

Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report

University of Idaho

Moscow, Idaho

April 20-22, 2015

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I. Evaluators

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II. Introduction

The University of Idaho (UI) is a land grant institution, with a mission that includes outreach as well as education and research. It is part of a statewide Idaho K-20 system that encompasses three other public universities, a stand-alone technical college, and public elementary and secondary education. The main campus is located in Moscow, with regional centers in Coeur d'Alene, Boise, and Idaho Falls and many extension or research centers, for a total of seventy locations throughout Idaho. Altogether, UI delivers 135 majors and 97 graduate programs to more than 12,000 students.

UI last completed a full-scale self-evaluation in 2004, and accreditation was reaffirmed in 2005 based on that report and the subsequent site visit. UI submitted a progress report in 2008 and accreditation was reaffirmed in March, 2010 based on a fall 2009 Regular Interim Evaluation. UI then began the new NWCCU accreditation process on an accelerated schedule.

UI submitted a Year One report in September, 2011. The evaluators made one recommendation based on that report:

1. The evaluation panel recommends that the University refines its indicators of achievement to ensure that the indicators are meaningful, direct measures of the objectives. (Standard 1.B.2)

UI was not required to submit either a Year Three or a Year Five Report. Instead, the institution proceeded directly to a Year Seven Comprehensive Self-Evaluation, completed in spring of 2015. In the Year Seven report, the University provided a response to the recommendation, stating that the objectives and indicators had been reviewed and refined, and asserting that “Adjustments to indicators of achievement reflect the changes in the objectives and provide well-developed measures that define mission fulfillment.” However, as discussed in the following evaluation, the chosen indicators have not yet been implemented fully in a way that clearly demonstrates the integration of planning, assessment, and improvement.

Since the Year One report was completed, UI has had a number of significant leadership transitions. On March 1, 2014, Dr. Chuck Staben became the 18th President of UI. Dr. Katherine Aiken has been serving as Interim Provost & Executive Vice President during a search to refill that position. Five new deans (Colleges of Letters, Arts, & Social Sciences; Law; Agricultural and Life Sciences; Science; and Business) took office, along with a new Vice Provost for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, UI Foundation director, Executive Director for Tribal Relations, Boise Center Executive Officer, WWAMI Director, and Special Assistant to the President for State Governmental Relations. Searches have been underway for a Provost & Executive Vice President (Dr. John M. Wiencek will start in the position June 1), Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Advancement, Dean of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, and Center Executive, Idaho Falls.

III. Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report and Support Materials

The University of Idaho prepared an informative Year Seven report. Like all institutions in this first accreditation cycle, UI has needed to interpret the new accreditation standards and reporting requirements in light of its institutional mission and objectives. As has been the case with some other institutions, the Year Seven report shows that it can be difficult to develop a practical definition of mission fulfillment (Standard 1.A.2.) and establish meaningful objectives and indicators of achievement (Standard 1.B.2.). If these initial steps in the process are not entirely successful, then it is very challenging to write the self-study sections that address Standard 4 and Standard 5. UI made a creditable effort, but as detailed in the following evaluation, the report did not solidly integrate planning, assessment, and improvement for all four core themes, in part because data were not available for some of the indicators. To some extent that is probably due to the relatively short time between the Year One report and this “Year Seven” report, which actually was due only three and one-half years later. The definition of mission fulfillment was not as clear as it needs to be, and that hampered assessment of mission fulfillment and related discussions of adaptation and sustainability.

The self-evaluation report content was verified and augmented by interviews with administrators, faculty, staff, students, and governing board members and by examination of relevant institutional websites. All requests for meetings and additional information made by the NWCCU review team were promptly fulfilled. The evaluation team thanks UI for facilitating our visit, and particularly thanks Dr. Jeanne Stevenson, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Accreditation Liaison Officer, and Ms. Lodi Price, Executive Assistant to the Provost & Executive Vice President. We also thank everyone who participated in preparing the documents that we were sent to review.

IV. Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements 2-21

As documented in the Year Seven Self-Evaluation (pp. 16-17, 31-38, 136, and 214) the University of Idaho meets all NWCCU eligibility requirements. The review team would like to emphasize one eligibility requirement, 23. Institutional Effectiveness:

The institution systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures, assesses the extent to which it achieves its mission and core themes, uses the results of assessment to effect institutional improvement, and periodically publishes the results to its constituencies. Through these processes it regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact the institution and its ability to ensure its viability and sustainability.

UI meets this eligibility requirement, but at present its approach to monitoring the external environment is decentralized. Documentation or information about these processes was not prominent in the self-study, although by talking with individual unit and campus administrators the evaluation committee ascertained that the necessary monitoring and impact assessment was occurring. Greater central coordination and documentation of these processes would yield stronger evidence of compliance.

V. Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

Standard 1.A. Mission

The University of Idaho's mission statement clearly articulates its purpose as a Land Grant research university, and the mission statement has been approved by the UI Board of Regents/State Board of Education. UI's four Core Themes, Teaching and Learning, Scholarly and Creative Activity with National and International Impact, Outreach and Engagement, and Purposeful, Ethical, Vibrant, and Open Community, comprise essential elements of that mission. Within those Core Themes, UI has identified objectives and indicators of achievement. The objectives appear appropriate for this institution, but, as discussed in other sections of the evaluation, some of the indicators of achievement are not precisely defined, and relevant data haven't yet been compiled for all of the indicators. That impacts the usefulness of UI's articulation of an acceptable extent of mission fulfillment, which states in part:

“Metrics have been identified to document progress toward goals in the [UI] strategic plan, to meeting institutional expectations outlined in the University of Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education strategic plan, and to document ways in which we fulfilled the mission and core themes of the University of Idaho. We identified peer benchmarks and national norms, adjusted to the unique characteristics of the University of Idaho, to monitor our performance and evaluate the extent to which we fulfill our mission...”

Within the self-study, there was no clear listing of the metrics “identified”. The Accreditation Liaison Officer, on request, supplied a list of metrics that were designed to assess institutional progress on the Board of Regents/State Board of Education strategic plan, which overlapped with the indicators of achievement but differed in many respects as well. The extent of mission fulfillment is adequately defined as “peer benchmarks and national norms adjusted to the unique characteristics of UI”. However, the benchmarks and norms were not presented in the self-study or other resources provided to the evaluation team, except that the Board of Regents/State Board of Education strategic

plan metrics have benchmarks, not all of which UI is currently attaining. The UI peer list used by the Board of Regents was provided to the evaluation team on request; the evaluation team considered many of those institutions to be aspirational peers. The self-study does not clearly state the “acceptable threshold for mission fulfillment”, i.e., it is not clear whether attaining the peer benchmarks or norms is required or whether falling below them to some extent is acceptable.

Recommendation Standard 1.A. The articulation of an acceptable degree of mission fulfillment is stated in terms of peer benchmarks and national norms. If that articulation is retained, the evaluation committee recommends that the benchmarks or norms used must be clearly identified and used in the assessment of mission fulfillment. This was particularly a concern for Core Themes 1, 3, and 4.

Standard 1.B. Core Themes

1.B.1. The University of Idaho has identified core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its Mission and collectively encompass its mission. These Core Themes and associated Objectives and Indicators are discussed and evaluated below.

Core Theme One: Teaching & Learning

Enhancing teaching and learning is a central mission of the university, and one that is strongly emphasized by faculty, staff, and administrators. The teaching and learning efforts focus on five University outcomes: 1) learn and integrate; 2) think and create; 3) communicate; 4) clarify purpose and perspective; and 5) practice citizenship through rich and diverse curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular opportunities. The commitment to quality teaching and learning (Core Theme One) is demonstrated in the University’s efforts to assess and improve student learning outcomes in all of its academic departments. Much progress has been made in this area since the last accreditation review.

The University of Idaho deserves special praise for its innovations in General Education and interdisciplinary courses and programs. The General Education Integrated Seminars (ISEM) are developmentally sequenced and aligned with the majors. In addition, the interdisciplinary emphasis across the university is exemplified in several integrated majors and graduate programs.

There are efforts to track and promote additional high impact practices (e.g., student research, study abroad, community service, service learning, and leadership opportunities). The institution highlighted programs and initiatives of distinction throughout the report. These experiential learning opportunities included a Basque Archeological Project, Idaho’s Clean Snowmobile Team, career development in Fire Ecology and Management, and the Vandal Innovation and Enterprise Works program.

UI has chosen appropriate and ambitious objectives for Core Theme One, and has identified several indicators for each one. However, not all of these indicators were fully assessable and verifiable in the context of the self-study. Some indicators were not fully defined in Section 1.B. of the report. For example, indicator “A.i. Student academic success” was not explained in detail, but in section 4.A.2. specific indicators of retention and GPA are mentioned. Some data on retention and graduation rates were presented, but GPA data were not presented or discussed. Another example is indicator “B.i. Refinement of general education”, which is a process rather than an assessable and verifiable indicator of achievement. This also applies to “C.ii. Exit interviews and surveys” and “C.iii. Stakeholder feedback.” As stated, there is not a clear relationship between the indicators and the objective to “Improve programs through robust, continuous assessment processes integrating internal and external input and participation”. The results of the “exit survey” and “stakeholder survey” were not discussed in the Standard 4 section of the report. There was mention of a survey related to student engagement

administered 2009-2011. NSSE 2012 survey results (for then-current freshmen and seniors) were available at the Institutional Research website, as were a Graduating Senior survey (2014), Alumni survey (2012), and Graduate Alumni survey (2011-2012). These surveys indicated that students and alumni were generally satisfied with UI, but it was not clear from the self-study that the results had been used to make program improvements, or that program changes had impacted survey results. For the Graduating Senior Survey Class of 2013-14, fewer students were satisfied in most categories than they had been in the preceding year, but it was not clear whether that was a significant trend or a random variation in responses.

Core Theme Two: Scholarly and Creative Activity with National and International Impact

A noteworthy strength of the University of Idaho is the research enterprise that focuses intentionally on the mission of a land grant university: building “cultural awareness and understanding for our citizenry; our economic vitality; and the sustainability of human, natural and technology systems within the state and beyond.” Active partnerships and collaborative, interdisciplinary activity build on the unique strengths of a campus that is smaller than those of most research universities and a culture that values collaboration, provides unique opportunities for interdisciplinary activity, and fosters an environment of innovation. Significant cross-disciplinary research enterprises, such as the Institute for Bioinformatics and Evolutionary Studies (IBEST) provide unique research opportunities for students and maximize the use of laboratories or top-of-the-line equipment. IBEST houses research with contemporary immediacy and significance such as the viral evolution, antibiotic resistance, the characteristics of the human microbiome, and the ecology and evolution of multi-drug resistant plasmids.

Compliment: UI is notable for interdisciplinary activity and for the way it connects the teaching, research, and community engagement elements of the institution’s core mission and goals.

As the UI streamlines its processes for greater efficiencies, maximizes technology for the submission and management of grants, and provides a broader range of trainings and support systems for researchers and promising young scholars it will strengthen its operation and expand its research capacity. UI has recently appointed a director of undergraduate research, to formalize and maximize its opportunities. Importantly, the Office of Research and Economic Development has initiated a planning process to develop a university-wide, comprehensive plan to prioritize research and related activities.

