

Dear Colleagues,

As I reflect on last week's productive, insightful, and quite positive NWCCU Mid-Cycle Accreditation visit, I am proud of the work that so many of you have contributed to this effort, particularly during the past nine months.

The focus of this collegial, consultative site visit was to determine CSN's readiness to provide evidence of mission fulfillment and sustainability in our upcoming Year Seven accreditation visit (2022, people!), and to determine whether the process of outcomes assessment will lead CSN to a successful Year Seven self-evaluation and peer evaluation. Additionally, we were asked to respond to three recommendations that came from our most recent Year Seven accreditation visit in 2015:

Recommendation One - The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College of Southern Nevada consistently document and use assessments to improve achievement of its identified student learning outcomes across its entire general education core and across all its courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered. (Standard 4.A.3 and Standard 4.B.2)

Recommendation Two - The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College implement an effective, regular system to evaluate all of its programs and services to ensure that they are achieving their intended goals or outcomes and to use the results of these evaluations for informing planning, and decision-making, and allocation of resources and capacity. (Standard 4.A.2 and Standard 4.B.1)

Recommendation Three - The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College connect its Strategic Plan, Academic Master Plan, Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, Campus Master Plan, and budgeting process to document that its mission, core themes, and objectives are the demonstrable basis for institutional decision-making, resource allocation, and assessment activities. (Standard 3.A.1)

To begin, you need to know that close to 100 faculty, staff, and students participated in a series of meetings with our peer consultants during the 1.5-day visit. **Our visitors found this level of engagement to be remarkable.** If you were one of those participants, I thank you. Additionally, we received kudos for the authenticity and transparency of our report – we were acknowledged for our honest assessment of where we had been, where we are today, and where we are headed as we prepare for our next Year Seven visit in 2022. Yes, we have much work ahead, but we have achieved significant momentum in a short period of time. I am grateful to the Accreditation Core Team who helped to pull this report together. If you haven't seen the Mid-Cycle Report and the Addendum Report, you may find these documents here: <https://www.csn.edu/accreditation>

While we will receive a final report from the visit, which we will post on CSN's accreditation webpage, I would like to share with you some of the preliminary observations and recommendations from our visitors:

- **CSN Strategic Plan** – We need to finalize our strategic plan; in doing so, we need to link our old strategic plan with the new plan. Tying in student learning outcomes (SLOs)

will strengthen our plan. Additionally, we need to focus on the core themes and indicators that keep us laser-focused on **mission fulfillment**. Dr. Z has highlighted for us several additional key indicators: student persistence, completion, and graduation; transfer; and workforce. Our timeline for finalizing this work is no later than Spring 2019.

- **Closing the Loop with Assessment** – While CSN has demonstrated an emerging culture of assessment across the academic and nonacademic units of the college (yay!), and while we have demonstrated notable momentum by developing and measuring course outcomes and SLOs, our work in assessing general education outcomes and institutional learning outcomes is fledgling work and needs to be ramped up really quickly – we have only this year to establish outcomes and two years to collect and analyze data for the Year Seven report.
- **Budget and Resource Allocation** – This is an area where we have only just begun our work; our Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan is in its formative stages, and it has become clear that we need to gather greater cross-college stakeholder participation, particularly from faculty and deans, to support our Institutional Effectiveness Council model. Additionally, we need to refine the charge of this Council to focus on mission fulfillment and not try to be all things to all budgeting. As recently as (October 15), we met with Faculty Senate leadership to refine the composition of this recommending body to be more inclusive of all stakeholders.
- **Year Seven Report** – As we move toward our Year Seven Report, we need to concentrate on telling our story in a cohesive manner; we need to weave a compelling narrative that describes how CSN is achieving mission fulfillment – data, graphics, and specific examples must effectively drive the narrative.

To conclude, was the visit a success? YES! Does CSN have more work ahead? YES! Can we do this? Together, YES!

Thanks for reading this long email, thank you for remaining engaged, and thank you for your commitment to CSN and the students whom we serve every day.

Margo

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