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January 22, 2010

Ms. Fran Ulmer
Chancellor
University of Alaska Anchorage
3211 Providence Drive, ADM 217
Anchorage, AK 99508

Dear Chancellor ^{Fran} ~~Ulmer~~:

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, I am pleased to report that the accreditation of the University of Alaska Anchorage has been reaffirmed on the basis of the Fall 2009 Year Three Evaluation. Congratulations on receiving this continued recognition.

The policy of the Commission is not to grant accreditation for a definite number of years. Instead, accreditation must be reaffirmed periodically. In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission requests that the institution ensure that Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Fall 2009 Year Three Evaluation Report are addressed in its Spring 2010 Year Five Report. A copy of the Recommendations is enclosed for your reference.

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission finds that Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Fall 2009 Year Three Evaluation Report are areas where the University of Alaska Anchorage is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement.

In the unlikely event the Commission should conclude that an institution is in danger of being unable to fulfill its mission and goals or to continue to meet the Eligibility Requirements or Standards, the Commission reserves the right to request that the institution submit a report or host one or more evaluators for a special review.

The Commission commends the University of Alaska Anchorage for doing an excellent job of responding to the requirements of these new and still-changing standards in a shortened time-frame, and for tying so well the institution's mission to the new core themes. Further, all involved in this effort are to be praised for regarding this requirement as a process of discovery and an opportunity to think deeply and in new ways about the University. In so doing, the University community has impressively and wisely aligned this new approach to accreditation practices, including perhaps most importantly the existing Strategic Planning Processes. It is both clear and laudable that the institution regards all of this activity as ongoing, iterative, inclusive, and important. Lastly, the Commission commends the University for the transparent ways in which it engages in planning, decision-making, and budgeting; and, for the exemplary ways in which leadership, governance, significant discussions, planning, and decision-making are the work of a wide range of administrators, faculty, staff, students, and external constituents. Such wide and open participation has clearly created a culture of respect, confidence, and trust across the University and into the Anchorage community.

President Fran Ulmer
January 22, 2010
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Best wishes for a rewarding year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Elman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Sandra E. Elman
President

SEE:rb

Enclosure: Recommendations

cc: Mr. Thomas P. Miller, Vice Provost for Accreditation and Undergraduate Programs ✓
Ms. Cynthia Henry, Chair, Board of Regents
Mr. Mark R. Hamilton, President, University of Alaska Statewide System

Comprehensive Evaluation Report
Fall 2009
University of Alaska Anchorage
Recommendations

(All of the Committee's Recommendations are based on Draft 4.0 of the Revised NWCCU Standards)

1. Even though the Evaluation Committee commends UAA for the diligent and excellent work it has done in articulating Core Themes that emanate clearly from its mission and strengths, and even though the objectives it cites under each theme are convincingly articulated, the Committee recommends that the University continue refining its indicators and mechanisms for assessing how well it is achieving those objectives to ensure that it employs a reliable range of “meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators” (Standard 1.B.).
2. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the University develop and implement a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of staff members at all levels. Given the assertion that UAA relies heavily on “growing its own staff” from within, it seems especially important that such an evaluation system be employed in order to have documented performance information on all staff employees (Standard 2.A.16, 2.A.17, and 2.B.2).
3. The Committee recommends that the University review its financial policies to ensure the adequacy and liquidity of its reserves (Standard 2.F.1).
4. Given the recent, substantial increase in student numbers and resulting pressure on curricular and student service access, the Evaluation Committee recommends that UAA undertake a concerted effort to connect its enrollment forecasting and management activities more directly to its planning efforts in the areas of course offerings, budgeting, space, and personnel in order to ensure desired student access and success. It appears that important pieces and tools are in place for this effort, but at present they don't appear to be integrated or fully adequate for addressing the growing challenges of student enrollment increases (Standard 2.B.1, 2.D.1, 2.F.2, and 2.G.1).