

Year Three Peer Evaluation Report

Southern Oregon University

Ashland, Oregon

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A confidential report of findings prepared for the Northwest Commission on
Colleges and Universities

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Introduction

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the Evaluation Committee conducted a review of the Year Three Self Evaluation Report of Southern Oregon University. The committee reviewed the Year One Peer Evaluation Report, the Year Three Self Study Report, and supporting materials assembled by Southern Oregon University.

Assessment of the Institution's Self-Evaluation Report and Support Materials

The Self Study was a helpful introduction to SOU and to the supporting materials gathered by the University. The material was well organized and the links to the supporting documents were helpful to the reader. The use of the shared drive with additional documents was an effective way to present information to the reviewers.

- Compliment-SOU should be commended for the spirit of community dedicated to the improvement of the institution evident in the interviews and supporting materials.

Eligibility Requirements 2-21

Section One

Standard 1.A. Mission

The mission of Southern Oregon University:

Southern Oregon University is an inclusive campus community dedicated to student success, intellectual growth, and responsible global citizenship.

Southern Oregon University is committed to

- *A challenging and practical liberal arts education centered on student learning, accessibility, and civic engagement;*
- *Academic programs, partnerships, public service, outreach, sustainable practices, and economic development activities that address regional needs such as health and human services, business, and education; and*
- *Outstanding programs that draw on and enrich our unique arts community and bioregion.*

The mission statement reflects the role of Southern Oregon University as a liberal arts university serving the southern Oregon, northern California region. We concur with the findings of the Year One Evaluation Report that the mission statement provides a basis for development of the core themes (p. 7).

The institution meets Standard 1.A. Mission Statement.

Standard 1.B. Core Themes

The Core Themes for the institution are *Student Success, Intellectual Growth, and Responsible Citizenship*. The institution has developed a set of objectives and indicators for each of the themes. The themes and associated objectives and

indicators of achievement/evaluation were evaluated in the Year One Evaluation Report (2011).

The Year Three Evaluation Self Study indicates that the institution revised the indicators of achievement to improve measurability and make better use of relevant data. The changes were summarized in a chart displaying the original indicator and the revised indicator (Year Three Self Study pp. 4-8). The revisions simplify and clarify the indicators and should help the institution to track their progress toward their objectives.

The institution meets the Standard regarding Core Themes.

Section Two

Standard 2.A Governance

2.A.1

The Institution has three governing bodies that report directly to the University President: the Faculty Senate, the University Planning Board and the Associated Students of SOU. Each entity has a role in advising the President and in making policies impacting the university community. The University has a shared governance policy that outlines the processes used in its decision-making and clarifies roles and responsibilities of the governing bodies. Policies are maintained on a public website for members of the university community to access. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.2

The institution is a member of the Oregon University System, which is governed by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education. The Oregon State Board of Higher Education has a Chief Education Officer that reports to the legislature and governor. Statutes and administrative rules of the state of Oregon specify the System policies, regulations, and procedures. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.3

The institution has established an Accreditation Steering Committee, a part of the University Planning Board, to handle compliance with accreditation standards. The Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies is the Accreditation Liaison Officer. The institution meets this standard.

Governing Board

2.A.4

The institution is governed by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, which has 13 members appointed by the Governor. Two faculty and two students from the Oregon University System serve 2-year terms. The other members of the board serve 4-year terms. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.5

The Year Three Self Study indicates that the Oregon State Board of Higher Education has delegated some of its responsibilities to three committees: Academic Strategies, Finance, and Governance and Policy (p.12). The institution meets this standard.

2.A.6

The Year Three Self Study indicates that the bylaws of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education establish the role and protocol of the board, board meetings and committees (p. 12). The institution meets this standard.

2.A.7

Oregon State Board of Higher Education policy “Internal Management Directives Section 1” describes the relationship between the President of the University and the Board and describes evaluation procedures (Year Three Self Study, p. 12). The institution meets this standard.

2.A.8

Internal processes and evaluative procedures for the Oregon State Board of Education are addressed in “Internal Management Directives Section 1.” The institution meets this standard.

Leadership and Management

2.A.9

The institution has a well-qualified leadership team. The institution has an Executive Cabinet comprised of the President, three Vice Presidents, and three other officials. The Cabinet receives recommendations from the Faculty Senate, the University Planning Board and the Associated Students. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.10

The institution’s chief executive officer is Dr. Mary Cullinan, in her eighth year as President. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.11

The institution employs a sufficient number of well-qualified administrators. The Year Three Self Study indicates that the University recently combined the positions of Vice President of Student Affairs with that of Vice President for Academic Affairs. The institution meets this standard.

Academic Policies

2.A.12

The institution has a web site where all SOU academic policies can be found. The institution also utilizes additional training and distribution of information about policies. Additional policies related to academic freedom are found in Oregon Administrative Rules and are part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement in place at SOU. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.13

Library policies are also housed on the university's policy web page. The Faculty Senate Library committee reviews policies. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.14

Policies regarding transfer of credits are available on the university's transfer articulation website and in the university catalog. The institution maintains articulation agreements with feeder schools and regional colleges and universities. The institution meets this standard.

