



8060 165th Avenue N.E., Suite 100  
Redmond, WA 98052-3981  
425 558 4224  
Fax: 425 376 0596  
www.nwccu.org

July 24, 2018

Dr. Noelle Cockett  
President  
Utah State University  
1400 Old Main Hill  
Logan, UT 84322-1435

Dear President Cockett:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the Spring 2018 Year Seven Evaluation of Utah State University by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on June 27-29, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of evidence, including the Institution's Self-Evaluation Report, the Peer-Evaluation Report, and information received as part of the institutional representative meeting with Commissioners.

Based on these materials and deliberations, the Commissioners took the following actions:

**Accreditation**

- Reaffirm Accreditation.

**Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation**

- Recommendation 1 of the Fall 2013 Year Three Peer-Evaluation Report is fulfilled with no further action required.
- Recommendation 2 of the Fall 2013 Year Three Peer-Evaluation Report is continued as Recommendation 1 of the Spring 2018 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report and is now an area of non-compliance.

**Recommendation:** Spring 2018 Year Seven Evaluation Out of Compliance

The Commission finds that the following Recommendation is an area where Utah State University is out of compliance with the NWCCU Standards for Accreditation. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation 34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy, *Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period* (attached), the Commission requires that Utah State University take appropriate action to ensure the Recommendation is addressed and resolved in the prescribed period. The Commission recommends that the University:

1. Develop, implement, and document an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement of identified general education program learning outcomes, and ensure that faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for assessing student achievement of general education learning outcomes (4.A.2, 4.A.3, 2.C.10).

**Recommendations:** Spring 2018 Year Seven Evaluation In Need of Improvement

The Commission recommends that the University:

2. Accelerate progress toward comprehensive program assessment in a manner that reflects the important, but incomplete, assessment work happening on campus. Specifically, Utah State University should increase the rigor of feedback to individual program assessment plans, it should ensure that all programs are fully committed to robust assessment of student learning outcomes, and it should improve the overall quality of assessment plans and reports of graduate programs (4.A.2, 4.A.3, 4.A.6).
3. Verify the accuracy and appropriateness of indicators of achievement to reflect more completely Utah State University's efforts associated with its Core Themes. Refinement of metrics definitions, establishment of appropriate benchmarks for metrics, and attention to qualitative and quantitative assessment methodologies will allow the institution to tell its story more effectively, particularly in the Core Theme of Engagement (1.B.2; 3.B.3; 4.A.1; 4.B.1).

**Required Follow-Up**

- Address Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 of the Spring 2018 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report as an addendum to the Mission and Core Themes Self-Evaluation Report in Fall 2019.

**Commendations:** Spring 2018 Year Seven Evaluation

The Commission commends Utah State University in particular for the following:

1. The Utah State University community, including students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni at all locations, displays close connections and positive relationships that may be summarized in the oft-heard phrase “the Aggie Family.” Members of the Board of Trustees share this pride, which pervades the institution.
2. The faculty, staff, and administration are committed to student success. The self-study document, data collection and analytics, and face-to-face interviews contributed to a strong sense of priority on student success. University-wide efforts in advising, student safety, academic support, and classroom engagement are all noteworthy examples of providing students with a positive experience.
3. Staff within Libraries, Facilities, and Information Technology, for the outstanding support of Learning, Discovery and Engagement. The buildings, grounds, and utility infrastructure are in excellent condition, both on the main campus and the regional campuses. The Libraries' commitment to users is evident in its robust subject liaison program, its course-integrated instruction, and its focus on making resources and services accessible regardless of location.
4. The balance that has been achieved through the collaborative efforts of USU and its regional campuses, and the successful integration of services, programming, and support to foster mission fulfillment on all campuses.

**Future Evaluations**

- Mission and Core Themes Report in Fall 2019 to include an Addendum to address Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 of the Spring 2018 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report.
- Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation and visit in Spring 2021.
- Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation and visit in Spring 2025.

NWCCU is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact NWCCU.

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy  
President

SR:rb

cc: Dr. Michael Torrens, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Mr. Jody K. Burnett, Chair, Utah State University Board of Trustees  
Dr. Royce Engstrom, Spring 2018 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Committee Chair