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April 9, 2010

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

Dear Chancellor ^{Fran} Ulmer:

At the outset, let me express the Commission's continued appreciation to the University of Alaska Anchorage for its good faith participation in the Standards Revision and Implementation Pilot Project. The Commission continues to benefit from the University's contribution in working through the challenges of translating the new Standards for accreditation and the oversight process into practice.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that at its April 1, 2010, meeting, the Executive Committee of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities acting on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, reaffirmed the accreditation of the University of Alaska Anchorage based on the institution's Year Five Report. Congratulations on receiving this continued recognition.

The Commission noted the rigor in which the University approached the Report and engaged in self-examination. The Commission further commends the University for its commitment and serious intent in piloting the implementation of the Commission's new Standards and the accreditation process.

In reviewing the institution's Year Five Report, the Commission made the following observations which are being offered to help guide the institution's self-examination in preparation for the Year Seven Report. The Commission encourages the institution to write more succinct narratives aimed at providing more clarity with regard to the extent to which the institution is meeting the Standards for accreditation, and emphasizes the importance of focusing on the institution's findings, that is, outcomes rather than inputs. Moreover, while the number of core themes the institution has identified is substantially appropriate and reasonable in number, the institution should consider revisiting the number of indicators that strategically buttress the core themes. As the institution works toward addressing Standard Five, the Commission stresses the importance of the University engaging in priority setting as a means of being better positioned to assess its own respective mission fulfillment and sustainability. Lastly, the Commission points out the importance of the institution discussing its plans for using the results of its assessment efforts for improvement.

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The Commission made the following Recommendations based on its review of the institution's Year Five Report.

1. The University has defined a large number of indicators associated with the core themes and collected data for those indicators. The Commission recommends that the institution take the necessary steps to effectively and consistently articulate a plan to use the data to link academic planning and student learning with themes and program goals and intended outcomes (Standard 4.B.1, 4.B.2).
2. The Commission recommends that the University succinctly articulate assessment of course, program, and degree learning outcomes and how they enhance student learning (Standard 4.A.2, 4.A.3).
3. The Commission recommends that the institution, in concert with its core theme of teaching and learning, clearly articulate how its comprehensive plan aligns, correlates and integrates planning, resources, practices and assessment with respect to the intended outcomes of its core themes (Standard 3.A.4; Standard 4.A.5).

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission finds that Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Spring 2010 Year Five Report are areas where the University of Alaska Anchorage is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement.

Best wishes for a successful completion of the academic year.

Sincerely,



Sandra E. Elman
President

SEE:rb

cc: Mr. Thomas P. Miller, Vice Provost for Accreditation and Undergraduate Programs ✓