Student Policies**2.A.15**

The institution has a section of its policy website dedicated to students related policies. There is an institutional student code of conduct, although the link to the policy is not active on the website. The institution has policies related to disability resources that are also available on the policy website. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.16

Academic policies are listed in the catalog and on the university policy website. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.17

Policies and procedures related to student life are on the student life web pages. The institution meets this standard.

Human Resources Policies**2.A.18**

Human resource policies are on the university's policy web page and has a University Policy Review Committee that reviews new policies and existing policies on a rotating basis. Links to the collective bargaining agreements covering classified staff and faculty are on the policy web site. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.19

Procedures are in place to ensure advertisement, orientation and access to policies and rules governing employment.

2.A.20

The institution has a secure location for storage of personnel files and policies in place to guarantee confidentiality in the records. The institution meets this standard.

Institutional Integrity Policies**2.A.21**

The Academic Catalog is updated annually online and made available to students. Guidelines on communication are on the institution's website. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.22

The institution adheres to ethics laws and administrative rules established by the State of Oregon and the Oregon University System. Policies concerning grievances are included in the policies. These policies are available on the university policy web page. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.23

Conflict of interest statutes of the State of Oregon and the Code of Ethics passed by the State Board of Education address conflicts of interest and related ethical concerns such as nepotism. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.24

The institution is covered by intellectual property policies of the Oregon University System. The institution is finalizing a policy that will address intellectual property questions regarding online course offerings. The institution meets the standard.

2.A.25

The institution correctly describes its accreditation status. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.26

The institution has guidelines on purchasing and for grants. Purchasing and contracting are further covered in Oregon Administrative Rules Division 61 and 62. The institution meets this standard. No coverage of contracted work.

Academic Freedom Policies**2.A.27**

Academic freedom policies are a part of the institution's collective bargaining agreement and in the Faculty bylaws. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.28

The core themes of student success, intellectual growth and citizenship relate to the independence of thought and university and Oregon University System policies support this value. The institution meets this standard.

2.A.29

The institution has a process in place, the Faculty Professional Activity Reports that allows review of how scholarship and creative activity is disseminated. The institution meets this standard.

Financial Management Policies**2.A.30**

An extensive set of policies govern financial management: Internal Management Directives from the Oregon University System, Oregon Administrative Rules, Oregon

Revised Statutes, Oregon University Fiscal Policy and internal SOU policies. The institution meets this standard.

2.B – Human Resources

2.B.1 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.

The institution meets this standard, with the following comments:

- Compliment-SOU should be commended for going through the Prioritization review process. This is not a simple process, and if done properly can help the institution align its limited resources with its strategic plan.
- Concern-SOU indicates some support functions at the institution have been adversely impacted by the reductions in budget and continue to function at less than ideal capacity. The evaluation team is concerned that this will negatively impact the institution's ability to meet its strategic goals.

2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

The institution meets this standard, with the following comment:

- Concern-As a result of the budget cuts mentioned in 2.B.1 Human Resources does not, at the present time, have the capacity to fully monitor department's compliance with performing an annual review of all administrative and classified staff.

2.B.3 The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities. The institution meets this standard.

2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

- Concern-SOU has had a significant reduction in the number of faculty FTE in the last year at the same time that the average student FTE has risen. Further reductions in the number of faculty may negatively impact the institution's ability to meet its strategic mission. (Standard 2.B.4)

2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation. The institution meets this standard.

2.B.6 All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member's roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern. The institution meets this standard.

2.C – Education Resources

2.C.1 *The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.*

The institution meets the standard..

The 12 credits of writing or communication, 36 lower division general education credits, and 9 to 12 credits of upper division general education credits are consistent with the liberal arts mission of the university.

- Concern-SOU the assessment rubrics do not identify what improvements have been made based on the assessment. Including the improvements in the assessment rubrics will provide the evidence that the assessment data is used to improve curriculum and program. (Standard 2.C.)

- 2.C.2** *The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.*

The institution meets the standard..

Course syllabi templates identify learning outcome that role up to degree program outcomes that, in turn, role up to university learning outcomes. These are identified in the assessment section of the web site.

- 2.C.3** *Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.*

The institution meets the standard..

Degree requirements are located on departmental web pages. These requirements role up to the university general education requirements.

- 2.C.4** *Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.*

The institution meets the standard.

Degree program requirements are identified in the catalogue. Each degree program demonstrates a coherent design meeting the metric.

- 2.C.5** *Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.*

The institution meets the standard..

The Faculty Constitution identifies the authority and responsibilities of faculty with regard to curriculum. Course and curriculum decisions are routed from the faculty through administration to the Curriculum Committee, University Studies

Committee, and Graduate Council.

- Compliment-SOU should be commended for its review of its curriculum and plans to pare offerings to better match the strategic plan. The involvement of the faculty in this process is important and the institution should be commended for the inclusive approach to this process.

