



July 23, 2021

Scott L. Wyatt
President
Southern Utah University
351 West University Boulevard
Cedar City, UT 84720

Dear President Wyatt:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on June 23-25, 2021, concerning the Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness of Southern Utah University. This action was taken after consideration of evidence, including the institution's Self-Evaluation Report, the Peer-Evaluation Report, the optional Institutional Response to the Peer-Evaluation Report, and information received as part of the institutional representative meeting with Commissioners.

Accreditation

Reaffirm Accreditation

Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation

- Recommendation 3: Spring 2014 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability - Fulfilled
- Recommendation 4: Spring 2014 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability - Fulfilled

Commendations

The Commission commends Southern Utah University for:

1. The institutional culture of caring and meaningful connection, as reflected in its laser focus on students and commitment to work/life balance for its employees. The institution's commitment to students and employees was especially evident in the flexibility and support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Its visionary and effective approach to providing an affordable and accessible education. The efforts to keep tuition flat, to develop the 3-year degree and expanded summer offerings, and to grow online programs strategically are all extraordinary.
3. The remarkable success in strengthening retention and graduation efforts and outcomes in the overall student population. The ACES and LEADS peer mentors, DFW analyses, curricular and advising enhancements, increased financial aid resources, and support provided through student services have produced outstanding results.
4. The transparent and inclusive nature of its budgeting and strategic planning processes, and for strongly tying resource allocation to the strategic plan within a data-informed context that allows for innovation.
5. The transparent sharing and analyses of data, especially with academic units to inform efforts to improve student achievement. The Unit Effectiveness Plans are great examples of disseminating data with unit leaders and asking them to use that data to drive unit efforts to enhance student achievement.

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

The Commission recommends that Southern Utah University:

- Recommendation 1: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Use the strong foundation of equity gaps data to develop more targeted and intentional strategies and interventions to mitigate gaps for specific student sub-groups. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.4)
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Develop systematic and sustainable evaluation and planning processes to refine the effectiveness of student support services, and to evaluate appropriate resources for student support services. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1;2.G.1)
- Recommendation 3: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Continue to refine its practices for analyzing general education student learning assessment data, and using these analyses to inform general education curricular revisions and learning support practices. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.6;1.C.7)

Future Evaluations

- Ad Hoc Report Spring 2023
 - Address implementation of the Doctor of Psychology degree program in Clinical Psychology
- Mid-Cycle Review Spring 2024
 - Recommendation 1: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
 - Recommendation 2: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
 - Recommendation 3: Spring 2021 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
- Year 6 - Standard 2 - Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Spring 2027
- Year 7 - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Spring 2028

Per [USDE guidance](#), all virtual accreditation site visits shall be followed by in-person campus visits within a reasonable time when public health conditions improve and are authorized by applicable law. Campus visits may be limited to focus on items identified in the Peer-Evaluation Report and may include fewer than all evaluation team members.

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 your staff liaison, Dr. Pamela Goad, at pgoad@nwccu.org.

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy
President

cc: Dr. James Sage, Associate Provost
Mr. Richard Christiansen, Board of Trustees Chair
Dr. Nathan Lindsay, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, The University of Montana - Missoula