

Year Three Peer-Evaluation Report

Eastern Oregon University

La Grande, OR

Fall 2013

*A confidential report of findings prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*

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I. Introduction

In March 2010, the NWCCU announced the approval of the new accreditation process and standards. Eastern Oregon University (EOU) was notified of the schedule for their first seven-year cycle, beginning with a Fall 2011 Year One Report and ending with a Fall 2017 Year Seven Report and Visit. Eastern Oregon University's accreditation was last reaffirmed in 2012 on the basis of the Year One Report. There were two recommendations, for which the Commission found that the institution was "substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement."

This Year Three evaluation is intended to review any updates to the institution's mission and core themes since the 2011 report and examine its resources and capacity to fulfill its mission. In addition, EOU was also asked to address Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Fall 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report, and again address Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Fall 2008 Comprehensive Evaluation Report.¹

Three peer evaluators were assigned to conduct this review on behalf of the Commission, with guidance from the NWCCU's Executive Vice President:

Ms. Megan Carlson, Chair
Assistant Vice Provost and ALO
University of Alaska Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska

Mrs. Trina Mahoney
Budget Director
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho

Ms. Anneliese A. Ripley
Interim Assistant Provost
The University of Montana – Western
Dillon, Montana

Dr. Les Steele, Liaison
Executive Vice President
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

The evaluation team received the Year Three Self-Evaluation Report on September 11, 2013. In addition to the self-evaluation report, the peer evaluators also reviewed the university catalog, website, documents linked to throughout the report, and other materials requested for clarification.

¹ The 2008 report was conducted under the old standards.

An off-site visit was conducted using audio and video conferencing on October 10 and 11, 2013. The evaluators held two full days of meetings with EOU administrators, faculty, staff, and students. They also spoke with a member of the Oregon Board of Higher Education and with the Oregon University System chancellor.²

The off-site visit was substantively informative and technically smooth. The evaluation team appreciated the opportunity to work with the warm and dedicated EOU representatives over that two day period, and to discover that it was possible to get a glimpse of the character of the institution without physically visiting the campus. The team was grateful for the logistical arrangements that allowed each meeting to be conducted by audio and video conference with evaluators located in three different time zones. Although many people contributed, Vice Provost Witte, Angie Adams, and Jon Norris were particularly helpful in orchestrating the off-site visit.

II. Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report and Materials

The self-evaluation report and support materials were thorough and clear. The report identified each eligibility requirement and standard and concisely responded to each, and indicated related standards for each eligibility requirement. Relevant links to documents like the Sustainability Plan and the institution's constitution were provided throughout the document.

The report described many institutional improvements prompted by preparing the self-evaluation, showing that EOU had embraced the opportunity for reflection to make the university better. Examples include changing the schedule for academic hearings to enable students to register accordingly based on the decisions, and modifying processes for program deletions to codify teach-out practices and allow an opportunity for faculty governance input.

While the report's brevity was generally appreciated, adding specifics to the narrative to augment those links would provide a reader with a greater sense of where to focus their attention in comparing the institution to the standards. It would also help to identify the areas of institutional strength beyond alignment with the standards.

The self-evaluation report made a clear and consistent case for the unique role the institution plays within the state of Oregon. Some topics, such as regional centers, graduate programs, and part-time faculty, were less clearly woven throughout the narrative. These relationships were more readily evident to the evaluators after the off-site visit, but future reports could benefit from greater integration of these important aspects of the institution.

Finally, the report included several remnants of prior reports, including references to the Year Five Report (which the Commission recently phased out of the new standards and process) and to indicators (such as a workplace climate survey) which no longer appear in the streamlined list of indicators.

² The appendix contains a complete list of the participants in the off-site visit.

III. Past Recommendations Addressed as an Addendum

The last reaffirmation requested that the institution address Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Fall 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report and to address Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Fall 2008 comprehensive report. These recommendations are briefly addressed in this section, and will be addressed in greater detail in the standards to which they relate (1.A, 2.C, and 2.D).

Fall 2008 Recommendation Five: Academic Portfolio Assessment & Student Learning Outcomes

The Committee recommends that the University continue its academic portfolio assessment and ensure uniform application across all academic programs. The Committee further recommends that student learning outcomes be an integral component of portfolio assessment. (Std. 2.B.1 – Educational Program Planning and Assessment, Policy 2.2 – Educational Assessment)

Since the Comprehensive Report, EOU has implemented an academic portfolio assessment system that documents program missions, objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment practices. The University uses TracDat software to collect data, analyze results, and document actions taken as part of assessment. The process is described in greater detail in Standard 2C.

Fall 2008 Recommendation Six: General Education Curriculum Revision and Assessment

The Committee recommends that the University fully implement the General Education Curriculum (GEC) revision undertaken in 2006-07, including the finalizing of the GEC Breadth Outcomes. The Committee further recommends that the GEC be systematically and regularly assessed. (Policy 2.1 – General Education/Related Instruction Requirements, Policy 2.2 – Educational Assessment)

Since the 2008 Comprehensive Report, EOU fully defined the GEC breadth outcomes for five categories of knowledge and four intellectual and practical learning outcome areas. The University has completed one full cycle of GEC program assessment and is nearing completion of the second full cycle. University leaders report being pleased with what has been learned from the assessment process and note a cultural shift from compliance to engagement. The results of the GEC revisions are addressed in Standard 2C of this report.

Fall 2011 Recommendation One: Indicator Refinement

The University identified 22 aims with 60 indicators to track, manage, and assess. Even with the purchase of a software system, managing and sustaining the assessment system is an enormous task for an institution that has had a 40% reduction in budget. The evaluation panel recommends that Eastern Oregon University review indicators to assure alignment with the core themes, goals, aims, and targets and the efficacy and sustainability of the plan (Standard 1.B.2).

Since the Year One Report, Eastern Oregon University has streamlined their core themes, objectives, and indicators; shifted terminology to align with Commission standards from goals, aims, and indicators to objectives, indicators, and measures; and modified its approach to assessing institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment. Campus leadership and

institutional assessment bodies agree this is a more sustainable and meaningful collection of indicators. This progress is described in greater detail in Standard 1A and 1B of this report.