2.C.6 *Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.*

The institution meets the standard..

Information literacy is listed as a foundational strand goal. A four-part program integrates library and classroom learning to achieve that goal.

2.C.7 *Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students' transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.*

Not met.

This policy is under development. Need to verify.

2.C.8 *The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students' programs, and integrity of the receiving institution's degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality, and level to*

credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.

The institution meets the standard..

The university maintains clear policies for acceptance of transfer credits including types of sources, articulation agreements, workflow tools, and petition forms.

Undergraduate Programs

- 2.C.9** *The General Education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.*

The institution meets the standard..

The lower and upper division general education requirements integrate intellectual breadth and depth. In addition, the new House Model embeds that integration into living and learning combinations.

- 2.C.10** *The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution's mission and learning outcomes for those programs.*

The institution meets the standard.

However, the assessment rubrics do not identify what improvements have been made based on the assessment.

- 2.C.11** *The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable*

learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

The institution meets the standard.. Certificate programs are awarded within major or degree programs.

Graduate Programs

- 2.C.12** *Graduate programs are consistent with the institution's mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.*

The institution meets the standard..
Graduate education is overseen by the Graduate Council.

- 2.C.13** *Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution's mission and the program's requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly defined policies by faculty with a major commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.*

The institution meets the standard..

- 2.C.14** *Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors that learning, and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning experiences external to the students' formal graduate programs.*

The institution meets the standard..

- 2.C.15** *Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality, and critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts, or feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.*

The institution meets the standard..

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

- 2.C.16** *Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals.*

The institution meets the standard.

Continuing Education falls into the following categories: 1) Precollege/Youth Programs, 2) Programs for Adults, and 3) Professional Development.

- 2.C.17** *The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.*

The institution meets the standard..

Most continuing education instructors are hired by the

institution. Dual credit and early college credit faculty members are reviewed by relevant department faculty.

- 2.C.18** *The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.*

The institution meets the standard..

The Advanced Southern Credit program is overseen by continuing education.

- 2.C.19** *The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.D – Student Support Resources

- 2.D.1** *Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.D.2** *The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.D.3** *Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including*

graduation and transfer policies.

The institution meets this standard.

- 2.D.4** *In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.D.5** *The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes:*

- a) Institutional mission and core themes;*
- b) Entrance requirements and procedures;*
- c) Grading policy;*
- d) Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings;*
- e) Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty;*
- f) Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities;*
- g) Tuition, fees, and other program costs;*
- h) Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment;*
- i) Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and*
- j) Academic calendar.*

The institution meets the standard.

The Catalogue and the institutional website are the primary sources for this information.

2.D.6 *Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on:*

- a) *National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered;*
- b) *Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.D.7 *The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.D.8 *The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.D.9 *Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution's loan default rate.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.D.10 *The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.*

The institution meets this standard. Students meet with both the university advisors and faculty members.

- 2.D.11** *Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.D.12** *If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution's mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community, and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.D.13** *Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution's mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.*

The institution meets the standard.
However, the disproportionality by gender is noted.

- 2.D.14** *The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.E – Library and Information Resources

- 2.E.1** *Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an*

appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

The institution meets the standard. With conditions. SOU spends the least per student on library materials in the Oregon system. If the downward trend of funding continues, the library will be unable to provide needed support to the university mission.

- 2.E.2** *Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.E.3** *Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

The institution meets the standard.

- 2.E.4** *The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.*

The institution meets the standard.

2.F – Financial Resources

- 2.F.1** The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.

The institution meets this standard, with the following comment:

- Compliment -SOU should be commended for implementing Responsibility Center Management (RCM). Many institutions have

used the RCM budgeting technique to better manage their limited resources in a strategic manner.

- 2.F.2** Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

The institution meets this standard, with the following comment:

- Compliment -SOU should be commended for implementing Responsibility Center Management (RCM) as a part of ensuring that the institution has the financial resources to meet its mission.

- 2.F.3** The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies. The institution meets this standard.

- 2.F.4** The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls. The institution meets this standard.

- 2.F.5** Capital budgets reflect the institution's mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution's mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes. The institution meets this standard.

- 2.F.6** The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations. The institution meets this standard.

- 2.F.7** For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board. The institution meets this standard.

2.F.8 All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization. The institution meets this standard.

2.G – Physical and Technological Infrastructure

2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs, and services. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.2 The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.3 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. The institution meets this standard.

Technological Infrastructure

2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.7 Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services. The institution meets this standard.

2.G.8 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services. The institution meets this standard.

Summary

The evaluation team finds that SOU is in compliance with Standards 1 and 2. The economic context presents many challenges as State of Oregon funding continues to decline. The leadership team is taking important steps to meet these challenges, but there are concerns that the institution's ability to meet accreditation standards and meet its strategic goals will be hampered by this budgetary situation.

Commendations, and Recommendations

The evaluation committee does not include any commendations or recommendations.