Evaluator Webinar
May 12, 2020

President Sonny Ramaswamy
Pam Goad, Executive Vice President
Selena Grace, Senior Vice President
Ron Larsen, Senior Vice President
Mac Powell, Senior Vice President
Jess Stahl, Vice President of Data Science and Analytics
Amy Luke, Chief of Staff & Director of External Relations
Mellissa Thoreson, Director of Institutional Evaluation
Kayli Martin, Financial Administrator
Summary of the Webinar

• **1:00 pm**: Context, Standards Revision, Standards 1 and 2, Rubrics, Evidence, Outstanding recommendations, New recommendations

• **About 2:15 pm**: Overview of Cycle and Process, Team Communications and Responsibilities, Report Specifics, Box, Evaluators’ Evaluation, Reimbursement
NWCCU Mission

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accredits institutions of higher education by applying evidence-informed standards and processes to support continuous improvement and promote student achievement and success.
Why focus on the quality of higher education?

- Economic Prosperity and Sustainable Democracy
- Public good and private benefit
- Public trust and social change
- Global interdependence
- Disruptive increase in information and technology
Why new standards?

- Equity gaps
- Financial sustainability
- Local priorities driven by institutional missions
- Transparency
- Purpose not process
Who defines accreditation?

- Commissioners; 1/7 are public
- Standing committees
- Other committees
- USDE, States, NWCCU, Higher Education Act
- Programmatic accreditors/national agencies
What is accreditation?

• Demonstration of Eligibility Requirements
• Self-review, effectiveness, and improvement
• Reports reviewed by peers
• Meets or exceeds standards
• Committed to institutional improvement and compliance with standards
• Candidates versus member institutions
Questions?
The 2020 Standards – Summary

- Five Standards to Two Standards
- 142 Standard Elements to 47 Standard Elements
- Standard One – Focus of Year 7 : 18 Standard Elements
- Standard Two – Focus of Year 6 : 29 Standard Elements
Transition to Reporting and Accountability

- Transitional period: January 2020 to December 2021:
  Institutions choose 2010 MFS* or 2020 EIE** pathway
- January 2022 ends transitional period:
  2020 EIE pathway required
- Online delivery impact? COVID-19?

*Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability  ** Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
New 2020 Standards

STANDARD ONE
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

• Institutional Mission
• Institutional Effectiveness
• Student Learning
• Student Achievement
Revised Standard 1 Element

STANDARD 1.C.3
The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students.
New Standard 1 Element

STANDARD 1.C.6
Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.
Nixed Standard 1 Element

**STANDARD 1.B.1 (2010)**

The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.
Revised Standard 1 Element

STANDARD 1.C.8
Transfer credit and credit for prior learning is accepted according to clearly defined, widely published, and easily accessible policies that provide adequate safeguards to ensure academic quality. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that such credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic rigor, and quality.
The 2020 Standards – New Concepts

- Comparative benchmarking to peer institutions
- Disaggregated data
Revised Standard 1 Element

STANDARD 1.B.2

The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.
New Standard 1 Element

STANDARD 1.D.2
Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).
New Standard 1 Element

**STANDARD 1.D.3**

The institution’s **disaggregated indicators** of student achievement should be widely published and available on the institution’s website. Such disaggregated indicators should be aligned with meaningful, institutionally identified indicators **benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions** at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources.
New Standard 1 Element

**STANDARD 1.D.4**

The institution’s processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to **mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity.**
Questions?
Rubrics

Accreditation Handbook Appendix:
Created by Fellows

• Institutional Effectiveness
• Student Learning
• Student Achievement
Rubric – Institutional Effectiveness

Screen Share – p. 62 (66 in pdf)

1.B.2 The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.

- Initial and emerging – and with peers
- Developed – and with peers
- Highly developed – and with peers
Rubric – Student Learning

Screen Share – p. 68 (72 in pdf)

1.C.7 The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.

• Initial and emerging – programs and learning outcomes
• Developed – programs and learning outcomes
• Highly developed – programs and learning outcomes
Rubric – Student Achievement

Screen Share – p. 71 (75 in pdf)

1.D.2 Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).