The identified indicators for Theme Two are appropriate and well rationalized. Data measuring program indicators and evidence of considerable success around these indicators are included in the Standard 4.A. section of the self-study, where the data are analyzed and connected to plans for improvement. The University of Idaho collects data on peer-reviewed scholarly and creative activities, juried presentations, and other efforts to move scholarship into the public domain. Targets are set by colleges and departments. Over the past five years, UI has shown steady growth in the number of master’s and doctoral degrees awarded, although they lag behind benchmarks for institutions in their Carnegie classification of Research University (high research activity). In addition to graduate research, there is significant engagement of undergraduates in research, with 67% of the students responding to the graduate survey reporting that they had research experience. Of the respondents, 44% think that there should be great emphasis placed on undergraduate research. The Office of Research and Economic Development has plans to implement formal tracking of undergraduate research opportunities.

During the recession, the NSF ranking of the UI declined from 130 to 150. In response, the Office of Research and Economic Development has been developing support systems, trainings, grant writing and management programs to support an increase in grant and contract activity. Research expenditures at UI have helped the State Board of Regents reach and surpass their strategic goals. Research productivity is particularly striking in the Colleges of Science and Engineering. NSF reports show that on national

average university research expenditures are most often 95% Science and Engineering and 5% non-Science and Engineering. The University of Idaho reports research expenditures of 98% S&E and 2% non-S&E. Between 2009 and 2013 total expenditures increased by 21% to \$54 million, showing progress toward the benchmark of \$112 million. A goal of the institution and the Office of Research and Economic Development is to increase the number of large proposals submitted and awarded.

Core Theme Three: Outreach and Engagement

The indicators of achievement for Theme Three mostly did not clearly meet the standard for being assessable and verifiable. In general there was no clear statement of how the indicators would be assessed. For example, Objective A. “Engage community partners in Idaho through Extension, providing information to improve practices and develop solutions for state and regional challenges” has the Indicators: i. Impact statements, ii. Number of programs offered, iii. Number of participants served, iv. Summaries of feedback on statewide presentations (qualitative). There is no discussion of how the impact statements or feedback would be evaluated, in terms of whether UI is or is not meeting the objective. Similarly, how many programs and participants does UI need in order to meet the objective? Is the aim to increase or decrease the number currently offered? Relative to the indicator B.ii., the self-study states that “Our pilot assessment process to evaluate successful partnerships will include a component that specifically addresses the measurement of impact.” Concerning C.iii., impact on students engaged in service learning, “The University of Idaho will develop a system to track all such activities.” There was little reporting on the results of these assessments in the Standard Four section of the report. In summary, the self-study shows that the development and implementation of these indicators is incomplete. There is not a straightforward way to know from the report whether UI is or is not meeting stated objectives based on the chosen indicators of achievement.

Core Theme Four: Purposeful, Ethical, Vibrant, and Open Community

Most of the indicators in this area, such as A.i., staff and faculty participation in University sponsored [professional development] programs or B. ii., retention of students, staff, and faculty, are routinely collected information and so are readily verifiable. But, again, it is not clear how UI decides whether the indicator represents unsatisfactory or satisfactory achievement. For Objective C., “Refine processes and practices to enhance access, inclusion, collaboration, and efficiency”, the indicators are simply examples of refinements and collaborations. How does UI determine whether the examples are good or bad, and whether there are enough?

1.B.2. Overall, the Objectives established for each of the themes are appropriate and in particular are consistent with the UI comprehensive plan, “Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015”. However, there are some weaknesses relative to full compliance with Standard 1.B.2., “The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.”

This standard was the subject of a recommendation relative to the Year One report, and improvement is still needed. Objectives are outlined for the core theme of Teaching and Learning, and indicators have also been provided. However, the indicators could be improved by outlining targets and/or benchmarks for each of the items. In other words, these would be more measurable if numbers or percentages were included.

Concern Standard 1.B.2.: The evaluation team finds that not all of the indicators were assessable and verifiable.

An important issue was that the self-study did not always provide a clear statement of what UI considered unsatisfactory or satisfactory performance on an indicator. For example, with B.i. Refinement of General Education, what is the nature and extent of “refinement” that is targeted? How is it determined whether changes are “refinement”...or merely changes? With the survey results, is it acceptable to UI that student satisfaction has recently decreased slightly in a number of areas? Or not? What survey result would trigger a concerted effort to improve? The other issue is that the self-study did not contain evidence that data or information had been collected for all of the indicators, so some of them were not verifiable.

VI. Resources and Capacity

Standard 2.A. Governance

2.A.1. The University of Idaho has a system of shared governance, which is similar to that of many universities: A Faculty Senate, Staff Affairs committee, and three student organizations (the Associated Students of the University of Idaho, the Graduate and Professional Student Association, and the Student Bar Association). Each of these can elevate matters of concern to responsible administrators. The Faculty Senate membership includes four student representatives and two staff members. There are two administrative bodies that are advisory to the top executives: the Provost’s Council and the President’s Cabinet. The Provost’s Council comprises the Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, Deans, Center Executive Officers, and other senior leadership positions such as directors of Tribal Relations, International Programs, and WWAMI. Through those positions nearly all faculty and staff involved in academic programs, research, student affairs, or extension have a voice. The President’s Cabinet includes the Vice Presidents and the Assistant Vice President & Chief Information Officer; Executive Director, Planning & Budget; Vice Provost for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management; Athletics Director; Special Assistant to the President for State Governmental Relations; Chief Diversity Officer & Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs; and the Executive Director for Communications and Marketing. New or revised university policies concerning faculty, academics, or student affairs and academic program additions or deletions are proposed by the Faculty Senate through the President to the Board of Regents. Other kinds of policy changes are proposed by the responsible administrator(s). All of the individuals that the evaluation team members interviewed were well aware of the University governance system and their options for engagement with it.

2.A.2. The University of Idaho is part of a multi-institution governance system. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education governs not only UI, three other public universities, and a stand-alone technical college, but public elementary and secondary education as well. The Board is responsible for the policies, regulations, and procedures that govern the University. However, each university has authority over internal policies, regulations, and procedures. That is specified in the Idaho State Board of Education Governing Policies and Procedure, Section: I. General Governing Policies and Procedures Subsection: A. Policy Making Authority: “Although the Board is responsible for ensuring that its policies and procedures are followed, it does not participate in the details of internal management of its institutions and agencies. That responsibility is hereby delegated to the respective chief executive officers.”

2.A.3. The University of Idaho Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Accreditation Liaison Officer is charged with monitoring compliance with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation. During discussions with the evaluation team she stated that any concerns would be reported to the Provost/ Executive Vice President, who could act to rectify them within her areas of authority and responsibility or could elevate them to the President or President’s Cabinet if necessary. In a meeting between the evaluation team chair and the Board of Regents/State Board of Education Chair, the Board Chair reported that the Board was regularly informed of the accreditation status of institutions, the self-study and

evaluation processes, and how those were impacted by changes in accreditation standards. She indicated that the Board carefully considered its actions in light of accreditation standards.

2.A.4. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education is the sole governing board for UI, as well as other public universities in the state. It has eight members, seven appointed to five-year terms by the Governor and one elected Superintendent of Public Instruction. Idaho Code and Board Policies regulate financial conflicts of interest of Board members, and any such much be disclosed an determined to be consistent with regulation and policy.

2.A.5. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education acts only as a committee of the whole; the extant subcommittees bring recommendations to the full Board for consideration and action. The full Board has formally delegated the responsibility for some decisions concerning UI to others, in most cases, to the UI President.

2.A.6. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education has established and published General Governing Policies and Procedures (http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/policies/i_policy.asp), which govern its own operation as well as the operations of the institutions that it oversees. New policy or policy revision proposals can be brought forward by the Office of the State Board of Education, the institutional Chief Executive Officers (e.g., the UI President), other university employees, and other interested parties according to established Board procedures. In a meeting between the evaluation team chair and the Board of Regents/State Board of Education Chair, the Board Chair reported that institution and Board employees and standing committees such as the President's Council and the Council on Academic Affairs and Programs regularly review the policies and procedures affecting their areas of responsibility. Policies and procedures are assessed for efficacy and relative to the impact of new legal requirements or other external factors, and changes are proposed and made as necessary.

2.A.7. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education selects the UI President and evaluates him (or her) annually. Authority to operate the University of Idaho is formally vested in the UI President by Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education Governing Policies and Procedures, Section: I. General Governing Policies and Procedures, Subsection E. Executive Officers, 2. Presidents/Agency Heads, a. Responsibilities:

The President/Agency Head is the chief program and administrative officer of the institution or agency. The President/Agency Head has full power and responsibility within the framework of the Board's Governing Policies and Procedures for the organization, management, direction, and supervision of the institution or agency and is held accountable by the Board for the successful functioning of the institution or agency in all of its units, divisions, and services. For the higher education institutions, the Board expects the Presidents to obtain the necessary input from the faculty, classified and exempt employees, and students, but it holds the Presidents ultimately responsible for the well-being of the institutions, and final decisions at the institutional level rest with the Presidents.

2.A.8. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education conducts an annual self-evaluation, and reviews the results at its annual retreat. It also reviews progress on the Board and UI strategic plans annually, and publishes the results of those reviews on its website.

2.A.9. The University of Idaho has an effective leadership team, staffed by qualified administrators, that is similar to the administration of most Land Grant universities. All of the administrators who were interviewed by the evaluation team members were aware of their responsibilities for planning, organization, management, and assessment. A challenge faced by UI is that there has been

considerable turnover in leadership positions over the past several years. This has had some impacts as discussed under Standard 2.A.11.

2.A.10. The University of Idaho President Chuck Staben is employed full-time as the UI CEO. He is not a member of the Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education.

2.A.11. The University of Idaho employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators, who provide effective leadership and management. However, UI has had a number of recent leadership transitions. On March 1, 2014, Dr. Chuck Staben became the 18th President of UI. Dr. Katherine Aiken has been serving as Interim Provost & Executive Vice President during a search to refill that position. Five new deans (Colleges of Letters, Arts, & Social Sciences; Law; Agricultural and Life Sciences; Science; and Business) took office, along with a new Vice Provost for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, UI Foundation director, Executive Director for Tribal Relations, Boise Center Executive Officer, WWAMI Director, and Special Assistant to the President for State Government Relations. Searches have been underway for a Provost & Executive Vice President (Dr. John M. Wiencek will start in the position June 1), Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Advancement, Dean of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, and Center Executive, Idaho Falls.

These transitions appear to have made collaborative work across institutional functions and units difficult. While certainly considerable, high-quality work is being done relative to accomplishing the Core Theme Objectives, a fully integrated, collaborative implementation of a planning, implementation, assessment and improvement cycle has been only partly documented in the self-study.

Concern: While the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management, turnover of senior leadership was frequent during the review period, and that appears to have led to some of the weaknesses in planning and assessment noted elsewhere in the evaluation. University of Idaho needs to work to ensure that leadership transitions are as orderly as possible and that planning, assessment, improvement and their documentation continue through these transitions.