Fall 2011 Recommendation Two: Rationale for Mission Fulfillment and Indicators

The rationale for an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment was not developed consistently for all targets, and it is not always apparent why a specific target has been set for some indicators (e.g., 75% of EOU's certificates and degrees to be accessible for students, 90% of the evaluations for faculty and staff to be completed on time). The evaluation panel recommends that the rationale for mission fulfillment and indicators of achievement be fully developed (Standard 1.A.2 and 1.B.2).

Since the Year One Report, Eastern Oregon University has established clear targets for each indicator, and included rationale for each of the targets. They have also clarified their rationale for mission fulfillment. The process and current status are described in greater detail in Standard 1A and 1B of this evaluation report.

IV. Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements 2-21 are briefly and adequately addressed in an executive summary in the self-evaluation report. The institution has provided evidence that it has met each of the Eligibility Requirements, and referenced the standards related to each Eligibility Requirement.

V. Standard One – Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

Standard 1.A: Mission

Eastern Oregon University’s mission, which was last changed in 2008, states:

EOU guides student inquiry through integrated, high-quality liberal arts and professional programs that lead to responsible and reflective action in a diverse and interconnected world. As an educational, cultural and scholarly center, EOU connects the rural regions of Oregon to a wider world. Our beautiful setting and small size enhance the personal attention our students receive, while partnerships with colleges, universities, agencies and communities add to the educational possibilities of our region and state.

The mission and core themes were last approved by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education in 2012, following development with feedback from university stakeholders, including the University Council (a widely represented governance body) and the Faculty Senate (a faculty governance body). The mission is supplemented by three values: access, affordability, and engagement.

The mission and values are clearly understood and embraced by the university community and representatives of its governing board and university system. EOU has a unique role in the state, serving rural populations in an eastern Oregon hub (via the main campus in La Grande), as well as in sixteen regional centers located throughout the state. The university augments these on-campus programs with robust distance offerings. The evaluation team heard many examples of educational and economic development opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to the individuals and communities served by EOU.

Commendation 1: *The evaluation team commends EOU for its deep sense of commitment to serving the rural regions of the state, including Eastern Oregon. High levels of commitment to meeting students where they are and contributing to community economic development were voiced by faculty, staff, and administrators from all sectors of the university.*

Within the mission, EOU has identified three core theme areas, abbreviated as **Quality Education, Access for All**, and **Live-Learn-Succeed**. The mission, core themes, and values guide the institution’s annual planning efforts, including decisions about its strategic direction and resource allocations. The core themes are supported by 7 objectives, 16 indicators, and 34 measures. Target thresholds are established to evaluate mission fulfillment based on historical trends and future projections.

The Institutional Research and Planning and Assessment team is developing sustainability threshold performance levels this academic year, as well as a dashboard to support regular monitoring of institutional progress toward mission fulfillment. A “preview” of these sustainability thresholds shows descriptions for each level, ranging from analyzing the factors that led to successfully reaching targets and setting new targets, to assessing strategies and scanning the environment to determine why performance in an area has been unable to reach the targets.

While the university has made progress in updating its approach to mission, core themes, and the articulation of mission fulfillment, the latter still remains somewhat unclear. Targets are set for each measure (as described in Standard 1.B), but an overarching acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment needs further definition.

Recommendation 1: *The evaluation team recommends that Eastern Oregon University continue its work on articulating mission fulfillment to more clearly describe the process and criteria which determine an acceptable level of mission fulfillment in cases where the institution has not yet met its ambitious targets. (Standard 1.A.2)*

Standard 1.B: Core Themes

As noted in the response to prior recommendations, the university has streamlined their core themes, objectives, and indicators since the Year One Report. The new core theme structure now includes:

| 2011 Year One Self-Study | 2013 Year Three Self-Study |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 4 Core Themes | 3 Core Themes |
| 10 Goals | 7 Objectives |
| 22 Aims | 16 Indicators |
| 60 Indicators | 34 Measures |

Campus leadership and parties responsible for institutional assessment agree that this is a more sustainable and meaningful collection of indicators to evaluate the institution’s mission fulfillment. The evaluator agrees that this list appears more manageable, and further that the indicators and measures are more meaningfully linked with the objectives and core themes than in the Year One self-study. The revised list is being shared with governance bodies for approval in Fall 2013, with plans for approval by the governing board in December 2013.

Three core themes now manifest the Eastern Oregon University mission:

1. EOU has high quality liberal arts and professional programs that prepare students for the world beyond college.
2. EOU is a regional University with a deep sense of commitment to students where they are.
3. EOU is the educational, cultural, and economic engine of Eastern Oregon.

Quality Education

This core theme focuses on quality education, and is composed of two objectives, four indicators, and seven measures. The objectives relate to student learning in General Education, Program, and University Learning Outcomes; and to successful recruitment and retention of quality faculty and staff. Ambitious targets are established for each measure, with 100% for all but one measure. The rationale for a lower threshold (85%) is well-stated for the General Education Learning Outcomes, since they are sampled from lower-division courses which may be introductory content for students, particularly those who enter university under-prepared. Student learning is measured using common rubrics developed and approved by faculty.

The graduate programs' place in this core theme, as well as in the third, is somewhat obscured in the self-evaluation report. While this integration was more complete after the site visit interviews, the institution could benefit from more clearly integrating graduate programs throughout future iterations of the self-study in this cycle.

Concern 1: Despite the emphasis of student learning in this core theme, the evaluator is concerned that graduate programs are not fully integrated into the institution's core theme descriptions. (Standard 1.B)

Access for All

The second core theme focuses on a commitment to serving students where they are, and is composed of two objectives, six indicators, and 13 measures. The first objective relates to student access to on- and off-campus education, retention and graduation rates, and baccalaureate degree completion for students transferring from community colleges. The second objective relates to achieving access through technological infrastructure, support, and educational innovation.

The rationale for these measures is strong and the targets are designed to be responsive to shifting student demand. Retention targets are another example of aspirational targets based on historical trends. The educational technology targets are an example of measures designed to respond to changing faculty and staff needs. This core theme also demonstrates the connection of the core themes with the university's environment, incorporating the EOU Achievement Compact with the Oregon University System into the indicator on baccalaureate degrees earned by transfer students from eight community colleges.

