



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

July 28, 2008

Dr. Karen Morse
President
Western Washington University
516 High Street
Bellingham, WA 98225-9033

Dear President Karen,

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, I am pleased to report that the accreditation of Western Washington University has been reaffirmed on the basis of the Spring 2008 Comprehensive Evaluation. 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 an 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 Western Washington University, the Commission requested that the University prepare a focused interim report and host a Commission representative in fall 2010 to address Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Spring 2008 Comprehensive Evaluation Report.

For your convenience, a copy of these recommendations is enclosed.

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission finds that Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Spring 2008 Comprehensive Evaluation Report are areas where the University is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria, but in need of improvement.

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.

The Commission commends the faculty, staff and administration for their uniformly shared understanding of, and deep commitment to, the University's core mission of undergraduate education and the pride they have in the success of their students. Moreover, the Commission applauds the University for its effective system of faculty evaluation which has been widely

RECEIVED
PRESIDENT/PROVOST OFFICE
JUL 31 2008
WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

President Karen Morse
July 28, 2008
Page Two

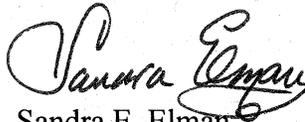
credited for its thoroughness and its impact on faculty development. In addition, the Commission finds laudable the University's attractive campus and its well organized and managed facilities operation with its computerized maintenance management systems. Lastly, the Commission commends the Board of Trustees for its informed and effective stewardship of the University.

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.

We will write in spring 2010 regarding the Fall 2010 Focused Interim Report and visit.

Best wishes for a rewarding year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra E. Elman".

Sandra E. Elman
President

SEE:rb

Enclosure: Recommendations

cc: Dr. Dennis Murphy, Provost
Mr. Kevin Raymond, Board Chair
Mr. Bill Grinstein, Chair, Higher Education Coordinating Board

**Comprehensive Evaluation Report
Spring 2008
Western Washington University**

Recommendations

1. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the operating budget process be given a thorough review and revision. The current process, though detailed and iterative, does not always provide adequate transparency. There is a need for more discussion prior to decisions, better and consistent communications of results, and greater demonstration that funding decisions are linked to strategic priorities (Standards 1, 7.A).
2. The Evaluation Committee notes that there has been inadequate progress on the implementation of key aspects of an institution-wide plan of program assessment. Despite admirable growth in ongoing data collection, campus support, a plethora of reports, the number of robust college-level plans and efforts, investments in staff, and committees, there is a need to close the feedback loop and use the information generated to improve programs and inform resource decisions in a consistent and systemic manner (Standards 1.B, 2.B, and Policy 2.6).
3. The Evaluation Committee finds that the library has not engaged in a fundamental and thorough planning effort, informed by assessment, to consistently support the University's academic mission (Standard 5).
4. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the University address the structure and working relationships of the numerous committees, processes, and reports that populate the governance process in order to enhance communication and effectiveness. This good faith effort to provide multiple opportunities for input and review has, in some areas, created confusion and sometimes tensions as to where reports go, how processes work and which group has responsibility for making decisions and implementing recommendations (Standard 6.A.1).