



May 8, 2023

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
8060 165<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Suite 200  
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear NWCCU,

I am writing to thank President Hilgersom and her team for their warm, supportive, and caring approach to Umpqua Community College's 7-year accreditation visit. UCC is in a period of post-traumatic growth following a mass shooting event and considerable administrative turnover and neglect and the approach of the team helped to build trust amongst our staff and faculty and restore pride in the great work that happens for students here. NWCCU's influence has ignited our pathway to excellence.

I also need to draw attention to an error of fact in our seven-year mission fulfillment report. On page 19, the following is written:

#### 2.F.3

*The college's library is currently open 49.5 hours per week. The library has three full-time employees and one part-time employee. Previously, the library staff consisted of 4.5 FTEs. As a result, activities that require staff to be away from the library, such as professional development, committee work, and sick leave, present challenges to maintaining open library services for students. The same person is sometimes required to open and close (7:30 am to 6 pm), occasionally alone, and staff often forgo other important activities or work through breaks.*

*Concern: The number of library staff limits the library's capacity to provide direct service, manage the library, and participate in teaching, curriculum, and planning – all activities vital to a responsive and engaged library.*

Our Library currently has 4.5 FTE's. Additionally, the library has maintained the same staffing levels for the past 5 years despite declining enrollment at the college. There have been vacancies over the past year and a half, as well as additional sick leave needs due to COVID 19 but there is no systemic issue in regard to providing quality library services to students or staff absences. Vacancies and illness have compressed opening/closing hours on rare occasions but not on a consistent basis and staff and faculty have participated fully in professional development and committee work. As an example;

#### Committee Work:

- Kelly Peter, Library Director: Academic Council, Oregon Library Association and Oregon Library Directors Association, multiple hiring committees, Title III committee
- Liz Teoli, Reference & Instruction Librarian: Academic Council, Teaching and Learning Committee, UCCFA Rep, multiple hiring committees, Title III committee, participated in college plays, Faculty meetings monthly.

The college is happy to furnish employment records to substantiate these staffing levels. We would like to request that this language be stricken from the report and that the response read as follows;

*2.F.3 Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.*

*The college's library is currently open 49.5 hours per week. The library staff consists of 4.5 FTEs. Library staff are actively engaged in committees across campus including Academic Council, Oregon Library Director's Association, multiple hiring committees, Title III planning, Teaching and Learning committee, monthly faculty meetings and more. The same person is sometimes required to open and close (7:30 am to 6 pm), occasionally alone, and staff often forgo other important activities or work through breaks.*

*Concern: The allocation of library staff occasionally limits the library's hours, and this is key to a library that is responsive to student needs.*

This response will help our college move forward in a positive way and continue the important work of serving students.

I would like to reiterate my thanks and the thanks of the board of directors of UCC, to all at NWCCU for an incredibly positive experience for our college.

Respectfully,



Rachel Pokrandt  
President, Umpqua Community College