



January 31, 2018

Dr. Alan Shaver
President and Vice Chancellor
Thompson Rivers University
900 McGill Road
Kamloops, B.C. Canada V2C 0C8

Dear President Shaver:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on January 10-12, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of evidence, including the Institutional 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.

Based on these materials and deliberations, the Commissioners took the following actions.

Accreditation

- Continue candidacy

Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation

- Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Spring 2016 Initial Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report are revised and continued as Recommendations 1 and 3 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation Report
- Recommendations 2 and 5 of the Spring 2016 Initial Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report are revised as Recommendations 2 and 4 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation Report

Recommendations Fall 2017 Year Seven Evaluation Out of Compliance

The Commission finds that the following recommendations are areas where Thompson Rivers University is out of compliance with the NWCCU Standards for Accreditation and are continued to July 1, 2019, for good cause. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation 34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy, *Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period* (enclosed), the Commission requires that Thompson Rivers University take appropriate action to ensure these Recommendations are addressed and resolved in the prescribed period.

The Commission recommends that the institution:

2. Demonstrate that the GE component of its undergraduate 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, to help students

develop the breadth and depth of intellect necessary to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment (Standard 2.C.9, 2.C.10).

4. Build upon its efforts to document student learning outcomes by developing appropriate measurements of student learning, analyzing assessment results, and implementing action plans in a cycle of continuous improvement (Standard 4.A.3 and 4.B.2).

Recommendations Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation in Need of Improvement

The Commission recommends that the institution:

1. Continue to improve its definition of mission fulfillment by articulating measurable institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment. While noting a useful reduction in the number of Core Theme objectives and indicators, the Commission finds that several of the indicators remain framed as inputs rather than measurable accomplishments or outcomes (Standard 1.A).
3. Develop a technology infrastructure replacement plan encompassing all locations to ensure its ability to continue supporting its operations, programs and services. The Commission finds that funding has been recently dedicated to the replacement and maintenance of technology infrastructure in TRU's most recent budget; however, formalized planning for infrastructure replacement has not been completed (Standard 2.G.8).
5. Articulate a policy governing the academic freedoms and responsibilities of all University employees (Standard 2.A.27).
6. Document its system of internal financial controls (Standard 2.F.4). TRU's Board Manual (Chapter 12, Audit Committee Term of Reference, section 4.3) requires that the audit committee obtain reasonable assurances that TRU has implemented appropriate systems of internal control. Additionally, NWCCU's minimum requirements of Standard 2.F.4 include having a "description of internal financial controls."
7. Document the relationship between its general operations and its ancillary operations funds, including whether general operations funds are permitted to support ancillary enterprises or the use of funds from ancillary enterprises may be used to support general operations (Standard 2.F.6).

Required Follow-Up

- Address Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Peer Evaluation Report within the Spring 2019 Interim Candidacy Self-Evaluation Report

Commendations Fall 2017 Interim Candidacy Evaluation

The Commission commends Thompson Rivers University in particular for the following:

1. Successful programs that have engaged and supported hundreds of undergraduate students in research, as demonstrated by the annual Undergraduate Research and Innovation Conference, the Undergraduate Research Experience Awards, the Undergraduate Research Ambassadors Program, the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeships, and the Undergraduate Research Assistants program. Institutional commitment to research is also evidenced by recent growth in external funding, Core Theme 4, and multiple indicators of local, provincial and national support for the institution's growing research agenda.
2. TRU's commitment to serving its local communities. Evidence of this commitment includes a consistent message of sensitivity to and appreciation for the indigenous cultures in the region it serves

as well as development of education and training programs responsive to community needs, such as the professional science master's degrees offered on the Kamloops' campus and the one-year certificate programs offered at Williams Lake.


3. TRU's agility and intentionality with which it has enacted service, policy and process improvements, as demonstrated by the institution's response to student complaints and frustrations concerning registration and course access. Recent improvements to streamline the registration process, to provide student-facing degree audit technologies, and to provide more centrally located and accessible enrollment support, represent informed and appropriate responses to the need for documented improvement in this area.

Future Evaluation

- Interim Candidacy Evaluation in Spring 2019

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 NWCCU.

Sincerely,



Marlene Moore, Ph.D.

President

MM:rb

- c: Mr. Matthew Kennedy, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Mr. Jim Thompson, Board Chair
Dr. Steven VanderStaay, Chair, Evaluation Committee