OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

Progress Report
Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

September 15, 2020

Addresses Recommendation 2 and 3 from the Spring 2019 Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report
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Introduction

At its June 19-21, 2019 meeting, the Board of Commissioners accepted Oregon State University’s Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report and reaffirmed the university’s accreditation. As of this most recent evaluation, OSU is substantially in compliance with the Standards, Policies and Eligibility Requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

In reaffirming the university’s accreditation, the Commission requested that OSU submit a Progress Report in Fall 2020. The purpose of this Progress Report is to address Recommendations 2 and 3 of the Spring 2019 Comprehensive Peer Evaluation Report by the Commission.

This brief report provides an update on what OSU has done in the last year to address the two recommendations, and what we plan to do in the future to fulfill the requirements. OSU will add an addendum to the spring 2022 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Report to address Recommendations 2 and 3 of the Spring 2019 Self-Evaluation. It is our understanding the Commission will act on them at that time.

The heightened importance of these two recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic necessitates even greater communication and clarity regarding assessment and the strategic use of resources and university-wide planning. This planning is grounded in our land-grant mission and our commitments to student success and access. OSU has taken a comprehensive, university-wide approach with respect to COVID-19 resumption planning within the academic and student domains. The objective has been to maintain the quality of the undergraduate curriculum and ensure timely completion of course work and progression to degree completion.
OSU’s Progress Addressing Recommendation 2

As Oregon State University expands its Ecampus, Cascades Campus, and other extended sites, the evaluator committee recommends that the university continues to exercise great care that credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement of the established Oregon State University learning outcomes. (2.C.3)

Standard 2.C.3 requires institutions to be able to demonstrate that learning outcomes are met for programs “wherever offered and however delivered.” Currently, each academic program at OSU, regardless of location or modality, submits an annual assessment report that includes data and analysis of student learning outcome objectives. Building upon the “clear and straightforward process for the submission of an annual assessment report,” the Office of Academic Programs and Assessment (APA) and the Graduate School have worked with academic program directors, assessment coordinators, and faculty to more fully document how assessment of student learning is being used to make program improvements. Additionally, for programs that are offered at more than one location (OSU-Cascades, the Portland Center, etc.) or offered both online through Ecampus and face-to-face, we have revised program assessment templates so that student learning outcomes data can be systematically disaggregated by location and/or modality of program delivery. These disaggregated reports will be required for the first time in Spring 2021. To achieve these goals, assessment analysts and administrators with extensive assessment experience from APA and the Graduate School implemented the following during the 2019-20 academic year:

- Added fields in the Undergraduate Annual Program Assessment Report template and the Graduate Learning Outcome Report template requesting information about student learning outcomes for Ecampus, OSU-Cascades, and other extended sites;
- Emphasized in meeting with members of University Student-Learning Assessment Council (USLAC) the importance of reporting student achievement of learning outcomes regardless of modality or location;
- Worked one-on-one with program directors, assessment coordinators, and faculty to better align their assessment work across modalities and locations;
- Met with faculty at OSU-Cascades to provide support and guidance for collaborating with faculty in Corvallis;
- Offered additional professional development opportunities around assessment via workshops held each quarter and in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning;
- Expanded assessment resources available on the APA website to support assessment coordinators and faculty; and,
- Hosted quarterly Undergraduate Program Director Lunches (sponsored by the Office of Undergraduate Education) and Graduate Program Director Lunches (Sponsored by the Graduate School).

Moving forward, OSU will continue its work to sustain our strong assessment culture and to enhance efforts to report student learning wherever offered and however delivered. We will do this by making certain that all academic programs report student achievement for the established university learning outcomes. The effort will include working with the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and the Provost Fellows Program to expand leadership training for program directors and assessment coordinators; working together with staff from the Center for Teaching and Learning to support effective full-cycle assessment when courses are being offered remotely during COVID-19; and collaborating with Academic Technology and Informational Services to explore strategies to increase efficiencies with assessment reporting.

