



ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY UPDATE

May 12, 2009

With the end of the Spring semester, we'd like to update you on Naropa's comprehensive accreditation self-study. The Self-Study Steering Committee has been gathering data from around the University, analyzing and evaluating it, and beginning to draft the self-study report. We will continue to work over the summer, and we plan to complete a full draft by the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester. We will make this draft available to the Naropa community and invite Board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students to review it and make comments. Broad engagement and input from all elements of the Naropa community is a priority for us, and it is essential to a thorough and transparent self-study.

The final self-study report is due to be completed early in January 2010, and our peer reviewers from the Higher Learning Commission come to campus March 8-10, 2010. The HLC asks that peer reviewers have as much access as possible to the University. They will schedule meetings with various groups and individuals, but they also like to engage campus community members in impromptu conversations. We'll provide more details about the peer review team's visit as we get closer.

We want to reiterate the approach we are taking with this self-study and our aspirations for it. We are evaluating how well the University fulfills its mission and identifying areas in which we do this with excellence and areas in which we are lagging behind our aspirations. While the obvious purpose of this self-study is continued accreditation, this self-study can serve the University in other important ways. We hope for a self-study which will support the Strategic Plan and other current initiatives for improving the University. We already have a culture of self-reflection, although it is often informal, implicit, and intuitive. We seek to make this self-reflection more formal, systematic, explicit, and articulate. This self-study is one of several steps the University is taking to fulfill the Mission Statement's view that we are "North America's leading institution of contemplative education." While much work remains to be done, the Self-Study Steering Committee is confident and committed to a self-study which is successful and useful on many levels.

For now, if you have any information you think would be helpful to the Self-Study Steering Committee, please forward it to selfstudy@naropa.edu or call the Steering Committee coordinator, John Davis, 303-245-4654. And if you simply have questions about the process of the self-study, please let us know.

We'd also like to thank and acknowledge the Self-Study Steering Committee. They have put a lot of time, energy, and reflection into the process so far and will continue to do so over the summer. The committee members are Reed Bye, Jeanine Canty, Barbara Dilley, Peter Grossenbacher, Jennie Hyatt, MacAndrew Jack, Deb Piranian, Annette Soucy, Robert Spellman, Sarah Steward, Samantha Wall, and Candace Walworth. If you see them around, tell them thanks for their work on this important task. They're doing a great job!

John Davis, Ph.D., Professor and Coordinator, Self-Study Steering Committee
Thomas B. Coburn, President