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February 9, 2017

Dr. Linda Schott
President
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, OR 97520

Dear President Schott: *Linda*

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, I am pleased to report that the accreditation of Southern Oregon University has been reaffirmed on the basis of the Fall 2016 Year Seven *Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability* Evaluation. Congratulations on receiving this continued recognition.

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission requests that the University submit an Ad Hoc Report without a visit in fall 2017 to address Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Fall 2016 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report. The Fall 2017 Ad Hoc Report is separate from the University's Fall 2017 Year One *Mission and Core Themes* Report. In addition, the Commission requests that the College submit an addendum to its Fall 2019 Mid-Cycle Report to address Recommendations 3, 4, and 5 of the Fall 2016 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report. A copy of the Recommendations is enclosed for your reference.

In making these requests, the Commission finds that Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Fall 2016 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report are areas where Southern Oregon University is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement.

The Commission commends the faculty of Southern Oregon University for their efforts to support students and to foster student success. In addition, the Commission finds noteworthy the proactive efforts of the University to address the issue of sexual assault. Lastly, the Commission applauds the community of Southern Oregon University for surmounting the challenges of recent years, including changes in leadership, a reorganization of the Oregon University System, a change in funding structure, and capital construction and physical plant improvements.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

President Linda Schott
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Best wishes for a peaceful and fulfilling New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sandra Elman".

Sandra E. Elman
President

SEE:rb

Enclosure: Recommendations

cc: Dr. Jody Waters, Associate Provost and Director of Graduate Studies ✓
Mr. Bill Thorndike, Board Chair
Mr. Ben Cannon, Executive Director, Oregon State Higher Educating Coordinating Commission

Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report
Fall 2016
Southern Oregon University
Recommendations

1. The evaluation committee recommends that Southern Oregon University (SOU) revisit its definition of mission fulfillment, and the planning for demonstrating mission fulfillment (Standards 1.A.2, 3.A.1, and 5.A.2).
2. The evaluation committee recommends that SOU revise its objectives and indicators for the core themes to encompass both undergraduate and graduate academic programs (Standard 1.B.2).
3. The evaluation committee recommends that the institution develop a plan to adequately fund the library for materials in order to support educational programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels (Standard 2.E.1).
4. As the University undertakes strategic planning, the evaluation committee recommends that care be taken to more closely connect the core themes with the planning effort, to make certain that the core themes are "consistent with the institution's comprehensive plan" and are "aligned with and contribute to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of the respective programs and services" (Standard 3.B.1 and 3.B.2). The committee further recommends that if there is any modification in the Core Themes, the University be mindful that Eligibility Requirement 3 requires that the Core Themes be approved by the Board of Trustees.
5. The evaluation committee recommends that the institution continue to expand the use of assessment data and document the assessment processes and results to inform academic and learning support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements (i.e., "closing the loop"). Furthermore, the committee recommends that all graduate programs be included in the assessment processes (Standard 4.A.3 and 4.B.2).