2.A.12. Academic policies — including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation — are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas via a comprehensive website. This site provides links to current university policies, a search engine for all university policies (which, however, was not functioning on the day the evaluator reviewed the site), and information about new or proposed changes to policies and their status as they go through the approval process. The Faculty Secretary coordinates policy review for the University, which is conducted by several committees from the Faculty Senate. New policies or revised policies enacted by the senate are distributed by internal communications (primarily e-mail) to the University community. In addition there are several policy compilations for specific groups, in particular:

- Administrative Procedures Manual (APM): Policies and/or procedures that provide criteria, guidance and instructions for properly conducting and complying with institutional financial, administrative, and select operational requirements.
- Faculty Staff Handbook (FSH): Policies that cover many areas affecting students, faculty and staff, including both educational and employment issues.

2.A.13. Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources — regardless of format, location, and delivery method — are documented, published, and enforced. Policies regarding the access/use of information and library resources are posted on the Library's website, and resources regarding copyright are available through the General Counsel's office. Copyright compliance for

electronic media is also monitored across the institution and enforced as necessary by the Chief Information Officer.

2A.14. The University of Idaho fully meets this standard by having a credit transfer policy that ensures academic integrity and promotes ease of transfer amongst institutions. Detailed information on transfer credit policies is published and regularly updated in the *General Catalog*, as well as on the Office of the Registrar web pages. Coordinated efforts across Idaho higher education institutions have enhanced the clarity and academic integrity of General Education transfer processes. During the last three years, students' ability to transfer between Idaho institutions has been enhanced by all of the public postsecondary institutions adhering to competencies and rubrics for six General Education areas: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Math, Science, Social Science, and Humanities.

2.A.15. The University of Idaho provides evidence of their student codes of conduct, student rights and judicial appeal processes as required. These documents reflect a careful consideration of the need for protection of the student as well as the maintenance of institutional well-being, public and personal safety and educational integrity. They are accessible on-line and in the various student handbooks. Student academic appeal rights are published in the UI *General Catalog*. The Student Code of Conduct was reviewed, broadened, and revised by the Faculty Senate, in consultation with other stakeholders, during the 2013-14 academic year and is published in the Faculty-Staff Handbook. It is also published on the Dean of Students Website and a search of the UI website using "student code of conduct" or "code of conduct" returns that website as the top result. The Code focuses on mutual responsibilities held by the students and the institution. Each student is responsible for their "conduct at all times from admission until graduation" both on and off campus. The institution holds the responsibility to provide a substantive educational experience "in an atmosphere where students will have the opportunity to be heard in matters affecting their welfare". The Code of Conduct also celebrates individuality, equity and diversity in personal interactions, suggesting mutual respect, civil discourse, academic integrity and responsible decision making. The recent revisions to the Code emphasize greater reliance on counseling and education and less on punishment.

Student appeal rights are clearly explained in the University of Idaho *General Catalog* on-line in the section labeled General Requirements and Academic Procedures. Students may petition one of three review panels depending on the nature of the appeal petition. There appears to be a range of options available for case resolution in these situations, depending on the nature of the infraction, student need or University requirement.

UI provides comprehensive services to students with disabilities through Disability Support Services. A UI web search for "disability" returns that office as the top result. The website provides appropriate information for students on how to access needed services. Disabilities Support Services (DSS) assists students, who have educational requirements related to physical, psychological or learning disabilities, to seek possible accommodations. The DSS is one of the Academic Support and Access Programs of Student Affairs. The on-line student handbook addresses the UI disability policy and informs students of their rights and responsibilities under federal law. Requests for special accommodations for undergraduates and graduate students are approved by the director of the Disability Support Services following the student submission of required documentation and consultation. Assistance can be given for educational, housing or other campus needs.

2.A.16. The UI admissions requirements for new freshmen, transfer, international and graduate degree seeking students are clearly defined and articulated on the University home page and in related documents. New freshmen admissions are based on the weighted review of completion of required high school core classwork, graduation from a regionally accredited high school, achieved high school grade point averages and ACT or SAT scores. Transfer students are required to have attended a regionally

accredited college and have their work reviewed for required cumulative GPA in all completed transferable courses. International applicants, for either new freshmen admission or transfer admission, must also demonstrate English language proficiency by test score. A holistic review of other factors by the admission staff suggesting the likelihood of probable academic success by the applicant can also be considered. Those who are denied admission under these standards may petition the admissions committee for re-consideration and may be admitted on a conditional basis until they demonstrate a required level of success in their academic studies.

Potential graduate students make application through Graduate Admissions Office of the College of Graduate Studies. Minimum baccalaureate GPA, English proficiency and GRE scores, as well as post-baccalaureate grades are considered in the admissions process. This process is detailed on their website and in other available materials in the College.

The University of Idaho on-line *General Catalog* provides a comprehensive explanation of required academic standards and University actions for non-performance. Academic standing, probation, suspension, dismissal and reinstatement policies and procedures are clearly defined. Exception and petition policies are also outlined. Of particular interest at the University of Idaho is the disqualification of first semester students who receive less than a 1.0 GPA, and the Fresh Start potential academic forgiveness policy for students who failed to engage in their education process initially and who return more than 5 years later. The former targets students who have not adjusted to the rigors of post high school education, while the later provides a means for previously struggling students to re-engage and pursue their college aspirations following a period of personal growth. Both programs have produced positive results.

2.A.17. The University of Idaho demonstrates through documents and related websites that they have established and published university policies that define that role of co-curricular activities and the student roles and responsibilities in those functions. Programs established for student growth and development, self-exploration, student expression and student welfare are in evidence. There are numerous examples of opportunities for students to explore leadership, internship, international study and volunteer possibilities to augment and enrich their academic experience. It appears that the University is invested in the holistic development of their students.

2.A.18. The University provided evidence of the availability of their Human Resource policies and procedures through access to their Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH) and Administrative Procedures Manual (APM). Updates and changes are published regularly and are posted on the Human Resources website and communicated by e-mail to employees. Policies related to faculty are coordinated by the Provost/Executive Vice President's Office and they maintain responsibility for compliance and accountability for faculty issues. Faculty items reviewed, such as hiring, annual evaluation, tenure considerations and termination, appeared consistent with accepted practices and sufficient to insure fairness and a thorough review of faculty. All other University employee policies are managed through the Office of Human Resources. Policies related to FLSA exempt employee rights, benefits and responsibilities are consistent with accepted industry standards.

The University of Idaho reports that their policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. Policy audits are conducted by the University Office of General Counsel, the Office of the Provost/Executive Vice President and the Human Resources Department. Audits may be initiated by changes in legal responsibility or federal regulatory requirements, the identification of internal need or at the request of University leadership. Changes are communicated in a timely way to University personnel. Disagreements over current policy are mediated by referral to a central policy agency.

2.A.19. Faculty and FLSA exempt staff receive an annual salary agreement and contract for the fiscal year which details the terms and conditions of their employment. Each position at the University has a position description which outlines the employee's responsibilities and by which their performance is evaluated. The employee is evaluated at least annually based on the requirements of his or her position description. Earlier or more frequent evaluations are mandated for newly hired employees or when deficiencies are noted in meeting performance requirements. Training is provided for supervisors on topics ranging from employee relations to effective evaluation processes and conflict resolution. A human resource specialist is assigned to each functional work area for support and consultation on employment issues.

The Human Resources website is comprehensive and easily navigated. Videos on the site are informative and helpful to employees. Areas of focus include current job openings, hiring requirements, benefits, personal wellness opportunities, retirement planning and resources available to new faculty.

2.A.20. Employee files and records are reportedly held in two secure locations, based on whether the person is a faculty member or other University employee. They are protected and restricted for all information except that which is reviewable under the Idaho Public Records law. Staff files are backed up electronically; faculty files are held in a secure Lektriever (software controlled automated media storage and retrieval) system.

2.A.21. All web, print, and marketing materials reviewed by the evaluators represented the University of Idaho clearly, accurately, and consistently. Academic program requirements are published in the *General Catalog*, which is reviewed and updated annually, and in an electronic degree audit system that is available to current students and their advisors. The self-study asserts that all media sources are reviewed and assessed annually. The Board of Regents' Five-Year Plan and the UI Strategic Plan are publicly available on the Board and UI websites, respectively. The evaluator could not find any public-facing information that demonstrates that UI academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. The institutional research website (<http://www.uidaho.edu/research/institutional-research-and-assessment/retention-graduation>) has overall six-year graduation rates and a breakdown by school/college, gender, ethnicity, and other student characteristics, which somewhat addresses this point, but which would not be easy for an average student or prospective student to find.

2.A.22. As is typical of public institutions, the University of Idaho operates under state and federal regulations, Board policies and regulations, and institutional policies and procedures designed to ensure that all employees and students are aware of requirements for fairness and ethical conduct, and that faculty, staff, and students are treated fairly and equitably. UI has established employee appeal and grievance procedures and student academic appeal and judicial processes. These are published in the Faculty-Staff Handbook and the Administrative Procedures Manual. New employee orientation includes an overview of ethical requirements, as does an annual professional development program provided to new administrators. Specialized training is provided as needed, e.g., to meet the requirements of funding agencies. UI has the usual committees charged with oversight of ethics in research, namely an Institutional Research Board and an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Internal Audit examines adherence to certain ethics policies, such as those concerned with conflicts of interest, in the course of its audits.

2.A.23. The University of Idaho is governed by Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education policies the prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of the Board members, University administrators, faculty, and staff. These policies are consistent with Idaho state law concerning ethical conduct by public employees. UI is a public institution and does not have unusual conduct requirements nor does it seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews.

2.A.24. The University of Idaho has policies on intellectual property that are consistent with federal and state laws and with the policies of the Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education.

2.A.25. The University of Idaho website (<http://www.uidaho.edu/about/accreditation>) accurately reports UI accreditation standards in conformity with this standard: “The University of Idaho is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, which recognizes our compliance with its standards of higher education.”

2.A.26. The University of Idaho has established policies, processes, and oversight to ensure that contractual agreements with external entities have clear terms and are designed to meet the needs and to maintain the integrity of the institution. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education maintains direct oversight of large contracts (in excess of \$1 million), and delegates authority for smaller contracts to its Executive Director (\$0.5 to \$1 million) or the UI president (less than \$0.5 million), who may further delegate his authority within UI. Contracting is controlled centrally through the office of Purchasing Services. There is a contract approval matrix (<http://www.uidaho.edu/apm/60/20>) that assures appropriate review and approval by UI administrators responsible for the operational area of the contract. The matrix provides for Dean, VP Research, and Provost/Executive Vice President approval of professional services contracts in the areas of research and instruction.

2.A.27. The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment. As demonstrated in trainings and online materials, faculty are encouraged to exhibit the highest ethical standards, as well as to distinguish their scholarship from personal opinions.

2.A.28. This standard is met through policies from the University of Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education (Governing Policies and Procedures III.B) and the University of Idaho Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH 3160) that support the rights and responsibilities of faculty. In addition, Core Theme Four focuses on creating an ethical and open environment, which emphasizes the institution’s commitment to these principles. Other policies related to research (FSH 1565) and tenure (FSH 3520) also foster this environment of academic freedom.

2.A.29. This standard is supported by FSH 3160 in the Faculty-Staff Handbook, which allows faculty to speak as citizens, but also clarifies that they do not speak for the university. Faculty members are encouraged to differentiate between their scholarly work and their personal opinions.

2.A.30. The University of Idaho follows Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education Policies and Procedures. Additional University policies have been established and published in the Administrative Procedures Manual. The policies and procedures address all of the areas required by the standard.

