



July 22, 2020

President Eric W. Murray  
Cascadia College  
18345 Campus Way NE  
Bothell, WA 98011

Dear Dr. Murray:

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 June 24-26, 2020, concerning the Spring 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness of Cascadia College. 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 Cascadia College for:

1. Its strong partnership between Cascadia's administration and faculty and the University of Washington Bothell's library staff. Throughout the visit, this collaborative effort was demonstrated in the widespread integration of information literacy skills across the college's curriculum and in the ongoing provision of exemplary library services.
2. Its commitment to professional development for faculty and staff. Throughout the visit, employees expressed appreciation for the college's commitment to financially supporting professional development opportunities, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. A pervasive focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students shared numerous examples of activities, programming, support services, and resources dedicated to establishing and maintaining a welcoming environment and sense of belonging.
4. The shared governance structure which ensures that stakeholders have input into decision-making processes. Throughout the visit, board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students indicated that they not only have a voice, but that they have a structural pathway to ensure their views and ideas are heard.
5. Its perseverance. Given the monumental impacts that the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic had on the college in the weeks leading up to the visit, the need to move from a face-to-face visit to a virtual visit, and the shift to the new 2020 NWCCU Standards, the college did an exemplary job of organizing and conducting an evaluation visit that was collaborative, substantive, and meaningful.

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

The Commission recommends that Cascadia College:

1. Use an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform decision making and resource allocation, toward improving institutional effectiveness and achieving mission fulfillment (2020 Standard 1.B.1; 1.B.2).
2. Engage in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. These assessment efforts should be used to inform academic and learning support-planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes (2020 Standard 1.C.5; 1.C.7).
3. Establish and share widely a set of indicators for student achievement that are disaggregated and compared to regional and national peer institutions in a manner that identifies and removes barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps), and promotes student achievement (2020 Standard 1.D.2; 1.D.3).

#### **Future Evaluations**

- Mid-Cycle Review Spring 2023
  - Recommendation 1: Spring 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 2: Spring 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 3: Spring 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
- Year 6 - Standard 2 – Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Spring 2026
- Year 7 - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Spring 2027

Per [USDE guidance](#), all virtual accreditation site visits shall be followed by in-person campus visits within a reasonable time when public health conditions improve and are authorized by applicable law. Campus visits may be limited to focus on items identified in the Peer-Evaluation Report and may include fewer than all evaluation team members.

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.

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy  
President

cc: Dr. Kerry Levett, VP for Student Learning and Success  
Mr. Chris Bragg, Associate Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, College of Southern Idaho