Live-Learn-Succeed

The final core theme focuses on EOU's role as the "educational, cultural, and economic engine for eastern and other rural regions of Oregon." It is composed of three objectives, six indicators, and nine measures. The objectives focus on faculty and student community engagement, financial sustainability, and academic program responsiveness to regional needs.

The EOU commitment to fostering community engagement is backed up by resource investments. To support extended participation in service learning, research, and other engaged educational opportunities, the provost instituted tuition remission for seniors who enroll in these projects over multiple terms. In response to this incentive, enrollment in these courses has increased 20% since 2011. The students the evaluation team met with spoke highly about the number and quality of community engagement opportunities they were able to take advantage of.

Financial sustainability is measured through a series of ratios, with targets composed as ranges to allow for flexibility. These measures are also informed by external factors, such as the revenue growth per student FTE, whose target is tied to the Higher Education Price Index.

VI. Standard Two – Resources and Capacity

Standard 2.A: Governance

Governing Board

Eastern Oregon University's constitution defines its shared governance structure, including the roles of the institution's leaders and governing bodies. The University Council is broadly representative of faculty, staff, administrative faculty, students, and administrators, and focuses on university policies, global personnel policies, and mission/strategic plan. The Faculty Senate is also representative of faculty, and focuses on faculty-driven areas, such as curriculum, academic standards, and faculty personnel policies.

The division of authority and areas of responsibility are clearly delineated and defined for EOU and the other universities in the Oregon University System, the System itself, and the Oregon Board of Higher Education. The board and system engage in appropriate levels of oversight and support for the component institutions, and evaluate system and institutional performance through performance measures.

The changing structure of the Oregon University System's governance is currently a significant factor for Eastern Oregon University, as the three largest universities will leave the system at the end of this academic year. The university's leadership, as well as those of the system and the other three smaller regional universities, is undertaking extensive discussion with stakeholders to determine the best way to move forward and the potential ramifications of this decision.

***Compliment 1:** The evaluator compliments Eastern Oregon University for its proactive and collaborative response to the upcoming changes to the Oregon University System structure, including thoughtful consideration of implications to the institution's governance, finances, and infrastructure.*

Leadership and Management

Eastern Oregon University is led by President Davies and his staff, including the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Vice President for Advancement and Admissions, the Dean of Student Success and Engagement, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the Colleges of Education and Business, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Athletics, and the President's Executive Assistant.

This leadership team plans and executes the university's mission and core themes within their divisions, collaborates across divisions, and works closely with university governance bodies to seek input in decision-making and policy changes. The leadership team is appropriately qualified and committed to working together with the university community to address challenges such as fiscal constraints through methods that closely align with core themes, values, and community needs.

While the institution acknowledges its "lean" administrator/staff ratio, they also point to the benefits this provides, as administrators have built strong relationships through daily interaction and consultation.

Policies and Procedures

Policies are published on appropriate websites, such as the Academic Affairs, Library, or Human Resources policy websites, and in printed documents such as the academic catalog or handbooks for faculty, staff, and students. The university takes opportunities to inform students of the location of these policies during orientation and other activities.

Processes are in place to create and revise academic policies. These processes have been particularly important as the university has identified improvements through the self-study process, such as adjusting the timeline for student academic hearings and formalizing a place for faculty input in administrator-initiated program deletions.

Credit Hour Policy

The Commission requested that all institutions undergoing Year Three evaluations in the current academic year address this newly articulated requirement from the Department of Education. Eastern Oregon University defines a term or quarter credit hour in the catalog as “at least 30 clock hours of time (e.g., in class, in lab, reading, research, studying or in other activities related to coursework) for every term hour of credit.”

The Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee is responsible for review of curriculum and academic program policies. During its review of curriculum revisions, the EPCC discusses the impact of credit changes if any result from proposed revisions. Any such changes are communicated to students by updating printed references such as the catalog and the program website.

Standard 2.B: Human Resources

Eastern Oregon University has well documented procedures to ensure the employment of a sufficient number of qualified personnel. The development of position descriptions for and the hiring of classified positions are guided by the Classified Collective Bargained Agreement as well as a recent classification and compensation study performed by an outside consultant for the Oregon University System and the Service Employees International Union. A similarly well-defined structure is in place for the hiring of administrative faculty to ensure that position descriptions are accurate and filled by qualified candidates. While EOU has recently and will continue to consolidate position duties in some areas in order to achieve needed cost savings and efficiencies as described in the Sustainability Plan, the university has ensured that collective bargaining and human resource representatives have been involved in plan development to mitigate potential negative impacts to personnel.

EOU has an established process of annual reviews for classified staff and administrative faculty. The university has also recently transitioned from a triennial to an annual review process for its executive administrators. While this process still culminates in a full review every three years it now also includes an annual process whereby executive administrators provide progress reports, outline contributions and leadership to the overall university, list future goals and update position descriptions as needed.

EOU provides a robust set of professional development opportunities for its staff and faculty. Employees with at least one-half time appointments are eligible for a staff fee waiver benefit

program which enables them to enroll not only at EOU but also at sister institutions across the state at a significantly reduced tuition rate. In addition to formal coursework through the OUS institutions, EOU also provides a wide range of training opportunities through its partnership with the Oregon Employment Council, in-depth instructional technology training and other on-campus offerings.

The university has sharpened its focus on ensuring employment of qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its mission through the development of and recent update to the Sustainability Plan. This plan puts forth a framework by which academic programs can be reviewed to ensure adequate faculty are in place and that workloads are being managed in a sustainable and consistent manner across the institution. In addition to the Sustainability Plan the EOU-APP Collective Bargaining Agreement provides additional structure for the workloads of tenured, tenure-track, and fixed-term teaching and library faculty.

EOU, through the Faculty Personnel Committee, recently underwent a thorough review and update to its Tenure and Promotion Handbook. This document clearly outlines the policy and procedures for reviews of tenure-track, tenured and fixed-term and adjunct faculty. It also outlines a detailed timeframe and set of criteria for achieving tenure and promotion to full professor and provides guidance and recommendations for portfolio preparation.