Standard 2.B. Human Resources

2.B.1. The University of Idaho is strongly committed to their professional staff. Policies outlined in the Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH) and the Administrative Procedures Manual (APM) are generally clear and descriptive regarding expectations for service and review. Hiring and employment trends are tracked by the University with particular interest in Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity issues. Potential openings and candidates are reviewed at several points during all hiring opportunities. Human Resource personnel monitor all hiring processes and are available for consultation through individuals assigned to each functional area. Job descriptions are required for each position on campus and are regularly reviewed.

These descriptions are used for annual reviews to determine levels of performance and proficiency and training requirements for new hires and incumbents.

The Human Resource website clearly describes available job openings, types of responsibilities, salary ranges, benefits and other compensation. The nature of the opening, whether it is permanent or temporary, and other contact information is also made available. Information regarding employee review, rights and Human Resource practices are also easily navigated on-line.

The current faculty appears well prepared and engaged. By report of the University, seventy-nine percent of the faculty is at the doctoral level. Thirty-eight percent of the faculty has achieved the full professor rank, with associate and assistant professors each representing approximately twenty seven percent of the total faculty. Instructor rank faculty represent only eight percent of the teaching faculty. The University of Idaho utilizes a large number of graduate teaching assistants, but few adjunct faculty members, and has a strong tradition of employing tenure-track faculty. Reported faculty salaries appear regionally comparable for public institutions. The current student-faculty ratio is approximately 17 to 1 by their report.

Standard 2.B.1. Concern: There appears to have been a considerable change in senior leadership at the University of Idaho during the past 3 ½ years. During that time the University has selected a new President, an interim Provost & Executive Vice President, Vice President of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, and five new deans, as well as several additional high-level administrators. Searches are continuing for a permanent Provost & Executive Vice President, two senior vice presidents and other University executives. Changes of this magnitude may potentially disturb the continuity of executive leadership on campus. The President reports turnover of University employees at 14% for faculty and 18% for staff annually. Additionally, there is considerable concern among university mid-level management and staff that recent classification and compensation issues will result in an increased difficulty in the hiring and retention of qualified employees.

2.B.2. As noted above, the University of Idaho utilizes a comprehensive program of evaluation for all employees. Staff performance evaluations are conducted during the period of December-February. Each staff employee is evaluated in reference to their job description and current level of adherence to job requirements. Procedures regarding these evaluations are prescribed in the Faculty/Staff Handbook. Supervisory personnel receive annual training regarding the evaluation of their assigned employees and may request additional assistance from Human Resource personnel. Goals and objectives for the coming year are discussed with the employee being evaluated in a face to face (interactive) discussion with their supervisor. The employee is given the opportunity to comment on the elements of the evaluation and future performance expectations. Human Resource officials reported a 99.2% completion rate for staff performance evaluations during the last review period.

2.B.3. The University provides evidence of a commitment to continued educational and personal growth for their employees. They offer a range of individual programs, on-line instruction and developmental workshops to encourage life-long learning and upward mobility. A large function of Human Resources, the Professional Development and Learning (PDL) unit, is tasked with this responsibility. They provide instruction in a New Employee Orientation, assistance for those assuming new or managerial responsibilities and encourage employees to explore diversity and human rights issues. Exploring the PDL website illustrates a broad selection of activities that employees can engage in to increase their knowledge of their jobs or be ready for additional opportunities to serve the University. University employees are also encouraged to explore additional educational opportunities available to them by University benefit.

Commendation: The University of Idaho is commended for its Leadership Academy and its multiyear effort to promote professional development, build capacity for the institution, and train staff and faculty leaders.

2.B.4. As mentioned in response to standard 2.B.1, the University of Idaho employs a sufficient number of dedicated faculty members to meet their programmatic and educational requirements. Their reported 17 to 1 FTE student to faculty ratio and consistent use of permanent or tenured faculty provides an opportunity for close student engagement consistent with their stated University objectives. Potential faculty openings are reviewed by the Colleges with the Provost & Executive Vice President regularly. The instructional and programmatic needs of the University are carefully considered before permission to advertise openings is granted. Faculty search objectives are discussed in terms of stated learning and University priorities. The Faculty Senate is active in helping explore and approve academic policies. Each potential hire is discussed in view of the changing needs of the UI.

2.B.5. Faculty expectations are outlined in the Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH). Each faculty member receives an annual position description detailing their responsibilities in each of four areas. These include teaching and advising, scholarship and creative activities, outreach and extension and University Service and leadership. Specific areas may change with the assumption of additional duties by the faculty member as directed by the department chair and college dean. For example, a faculty member who receives a chairmanship may have duties in other areas reduced as needed. Additionally a special University assignment for assessment may reduce a teaching load. These changes are determined by rank, college, discipline and University role. Accordingly, individuals are evaluated in reference to their accomplishment of the outlined duties for that year. Changes may also be made mid-year as needed and as agreeable to the University and the faculty member. Positions are generally for the 9 month academic calendar or a fiscal year which begins on July 1st. Faculty reviews generally occur in January or February.

2.B.6. The University outlines a systematic means of annual faculty review in their documents and procedures. As noted previously, each faculty member is evaluated annually and must provide: 1) a current faculty vitae, 2) a University of Idaho Faculty Position Description for their position, and 3) a detailed summary of their faculty activity for the year. The summary is evaluated in reference to the job description and any agreed upon modifications of the four criterion areas described in Standard 2.B.5. In-person evaluative sessions may be requested between the faculty member and the area administrator, be it the department chair or area supervisor. Each area of review is evaluated on a 5 point scale from 5: exceptional performance to 1: unacceptable performance. These records are reviewed at higher levels and are due for Provost & Executive Vice President review by the end of February.

If the faculty member is rated at a 2 (below expectations) in any of the four areas, the administrator will offer to meet with the faculty member to discuss ways that the area might be improved or resources that might be utilized to improve performance. If the overall rating of the member is a 2 or less, a faculty mentoring committee may be organized within the area to outline actions for improvement for the faculty member. Specific and detailed actions are recommended to the faculty member to improve performance. The annual reviews of performance are a major factor in the tenure process at the University of Idaho. This process is well established and is found in the Faculty-Staff Handbook in subsections 3520 and 3530. Provisions are also made for post tenure review for tenured faculty who fail to meet appropriate standards (three annual reviews at an overall level 2 or below). Such circumstances are reviewed by the Provost & Executive Vice President for possible remediation efforts or termination for cause. The Provost/Executive Vice President's Office is responsible for the management of requisite faculty documents.

Standard 2.C. Education Resources

2.C.1. The University offers programs that are in line with its land grant and research mission. Learning outcomes have been developed and posted online for UI's degree and certificate programs, which are available at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The degrees cover traditional disciplinary topics as well as several innovative interdisciplinary areas.

2.C.2. Learning outcomes are outlined at the course, degree, and University levels. The University learning outcomes are posted through the *General Catalog*, and degree outcomes are contained on the institution's assessment website. Associate deans and department chairs in the various units review course syllabi to ensure that learning outcomes are appropriately developed.

2.C.3. Credits and degrees are awarded based on University of Idaho Board of Regents and State Board of Education policies, as well as regulations in the University's *General Catalog*. Student achievement is documented through records that are available to both students and advisors.

2.C.4. Admission requirements are consistent with University of Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education policy (III.Q) and are published through the *General Catalog* (under "Admission to the University") as well as on the Admissions page of the University of Idaho website.

In the same way, graduation requirements are established, published and regulated. Again, minimum requirements for degrees follow University of Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education (III.E, 8/11-12/2010 Meeting Notes on "Instruction, Research and Student Affairs"). These guidelines form the base for UI policies and expectations. The *General Catalog*, "College of Graduate Studies" details general and specific requirements. Advisors rely on Degree Audit for tracking student progress. Both undergraduate and graduate degrees include appropriate curricula, and a culminating or capstone project in most disciplines.

2.C.5. At the UI, faculty have principal authority and responsibility for the development and teaching of curriculum, the identification of learning outcomes, and the assessment of student learning. Curriculum improvement occurs at the departmental level and curriculum management process in the college. Curriculum "items" approval moves from the College to the University Curriculum Committee to the Faculty Senate for review. Ultimately the report goes to the President and Board of Regents. These processes are described in the Faculty-Staff Handbook, FSH 1540. Faculty discuss learning outcomes assessment and discuss areas for improvement, a process of "closing the loop" that is managed by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

2.C.6. This standard was met very effectively through a variety of methods, and the integration of library resources throughout the University is quite strong.

Compliment: The faculty recently finished an excellent mapping project that aligned courses with library instruction to national standards of information literacy. The mapping revealed that these standards are being taught to a significant degree at both the lower and upper division undergraduate levels. Faculty library liaisons are providing much of the outreach in the upper division courses and capstone courses. Information literacy assessment is also conducted by faculty teams in the ISEM 101 courses. The results from the pre- and post-test rubrics showed significant gains in the use of bibliographies, as well as research and writing skills.

2.C.7. The UI evaluates petitions for credit for prior learning through procedures established by the Office of the Registrar and published in the *General Catalog*. Students must complete a comprehensive

portfolio to document their prior learning. The portfolio is reviewed by teaching faculty and approved by the department and the registrar before credit is awarded. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning Standards are used in the review, and credit is awarded only at the undergraduate level. Any credit awarded is identified on the transcript as experiential learning credit, with a grade of “pass”. Catalog Policy J-5-b. appears to allow up to 48 experiential learning credits to be granted (“Forty-eight credits in any combination for...credit based on test scores, credit by examination, experiential learning, independent study...”) This exceeds the standard of 25% of total credits needed for a degree, but the self-study notes that the policy is under review owing to the reduction of most baccalaureate degree credit requirements from 128 to 120. UI should ensure that the revised policy complies with the standard.

2.C.8. This standard is fully met through the comprehensive set of transfer credit policies and processes maintained by the institution and overseen on a statewide level by State Board of Education. Strong articulation agreements exist between this institution and other Idaho state universities and colleges. The university has a rigorous process for evaluating transfer credit requests that places final decision authority with faculty. Proper processes are in place to ensure that transfer credit is only granted for non-regionally accredited institutions after extensive review.

2.C.9. Recent revision of the General Education curriculum and requirements are included in the 2011-12 University of Idaho *General Catalog*. Core requirements include the ISEM 101 integrated seminar in the first year and the ISEM 301 Great Issues, American Diversity, and Senior Experience at the end of their undergraduate study. General Education requirements are published in the *General Catalog* under “General Education Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees” or on the General Education website. The two ISEM courses have involved faculty from Engineering to History and from Business to Journalism in teaching classes that demonstrate integrated thinking, a core value of the UI.

This intentional design for an integrated General Education experience is to be commended, as is the plan for learning outcomes assessment. Because it is new, on-going assessment will demonstrate the efficacy of the approach, but the review team deems it a promising start. There is considerable enthusiasm on campus about the new direction of General Education that has engaged faculty across campus in the teaching of the ISEM 101 and 301 courses. These two classes provide a unique opportunity to assess the longitudinal impact of integrated learning and General Education, and will undoubtedly lead to future strengthening of the program.

