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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Institutional Profile

Cedarville College is a Baptist college of arts and sciences of over 2,500 students. Since its founding, Cedarville has coupled a balanced curriculum of arts, sciences, and professional programs with a conservative, Christian theological position in regard to doctrine and patterns of conduct. All classes are taught by dedicated Christian professors who endeavor to integrate the knowledge of their respective fields with biblical perspectives.

In keeping with the liberal arts concept, the curriculum centers on a basic program of general studies including biblical education, science and mathematics, humanities, physical activity, communication, and the social sciences. Concurrent with this program, students choose a major field of concentrated study related to their abilities, interests, and career goals. Upon completion, students receive the baccalaureate degree. The College also offers an associate of arts degree in office technology.

## Brief History of Cedarville College

Cedarville College was established on January 26, 1887 through the vision of five godly men who dreamed of a college that would provide Christian young people with education that was offered within a spiritual framework. Affiliated with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the College attracted many area students and built its first building in 1895. Year after year, Cedarville attracted a record number of students and soon gained a reputation for not only its Bible teaching, but also for its liberal arts program.

The turbulence of the first 50 years of the 20th century led to hard times for the College. Following one final attempt to become strong after the end of WW II, the trustees realized that the enrollment could not support expenses. The College would have to find another church group to assume its operation, or close its doors.

At that time, the trustees of the Baptist Bible Institute of Cleveland, Ohio, were seeking a campus on which to expand. Hearing of Cedarville College, they visited the campus and were convinced that Cedarville was the site that God had for their school. Upon mutual agreement by both trustee boards, ownership of the College was transferred on April 4, 1953. Cedarville College became a Baptist college of arts and sciences. James T. Jeremiah, the pastor who first suggested the Baptist Bible Institute-Cedarville College connection, was called to be the president.

Soon the College was alive and flourishing. By 1959 the enrollment had grown to 255. Faculty, staff, and facilities were added. Six years later the student body had nearly tripled to 763. By the end of Dr. Jeremiah's 25-year tenure as president in 1978, the College's enrollment had grown to over 1,200 students.

Dr. Paul Dixon was then called to lead Cedarville College. Through his leadership, the College has continued to flourish in every area. The student body has grown to over 2,500 students. Several new facilities, including six residence halls, the Athletic Center,

Centennial Library, and the Miter Conference Center have been constructed in the last decade. A new academic building for engineering, nursing, and science was completed in 1992. The Dixon Ministry Center, a 3,400-seat chapel, and facilities for both the Division of Christian Ministries and the Department of Music, was completed in 1996.

## **Description of Certification and Accreditation**

Cedarville College is chartered by the State of Ohio and certified by the Ohio Board of Regents. The College is approved by the State Department of Education for the education and certification of both elementary and secondary teachers. The following academic disciplines are also accredited by specific organizations.

Nursing–National League for Nursing

Engineering–Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology

The College holds membership in the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities, the Ohio College Association, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Association of Christian Schools International, the Council of Independent Colleges, and the Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges.