Standard 2.C: Education Resources

Educational resources available at EOU appear to be consistent with institutional mission. Faculty and students report that technology supports are adequate for classroom and online instruction. (2.C.1)

The EOU publishes learning outcomes for its degree programs in its catalog. Learning outcomes are not developed for minor programs. There is some inconsistency in how the outcomes are stated, but generally they satisfy the intent of the NWCCU standards. EOU is concluding its second four-year cycle of assessment. The assessment team reports that 2010 curriculum mapping process contributed to better understanding of how to achieve learning outcomes within programs, which has led to better data and higher faculty engagement. (2.C.2)

In recognition of the growing overlap of technology assisted instruction and wider use of distance technologies in on-campus instruction, EOU reorganized its Division of Distance Education and decentralized responsibility for oversight of distance coursework, programs, and services. Sixty percent of EOU students are served at a distance via online or onsite coursework. On campus academic departments are responsible for ensuring that distance courses meet established learning outcomes. Assessment of online and onsite courses and programs is accomplished by capturing learning outcomes data from the GEC and program portfolio samples. Capture of the data is enabled by use of TracDat. (2.C.3)

The majority of EOU's academic programs demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breath, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. The Liberal Studies degree program represents an exception. Although recognized as meeting the needs of a large number of students and resulting in the second highest number of degrees awarded annually, the Liberal Studies degree program is vulnerable to weak academic oversight, a potential paucity of senior-level credits, and inadequate number of faculty to oversee capstone experiences. It should be

noted that the deans and provost universally acknowledged the need to refocus assessment efforts on the Liberal Studies program. (2.C.4 and Policy 2.2)

The Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (EPCC) reports to the Faculty Senate and is authorized to review educational programs and course offerings, develop and review curricular policy, and to recommend the implementation of these programs and policies to Faculty Senate. The EPCC is also authorized to initiate proposals in order to improve the educational development and programs at EOU. The EPCC oversees the General Education Council curricular review process. Membership of the EPCC and GEC is comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators. EOU faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation and revision of the curriculum. Through the learning outcomes expressly defined for the GEC program and approved by the EPCC, faculty take responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement (2.C.5)

There is adequate evidence that a wide variety of library resources is available to students and that students receive instruction on how to access the resources. Library faculties teach three general education course offerings (LIB 127, 307, 327) and provide library workshops to Gateway courses upon request. The library courses and workshops ensure that students achieve the intended GEC learning outcomes of critical thinking, inquiry and communication. (2.C.6)

Prior learning credit is available to students who demonstrate college-level mastery in a faculty reviewed portfolio. The process and policy for prior learning credit is published in the academic catalog. Portfolio development occurs in a required portfolio development course, APEL 390. Students may apply no more than 45 prior learning credits to a degree, which complies with NWCCU standards. EOU does not award prior learning credits for graduate programs. (2.C.7)

The university's transfer credit policy is published in the academic catalog and on its website. The policy is liberal in accepting recognized general education coursework from institutions in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. EOU also maintains transfer articulation agreements with many other domestic and international institutions. (2.C.8)

Undergraduate Programs

EOU students are required to complete a 60-credit general education curriculum (GEC). The GEC includes 6-20 credits of aesthetics and humanities, 6-20 credits of natural, mathematical and informational sciences, 6-20 credits of social sciences, 6-20 credits of artistic process and creation, and up to 15 credits of gateway courses. The GEC curriculum reflects an integrated course of study that develops students' breadth and depth of intellect. EOU provides supporting evidence that the program is designed and assessed by faculty. The Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (EPCC) has responsibility for review of the GEC program and new course proposals. The committee's makeup and policies are described in EPCC Handbook. As part of regular program review, the EPCC undertook a systematic review of the entire GEC in 2010-2011. The review included a curricular mapping exercise to aid its assessment of GEC learning outcomes. (2.C.9)

EOU's GEC learning outcomes are consistent with higher education standards for undergraduate programs and they cover the essential areas of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, and

civic engagement. These outcomes are consistent with the institution's mission to provide integrated, high-quality liberal arts and professional programs that lead to responsible and reflective action in a diverse and interconnected world. (2.C.10)

EOU does not offer applied degree or applied certificate programs. The self-study states, "EOU non-applied certificate programs are fully encapsulated within related associate, baccalaureate and master degree programs and, as such, conform to the learning outcomes and expectations assessed through the academic programs." The evaluator selected two certificate programs to investigate and did not find this statement accurate. The programs—Public Administration and Spanish for Health Care Professionals—did not articulate directly to a degree program and neither of the certificates included readily identifiable related instruction. EOU provided evidence from the 2011 sustainability plan (p. 49) that certificates in the Modern Languages and Global Culture degree were recommended for suspension, yet the Spanish for Healthcare Professionals Certificate remained listed in the 2012-2014 catalog with no indication of suspension. The web-based version of the catalog does indicate that the Modern Languages and Global Culture major is no longer offered as of February 27, 2013; however, it makes no mention of the Spanish for Health Care Professionals Certificate.

EOU provided the following response to the question, "How is the NWCCU's computational requirement met in the public service certificate?"

This is a certificate program that currently has no students and should be eliminated or reconstituted as a minor being fully encapsulated in the Public Administration program. The Public Administration underwent extensive revision during the past academic year. We will be requesting that program faculty consider the option of including a revised version of this certificate as a minor in the Public Administration program. In the event that this program does not undergo revision as a Public Administration minor, it will be eliminated.

The two non-applied certificate programs selected from the 2012-2014 academic catalog for review did not meet the NWCCU's standard for related instruction. (2.C.11 and Policy 2.1) Notification of the status of these programs also raises concerns about the current and accuracy of program information in the campus catalog (2.D.5) and website.

