



February 3, 2020

President Stephen E. Thorsett  
Willamette University  
900 State Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear President Thorsett:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on January 8-10, 2020, concerning the Fall 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation of Willamette University. This action was taken after consideration of evidence, including the institution's Self-Evaluation Report, the Peer-Evaluation Report, the optional Institutional Response to the Peer-Evaluation Report, and information received as part of the institutional representative meeting with Commissioners.

#### **Accreditation**

- Reaffirm Accreditation

#### **Commendations**

The Commission commends Willamette University for:

1. The institutional leadership's actions to adapt and evolve in a changing planning dynamic.
2. The President, Board of Trustees, and the community of faculty and staff's efforts at prioritizing student experience during a time of financial challenge.
3. The institution's success in integrating students from other cultures into their university community, as for example in the collocation of Tokyo International University of America at Willamette.
4. The faculty's dedication to academic excellence and scholarship, including the naming of eleven Willamette faculty members as Oregon Professor of the Year.

#### **Recommendations Substantially in Compliance But in Need of Improvement**

The Commission recommends that Willamette University:

1. Continue to assess its strategic position and revise, as necessary, the comprehensive plan for fulfilling its mission (2020 Standards: 1.B.4, 2.E.2).
2. Develop meaningful indicators of institutional effectiveness and/or mission fulfillment to support future decision-making (2020 Standards: 1.B.2).
3. Create a comprehensive system of assessment that builds on existing program assessment efforts for the purpose of supporting future programmatic and institution-level planning (2020 Standards: 1.B.1, 1.C.5, 1.C.7).
4. Address budget shortfall due to lower enrollment and develop a responsible enrollment forecasting methodology that supports realistic enrollment budgeting (2020 Standards: 2.E.2).

**Future Evaluations**

- Mid-Cycle Review Fall 2022 with an addendum to address:
  - Recommendation 1: Fall 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
  - Recommendation 2: Fall 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
  - Recommendation 3: Fall 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
  - Recommendation 4: Fall 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
- Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Fall 2025
- Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Fall 2026

NWCCU is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your staff liaison, Dr. Mac Powell.

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy  
President

SR:eg

cc: Dr. Michael Moon, Senior Director, Institutional Effectiveness  
Dr. John Cech, President, Carroll College