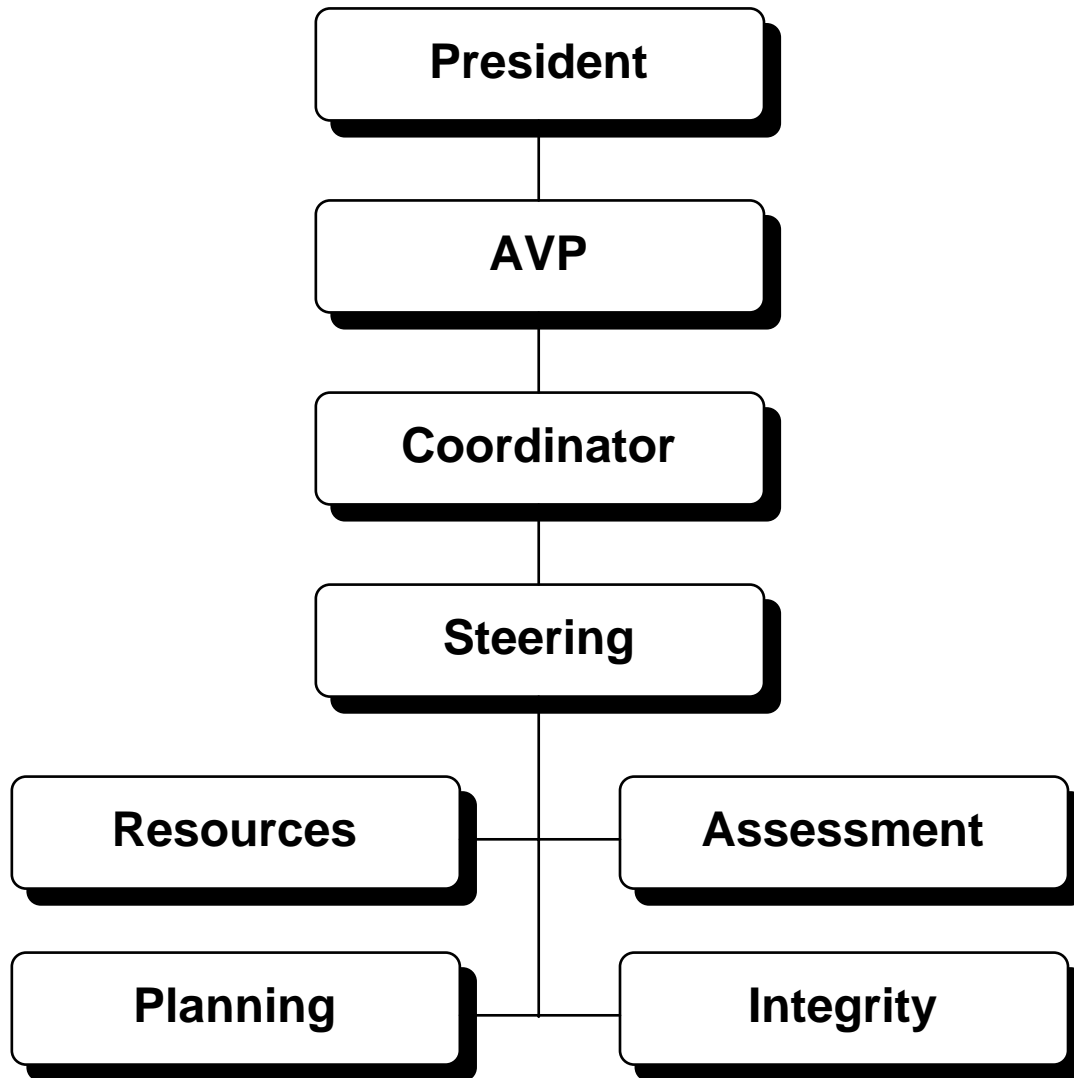
## **History of Accreditation at Cedarville College**

Cedarville College made initial contact with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) in the early 1970's. The College was granted candidacy status by the NCA in 1972. Initial accreditation was granted in 1975. Reaccreditation was granted in 1979 and a 10-year reaccreditation was granted in 1987.

## The Self-Study Process

The institutional self-study process was initiated in the spring of 1995. The Self-Study Coordinator was selected by the Academic Vice President and approved by the President. Figure 1.1 shows the organizational structure for the self-study.

**Figure 1.1**  
**Self-Study Organization**



**Purpose and Objectives**

NCA Self-Study

The self-study was intended to provide an opportunity for institutional evaluation of mission, function, and effectiveness. Cedarville College hoped to gain the greatest advantage from this opportunity by focusing on the following self-study objectives. Although NCA reaccreditation was the impetus behind the self-study, it was not the primary purpose.

The self-study process:

1. Provided an in-depth evaluation of Cedarville College’s purposes, priorities, policies, and practices.
2. Provided information about the College and its environment that will form the basis of future strategic planning.
3. Demonstrated areas of effectiveness and plans to enhance institutional strengths.
4. Illuminated areas of concern and strategies to address those concerns.
5. Provided evidence of Cedarville College’s continuing fulfillment of accreditation requirements.

### **Organization**

The self-study was composed of six major components. Other individuals and groups provided data or other resources as required.

1. *Self-Study Coordinator.* The self-study coordinator was appointed by the President of the institution. The coordinator was under the direction of the Academic Vice President. Responsibilities of the coordinator included:
  - a. Articulating the purpose and benefits of institutional self-study to various constituencies.
  - b. Promoting college interest and participation in the self-study process.
  - c. Communicating self-study issues to the entire college community.
  - d. Providing resource materials for committee members.
  - e. Coordinating the activities of the Steering Committee and sub-committees.
  - f. Authoring self-study report for review by college constituencies and NCA staff.

2. *Steering Committee.* The steering committee was selected by the coordinator in consultation with the Academic Vice President. The committee was composed of nine individuals and the coordinator. Four of the nine members served as chairs to various sub-committees. Member selection was designed to provide representation from a broad range of institutional areas. The committee included both faculty and staff representation. Table 1.1 provides a listing of steering committee members. Responsibilities of the steering committee included:
  - a. Approving the self-study plan.
  - b. Determining the scope of the self-study.
  - c. Suggesting appropriate instruments for institutional assessment.
  - d. Assisting in oversight of the sub-committees.
  - e. Assisting in self-study communication with constituencies.
  - f. Developing recommendations to answer concerns raised by the self-study.
  - g. Assisting in the writing of the self-study report.
  
3. *Resources Sub-Committee.* This committee was charged with evaluating whether “the institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.” The committee drew information from numerous constituencies and synthesized the gathered data into a report to submit to the steering committee.