Graduate Programs

EOU offers four graduate programs—a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), a Master of Science (MS) in Education, a Master of Business Administration (MBA), and a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Creative Writing. Each program is a natural scholarly progression from the university's baccalaureate degrees and is consistent with the university's mission of providing high quality graduate-level studies in professional programs. The graduate programs require greater depth of study and increased demands for intellectual or creative capacity, knowledge of the field, and appropriate professional practice. (2.C.12)

General admission requirements for graduate programs are published in the academic catalog. Specific application and admission requirements for the MAT and MS programs are published on the College of Education website. The MFA program was approved after the 2012-2014 academic catalog was published. MFA program application and admission requirements are

published on the university website. The self-study provides an explanation of transfer policies for the MFA and MS programs. Transfer credits are generally not accepted for the MAT and MBA programs. (2.C.13)

EOU does not award prior experiential learning credit for graduate programs. Clinical practices embedded in the MAT program do award credit and are supervised and assessed by program faculty. The MFA and MS programs also grant credit for internships, field experiences, or clinical practices, but these experiences are designed as credit-bearing activities that are supervised and assessed by program faculty. (2.C.14)

EOU's graduate programs are intended to prepare students for professional practice. Program curricula lead to higher levels of knowledge and performance within the teaching, business and writing professions. Students in the MAT and MS programs must complete classroom-based research projects. Students in the MFA and MBA programs must complete original theses. (2.C.15)

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

EOU generally meets professional development requirements for educators by offering graduate-level education courses. These courses are offered directly by the College of Education. The Dean of the College of Education, reported offering few continuing education credits via credit overlay. The self-study reports that credit overlay offerings are consistent with other credit-bearing courses and overlay course syllabi align with institutional mission, outcomes, and published university procedures. (2.C.16)

Credit overlay is designed to meet student's specific needs and grant credit for work done through seminars, workshops, special individual studies, professional development activities and traditional courses offered in non-traditional modes. Overlay credits are offered at the 700-level to distinguish them from graduate-level work. Oversight and approval of overlay credits is maintained within appropriate colleges, with most of the overlay credits awarded through the College of Business and Education. (2.C.17)

Credit overlay offerings follow established guidelines, which require an instructor vita, course syllabus, course outcomes, correlated assessments, and content faculty approval. College deans grant final approval of Credit Overlay proposals and offerings. (2.C.18)

The self-study states that EOU does not offer courses or provide learning through non-credit instruction. (2.C.19)

Commendation 2: *The evaluation team commends Eastern Oregon University for its faculty-driven academic program assessment approach, which has transformed a process-based approach to one which facilitates reflection and program improvement based on the expertise of its faculty members.*

Recommendation 2: *While checking certificate programs for related instruction, the evaluator found that not all catalog listings are current. The evaluation team recommends that EOU take the necessary steps to ensure that all catalog listings are accurate and that certificate programs meet NWCCU requirements for related instruction (Standard 2.C.11, 2.D.5)*

Recommendation 3: *Whereas the evaluation team acknowledges that EOU has made significant progress toward uniform application of academic portfolio assessment, it recommends that the university continue to ensure uniform application of assessment across all academic programs (Standard 2.C.4)*

Standard 2.D: Student Support Resources

Consistent with the nature of its programs and delivery methods, the university provides appropriate services to support student success. The La Grande campus hosts a variety of support offices ranging from counseling and disability services to a learning center, math lab, and writing center. The campus also offers a First Year Experience (FYE) program. Roughly two thirds of EOU's student population attend classes online or onsite at one of the regional centers. EOU staff are available at each of the regional centers and provide advising and support services. Regional center staff report strong connections to EOU and receive a lot of support from the La Grande campus. Regional center staff further report that recent availability of online tutoring has been a huge benefit to students and is well received. (2.D.1)

The Director of Student Relations is responsible for collecting and reporting crime statistics for the campus. The reports include incidents at the main campus and the regional centers. The campus security and fire reports from 2010 through 2012 are available on the campus website. Sexual misconduct reports for 2010 and 2011 are available on the campus website—the 2012 report has not been posted. Safety and security on La Grande campus is monitored by campus security officers. Law enforcement is provided by the La Grande Police Department. The regional sites are largely located on community college campuses, which provide safety and security services. (2.D.2) When queried about U.S. Department of Education regulation 602.16(a)(1), EOU seemed unaware of its reporting requirements. EOU does have student complaint and grievance procedures outlined in the Student Handbook (pp. 43-47). The university does address student grievances and keeps records; the university does not make available an account of student complaints. The Dean of Student Success and Engagement noted the NWCCU evaluator's concerns regarding full adherence with the DoE regulation and promised to take follow up actions.

Concern 2: *The evaluator is concerned that Eastern Oregon University's reporting efforts do not fully adhere with U.S. Department of Education regulation 602.16(a)(1).*

EOU is an open enrollment institution with the mission to provide regional access to liberal arts and professional programs and to promote the economic, social, and cultural development of eastern and rural Oregon. To realize that mission, staff make an effort to "meet students where they are." Advisors work with students to transfer credits from other institutions and provide personal advising. EOU makes program, transfer, and graduation information readily available in its academic catalog and on its website. The university offers formal orientation and welcome events (Mountaineer Registration Days and Week of Welcome). Since 2011, the university has also developed the Eastern Promise program. Several components of the Eastern Promise reach out to k12 students to generate enthusiasm and to provide early college orientation—Academic Momentum (5th grade) and Success 101 (9th grade).

Compliment 2: The evaluation team compliments EOU on the Eastern Promise program as an exemplary effort to orient students to higher education and provide timely, useful, and accurate information. (2.D.3)

Procedures for program changes are outlined in the EPCC Handbook. During preparation of the self-study, EOU realized the EPCC Handbook required changes to differentiate faculty- and program-initiated changes from administration-initiated program deletions. The new language states that teach-out arrangements for deletions of stand-alone minors and degree program will be initiated by the provost and managed by the dean or dean's designee. The proposed changes are currently being reviewed by the EPCC, Faculty Senate, and the administration. (2.D.4)

With few exceptions, the self-study and related documents show adherence to the required elements of Standard 2.D.5. Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements is consistently found through program listings. Expected learning outcomes are listed for majors. Expected learning outcomes are listed for some, but not all minors. Required course sequences and timelines for completions are listed for most majors.

