



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

January 22, 2019

Dr. Christopher Bailey
President
Lower Columbia College
1600 Maple Street
P.O. Box 3010
Longview, WA 98632-0310

Dear President Bailey:

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 January 9-11, 2019, concerning the Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation of Lower Columbia College. 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.

Commendations

The Commission commends Lower Columbia College for:

1. The College's extraordinary provisions for ensuring the safety and security of its students, employees, campus visitors, and property at all locations where it offers programs and services.
2. Dedication and enthusiasm of Library and Learning Commons faculty in their support of the campus community and for their success in the use of assessment data to improve services for students and faculty. The initiative to pilot and embrace Open Educational Resources (OERs) to make textbooks affordable for students is especially noteworthy.
3. Faculty leadership, for developing—and sustaining over a long period of time—a robust process for evaluating and improving student learning in Global Skills during the annual Summer Assessment Institute. The ongoing level of faculty participation, enthusiasm, and demonstrated continuous improvement resulting from this Institute is a testament to the authentic culture of assessment that has been nurtured and sustained at Lower Columbia College.
4. Exemplary commitment to student success by meeting students where they are and then helping them in the following ways:
 - Consistently supporting strong retention and graduation rates;
 - Having robust i-BEST and tutoring programs;
 - Creating a food pantry;
 - The Foundation's establishment of a Student Success Fund to assist students who are experiencing acute, short-term financial needs; and
5. Providing the students with beautiful and well-maintained campus facilities.

Recommendation for Areas Out of Compliance

The Commission finds that the following Recommendation is an area where Lower Columbia College 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* (enclosed), the Commission requires that Lower Columbia College must take appropriate action to ensure this Recommendation is addressed and resolved in the prescribed two-year period.

The Commission recommends that Lower Columbia College:

2. Articulate identifiable and assessable learning outcomes for related instruction—communication, computation, and human relations—that align with and support student learning outcomes in applied certificate and degree programs (E.R. 12, Standard 2.C.11).

Recommendations for Areas Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

The Commission recommends that Lower Columbia College must:

1. Provide adequate staff training and resources to implement an adequate review process over the College's internal controls and financial reporting to ensure the financial information is accurate, complete, and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) in order to resolve all issues relating to staff turnover transition, internal controls and segregation of duties, financial statement preparation and the requisite oversight (Standard 2.F.4).
3. Perform ongoing review and regular, systematic evaluation and revision, as necessary, of Administrative Policies that promote effective management and operation of the institution and ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students (Standards 2, 2.A.12, 2.A.18).

Required Follow-Up

- Address Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Report as an addendum to the Spring 2020 Mission and Core Themes Report.
- Address Recommendation 2 of the Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Report in an Ad Hoc Report without a visit in Spring 2020.

Future Evaluations

- Mission and Core Themes Report in Spring 2020 to include an addendum to address Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Report.
- Ad Hoc Report without a visit in Spring 2020 to address Recommendation 2 of the Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Report.
- Mid-Cycle Evaluation and visit in Fall 2021.
- Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation and visit in Fall 2025.

January 22, 2019
Page 3 of 3

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, Vice President Valerie Martinez.

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy
President

SR:rb

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Wendy L. Hall, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Ms. Heather Mansy, Chair, Lower Columbia College Board of Trustees
Mr. Garth Sleight, Fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Peer-Evaluation Committee
Chair