**Table 1.1**  
**North Central Accreditation**  
**Self-Study Committees**

**Steering Committee**

Dr. Jim Colman, Associate Professor of Music–Chair  
 Mr. Lynn Brock, Director of Library Services  
 Dr. Dan Estes, Assistant Academic Vice President  
 Dr. Pam Johnson, Director of Academic Assistance  
 Mr. Dave Ormsbee, Vice President for Enrollment Management  
 Dr. Jack Riggs, Director of Institutional Research  
 Mr. Tim Bosworth, Director of Personnel

Dr. Joe Francis, Assistant Professor of Biology  
Dr. Carl Ruby, Associate Dean of Students  
Mrs. Jane Adams-Smith, Director of Alumni Relations  
Dr. Sharon Rahilly, Assistant Professor of Nursing

**Assessment Sub–Committee**

Dr. Jack Riggs–Chair  
Standing Assessment Committee Members

**Resources Sub–Committee**

Mr. Tim Bosworth–Co-Chair  
Dr. Sharon Rahilly–Co-Chair  
Miss Jan Bosma, Associate Director of Library Services  
Mr. Steve Thompson, Associate Director of Financial Aid  
Mr. Jeff Vickman, Maintenance/Physical Plant

**Planning Sub–Committee**

Dr. Joe Francis–Chair  
Dr. Lee Eimers, Professor of Physics  
Dr. Sharon Eimers, Associate Professor of Education  
Mr. Tim Fisher, Financial Aid Administrator  
Dr. James Sellers, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

**Integrity Sub–Committee**

Dr. Carl Ruby–Chair  
Mr. Jim Bjornstad, Professor of Philosophy  
Mr. Mark Matthews, Assistant Director of Campus Activities  
Mr. Roscoe Smith, Director of Public Relations  
Dr. Bert Wheeler, Assistant Professor of Economics

4. *Assessment Sub-Committee.* This committee was charged with evaluating whether “the institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.” The committee was composed of the currently active college assessment committee. Much of the committee’s data came as the result of the recently implemented college assessment program. The committee synthesized the gathered data into a report to submit to the steering committee.
5. *Planning Sub-Committee.* This committee was charged with evaluating whether “the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.” The committee drew heavily from current strategic planning processes to examine long- and short-term strategic planning. The committee synthesized the gathered data into a report to submit to the steering committee.
6. *Integrity Sub-Committee.* This committee was charged with evaluating whether “the institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and

relationships.” The committee drew information from numerous constituencies both inside and outside the institution and synthesized the gathered data into a report that was submitted to the steering committee.

### **Timeline**

Data gathering for the self-study took place on many different fronts throughout the 1995-96 academic year. Each sub-committee was challenged to submit a report by the end of the academic year. The reports were reviewed by the steering committee and retained by the coordinator.

Initial drafts of the institutional report were distributed to the steering committee in early 1997. February and March of 1997 were devoted to faculty and administrative approval of the document. In April, the Board of Trustees approved the final document and the report was submitted to NCA.

### **Outline**

In general, the format of the self-study report is patterned after the five accreditation criteria. The first portion of this report addresses the administrative details of the General Institutional Requirements and other forms and also responds to the recommendations made by the 1987 accreditation team. The second part of the report addresses each criterion with suitable patterns of evidence. A special chapter gives attention to two areas where Cedarville College is implementing a significant change: the request for approval of graduate degrees and the reorganization of the academic division.

### **Technology**

Computer technology is an integral part of the Cedarville College campus. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students are connected by a network that covers the entire campus including offices, dorms, and classrooms. The self-study project used this technology in numerous ways including:

1. E-mail connections between self-study participants.
2. Computerization of surveys, questionnaires, and other documents.
3. Direct access to self-study documentation via a World Wide Web page.
4. Communication and interaction with alumni via a World Wide Web page.
5. Maintenance of self-study records and administration.

### **Communication**

Communication was essential throughout the self-study process. The following steps helped facilitate adequate communication to all parties during the self-study.

1. The President and Vice Presidents received reports from the coordinator every other month to keep them informed of the progress of the self-study. Trustee board members were provided quarterly progress reports at each of their meetings.
2. Faculty members were apprised of the progress of the self-study at least once each quarter.
3. Minutes of steering committee meetings were available to faculty and staff on the campus network.
4. An “open forum” was held as the self-study was completed to allow participants to view the report and ask questions concerning the process.
5. A campus-wide accreditation newsletter was distributed periodically to all students, staff, and faculty. The newsletter gave background information and an explanation of the accreditation process.
6. The entire college community had access to pertinent self-study information via the campus computer network.

## **Summary**

The history of Cedarville College has provided a solid foundation for continued academic growth and progress. The present self-study seeks to describe and evaluate the current condition of the institution and the justification for continued accreditation from the North Central Association.