The academic catalog does not specify licensure requirements for teachers, but it does state which education programs lead to licensure consistent with Oregon's Teacher Standards and Practices Commission. Likewise, certification standards for firefighters are not specified, but links to appropriate certifying agencies are published. (2.D.6)

Policies and practices designed to protect the security of student records are described in the self-study. EOU's procedures are governed by OUS policy. In collaboration with the OUS, the university is developing new digital processing of student records to create multiple-redundancy of storage and backup. The university reports adherence with meeting FERPA requirements, the evaluator did not verify the self-report. (2.D.8)

Financial aid policies, procedures, opportunities and resources are clearly described on the Financial Aid Office website. Students who receive financial aid must attend mandatory entrance and exit loan counseling and are informed of their repayment obligation. EOU's student loan default rate is currently at 7.8%. (2.D.9)

EOU maintains robust academic advising services that utilize face-to-face and online delivery modes. The extent and thoughtful integration of services is of particular note because of the need to service such a large off campus student population.

Compliment 3: The evaluator compliments EOU on its advising services. (2.D.10)

The self-study reports ample opportunities for on-campus students to engage in extra-curricular activities that are in keeping with the university's mission. (2.D.11) Equivalent extra-curricular programming opportunities are not available for nearly two-thirds of the student population who attend online or at one of the regional centers. Regional center staff report that onsite and online students tend to be more non-traditional and do not request the same level of extra-curricular programming. As the university further develops civic engagement learning outcomes in GEC offerings, there may be greater need to extend extra-curricular programming to Regional Centers.

The self-study supplies evidence that auxiliary services support the institutional mission of the campus and contribute to the intellectual climate. The recent restructure of Student Affairs to the

Division of Student Success and Engagement provides additional evidence of auxiliary services contributing to the intellectual climate of the campus. The restructure was proposed with the goal of rejoining academic support with student affairs in an effort to enhance student persistence and contribute to student diversity. (2.D.12)

EOU is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes (NAIA) and, as evidenced in the self-study, follows the NAIA guidelines for admission procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards. (2.D.13)

EOU distance education courses and programs follow standard student verification processes for online courses and proctored exams. The university's IT staff are currently evaluating options for additional online verification, which include IP logging, web cameras, and lock down browsers. (2.D.14)

Recommendation 2 (repeated): *While checking certificate programs for related instruction, the evaluator found that not all catalog listings are current. The evaluation team recommends that EOU take the necessary steps to ensure that all catalog listings are accurate and that certificate programs meet NWCCU requirements for related instruction (Standard 2.C.11, 2.D.5)*

Standard 2.E: Library and Information Resources

The self-study and head librarian report that EOU's Pierce Library collections and services are sufficient to support the EOU's academic mission and core themes. Students have ready access to physical and electronic collections, which include databases, journals, federal government documents, and Oregon State documents. Collection analysis tools indicate the book collection is biased toward 1960s and 1970s American Literature. The American Literature holdings are currently being culled to rebalance the collection. There is a decrease in serial holdings due to the rising cost of institutional subscriptions and an increase in student use of online references. Pierce Library belongs to the Orbis Cascade Consortium. The consortium includes 37 libraries in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho that share material collections via interlibrary loan. (2.E.1)

The library uses an allocation formula to fund departmental collections. The allocation formula includes and weights program statistics such as the percent of total faculty in a department, the number of degree majors and minors, the percent of degrees awarded, the percent of circulation by discipline, and average title costs by discipline. EOU librarians also track holdings data, circulation data, cataloguing data, access and usage data for online collections, reference statistics, gate counts, patron counts, and interlibrary loan counts. Planning for the library and information resources appears to be guided by appropriate measures to ensure departmental equity and is data driven. (2.E.2)

Library staff who hold faculty rank have teaching responsibilities. Library faculties teach three general education course offerings (LIB 127, 307, 327) and provide library workshops to GEC Gateway courses upon request. The library courses and workshops ensure that students acquire necessary skills to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources. (2.E.3)

Pierce Library utilizes a variety of mechanisms to evaluate the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources. Several of these mechanisms have already been

addressed in response to Standards 2.E.1 and 2.E.2. Security of material library resources is achieved through inventory control, alarmed security gates, and video monitoring. (2.E.4)

Standard 2.F: Financial Resources

Like many public institutions across the country Eastern Oregon University (EOU) has been faced with declining state funding in recent years. EOU turned this challenge into an opportunity to realign its resources in support of meeting its mission and goals. This renewed focus is most clearly seen in the Sustainability Plan written in 2011 and recently updated in 2013 which outlines a clear path forward to financial sustainability and an ability for EOU to reinvest in key areas. While the university dropped slightly below the state mandated 5.0% fund balance requirement in FY2013 (4.7% prior to non-cash entry to write down net accounts receivable) the Oregon University System (OUS) determined that the Sustainability Plan illustrated EOU's commitment to strengthening its financial future and chose not to take action.

EOU is primarily funded through state support and tuition and fee revenue and has well developed processes for developing budgets for these funding sources. As reflected in the Sustainability Plan EOU takes a conservative approach when estimating both future revenues and future expenses in order to mitigate the impact of unforeseen circumstances.

Of particular note is the university's extremely robust tuition setting process. This process is open and inclusive inviting participation from stakeholders campus-wide including students enrolled at a distance both through official committees and via open forums. Opportunities to provide feedback exist throughout the process to ensure that all concerns and suggestions are heard. Coupled with this inclusive process is a thorough analytical approach to proposed rate increases taking into account a multitude of factors including Pell eligibility and other elements impacting students' ability to pay. The success of this engaged process has been seen in the student support EOU has received for its proposed tuition and fee increases and in positive feedback from the Oregon University System.

As mentioned above EOU's two primary funding sources are tuition and state funding. In addition to the above tuition process the university has well established procedures for folding in state funding and normalizing its budgets with involvement from both departments and the Budget and Planning Committee. This committee, starting with the total revenue budget based on the tuition process and the state appropriation, reviews the departmental normalizations and proposed budget requests and provides recommendations to the president who in turn reviews all recommendations with executive staff to arrive at the final annual budget. This process is done on a schedule to ensure that departments are notified of their budgets with sufficient lead time for planning and making expenditure commitments for the upcoming year.

