU is working hard to align its extensive planning activities with budgeting priorities. Progress on this front has been made, but there is still work to do. Following the *Diné cultural principles: Nitsáhákees, Nahátá, Íina, Siihasin*, planning activities start out with focus group sessions and planning meetings with major stakeholders in NTU, including tribal government groups, members of communities where the campus or instructional sites are located, students, staff, faculty, administrators, and experts in specific fields. Business interests have also been key in helping form academic programs like Chemical Engineering or the Pre-Engineering Certificate program. Assessment activities help evaluate academic operations, enhanced by focus group sessions with stakeholders, frequent planning meetings, oversight by the President's cabinet and the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness (CIE), Board of Regents meetings, and special examinations such as the interviews with faculty designed to examine NTU faculty morale. The Budget Committee then takes into account strategic planning efforts in examining and putting together the annual budget.

The biggest challenge at NTU currently is budgeting. Budgets constructed before this year's budget were often put together by the CFO and financial department without adequate consultation with other parts of NTU or strategic planning efforts. Too often no one, including Department Chairs, had a clear understanding of what their budgets were. An improvement has been made this year, but the budget was finally put to bed in September after the start of the year. This is an aspect of NTU that needs to improve.

1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

1. *NTU clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.*

The mission, statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, and institutional priorities of NTU are available in a number of public documents. The catalog (www.navajotech.edu/images/academics/catalog/undergraduateCatalog_2016-2018.pdf, p. iv) that is publicly available online contains all of these. Annual Reports to the Board, public, and appropriate Navajo Council Committees often also contain all of these.

2. *The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.*

The Mission Statement for NTU is current. The last modification occurred in 2012. NTU will be reviewing the Mission Statement in 2017 after the visit by the self-study team from HLC. It's clear the current mission statement addresses instruction, scholarship and research, creative works, public and clinical service, economic development, and cultural purposes.

The vision and philosophy statements in the catalog, and in other documents, supplements and enhances the Mission Statement. These statements also provide guidance as to the institution's emphasis on various aspects of its mission.

3. *The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.*

The Vision statement for NTU clearly identifies the intended constituents for the university. It says, "The vision of Navajo Technical University is to educate Navajo individuals. . ."

(www.navajotech.edu/images/academics/catalog/undergraduateCatalog_2016-2018.pdf, p. iv) The Mission Statement broadens this definition: "Students,

faculty, and staff will provide value to the Diné community . . .” Therefore NTU’s primary mission is to individuals with a Navajo heritage and the Navajo community.

1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

The Mission of NTU is to serve the Navajo people. As a tribal university chartered by the Navajo Nation NTU by its very existence provides strength to the multicultural society of the United States. However, the university also has an open admissions policy that allows people of all races and genders to attend. “Navajo Technical University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age or disability.”

(www.navajotech.edu/images/academics/catalog/undergraduateCatalog_2016-2018.pdf, p. iv) Inherent in this policy is recognition that diversity in a university that primarily serves Navajo students is an important component of allowing students to interact in a society that is multicultural. The university also hires professors and instructors from different parts of the world who bring different sensibilities and approaches to the student body even when the emphasis is strongly on Navajo and its culture and people.

3. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

As stated above NTU accepts all students without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age or disability. Its General Education requirements also reflect its commitment to having students explore human diversity within the context of its Navajo constituency. The General Education philosophy is summarized as follows in the catalog:

provides students with knowledge, skills, attributes, and values needed to learn actively, communicate clearly, think critically, creatively, and reflectively, and to interact effectively in diverse environments. NTU’s general education is to educate students within the Diné Philosophy of Education to be independent, critical thinkers, competent in their chosen professions by possessing a solid foundation in math, English, laboratory, social and behavioral sciences, communication, and information technology.

(http://www.navajotech.edu/images/academics/catalog/undergraduateCatalog_2016-2018.pdf, p. 39)

Courses like Interpersonal Communication or Global Cinema, for instance, help students interact in a broader world. The effort throughout the curriculum to teach students to be independent, critical thinkers, whether in mathematics, the sciences, or the humanities, also helps students pay attention to human diversity

within the context of the Dine Philosophy of Education and NTU's efforts to serve the Navajo people.

General Education is supplemented by activities that relate the campus environment to the worldwide environment. The deep involvement of the campus in the World Indigenous Nation's Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC), which held its annual conference at NTU in 2014, is an example of these activities. Efforts to place students in internships and externships throughout the United States, and the especially important involvement in NASA, are other examples. Students are also involved in competitions with other colleges and universities on a number of different levels, ranging from SKILLSUSA where NTU students are involved in national, after winning state, competitions every year to efforts made by students at the Spring American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) conference where competitors from tribal colleges and universities from all over the United States compete in everything from the Knowledge Bowl to Archery to drama to creative writing. These opportunities all show the university's commitment to involving students in interactions that build an understanding of, and commitment to, human diversity.

1.D. The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the [public good](#).

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the [public](#), not solely the institution, and thus entails a [public obligation](#).

If any institution of higher learning in the United States acts upon its understanding that in its educational role it serves the public, NTU is that institution. There are a lot of examples of this:

- The Navajo Technical University Teaching Hospital located in Crownpoint, NM not only prepares students to become Veterinary Technicians, but also serves the veterinary needs of Western Navajo, provides vet services to rodeos throughout the Navajo Nation, does research designed to improve cattle, horse, and sheep health and production, and works extensively in public schools with significant numbers of Navajo students.
- NTU has worked with the Navajo Nation to prepare proposals for funding through competitions like the [Promise Zone](#), addressing needs throughout the Navajo Nation in the process.
- [NTU's dual credit program](#) works extensively with high schools serving significant numbers of Navajo students in New Mexico and Arizona to help improve secondary education on Navajo.
- The accounting students at NTU prepare tax returns free for hundreds of Navajo ranchers, farmers, veterans, and poor families every year.