OSU has made a commitment to expand technology in our classrooms, thereby increasing access to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. This includes investments in technology and infrastructure so that every classroom has Zoom technology, and faculty, staff and students have access to specialized training to successfully navigate remote or hybrid learning.

OSU’s Progress Addressing Recommendation 3

_The Evaluator Committee recommends that results of core theme assessments, particularly student learning outcomes assessment, are more consistently used for improvement by informing planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources and capacity. The committee further recommends that student learning outcomes assessment results are made available to constituencies outside Oregon State University in a timely manner. (4.B.1 and 4.B.2)_

OSU has invested in the development of a structure and in the employment of staff that support and ensure that all undergraduate and graduate academic programs participate in a comprehensive assessment process. Now that our processes are well established, and “a culture of assessment (has) been authentically created and perpetuated,” we have turned our attention to fully report how assessment data are being used to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that will lead to enhancement of student learning outcomes attainment. In addition, we have emphasized the importance of using student learning outcome assessment evidence and student success data to inform curricular and pedagogical improvements and strategic planning. This process aligns with our values, mission, and Strategic Plan 4.0 goals.
We recognize that it will take time to realize improvements attributed to student learning based on assessment data, and we are doing the following to support program faculty and administrators:

- During one-on-one meetings with the Assistant Vice Provost of Academic Programs and Accreditation, academic unit leaders are asked to describe how the faculty reflect on the assessment data and to provide examples of how the results of assessment efforts are used to inform academic planning that lead to improvements of student learning achievements.
- Through a process of review and feedback, APA ensures that undergraduate annual assessment reports communicate learning outcomes, assessment methods and results, analysis and reflection, and data-derived curricular decisions. The Graduate School provides similar review and feedback for graduate annual assessment reports.
- The Undergraduate Assessment Report Template and the Graduate Assessment Report Templates have been updated to include gathering more information about how programs use student learning data to inform programmatic decision-making and maximize student learning. The Templates’ design allows for compiling data into “dashboards” or other reporting methods.
- During meetings of the University Student-Learning Assessment Council, members report how academic units are using assessment data to enhance student learning outcomes and close achievement gaps.

Oregon State University’s online [Academic Catalog](#) publicly displays all academic programs (degrees, certificates, options, and minors) and course information. During the 2019-20 academic year, program learning outcomes were uploaded into the Academic Catalog for all undergraduate and graduate programs. Additionally, each program and academic unit is responsible for publishing program learning outcomes on its public website. Curriculum coordinators in APA work with staff in the Registrars Office to maintain catalog records.

OSU uses [SharePoint](#), an online database, to maintain and track student learning outcomes, assessment plans, assessment reports, feedback reports, and materials for academic program reviews. This database, and assessment results, are not accessible to the public. Staff members in APA and the Graduate School are working with academic units to make certain that student learning outcomes assessment results are made available to constituencies outside OSU in a timely manner. The information will be publicized in a format that maintains student privacy and yet is informative for prospective students, family members, and others with an interest in OSU’s efforts to promote learning and student achievement.
Concluding Statement

Oregon State University is dedicated to being in full compliance with the NWCCU Standard listed in Recommendations 2 and 3, and we are taking steps to accomplish this. Taking office in July 2020 as OSU’s new University President, F. King Alexander has affirmed his commitment to SP 4.0 and advancing the university’s well-established culture of assessment, student learning, student success, and transparency.

The Accreditation Assessment Team will meet in Fall 2020 to review the progress made by the Academic Program and Assessment staff and Graduate School staff to assess and document how program faculty are using student learning outcomes assessment data to inform planning and decision-making. Additionally, the University Student-Learning Assessments Council will meet quarterly to discuss how academic units are engaged in assessment planning, reporting, and using outcome data for program improvements. Finally, OSU’s Accreditation Liaison Officer will report on assessment annually to university leadership and the Faculty Senate.