



July 26, 2024

Seth Bodnar  
President  
The University of Montana - Missoula  
32 Campus Drive  
Missoula, MT 59812

**Revised**

Dear President Bodnar:

This **revised** 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 18-21, 2024, concerning the Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness of The University of Montana - Missoula.

### **Accreditation**

Reaffirm Accreditation

### **Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation**

- Finding Type 1: Spring 2023 Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review - Fulfilled
- Finding Type 2: Spring 2023 Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review - Fulfilled

### **Commendations**

The Commission commends The University of Montana - Missoula for:

1. UM faculty, staff and administrators for their deep commitment to the mission of the institution, their resiliency through prior challenges, and their commitment to moving forward together to continuously improve in service to their students and communities.
2. Supporting their uniquely diverse student body through the delivery of programming tailored to support student success and well-being.
3. Its progress on student success and achievement as evidenced in their metrics, specifically improvements in retention and four-year graduation rates. Further, the institution is commended for their use of disaggregated as well as peer-comparison analytics to identify and address equity gaps.
4. Its strong commitment to faculty, staff, and student shared governance and to productive collaboration toward common goals.

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

The Commission recommends that The University of Montana - Missoula:

- Recommendation 1: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Fully integrate Academic Affairs into the Strategic Operating Rhythm planning and evaluation process to inform and refine the institution's effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1)
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Develop an inclusive and integrated University-wide framework to assess student learning outcomes at the program and degree level that is distinct from the use of student achievement data and metrics. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.7)
- Recommendation 3: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Implement an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed and that the institution ensure that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy. (2020 Standard(s) 2.G.7)

### Future Evaluations

- Ad Hoc Report with Visit Spring 2026
  - Recommendation 1: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 2: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 3: Spring 2024 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
- Mid-Cycle Review Fall 2026
- Year 6 - Standard 2 - Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Fall 2029
- Year 7 - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Fall 2030

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, Dr. Selena Grace, at [sgrace@nwccu.org](mailto:sgrace@nwccu.org).

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy  
President

cc: Mr. John DeBoer, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Joyce Dombrowski, BOR Chair  
Dr. Susan Kalina, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness, University of Alaska Anchorage  
Mr. Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System