In addition to activities like these, the university is always reaching out, holding [focus groups on new programs](#) or asking for input about various programs such

as the Industrial Engineering or Culinary Arts programs from professionals in those fields. Currently NTU is working with the Navajo Division of Public Safety, at the request of the Division, to explore the establishment of a Navajo Police Academy because of the lack of qualified candidates for the police force. A new program, in partnership with the Palo Alto University, has been launched to do basic research into the suicide clusters that have been such a problem in recent years. This research will result in the building of a curriculum designed to train specialists in suicide prevention and drug and alcohol treatment.

The President also gives a [yearly report to Navajo Nation Council committees](#) and he and other staff work extensively with a broad range of Navajo Nation divisions and departments throughout the year on different projects and to meet specific needs.

2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

The primary mission for NTU is providing certificate and degree programs to Navajo students. This is borne out by an analysis of NTU's financial statements, which show that the ratio of direct education costs to all other costs minus capital expenses is . Clearly the university spends the vast majority of its income of education. Even its research, economic development, and community services activities involve student participation, strengthening the student's ability to develop skills and knowledge that lead to careers and jobs. As a tribal university, of course, NTU is a non-profit tribal chartered organization that does not generate financial returns for investors, a parent organization (in this case the tribe), or any external interest.

3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

The external constituencies and communities of interest NTU tries to respond to include:

- Tribal government, which the university provides regular reports to and works on various projects during a typical year. Curriculum and projects are developed based upon priorities discussed with either Tribal Council members or the leadership of the Nation and its various agencies. Sometimes, in the case of a project like the Church Rock Innovation Center, joint efforts are undertaken in an effort to help meet long-term Navajo Nation goals. Some of the priorities undertaken are based upon NTU's understanding of tribal goals:
 - Economic Development is the Tribe's number one priority. The Innovation Center operated by NTU near Church Rock, New Mexico and the Center for Digital Technology and the Advanced

Manufacturing curriculum are examples of economic development efforts.

- Increasing skills, knowledge, and attributes among tribal members that can lead to long-term employment. All of the programs in the School of Technology are examples of the efforts to help fulfill this goal. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs help fulfill both this goal and the economic development goal.
- Development of discipline courses of study that can, over time, help develop both a research and educational capacity that can either reduce or resolve the endemic health problems in the Navajo Nation and lead, eventually, to the establishment of a Navajo Medical School. The development of nursing programs and the Certificate in Counseling are examples of the efforts to help fulfill this goal.
- Preservation of Dine Language and Culture. The baccalaureate and masters degree programs in Navajo Culture, Language, and Leadership and the development of the Navajo Poet Laureate program are examples of efforts to meet this goal.
- Reduce Crime and improve Navajo jurisprudence. The Law Advocate associate degree program and the effort to partner with the Navajo Division of Public Safety on a Police Academy located in Chinle, AZ are examples of efforts made to date to address this goal.
- Achieve equivalence with Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah in education, ensuring that Navajo communities are equal, or superior, to the states in which the Navajo Nation is located in terms of educational attainment. Examples include the baccalaureate degree program in Early Childhood and the dual credit program that works with high schools serving significant populations of Navajo children to provide college credits to high school juniors and seniors.
- Improve the infrastructure throughout the Navajo Nation. Construction, welding, Building Information Management, Energy Systems, and Electrical Engineering, and the Internet to the Hogan Project are all examples of efforts to meet this goal.
- Improve Leadership and Public Accountability throughout the Navajo Nation. Public Administration, accounting, and leadership programs are all examples of efforts to meet this goal.

This list was developed out of the partnership between NTU and the President of the Navajo Nation's to submit a Promise Zone application to the Department of Agriculture and informal and formal discussions with the Nation's Office of the President, leaders of divisions and agencies, and committees and members of the Navajo Nation Council.

- Chapterhouses, especially in places where instructional sites or the campus are located. The Teec Nos Pos and Chinle instructional sites both came about because of initiatives by chapterhouses and community members in those communities. Consultation is currently underway in Shiprock, NM with that chapter.
- Federal agencies like NASA, NSF, and the Department of Agriculture, which have aided in the development of labs, programs, and the land grant programs (including the Extension effort).
- Ranchers and farmers and animal owners, which have benefited from a broad variety of programs, including research projects, seminars, different kinds of clinics, and services by the NTU Veterinary Teaching Hospital.
- Schools with significant numbers of Navajo students. An example is the extensive dual credit program offered in New Mexico and Arizona.
- Navajo-based organizations. An example is the that is mapping where weavers are coming from that sell their rugs at the Navajo Rug Auction and the facilitated by the Navajo Weavers Association of Crownpoint (NWAC) where NTU's New Media are detailing the Auction's history and it's impact on the local community. New Media have also developed a number of films for Indian Health Service in New Mexico and Arizona.
- Industries and businesses that are working with the Church Rock Innovation Center, Navajo Division of Economic Development, and the Digital Technology Center plus Navajo-owned businesses.
- The General Public that becomes involved in focus group sessions such as those preparing for the Biology four year program and the Business Administration and Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management programs.