Commendation: The University of Idaho is commended for its innovative and interdisciplinary General Education reforms. The General Education Integrated Seminars (ISEM) courses are developmentally sequenced and connected with the majors, which is an excellent model for other universities seeking to enhance their General Education curriculum. Also notable is the well-designed General Education assessment process, which is multifaceted and robust. These assessment practices include an evaluation of students’ writing in the first-year Integrated Seminar (ISEM 101) courses, as well as other direct and indirect assessments.

2.C.10. The General Education learning outcomes are based on the University’s learning outcomes, which in turn are well integrated with the General Education outcomes across the state. These also correspond nicely to the Essential Learning Outcomes of the “Liberal Education and America’s Promise” initiative.

The assessment rubrics used for General Education are also based on best practices, and are modifications of AAC&U’s VALUE Rubrics. These rubrics are currently used in ISEM 101 and ISEM 301, and they will be used in the ISEM capstone courses, which will allow for the longitudinal tracking of students’ learning gains.

2.C.11. This standard is met in the University's 35 certificate programs, which have each identified appropriate learning outcomes. The institution does not offer applied degree programs. Courses embedded outside of certificates are also monitored to ensure that faculty have appropriate qualifications.

2.C.12. The College of Graduate Studies promotes high quality graduate education, which in the best scenarios, capitalizes on the unique opportunities presented by funded, interdisciplinary research institutes. These programs are integral to the research mission of the institution and produce master's and doctoral students who contribute to UI's land grant mission and future careers in their fields. Graduate degrees have greater depth and breadth in their disciplines and engage students in scholarly research or creative activity.

The College of Graduate Studies awards graduate faculty status to faculty who teach graduate level courses and manage scholarly activities. It has a Graduate Council that reviews policy, assessment and the review of programs of study as described in the Faculty-Staff Handbook, FSH 1700, Article VI.

2.C.13. The principal role of the Graduate Studies office is graduate admissions, with the Graduate Council determining University-wide admission requirements such as the 3.0 GPA minimum requirement. Faculty in departments and colleges design degree programs, requirements and expectations. The role of the Graduate Studies office is to apply these requirements in the admission process. There are special processes for international students and transfer students.

2.C.14. Graduate Programs permit the granting of credit for activity beyond traditional coursework or research activity, provided these are tied to learning outcomes. The policy of the Graduate Studies office allows up to 12 credit hours of non-matriculated coursework from accredited graduate degree granting institutions, internships and clinical practicums, and appropriate exposure to the field of study.

2.C.15. The range of scholarly and creative activities at UI is reflected in the breadth of degrees offered. Research degrees such as the Ph.D., M.A. and M.S., creative degrees such as the M.F.A. and M.Mus., and professional degrees such as the M.A.T., M.Acct., M.Arch., M.B.A., M.Ed., M.Engr., M.L.A., M.N.R., M.P.A., M.S.A.T., P.S.M., Ed. Spec., D.A.T., and Ed.D. all promote excellence and depth of knowledge or capabilities, and prepare students for future research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation.

2.C.16. The University of Idaho, consistent with its mission and goals, offers continuing education units (CEUs) to enhance the learning of both current students and industry professionals.

2.C.17. This standard is met through the central role of the academic colleges in reviewing and approving continuing education offerings. The institution's CEU Course Request Form process governs the development and implementation of continuing education courses and programs.

2.C.18. This standard is satisfied through the application of guidelines of the national Task Force on the Continuing Education Unit. The granting of CEUs is grounded in institutional mission, is applied consistently across the institution, and is linked to identified learning outcomes.

2.C.19. This standard is met through the central coordination of the Office of the Registrar, and records of all CEU courses are maintained in the institution's databases.

Standard 2.D. Student Support Resources

2.D.1. The University of Idaho provides quality student services in a beautiful setting to create an effective learning environment. The main campus is large with more than 1,500 acres of space in a

picturesque college community. Surrounding areas are forested with rolling hills and a rural feel. The campus boasts its own 18 hole golf course, a large arboretum, classic architecture in many of its older buildings and deeply held college traditions. The University is firmly ingrained in the fabric of the local community. Students are frequently engaged in community activities and service.

UI provides numerous activities outside the classroom to accomplish its goals of engagement and involved learning, including internships, study abroad opportunities and active learning communities. Long standing ROTC programs for the US Army, Navy and Air Force are available and supported on campus. Student participation at University sponsored extension centers and activities are consistent with UI's Land Grant mission.

The institution provides adequate student services to meet individual needs and eliminate personal barriers to the educational process. Included are the following:

- Student Health Center, which provides medical services and treatment. Medical coverage is currently outsourced to a community family practice clinic which offers regular office hours and urgent care provision. Each student must be enrolled in the University health plan paid by student fee or show proof of adequate individual health insurance coverage while a student at UI.
- Counseling and Testing Center, which provides individual and group psychotherapy, access to psychiatric services for medication, stress management and biofeedback training, and treatment for depression, anxiety, and relationship issues. The center also provides educational and disabilities testing for students when required.
- Academic Advising Office, which provides assistance for students in helping them “define educational goals” and track progress toward graduation.
- The Career Center, which helps students prepare for job searches and employer interviews and negotiations.
- Student Financial Aid services, which provide assistance to students regarding applications for University and federal aid, grants and scholarships.
- Tutoring and Academic Assistance Programs, which provide assistance with student learning as implied.
- Campus Safety Office (Please see 2. D.2 for details.)
- Disability Support Services, which provides support for students with documented learning difficulties and assists with accommodations in accordance with federal law.

2.D.2. The University has engaged in a significant number of public safety initiatives since their last review. The UI self-report documents at least 15 major programs involving students, faculty and the University community at large which have established in the last four years. These programs include bystander intervention programs that aim to prevent sexual abuse and harassment, suicide, gender-based violence, and hate crimes. A Threat Assessment and Management Team has also been created and trained. This has led to a greater sense of personal involvement and safety within the campus environment.

The University employs a private security firm, Barton Security Services, to provide unarmed 24 hour patrols on campus to identify unsafe situations, protect University and personal assets and property and offer information and assistance. They also provide “safe walk” services when requested. These services reduce theft and vandalism and increase safety awareness. Law enforcement responsibilities on campus are handled by the Moscow Police Department which provides a dedicated unit of uniformed officers to the University. They respond to criminal activity and violations of state code and traffic offenses. They also provide criminal investigation services when required. They are armed and state certified.

The University maintains an Emergency Management Plan as required. They also have public safety and security programs to protect not only the students and other members of the University family, but also the assets of UI to include electronic and computer security. They publish the required documents for review in each of these areas. Their Clery Act report on crime statistics and campus safety and their Comprehensive Emergency Plan are outstanding and could be used as an example to other colleges and universities.

Commendation: The University of Idaho is commended for its significant efforts over the past four years to improve public safety on campus and engage the University community in taking personal responsibility to insure the welfare of others.

2.D.3. Admission to the University of Idaho is selective and based on the likelihood of successful student matriculation. Student admission is controlled by the Enrollment Management unit of the Student Affairs division which oversees the Undergraduate Admissions Office. Requirements for admissions are clearly articulated in all University admissions documents and on the website. These requirements are reviewed for accuracy for each admissions cycle. Admissions specialists are well trained and aware of the requirements. The admissions website is clearly marked and directed for the various admissions types including new freshmen, transfer students, graduate students, and international student applications. On campus visits and telephonic contact for assistance are encouraged.

Most incoming undergraduates participate in a day long orientation program referred to as “Vandal Friday”. During these programs, incoming students are provided “extensive academic information about requirements and policies, as well as initial advisement and registration” for coursework for the upcoming semester. Graduate students receive direct advisement from their graduate advisor prior to registration. The University is engaged in a consultative review of historical admissions data to insure that they are in harmony with their traditional role as a Land Grant university and current reported mission statement objectives. Planning for “Vandal Friday” programs has included greater collaboration with Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, the colleges and other units. Recruiting Coordination Workshops have been established to allow interaction and training by admissions staff with individuals in the colleges that assist in recruitment efforts at UI. Greater emphasis has been placed on the recruitment of multi-cultural and international students and others from underserved populations, through improved recruitment materials and tracking.

2.D.4. As noted in the *General Catalog*, General Requirements and Procedures section under “Rights Reserved to the University”, programs or courses of study can be eliminated, significantly altered or withdrawn. This follows a review and recommendation of the department and college, the University Curriculum Committee, and University Faculty Senate. Such recommendations are then evaluated by the President before they are submitted to the State Board of Regents/State Board of Education for adoption.

If such an action is approved, the University notifies each student who is in the declared instructional program and regularly evaluates their progress towards completion of the program. Students who are within two years of graduation through normal progress standards are given every opportunity to complete the eliminated programs. They are sent e-mails each semester as reminders noting their progress, remaining program support and encouraging regular meetings with their program advisors to insure their completion within the specified time requirements.

2.D.5. The University of Idaho provides an extensive on-line catalog for review as reflected in the requirements of standard 2. D.5. Student policies regarding admission, tuition, academic calendaring, classes, major and minor requirements, academic honesty and academic standards are easily accessible. Faculty information is also retrievable. However, while the recently approved (2014) Student Code of Conduct is briefly mentioned in the Catalog, it is not easily located there. It is listed as available in the

Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH) and in a pamphlet available in the Dean of Students Office under the title of “Policies and Information of Interest to Students”. It is suggested that the Student Code of Conduct be considered for a more prominent place in University student publications so that students may be more informed regarding its requirements, safeguards and obligations.

2.D.6. The *General Catalog* of the University provides information regarding programs which are offered at bachelor’s and graduate levels for which certifications or licenses are approved. Occasional references are mentioned regarding licensure requirements such as the bar exam for the Law School and teaching certification. However, particular requirements for these occupational areas are more difficult to find within the individual unit reviews or descriptions.

2.D.7. The University follows appropriate practices with respect to the retention, retrieval or access and review of official student records. Records are stored in accordance with State of Idaho and AACRAO guidelines. Electronic records are secured as required and backed up automatically. Imaged records and paper files are destroyed in accordance with recognized industry standards of practice. FERPA guidelines (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) are followed closely with respect to access or release of information. Training is required for faculty and staff who have access to student records before access is granted and the University catalog provides instruction to students as to the use of their record. The release of student information is also reviewed on the registrar’s office website.

2.D.8. The UI provided evidence of their assistance to students who seek financial aid during their matriculation. Internal grants-in-aid and scholarships currently account for approximately 25 million dollars in available funds for students. The University also disperses approximately 90 million dollars in federal grants and loans annually. A web link directly off the University home page provides easily understood information regarding “Paying for College”. The various forms of available assistance to students are discussed including scholarships, grants, and loans of all types. The descriptions and payment requirements of each of the various University awards and federal loans are discussed. The cost of education at the University is easily accessed, so inquiring students have a reasonable idea of their potential financial responsibility before admission.

2.D.9. The information provided to potential and attending students encourages accruing a limited debt load during matriculation. The University also takes an active role in encouraging students to repay their debt as soon as possible. Links are provided to federal loan information sources as well, at studentloans.gov from the “Paying for College” website. Exit counseling for loan repayment is available to all students and continues after graduation. Individuals can contact the University post-graduation for counseling in debt repayment strategies. The University tracks annual loan repayment default rates for their three-year post-graduation cohort as required. For the most recent reporting period the default rate was 8.3%. This is currently below the national average. A recent Department of Education formal financial audit conducted regarding the University’s policies and procedures was closed without institutional liability or sanctions recommended.

