January 24, 2008

Dr. Stan L. Albrecht
President
Utah State University
1435 Old Main Hall
Logan, UT 84322-1435

Dear President Albrecht:

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, I am pleased to report that the accreditation of Utah State University has been reaffirmed on the basis of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report. Congratulations on receiving this continued recognition.

The policy of the Commission is not to grant accreditation for a definite number of years. Instead, accreditation must be reaffirmed periodically. Each institution is required to conduct a self-study and be visited by a full evaluation committee at least once every ten years, and during the fifth year, the institution is to submit an interim report and be visited by one or more Commission representatives. In the case of Utah State University, the Commission requested a progress report in spring 2008 to address Recommendation 7 of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report. The Commission also requested that the institution prepare a focused interim report and host one or more Commission representatives in fall 2009 to address Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report. A copy of the Recommendations is enclosed for your reference.

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission determined that Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report are areas where the institution is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria, but in need of improvement. The Commission further determined that Recommendation 7 of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report does not meet Commission criteria for accreditation. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation 34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy A-18, Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period (enclosed), the Commission requires that Utah State University take appropriate action to ensure that Recommendation 7 of the Fall 2007 Comprehensive Evaluation Report is addressed and resolved within the prescribed two-year period.

In the unlikely event the Commission should conclude that an institution is in danger of being unable to fulfill its mission and goals or to continue to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Standards or related Policies for accreditation, the Commission reserves the right to request that the institution receive an evaluation committee for a special review.
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The Commission commends the University for the remarkable success of its capital campaign in generating $200 million from the private sector to support programs and facilities. Moreover, the Commission applauds the University’s accomplishments in engaging undergraduates in research. Further, the Commission commends the faculty and staff for their commitment to meeting the needs of students and their dedicated service to the University. In addition, the Commission finds laudable the responsive efforts of the administration and the University Library in assuring that faculty and students, both on campus and at a distance, have access to needed information, whether in traditional or electronic formats. The Commission notes the University’s extraordinary efforts to extend its resources to meet the needs throughout the state and for its effectiveness in reaching collaborative agreements with state and local governments and other institutions. Lastly, the University is to be commended for its effectiveness in maintaining and expanding the facilities and enhancing the campus landscape during periods of constrained resources.

Again, congratulations on receiving this recognition. Please feel free to contact me regarding your thoughts or suggestions for improving the comprehensive evaluation process and for any assistance we may provide the institution.

The Commission requests that Utah State University submit eight printed copies and one electronic copy of its Spring 2008 Progress Report to the Commission office no later than April 18, 2008, as specified in the Guidelines for the Preparation of Progress Reports (enclosed).

Best wishes for a rewarding and peaceful new year.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Sandra E. Elman  
President

SEE: rb

Enclosures: Recommendations  
Policy A-18  
Guidelines for the Preparation of Progress Reports

cc: Dr. H. Craig Petersen, Director, Analysis, Assessment and Accreditation  
Mr. Richard L. Shipley, Board of Trustees Chair  
Mr. David L. Buhler, Interim Commissioner of Higher Education
Comprehensive Evaluation Report  
Fall 2007  
Utah State University

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the University develop and promulgate a three- to five-year enrollment and financial plan based on: 1) the institutional strategic vision and plan; 2) analysis of state demography, student demand, and student cohort groups; and 3) projected state appropriations, fee revenue, and other identified revenue sources, to assure adequate support for current and planned programs (Standards 1.A.4, 1.B.2-5, 2.E.1, 2.E.3, 3.B.1, 4.A.4, 7.A.2, and 7.B.5).

2. The Committee recommends that the University 1) continue to improve its institutional outcomes assessment plan for all sectors; and 2) identify and implement specific outcomes measures appropriate - but not necessarily the same - in each instance to assess the achievement of intended outcomes (Standards 2.B and Policy 2.2).


4. The Committee recommends that the University review for possible revision its salary increase policy and procedures for clarity, effectiveness, transparency, and fairness (Standard 4.A.4 and Policy 4.1).

5. The Committee recommends that the University assure the scheduling of sufficient sections of general education courses to enable students to make timely progress toward graduation (Standards 2.A.1, 2.A.9, 2.C.3, 4.A.8, and 7.B.1).


7. The Committee recommends that the University develop and implement a Disaster Recovery Plan for student records (Standard 3.C.5).

8. The Committee recommends that the University review for possible revision and for consistent implementation the pre-tenure faculty mentoring and evaluation policies and procedures and the post-tenure faculty evaluation policies and procedures, including institutional involvement in implementing plans for improvement (Standard 4.A.5 and Policy 4.1.a-d).