A possibly area of concern for EOU is the upcoming change to the governance structure at the system level with the three larger institutions moving to individual governing boards and the governing structure for the regional institutions, including EOU, still unclear; however based on discussions with Finance and Administration along with Facilities and Information Technology there is a clear sense that EOU is taking a very proactive approach to the changes, turning a challenge into an opportunity to shape the future of EOU. The Finance and Administration Vice-Presidents of the regional universities are meeting regularly to go over all shared services to ensure a smooth transition and to explore possible opportunities for efficiencies. They are also putting together cost impact reports for the legislature and have already received positive

feedback indicating the state's sensitivity to the potential impact of governance changes on the regional institutions and the need for the state to provide funding support. This work along with similar efforts within Facilities and Information Technology indicate that EOU has, as mentioned above, taken a proactive approach to turn this potential concern into an opportunity to shape its future as well as strengthen cooperative ties with institutions across the state.

The university utilizes the Banner enterprise reporting system which includes internal control features within its structure. In addition to system controls EOU also undergoes regular audits by the OUS's external auditor, OUS Internal Audit and the university's own Finance and Administration Division. This comprehensive audit structure along with the internal controls within Banner and procedures aimed at internal control issues combine to ensure adequate controls are in place.

Capital budgeting for EOU is centered around a well-developed ten-year campus master plan which utilizes core principles such as increasing accessibility, enhancing campus circulation and improving the entry points to create a sense of arrival and strives to align facility planning with the university's core themes. This plan is extremely thorough and regularly updated and provides detailed information about existing conditions as well as guidance on design and sustainability standards to ensure a cohesive campus which meets the current and future needs of students, faculty and staff. It supports the goals of EOU by focusing on capital improvements which positively impact faculty and student retention, enhance technology, improve utilization of existing facilities, increase sustainability and reflect the university's commitment to the community. Using the master plan as a guide overall budgeting for capital improvements is done within limits established by OUS in regards to debt burden ratios and in accordance with EOU funding availability to ensure that capital expenditures do not represent an unreasonable drain on resources.

While recent changes within the Oregon University System do now allow transfer of E & G funding to Auxiliary Enterprises this is generally not a practice at EOU. The university does charge Auxiliary Enterprises a routine overhead rate of 8% of revenue and has periodically made additional transfers from Auxiliary Enterprises to support the operations of the university. All such charges and transfers are clearly accounted for in the financial system.

EOU, as part of the Oregon University System, undergoes an independent external audit on an annual basis which covers financial statements, internal controls and compliance areas. The university and its foundation operate under both a memo of understanding outlining their cooperative but independent relationship as well as within EOU and state of Oregon policies.

Standard 2.G: Physical and Technological Infrastructure

As mentioned above in regards to capital budgeting EOU has a well-developed 10-year campus master plan. In addition to and in support of the master plan the university also maintains a detailed facility inventory which includes key details about each facility including sub-system life cycles and renewal dates, a comprehensive building and site utilities assessment which provides a summary of key observations as well as detailed descriptions of each facility, and analytical data prepared in cooperation with Sightlines, a recognized expert in the area of facility evaluation and management. While EOU, like many public institutions, does have a deferred

maintenance backlog (approximately \$18m), the above tools are used to actively manage facilities to mitigate any negative impact on students, faculty and staff within the constraints of limited resources.

One area of potential concern indicated in several documents relates to building evaluation indicated a need for EOU to engage in a comprehensive evaluation of building envelopes (roofing systems and exterior shells). Facilities currently includes envelope upgrades, as needed, in renovation projects to start addressing this issue and has implemented a multi-year process to assess all remaining facilities.

Of particular note and consistent with EOU's focus on student engagement, Facilities is looking into working with students, as part of a paid internship with Media Arts and Communication. These students would work with Facilities to create photographic records which can then be linked to the master plan. In addition Facilities also works with students engaged in GIS projects to map various campus attributes with a recent example being a comprehensive tree inventory.

The university has clear policies and procedures regarding hazardous and toxic materials. They also have several positions dedicated to training university employees, providing appropriate waste disposal and ensuring that applicable policies and procedures are being followed. In addition to these dedicated positions the university also has a Chemical Hygiene Committee which reviews and updates the Chemical Hygiene Plan on an annual basis. This plan provides university employees and students detailed information regarding safe use of laboratory facilities. All training of university employees is tracked by Environmental Health and Safety to ensure that new employees receive the training required for their positions and existing employees are kept up to date on changes to policies and procedures.

As referred to above EOU maintains a detailed campus master plan. This plan is updated regularly and serves as a guiding document when making decisions regarding capital improvements to ensure that investments are in alignment with the university mission and goals.

Despite recent financial challenges the university has been able to continue investing in needed equipment not only with the area of information technology as discussed in 2.G.4 of the self-study but campus-wide. Significant investments have been made in the central plant to update, expand capacity and gain efficiencies.

Due to the significant number of students enrolled in online course and EOU's goals related to increasing distance enrollment information technology plays a key role in mission attainment for the university. Recent significant investments in this area in the midst of financial challenges are a reflection of EOU's awareness of the importance of information technology in achieving its goals. Like many institutions EOU was reliant on legacy systems and aging technology infrastructure; however as part of the Sustainability Plan as well as in response to a recent EOU requested review by OUS, the university has recently made major investments including an enhanced hosted telephone system, wireless expansion, redundant fiber, bandwidth increases, increased number of smart classrooms, BlackBoard updates and other improvements targeted at improving both face to face and distance learning. The university has also shifted to a long-term sustained technology investment approach, focusing on dynamic solutions which offer future flexibility and overbuilding capacity to meet future needs all aimed at avoiding being in a constant state of needing to catch up to technology needs on campus.

EOU's recent focus on technology has not been solely in the area of infrastructure. The university has invested resources into the area of support by providing excellent training opportunities for faculty on the use of technology in the classroom, making changes to the help desk structure, increased and improved online training resources and renewed efforts to leverage partner resources such as EOU's relationship with Oregon State University (OSU). As mentioned earlier EOU along with the other regional institutions will be facing some challenge in the near future as the larger institutions shift to independent boards and the regional institutions work to determine what their governance structure will look like. EOU's technology area has already been working closely with the other regional institutions to mitigate any negative impact from this change on students, faculty and staff as it relates to information technology. A prime example of this proactive and cooperative approach is in the support structure for Banner, the university's enterprise reporting system. OSU currently hosts Banner support for the regional institutions in the form of 5th Site. EOU and the other regional institutions are already working to confirm that funding for 5th Site will continue and have initial feedback from OSU indicating that it will continue to host the service.