2.D.10. The institution employs a hybrid advisement model utilizing both faculty and staff advisors. Students are required to seek advisement before they register for each semester of coursework. Advisors refer to provided University written materials and websites to comment on student progress towards graduation, career path preparation, required and elective course selection and any other student questions. Faculty members who serve as advisors do so as part of their faculty stewardship requirements and receive evaluation of their efforts during their annual performance review. Students who struggle with their academic standing during their first year at UI are encouraged to attend the Student Options Advising Retreat (SOAR) where they are presented options to review study and time management skills to improve performance, discuss their individual studying issues and look for other ways to improve academic performance.

Advisors receive opportunities for training and development before the assumption of their duties and are encouraged to continually develop their skills. This occurs through local monthly in-services; an annual advisement symposium co-sponsored with Washington State University, and suggested reading materials to enhance their advisement skills. Staff advisors are also encouraged to affiliate with regional and national advisement organizations such as NACADA. During the past five years, the institution has surveyed the student body regarding their satisfaction with their advising and to query advisors on perceived training needs. Future advisement training will proceed from the results of these surveys.

Compliment: The University of Idaho is complimented for its recently improved advisor training.

2.D.11. The University provides a large number of co-curricular activities for students which are largely focused on achieving their core themes and learning outcomes. Wherever possible, activities are planned to incorporate one or more of these accepted goals and objectives. Vehicles for experiences in these functions include various living and learning housing communities, academic and social clubs, the Associated Students-University of Idaho, the Residence Hall Association and fraternity and sorority councils.

Many of the activities are service related and focused on community engagement. Most involve student leadership and foster exposure to diversity in experiences with “people, ideas and perspectives.” Students are encouraged to use the knowledge they acquire at the University to make a difference in the world around them. Co-curricular involvement gives the students opportunities to practice their skills and learn self-governance. They also learn to be open to new experiences and people, be creative in many domains and incorporate appropriate forms of recreation in their lives to achieve personal balance and perspective.

2.D.12. The University of Idaho operates a number of functions within the Auxiliary Services organization which provide support to the educational mission of the main campus and its satellites. These include University Housing, dining services (Vandal Dining Services), bookstore operations (VandalStore), Parking and Transportation Services, and the University of Idaho Golf Course. These units are self-sustaining and operate to address the housing, dining and recreational needs of students and create a desired “welcoming community” environment. Auxiliary Services focuses on student success and retention by fostering learning communities within the housing units, helping to identify students who are struggling and providing student programming to encourage community engagement and improve social relationships. The Vandal Dining Services offers a variety of meal options to meet student schedules and dietary needs, increasing convenience while helping to maintain student health. The VandalStore tracks the educational materials requirements of the University with an eye to using new methods of retail and purchasing to reduce costs. Each of these units has an advisory board involving student, staff and faculty members soliciting feedback on operations and costs. Students and faculty have a voice on proposed rate and service changes and constituents are frequently surveyed regarding their satisfaction with current service levels.

2.D.13. The UI Athletics Department was certified by the NCAA in 2005, and follows the national requirements of the governing body for eligibility, academic progress and graduation rates. In 2006, an Assistant Registrar for Athletic Compliance position was created to insure that student athletes who were recruited met the necessary requirements and were correctly evaluated annually. Eligibility requirements are strictly enforced. There is some discrepancy in the reported number of intercollegiate sports sponsored by the University. The self-study suggests that there are 16; however the athletics web-site reports that there are 14; six men’s teams and eight women’s teams. The University reports that 14 of the 16 teams exceed the NCAA requirement for academic progress rate (APR) with men’s football and golf being slightly below the recommended threshold. They relate that corrective actions are in progress with

these teams to meet the requirements in the future. The UI reports that the graduation rate for student athletes is higher than the institution's overall rate (p. 91 of the self-study).

As noted in the University's self-study, "intercollegiate athletics at the University of Idaho operates under the same admissions requirements, degree requirements and financial award requirements as all other UI units." They acknowledge that academic support for student athletes with learning difficulties and other educational issues has been problematic in the past. In 2006, only one full time FTE was dedicated to student athlete academics. Now there are three full time employees and two graduate students who serve the athletes. However, demand for services continues to increase and they have had to eliminate some testing services that they previously provided. The University has identified increasing staffing levels at the Athletic Academic Support Services as a future priority. They are reviewing services at peer institutions to determine requirements.

2.D.14. The University reports the usage of standard industry identification and verification procedures with regard to their on-line educational programs. Students enrolled in the programs must use secure logins and passwords to test or submit assignments. Additionally, the Engineering outreach program requires the use of proctors for exams in that discipline. Individuals must secure an independent person to serve in that function and update the proctor directory each semester or whenever a person must be replaced. The student is required to pay for the fees required for proctors. A listing of the types of individuals who may serve in this function is provided.

Standard 2.E. Library and Information Resources

2.E.1. The University of Idaho Library and University of Idaho Law Library serve the faculty and students of the institution through the development of their own collections of print and electronic resources as well as by providing access to commercial databases, electronic periodicals, and consortial materials. Consistent with the land grant mission of the University, both libraries joined the Orbis Cascade Alliance in 2011, connecting the institution to the libraries of thirty six other colleges and universities in the Northwest and providing access to 9.2 million titles.

A flat budget for the Library is resulting in fewer acquisitions and greater difficulty in recruiting and retaining library faculty and staff. Positions are often held open for extended periods either for budget savings or due to the inability to attract qualified candidates. Some relief on library resources has been provided through a central university allocation for annual periodical inflation and by grants for building renovations. The latter has been successfully leveraged by the Library for additional external fundraising efforts. Anticipated enrollment growth and an expansion of research support will strain existing Library resources.

2.E.2. Following the development of the University of Idaho's strategic plan for 2011-2015, Library leadership, faculty, and staff collaborated to create a matching unit-level strategic plan. This plan includes statements of vision, mission, and values as well as goals that reflect the objectives and core themes of the University.

The Library collects data on usage, satisfaction, and instruction. Circulation statistics, website counters, and interlibrary loan tracking inform purchasing and collection decisions. Assessment is measured periodically through the Association of Research Libraries LibQUAL+ survey instrument. Previous LibQUAL+ surveys have occurred just after major changes, prompting the library to move its next assessment to 2016 due to its recent integrated library system migration. The Library is currently participating in The Library Association of College and Research Libraries' Assessment in Action program to assess the impact of library instruction on first year student success, retention and perceptions.

Ad hoc and informal feedback is provided through the relationships developed between Library Liaisons and the faculty members they support.

2.E.3. Instructional support for undergraduate students is provided through components of Integrated Seminar (ISEM) and General Education composition courses. Graduate students are supported through the Research Colloquium Series and skills training workshops. Support for faculty is provided through the Library Liaison program, which pairs librarians with specific colleges and areas of expertise. Faculty members may also schedule individual appointments with librarians for assistance. On demand Library support is provided for any constituent, including the general public, through reference desk services. Only limited support is available online and for distance education students.

2.E.4. Library assessment data from multiple sources, including LibQUAL+, Assessment in Action, student evaluations and faculty evaluations of library instruction, is regularly reported to the campus. Statistics on collection size, acquisitions, and utilization of library services is collected annually and posted for university review. A comprehensive annual report is developed and published with summaries of past activities, current projects, and future plans. However, assessment data and evaluation information concerning the Law Library collection and services is not available.

The institution meets this standard with the condition that regular assessment and review of the Law Library is initiated.

Standard 2.F. Financial Resources

2.F.1. The university has adequate financial resources to address current needs and existing debt service. Additionally, adequate fund balances exist to support the institution during short term impacts.

The use of the Consolidated Financial Index is a good practice and provides a solid dashboard view of the overall financial health of the university. Although there are some challenges in relying solely on the indexes for fiscal health, the ratios provide a helpful trend analysis and are one additional tool to help measure the health of the institution's finances. The university has been using this measure since 2012 and the trajectory has been going in the right direction.

Use of the Vandal Strategic Loan Fund (VSLF) appears to be a well-structured method for addressing the use of fund balances. This practice is a positive way to leverage the university resources and put the money to work while still incentivizing good fiscal management.

Compliment: The use of the VSLF is an inventive method to leverage institutional resources while still encouraging good fiscal management at the departmental level.

The university's debt management plan is based on a conservative financial projection and should be obtainable given a stable enrollment. Given the potential for a decline in enrollment the university may want to consider what level of enrollment/funding decrease may impact the plan and set aside adequate reserves to cover any potential shortfall, if the margins are tight.

2.F.2. The university has incorporated good practices to drive down the costs of benefits in the Education and General (E&G) budgets and is making obvious efforts to control costs and capitalize on the new ability to charge tuition. Additionally, the restructuring of how they award and manage Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) created positive net tuition revenue from past practices. While these practices, and others such as bringing in the consulting firm Noel-Levitz, represent good business practices, there is not much evidence that planning and development are addressing new initiatives in the

area of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources. It is evident that the university is monitoring enrollment and the potential impact shifts in credit hour requirements, neighboring institutions, and high school demographics can have.

2.F.3. The internal budget process is relatively open and inclusive allowing for good opportunities for participation by the constituencies. Most the direct involvement, however, is at the administrative level. The campus at large has the ability to engage in the process through the University Budget and Finance Committee. However the involvement is mostly dependent on the leadership of the committee, rather than the committee being engaged formally in the process. Additionally, the campus can engage in the process at the departmental level to the extent desired by the individual employees.

Although the budget process is not formally documented, there is an internal calendar (maintained by the budget office) that triggers the various meetings and information reporting deadlines.

Concerns:

- The budget process could be better documented and communicated across the campus. It isn't formally documented and sustainability of the process with administrator turnover could be problematic.
- The process is largely focused on requests for additional base or one-time funding. Developing a methodology to address negative budget cycles before they occur would help prepare the university for potential challenges in the future.

2.F.4. The financial information and reporting is well documented and utilizes Banner for the enterprise system. Additionally, the use of internal auditing staff continuously monitors processes and controls to ensure compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. All modifications to the systems are thoroughly tested by staging updates before releasing them into production. This provides a safe environment for testing by the departments to ensure functionality before going live.

Financial statements, inclusive of component units, are prepared quarterly and presented to the Board of Regents quarterly as well. This practice, while requiring significant effort, provides consistent, frequent monitoring of the financials (cash flow) for the university and helps ensure financial targets are on track.

Compliment: The use of quarterly financial statements, while time consuming, provides a much clearer picture of the financial status of the institutional than annual reports.

2.F.5. The university prepares an annual capital budget request in accordance with state guidelines. This process includes the involvement of key leadership and recently has been included in the budget hearing process to improve awareness and generate greater support for the projects.

The campus master plan is reviewed annually by university administration and numerous other key constituents. The plan is well documented and shows a clear tie to the university's core themes and mission and projects the capital needs for the upcoming six years.

Facilities sets aside a budget annually to address emerging ADA needs.

Compliments:

- The facilities group has done an excellent job documenting the planning process and ensuring it is tied to the institution's core themes.
- The Assistant Vice President for Facilities was able to discuss each of the themes and demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the mission and strategic plan.