• Initial and emerging – peers and disaggregated
• Developed – peers and disaggregated
• Highly developed – peers and disaggregated
Evidence - Principles

How do you know the standard is being met?

Five Principles of useful evidence:

- Relevant
- Verifiable
- Representative
- Cumulative
- Actionable
Evidence - Pitfalls

**What institutions should avoid:**

- Abundance, everything possible
- Discrete time periods
- “Best” of all
- Over the top precision
- Summative for all time moving forward
Evidence – Prompts for action

Data-driven actions in:

• Strategic planning
• Unit Planning
• Student learning
• Student achievement - disaggregated
• Transparent and published
Direct and Indirect Evidence of Student Learning

**Direct Measures**
- Faculty Grades – rubric oriented
- Licensure exams, standardized exams
- Pre- and Post-Test Designs
- Competency-based demonstration
- Portfolios

**Indirect Measures**
- Faculty Grades – DFW, for example
- Surveys and Reflections
- Course evaluations
- Graduation Rates
- Retention Rates
Qualitative Evidence

Narratives:
How to use? Balance to quantitative evidence, especially coupled with indicators far removed from students, staff, and faculty

- Policy and process issues in student learning, curriculum, facilities, services, technology, staff development
- Student perspectives and experience vs. graduation and retention rates
- Cultural emphases on community; also values diversity
- More complex situations and contextual diversity
Evidence

**Perspective:**
Transitional Period

- How much should be shown in addressing gaps in equity?
- Peer institutions’ comparative benchmarking?
- What about local priorities and core themes?
Questions?
New 2020 Standards continued

STANDARD TWO
GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES, AND CAPACITY

• Governance
• Academic Freedom
• Policies and Procedures
• Institutional Integrity
• Financial Resources
• Human Resources
• Student Support Resources
• Library and Information Resources
• Physical and Technology Infrastructure
Revised Standard 2 Element

STANDARD 2.A.1

- The institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.
Revised Standard 2 Element

STANDARD 2.E.1 and 2

2.E.1 The institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.

2.E.2 Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.
Revised Standard 2 Element

STANDARD 2.F.4

- Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.
Revised Standard 2 Element

STANDARD 2.G.1

• Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.
Standard 2 Exhibits

*Screen share* – p. 55 (59 in pdf)

Accreditation Handbook Appendix A Checklist

- Facilities questions – what evidence rises in importance?
Tribal Colleges
Standard 2: Tribal Colleges

Governance and Culture
Accreditation Handbook Appendix

- Tribal Council and Board of Trustees
- Funding
- Cultural Awareness
Questions?
Outstanding recommendations?

Using 2010 Standards

Contextual translations

• Planning
• Assessment
• Items that may be no longer be explicit but still important; hazardous waste
Outstanding recommendations?

Potential actions:
Contextual translations

• Satisfied
• Continued as is
• Continued with a revision
Outstanding recommendations continued?

Example – what is the new 2020 standard?
While noting that faculty and administrators receive regular and periodic evaluations, the evaluation committee did not find evidence that all categories of staff are formally evaluated beyond the six-month probationary period. The committee recommends that the University engage in an ongoing, consistent process of regular employee evaluation with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities (2010 Standard 2.B.2).
Outstanding recommendations continued?

Example – what is the new 2020 standard?

2010 2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

2020 2.F.4 Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.
Outstanding recommendations continued?

Example: Mission Fulfillment
For all indicators of success, the panel recommends that Sonny’s College fully implement its plan for developing its baseline performance, benchmarking based on peer comparators, and setting performance targets in order to more clearly define mission fulfillment, articulate an acceptable threshold of performance, and evaluate the College’s accomplishments and outcomes for mission fulfillment (2010 Standard 1.A.2)
**Outstanding recommendations continued?**

**Example – but with a different context?**

**2010 1.A.2** The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

**2020 1.B.2** The institution sets and articulates meaningful goals, objectives, and indicators of its goals to define mission fulfillment and to improve its effectiveness in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions.
Outstanding recommendations continued?