In addition to infrastructure, training and support EOU has also implemented recommended changes to the reporting structure for Information Technology. These changes are aimed at eliminating former issues related to leadership, plan execution and a silo structure. The new structure brings the Information Technology unit together under an interim Chief Information Officer position within Finance and Administration and allows for rapid decision making and timely follow through.

The planning process for technology within EOU is inclusive and falls primarily within Information Technology working together with the Information Technology Advisory Team (ITAT) which is comprised of Information Technology staff, administrators and academic leaders. This team is tasked primarily with expediting decision making and ensuring that technology decisions are strategic and tie back to the university's mission, core themes and goals. Working in conjunction with ITAT is the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA) Advisory Group. This group focuses on academic technology, is faculty driven, and serves as a communication tool between the academic units and Information Technology to ensure that EOU continues to make strategic advancements in the area of technology in teaching.

EOU has a well-developed replacement schedule documented in the Computing Equipment Replacement Policy. All technology purchasing is managed centrally by Information Technology which ensures compliance with the policy. In addition to routine replacement Information Technology and ITAT meet regularly to assess technology across campus and provide updates to executive leadership regarding potential issues.

Compliment 4: *The evaluator compliments Eastern Oregon University for its strong commitment to Information Technology as seen in recent investments in infrastructure during times of financial challenges as well as organizational restructuring to better align limited human resources with university objectives and mission fulfillment."*

VII. Summary

Eastern Oregon University's Year Three Self-Evaluation Report and Peer-Evaluation Site Visit clearly demonstrate that the institution has defined its mission and core themes, which are being used to guide institutional decision-making. The institution's leaders have engaged the university community in an evaluation of their resources and capacities to support EOU's sustainability and ability to fulfill its mission and core themes.

The university has policies and systems in place to proceed through this new accreditation cycle, culminating with a Year Seven evaluation 2017 in which the institution will report on its planning, implementation, assessment, improvements, and mission fulfillment.

VIII. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The evaluation team commends EOU for its deep sense of commitment to serving the rural regions of the state, including Eastern Oregon. High levels of commitment to meeting students where they are and contributing to community economic development were voiced by faculty, staff, and administrators from all sectors of the university.
2. The evaluation team commends Eastern Oregon University for its faculty-driven academic program assessment approach, which has transformed a process-based approach to one which facilitates reflection and program improvement based on the expertise of its faculty members.
3. The evaluation team commends Eastern Oregon University for its robust, open and inclusive tuition setting process. This process utilizes a broad spectrum of relevant data elements and is truly participatory with active involvement throughout the process from a cross-section of campus including students, staff and faculty via the Tuition Advisory and Budget and Planning Committees as well as through university-wide open forums. The positive impact of this process is evident in the level of student support for proposed increases and complimentary feedback at the Oregon University System level.
4. The evaluation team commends EOU's aggressive, visionary, and proactive leadership to streamline operations, reduce costs, and improve services, aided by insights gained from the self-evaluation process. Leadership actions have led to reorganization of regional operations, student success and engagement, and information technology, as well as development of a long-term sustainability plan.

Recommendations

1. The evaluation team recommends that Eastern Oregon University continue its work on articulating mission fulfillment to more clearly describe the process and criteria which determine an acceptable level of mission fulfillment in cases where the institution has not yet met its ambitious targets. (Standard 1.A.2)
2. While checking certificate programs for related instruction, the evaluator found that not all catalog listings are current. The evaluation team recommends that EOU take the necessary steps to ensure that all catalog listings are accurate and that certificate programs meet NWCCU requirements for related instruction (Standard 2.C.11, 2.D.5)
3. Whereas the evaluation team acknowledges that EOU has made significant progress toward uniform application of academic portfolio assessment, it recommends that the university continue to ensure uniform application of assessment across all academic programs (Standard 2.C.4)

IX. Appendix: Participants in the off-site evaluation visit

| EOU Representatives | Title |
|----------------------------|--|
| Andy Ashe | Budget Analyst |
| Angie Adams | Executive Assistant to the Provost, Planning and Assessment Coordinator |
| Anji Weissenfluh | Athletic Director |
| Anna Maria Dill | Dean of Student Success and Engagement |
| Art Doherty | HR Director |
| Ben Corley | Area Coordinator for Residence Life |
| Beth Upshaw | College Operations Manager, Colleges of Business and Education |
| Bob Davies | President |
| Brenda McDonald | Regional Director/Advisor, EOU Central and South Central Oregon |
| Colleen Cascio | Director of Student Relations |
| Dan Mielke | Executive Director, Eastern Promise |
| David Lageson | Director of Facilities and Planning |
| DeAnna Timmermann | Associate Professor of Psychology |
| Donald Easton-Brooks | Dean, Colleges of Education and Business |
| Donna Evans | Assistant Professor of Writing, Director of the Writing Center and WAC Coordinator |
| Evan Bryan | ASEOU President |
| Farooq Sultan | Institutional Research Analyst |
| Gabe Tzeo | ASEOU Vice President |
| Heather Cashell | Executive Assistant to the President |
| Jeff Carman | Desktop Support Coordinator |
| Jessie Brett | Alumni Coordinator |
| Joyce Depriest | Accounting Manager |
| Karen Clay | Director of Pierce Library |
| Kirk Schuler | Oregon State Board of Higher Education Member |
| Lara Moore | VP for Finance and Administration |
| Melody Rose | Oregon University System Chancellor |
| Michelle Rosales | EOU Regional Director/Advisor EOU Malheur County Center |
| Rory Becker | Associate Professor, Anthropology |
| Sarah Witte | Vice Provost for Academic Affairs |
| Sharon Nelson | Director of Regional Operations |
| Steve Adkison | Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs |
| Steve Gammon | Dean, College of Arts and Sciences |
| Sue Cain | Budget Analyst |
| Tanna Rasmussen | Assessment and Accreditation Manager, College of Business |
| Ted Takamura | Professor of Business, Mount Hood Community College Campus |
| Tim Seydel | VP for Admissions and University Advancement |
| Tim Wilson | Director of Enterprise Systems |