2.F.6. The institution has classified the transfer of funds into four categories as noted in the self-assessment document. As a course of practice, funds are not transferred directly from auxiliaries without justification and negotiated assessments. Additionally, no general funds are permitted to be transferred to support auxiliary operations. While a financial relationship is not formally documented, the relationship and practice was clearly understood between the different organizations.

2.F.7. The university undergoes annual external financial audits and provides adequate reporting and attention to the reports and findings.

2.F.8. The university's advancement division partners with the University of Idaho Foundation for fundraising activities. The operating agreement is in writing and clearly defines the relationship and duties of each party associated with fund raising activities.

Standard 2.G. Physical and Technological Infrastructure

2.G.1. The institution's facilities are attractive and appear to be well maintained. Funding for deferred maintenance falls well short of the national benchmark standards identified in the report. While the university is operating with fewer resources than national comparators (APPA averages according to the self-study) the institution has an informative process that identifies the greatest priorities to ensure the institutional needs are being addressed. An inventory of deferred maintenance shows an increasing annual rate of growth that is not being addressed.

The University has made a solid effort to reduce workers compensation claims with the lowest loss ratio on record in 2013. In recent years, the university has developed a self-report/identify plan to address life safety issues. The reduction in claims has been partly attributed to this plan. The university has adequate documentation to demonstrate fire and life safety systems are being maintained and inspected routinely.

Quality and quantity of space is considered adequate for the current level and distribution of research. Future expansion of research, however, will be hampered without the increase of additional space. The new IRIC building will be a great resource to help with this need.

The concept being tested by the College of Art & Architecture, "faculty studio", is interesting and would provide a substantial benefit in generating space for the additional faculty and staff offices needed for anticipated growth. The results of this experiment will provide some valuable information to help determine how best to meet the future demand for office space.

2.G.2. The university has developed clear policies and procedures to address the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous and toxic materials. The policy is administered under the direction of the Vice President for Finance. Additionally, training for staff and employees is required under section 35.40 of the Administrative Procedures Manual. Verification that this training is occurring is made by the Vice President's Office through the utilization of Net Learning.

2.G.3. The Campus Master Plan was developed in the 1990s and undergoes occasional comprehensive reviews with annual updates. The plan is based on an "umbrella concept" in that future buildings are not specifically identified but rather space is identified across the campus on possible sites. When buildings are funded, or near that stage, the specific location is identified and incorporated into the planning.

There is good documentation and evidence that the master plan was developed with the institution mission and strategic plan as the driver. Additionally, substantial involvement from the institutional stakeholders was also evident.

2.G.4. The university has recently adopted a methodology for ensuring that equipment purchases are not duplicated and are focused on long term needs of the institution. The establishment of core facilities that are shared by different programs and colleges will provide a much greater leveraging of resources if it is successful. Overall, it is apparent that the university has sufficient equipment (quality and quantity) to fulfill its current functions and mission.

2.G.5. All of the groups interviewed agreed that there is adequate technology to support the mission of the university; however, they almost all commented on the lack of IT support. This lack of support creates long lead times for implementation and is impacting some programs ability to teach and provide research. The lack of support was attributed to the salary differential between competing universities and the private sector. While apparent institution-wide, it seems to be particularly problematic in IT positions.

IT believes they are adequately staffed to support the technology needs of the university. While they acknowledge the hiring and retention challenge, they feel that steps are being made to mitigate the salary issues. Additionally, with the recent implementation of a prioritization process and security office, the department believes they will be able to make much needed improvements in implementing and securing new and existing processes.

2.G.6. A lot of effort has been made to standardize systems and ensure they are operational during working hours. This has required a lot of the maintenance work in busy labs, and other critical areas, to be accomplished at night, weekends, and holidays. Additionally, IT invests substantial resources to ensure support personnel have annual training and are able to provide the most recent knowledge on systems and processes.

IT also has implemented adequate resources to help insure that systems are secure and protected. An annual scan is done by an independent, third party to ensure systems are secure. Additionally, a security office was established last year to implement the recommendations from the 2014 report and develop ongoing security measures.

2.G.7. IT conducts an annual planning process and provides opportunity for constituents to provide feedback. The planning process appears to have been fairly disjointed over the past and not directly focused on the institution's strategic plan. The IT department has recently developed a much more robust process that will provide a greater connection to strategic planning and institutional priorities.

2.G.8. The university utilizes a technology update plan based on a five year cycle for enterprise hardware and a four year cycle for desktop hardware. The plan is reviewed and updated through various institutional councils and advisory boards. Funding for updates is largely handled at the departmental level but the general consensus is that adequate funding is available to appropriately replace equipment.

VI. Planning and Implementation

Standard 3.A. Institutional Planning

3.A.1. The University of Idaho has clearly engaged in meaningful planning. A strategic plan, “Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015”, was in force for the time period covered by the self-study and it is publicly available on a group of UI web pages. UI senior leadership told evaluators that they intended to

complete a new strategic plan before the end of the next academic year. The goals of the Strategic Plan 2011-2015 align fairly closely with the four Core Themes established for accreditation reporting:

- Goal 1. Teaching and Learning Goal: Enable student success in a rapidly changing world.
- Goal 2. Scholarly and Creative Activity Goal: Promote excellence in scholarship and creative activity to enhance life today and prepare us for tomorrow.
- Goal 3. Outreach and Engagement Goal: Meet society's critical needs by engaging in mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Goal 4. Community and Culture Goal: Be a purposeful, ethical, vibrant, and open community.

However, the self-study did not explicitly connect the Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators to the strategic plan, and many of the "strategies" in the strategic plan didn't bear an obvious relationship to the objectives and indicators. Individuals interviewed by evaluators did not think that the strategic plan was or had been a major driver for decision making.

Standard 3.A.1. Concern: Clear documentation that the University of Idaho Strategic Plan 2011-2015 was implemented was not provided in the self-study report. The relationship to the Core Themes and Objectives, although there is obviously some alignment, is not explicit in the Self-Study nor was it clearly explained by campus administrators.

The evaluation team recognizes that the purpose of a strategic plan (institutional advancement) is not the same as the core themes, objectives, and indicators, which are essentially an explication or expansion of the institution's mission together with a means (the indicators) to assess whether or not the mission is being fulfilled. In UI's case the strategic plan was not developed based on the outcomes of a prior accreditation cycle under the new NWCCU standards, because those standards were instituted at about the same time that the planning process was undertaken. The institution had selected its original set of Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators and submitted its Year One report at about the same time that the Strategic Plan was finalized, but in response to the Year One evaluation, made substantial changes to the Objectives and Indicators. In addition UI experienced considerable leadership turnover soon after the Strategic Plan 2011-2015 was approved. So the limited evidence of implementation in the accreditation self-study is understandable, but the implementation of the next strategic plan during the next accreditation cycle needs to be clearly documented.

The Board of Regents/State Board of Education has a current strategic plan for the period FY2015-2019. The Board plan consists includes the broad goal of a well-educated citizenry and sets specific performance benchmarks for the postsecondary institutions that it governs. The benchmarks are ambitious compared with current performance of UI and the other Idaho postsecondary institutions governed by the Board, and so adopting these as part of the future UI plan would drive considerable effort. These benchmarks include:

- Percentage of new full-time students returning (or graduated) for second year in an Idaho public institution.
 - 2-year Institution Benchmark:75%
 - 4-year Institution Benchmark:85%
- Percent of Idahoans (ages 25-34) who have a college degree or certificate requiring one academic year or more of study.
 - Benchmark: 60% by 2020
 - Benchmark: 26% with a Baccalaureate degree by 2020
 - Benchmark: 8% with a graduate level degree by 2020
- Postsecondary unduplicated awards (certificate of one academic year or more) as a percentage of total student headcount)
 - Benchmark: 20% for 2-year institutions, 20% for 4-year institutions

Administrators, faculty and staff are well aware of the Regents' plan, which is reported to underlie institutional objectives, established by President Staben, to increase enrollment by 50% and to increase retention and graduation rates. The relationships between the new UI Strategic Plan and the Board Plan will need to be documented in the next self-study as well.

3.A.2. There was little information in the self-study or on the Strategic Plan website on the process that generated the Strategic Plan 2011-2015. Since there was no recommendation on that matter as a result of the Year One report, the evaluator assumes that the process met this standard. The current self-study states that the strategic planning process planned for academic year 2015-2016 will include opportunities for input from internal and external constituencies. The new plan will be drafted by a working group comprising faculty, staff, students, alumni, which is constituted to reflect the breadth and diversity of the university community. The draft will be made available to the university community and suggestions considered in developing a revision, which will then be submitted to the President for review by administrative groups. After due consideration of input, a final version will be accepted by the President and he will present it to the Board of Regents/State Board of Education for approval.

3.A.3. The self-study asserts that UI planning is informed by data, and that data are used to evaluate fulfillment of the UI mission, but the self-study does not present a compelling case, supported by evidence. Particular shortcomings in assessment relative to the Core Themes are discussed under the evaluation of Standard 3.B. The self-study (Standard 3.A.2.) discussion of the planned AY 2015-16 Strategic Planning process does not include information on how institutional data, or specifically the Indicators, will inform that process. As explained in the team evaluation of Standard Five, UI has not systematically and comprehensively used data to evaluate fulfillment of its mission, although has made some appropriate uses of data.

Ideally, the institution's strategic plan would be developed based on the preceding accreditation cycle (including the results of the assessment of performance relative to the objectives and an assessment of the external environment) to assure that the institution will continue to fulfill its mission and will improve as necessary. The evaluation team recognizes that in this first cycle, that process could not be followed, but this should be implemented for the new accreditation cycle.

3.A.4. It is not well-documented that the Strategic Plan 2011-2015 or the Objectives developed under the Core Themes have guided decisions on resource allocation. As described in the self-study under Standard 2.F.3., the annual budget process commences with university leadership (including deans, some directors, Provost & Executive Vice President, vice provosts, and vice presidents); these individuals present their specific requests for continuing or one-time funding. The vice presidents and Executive Director of Planning & Budget prioritize the requests. The decisions on requests are made by the executive team, after revenue (from state appropriation, tuition, and other sources) for the next year can be accurately projected, which is generally in June. The decisions are communicated to the campus community the following fall. This description does not make it clear that the Strategic Plan or other planning documents are considered in the allocation of funding. When senior administrators were questioned on this point, most could not provide particular examples linking the Strategic Plan or the Core Theme Objectives to specific budget decisions. The Provost & Executive Vice President did provide a budget request form, which included a question about how the request related to the Strategic Plan, and said that the responses were considered in funding decisions along with other factors.