**Example: Assessment**

The University does not yet regularly and comprehensively assess all student program learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs. The Commission recommends that the assessment of student learning outcomes be systematically accelerated such that continuous improvement resulting from assessment leads to enhancement of student achievement and to a meaningful evaluation of mission fulfillment (2010 Standards 4.A.3 and 4.B).
Example: Hefty standards cited all at once

2010 4.A.3 The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

2010 4.B.1 Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision making, and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

2010 4.B.2 The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.
Outstanding recommendations continued?

Example: Best fit without a revision

2020 1.C.5 The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs.

2020 1.C.7 The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes.
Building New Recommendations

The evaluation team recommends that Sonny’s College:

• Begin with a verb
• No reference to progress thus far or contextual information, save these acknowledgements for the main text of the peer-evaluation report
Example – the original wording
While noting that faculty and administrators receive regular and periodic evaluations, the evaluation committee did not find evidence that all categories of staff are formally evaluated beyond the six-month probationary period. The committee recommends that the University engage in an ongoing, consistent process of regular employee evaluation with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities (2020 Standard 2.F.4).
Building a New Recommendation Format

The evaluation team recommends that Sonny’s University:

- ...engage in an ongoing, consistent process of regular employee evaluation with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities (2020 Standard 2.F.4).
Building New Commendations

The evaluation team commends Sonny’s College for:

• Begin with a natural continuation
• Remains oriented toward institutional level accomplishments and efforts
Building a New Commendation Format

The evaluation team commends Sonny’s College for:

• Its commitment to development of an environment of utilizing data to inform processes and transparency. The College has established a goal to develop a system in which planning, assessment and linkage to continuous improvement guide all levels of decision making. The leadership team communicated a cohesive vision and commitment to transparency at all levels throughout the organization.
Building a Compliment or Concern

Cited within the report text describing a standard:

- Compliment – something one department does well; an activity well-suited to students, etc.; removed from team’s commendations
- Concern – details of the evidence producing a formal recommendation; you may be asked to write a concern into your text
Resources

- Accreditation Handbook
- Visit Logistics Handbook
- Educational Resources on NWCCU website
- Model Reports to be developed
- Home institution reports
- NWCCU Staff
- Colleagues
Questions
Off-screen break: 10 minutes
Evaluator Webinar continued

- Communications
- Process
- Team Assignments
- Report Specifics
- Box
- Evaluations
- Reimbursements
Institutional Evaluation Types

- Candidacy
- Reaffirmation
  - Mid-Cycle
  - Policies, Regulations, and Finance Review (PRFR)
  - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE)
- Ad Hoc
Institutional Evaluation Seasons

- Fall – Late September to early November
- Spring – Late March to early May
## The New Cycle – A Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Cycle Review</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study Submitted</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation Site Visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission Decision</td>
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## The Process

### ANNUAL REPORT
- Disaggregated Data
- Student Achievement
- Financials
- Annual Submission
- Staff Review

### MID-CYCLE REPORT
- Report and Onsite Review
  - Assessment
  - Data Collection and Analysis
  - Planning
- Onsite peer review in Year 3
- Staff review of evaluation reports for Commission Meeting consent agenda

### POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND FINANCIAL REVIEW (PRFR)
- Report and Offsite Review
  - Financial Performance
  - Policies and Regulations
- Offsite peer review in Year 6
- Findings reported to EIE Team in Year 7

### EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (EIE)
- Report and Onsite Review of Student Success
  - Institutional Mission and Effectiveness
  - Student Learning
  - Student Achievement
- Onsite peer review in Year 7
- Review findings from PRFR
- Commission Decision
Overview of Report Contents

Hyperlinks to relevant content encouraged

MID-CYCLE – ABOUT YEAR 3
- Accreditation framework, peers, two programs, assessment
- Formative, collegial and to support reaffirmation

YEAR 6 PRFR (beginning in Spring 2021 for Spring 2022 EIE institutions)
- Standard 2, Exhibits, descriptive but concise, certification (screen share – p. 110, 114 in pdf)
- Offsite, recommendations to Year 7 EIE team

YEAR 7 EIE (previous MFS)
- Standard 1, disaggregated data and student achievement
- Summative, recommendation to Commission

AD HOCs
- Context dependent, substantive change follow-up
- Recommendation to Commission
Institutional Visit Lengths – Virtual or Onsite

Dependent upon the type of visit:

MID-CYCLE EVALUATION
• Night before visit – organization meeting;
• 1 and ½ days

EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (EIE)
• Night before visit – organization meeting;
• 2 and ½ days

AD HOC REPORT
• 1 and ½ days
Policies, Regulations, Finance Review (PRFR)

In design phase, beginning Spring 2021:
ONSITE IN REDMOND, WASHINGTON

- 2 days in the NWCCU Office
- Final PRFR Report to Institution and EIE team
Other visits

Information forthcoming:
OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS
• 1 day
2020 COVID-19 FOLLOW-UP VISIT (onsite only)
• 1 day
Off-site locations and delivery methods

Established with Chair; guided by NWCCU policies

OFF-SITE LOCATIONS – ALO ARRANGED
• Resources and capacity, interviews
• Support services
• Comparable to main campus SLO’s*?

DELIVERY METHODS – DISTANCE (ONLINE) AND COMPETENCY-BASED – ALO ARRANGED
• Resources and capacity, interviews, NWCCU policy
• Comparable to face-to-face SLO’s, assessment
• Integrated into decision-making and planning

*SLO’s – student learning outcomes
Questions?
Communications to Evaluators

**Invitation:**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

- Type of report
- Institution type
- Evaluator preferences for season
- Areas of expertise
- Evaluator’s own institutional cycle
- Balance of new to experienced evaluators
- State location of institution
Member Institutions by State/Province

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*

Alaska 5
Idaho 11
Montana 21
Nevada 9
Oregon 41
Utah 13
Washington 56
British Columbia 3

*Does not include Candidate Institutions; 2019
Communications to Evaluators

Before and during the visit:
LOGISTICS OF TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATIONS

• NWCCU Memo details hotel location and airport
• Airfare quotes or reservations
• Transportation to institution by car
• Local transportation by institution (ALO)
• Meals and special dietary needs
• NWCCU instructions for expenses relating to the visit, and the NWCCU Business and Travel Expense Policy.
Activities prior to a visit

Initiated by the Chair, you, or the ALO

Dependent upon type of visit

- Chair initiates pre-visit conference calls
- Overview of report and assignments
- Establish who to interview at institution
- Requests for additional materials from ALO
- Establish visit schedule in collaboration with ALO
- Dietary needs, technology needs
Responsibilities of an Evaluator

- Communications will be frequent, please respond;
- Participates in evaluation team conference calls;
- Reviews the institutional report and all NWCCU materials;
- Works to develop and utilize appropriate lines of questioning;
- Participates actively in all assigned meetings designated in the visit schedule;
- Attends the exit meeting with the institution on the last day of the visit; and
- Completes assigned sections of the Peer Evaluation report in a timely manner.
Best Practices for Evaluators

- Review all materials from NWCCU and institution;
- Consult with the Chair if you have questions;
- Prior to the visit, prepare an outline or draft;
- Focus on the Eligibility Requirements or Standards of Accreditation;
- Review NWCCU policies as needed; and
- Respect the confidentiality of the process.
Typical schedule of a Year 7 EIE visit

Adjustments may occur

DAY 0
• 4 pm organizational meeting at the hotel

DAY 1
• Introductory meeting, heavy interview day
• 4 pm executive session with team

DAY 2
• Verification of initial findings, interviews con’t
• 4 pm executive session with team; C and R time

DAY 3
• Writing time; last-minute confirmation of language
• Exit meeting, leave by 12 noon
• Cloud service for evaluation materials, evidence*
• Made available through NWCCU technology platform to all NWCCU staff and to Commission
• Secure
• Invitation sent by NWCCU liaison
• ALO has access to institutional folders only
• **Screen share**

*some institutions will provide access to intranet, Sharepoint, etc., in addition to BOX*
Evaluation of the Evaluators

• Who does this?
• How is it used?
• Expensify – NWCCU policy and instructions included
• Receipts required
• Comparable airfare quotes
• Maps for mileage
• Direct deposit to your personal account
Resources

- Accreditation Handbook
- Visit Logistics Handbook
- Models
- Rubrics
- Ongoing trainings
- Guidelines for Reports
- Box.com
- Connect with your assigned NWCCU liaison
- Send additional questions to info@nwccu.org
Questions?
Thank you