According to administrators interviewed by the evaluation team, recent resource allocation and reallocation has mainly been driven by the Focus For the Future (FFF) process, a process of academic and non-academic program prioritization. UI conducted this extensive program analysis in response to a State

Board of Education/University of Idaho Board of Regents mandate. The prioritization criteria (with weighting factors in parentheses) were:

- Centrality (5) – The program is central to the mission and future of the University of Idaho as a land-grant, national, research institution. The program is responsive to the vision and strategic plan of the university and to important stakeholders throughout Idaho.
- Demand – External (4)
- Demand – Internal (4)
- Quality (5) – The program contributes to the national and international reputation of the university and the work of the faculty is nationally and internationally recognized as significant.
- Size & Scope (3) - The program includes a critical mass of faculty and provides a program to a significant number of students.
- Productivity (3) – On a per FTE basis, the program produces significant numbers (when compared to appropriate peers) of graduates, student credit hours, scholarly products or performances, and outreach events and participants.
- Cost Effectiveness (4)
- Impact (4) – The outreach work of the program has produced significant changes in the practices or conditions of key stakeholder audiences. The program’s research, teaching, and outreach components contain mutually-beneficial outcomes. The program is responsive to the vision and strategic plan of the university and to relevant stakeholders throughout Idaho.
- Synergies (3) – The program is engaged in cooperative interactions across departments or other administrative units both within the University of Idaho and/or with groups outside the UI that enhance quality and/or productivity providing clear benefits to students and/or faculty.

These criteria are, for the most part, the usual ones employed in such prioritization exercises at universities, and do consider (at 14% of the total weighting) the mission and strategic plan of the university. They are not necessarily incompatible with UI’s established Core Themes and Indicators nor with the UI Strategic Plan 2011-2015, but neither has UI made a clear effort to reconcile its three sets of priorities.

3.A.5. UI has a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan that includes a response plan for emergency situations in general, along with specific recommendations for bomb threats, spills or other release of hazardous materials, power outages, and a number of other emergencies. Information Technology has technology-related disaster recovery and business continuity plans. UI has a multi-modal mass notification system that can be used to provide important information to faculty, staff, and students in an emergency.

VII. Core Theme Planning, Effectiveness, and Improvement

Core Theme One: Teaching and Learning

Standard 3.B. Core Theme One Planning

3.B.1 & 3.B.2. The two major planning documents guiding the University of Idaho are aligned reasonably well for this Theme. Core Theme One of the University of Idaho Year Seven Self Study is the same as the “Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015” Goal 1: Teaching and Learning. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education Strategic Plan was implemented following the UI Strategic Plan and Year One report, but likewise includes an emphasis on learning as shown in Goal 1: A Well Educated Citizenry. However, there are some differences in specifics. The UI Strategic Plan focuses on qualitative

improvements to academic programs, using strategies such as: Implement general education requirements that emphasize integrative learning throughout the undergraduate experience; Employ active learning pedagogies to enhance student learning where appropriate; and Increase opportunities for student interaction and interdisciplinary collaboration. The Board of Regents' plan focuses on reaching quantitative benchmarks for retention, graduation, students enrolled in STEM programs, participating in internships, and engaging in undergraduate research, among others. The Objectives and Indicators chosen for Core Theme One are more aligned with the UI Strategic Plan.

UI Core Theme One planning focuses on two principal goals: 1) building adaptive, integrative curricula and pedagogies, and 2) developing integrative learning activities that span students' entire university experiences. Planning around student learning begins with the development and review of curriculum by faculty that is built around learning outcomes and learning outcomes assessment. Learning outcomes data, retention and completion data, and other measures of student success are routinely gathered, published and disseminated to identify strengths and areas for refinement. Each department and college develops annual reports and summaries that are submitted to Institutional Research and Assessment. Dashboards for data are found on the Institutional Research and Assessment website <http://www.assessment.ui.edu>. Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and the individual academic colleges coordinate efforts around student success and student learning to align them with strategic goals of the institution.

To the evaluation team, the approach to planning seems to be largely decentralized, and while this appears to have been effective in driving curricular innovation, based in part on data from student learning outcomes, it is less clear that information and assessment from other areas – student services or co-curricular activities, for example – are incorporated into planning. Also, there wasn't clear evidence of coordinated planning to meet broad institutional objectives, such as improved retention, increased graduation rates, more STEM graduates, or increased enrollment overall.

There is not much documentation of systematic selection (or expansion vs. reduction) of programs and services, or their components, to ensure alignment with Core Theme objectives. The Focus For the Future process, which absorbed considerable institutional time and energy, resulted in a minimal number of changes.

3.B.3. Student learning outcomes assessment data and program review are used appropriately in planning. Assessment of co-curricular learning outcomes is less well-developed and consequently the incorporation of data into planning is not well-documented.

Standard 4.A. Core Theme One Assessment

4.A.1. The institution's response to this standard was very strong in some areas, and in need of improvement in other respects. The institution requires departments to submit their student learning outcomes assessment reports annually, and 91% of departments submitted their report in the last cycle; 83% of departments submitted a full report, without any items missing. Faculty and administrators described a very positive "sea change" in assessment attitudes and practices, noting that many faculty members were no longer just meeting the minimal requirements. Nonetheless, the quality of these reports varied. One possible approach for further improvement would be to have an institutional review of the assessment reports, conducted by small teams of faculty who are from other disciplines, who would provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each report.

The institution regularly gathers and publishes data about student learning and progress through their programs, and information is gathered using a variety of modalities — learning outcomes assessment, surveys, focus groups and qualitative research. Learning outcomes assessment results and program

reviews are reported annually and compiled on a restricted access website (Program Review and Assessment Activities for the Years 2010-11 and 2011-12, <http://www.assessment.ui.edu>). Self-reported student data is collected by Institutional Research and Assessment through the Graduating Senior Survey, the Alumni Survey, the Graduate Student Survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement, and other data sets that track new initiatives (<http://www.uidaho.edu/research/institutional-research-and-assessment/assessment>).

However, Student Affairs has conducted relatively few learning outcomes assessments of co-curricular experiences, and so has not developed a basis of information to align their activities with the larger learning outcomes goals of the university. A plan is in place for developing learning outcomes for each department by the fall semester.

Standard 4.A.1. Concern: Although learning outcomes assessment has become systemic in Academic Affairs, a culture for assessing learning outcomes has not been developed in co-curricular affairs.

4.A.2. Academic program review is conducted every seven years, and incorporates much of the data and information that are collected as Indicators for Core Theme One. This process appears to provide a thorough assessment of program quality and productivity, with a good deal of faculty engagement and positive outcomes in terms of program improvement.

Annual reports, assessment summaries, and data sets are used in the units, colleges and for university-wide assessment and improvement. Data are used to identify needed improvements and refinements of existing programs and reasons to develop new ones. Departments and colleges engage in annual review of the past year's assessment plan and results, and "complete the loop" or set goals for improvement for the next year.

As noted in the Commendations, an excellent process for General Education assessment has been developed. These assessment practices include an evaluation of students' writing in the first-year Integrated Seminar (ISEM 101) courses.

Several quantitative measures (such as students in STEM majors and various forms of experiential learning) are tracked by the institution, and these data could be shared, discussed, and evaluated more broadly. For example, the number of students participating in internships and service learning had decreased in the most recent year, and it is not clear that this change had attracted a concerted institutional response. Many different surveys are also conducted to collect student feedback and perceptions, including the NSSE, Alumni Survey, and Graduate Student Survey. Some of the highest scores from the NSSE were reported, and it would be helpful to have reports of strengths and weaknesses from the other surveys as well. It was not clear from the self-study how these survey data are being analyzed and used for assessment and improvement.

Standard 4.A.2. Concern: The self-study did not present robust evidence that systematic program evaluation in areas such as student services and co-curricular activities is occurring.

4.A.3. The institution has a well-functioning Annual Assessment Cycle, and faculty take the lead in evaluating student achievement of the learning outcomes. The accreditation report listed many examples of improvements that were being made to academic departments. However, the institution acknowledges that the documentation of actions taken to "close the loop" and make instructional or curricular improvements in response to assessment could be strengthened. Assessment reports often include descriptions of curricular modifications, but those need to be tied more closely to the assessment data.

4.A.4. & 4.A.5. Teaching and learning are integral to the recruitment, retention, and graduation of undergraduate and graduate students. These areas are assessed through the collaborative network of the Division of Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, and the Division of Student Affairs. Recent initiatives to recruit and retain students have been positive, and more collaboration on student retention efforts and planning would be beneficial. As noted above, while student learning outcomes assessment is nearly consistent and complete, there is less evidence of evaluation of co-curricular activities and student services. Although survey data have been collected, it is not clear how it has been used. Examples of resource allocations said to be based on assessment include an allied health advising position (for pre-med or pre-health programs), robust support for Honors program advising and scholarship programs, funding for student safety initiatives, and retention tools such as MapWorks, but specifics of the underlying assessments were not provided. Plans are also in place to increase internships and study abroad opportunities, but again it is not clear that the reason for these improvements is rooted in the assessments being conducted.

Standard 4.A.5. Concern: Curriculum mapping has not been completed for most of the academic degrees. It would be helpful to align the degree outcomes with the courses that are offered by each department.

4.A.6. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment coordinates the efforts to gather institutional data. The report indicated that processes are in place to review and refine the objectives and indicators based on the evidence gathered through assessment. However, these processes were not clearly explained (i.e., Who participates? Which office coordinates?), and few examples of refinements based on assessment results were provided.

Standard 4.B. Core Theme One Improvement

4.B.1. This standard could be met more solidly. Objectives and indicators have been identified that focus on appropriate areas. The institutional planning mentions benchmarks and targets, but specific numbers or percentages are not provided in the report. Some of these numbers are available through the Institutional Research and Assessment website, and others have been distributed in internal reports. If these numbers were synthesized and communicated more broadly, the institution could more effectively track these trends over time, and systematically determine whether goals are being met.

In addition, it was unclear how the results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are used for the allocation of resources and capacity. The self-study did not discuss how the results were made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

4.B.2. The report outlined a substantial list of changes that have already been made (e.g., General Education curriculum implementation), as well as the next implementation action steps, which include increasing internships, study abroad experiences, formalizing University retention processes, and determining the most appropriate student affairs surveys. As noted for standard 4.B.1., the results and action steps of student learning assessments are currently not shared with a wide range of constituents, including students, parents, and faculty.

Core Theme Two: Scholarly and Creative Activity with National and International Impact

3.B. Core Theme Two Planning

3.B.1. & 3.B.2. As already discussed under Core Theme One, there are two strategic plans that should guide planning for Core Theme Two, “Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015” and the Idaho Board of

Regents/State Board of Education Strategic Plan 2015-2019. The UI Plan emphasizes strengthening research and increasing participation of faculty staff and students in research. The Regent's plan focuses solely on setting benchmarks for increasing grant and contract research expenditures from federal, industry, and other private sources. Core Theme Two Objectives and Indicators encompass both, and add the Objective "Contribute to the Economic Development of Idaho", which focuses on monetization of intellectual property and impacts of research on Idaho and beyond.

Research plans exist in some colleges or research units, but not consistently across campus. Campus-wide research planning, beyond the Strategic Plan 2011-2015, has not been done. However, the Office of Research and Economic Development will soon launch a campus-wide planning process that result in a prioritization of research and related activities on the UI campus. It is anticipated that the process will take a year, identify university-wide research themes, develop strategies to resource these themes, and work on policies to support and enable cutting-edge research. The evaluators for this Standard believe this process is essential to the growth and expansion of research on the UI campus and will result in a greater sense of purpose and priorities, implementation plans, and the maximization of opportunities. Although research is a particular strength of the UI campus, a strategic, university-wide plan will support its efforts to build on earlier successes.

Standard 4.A. Core Theme Two Assessment

4.A.1 & 4.A.2. The Office of Research and Economic Development routinely tracks a number of key indicators related to the Core Theme Objectives: contribute to knowledge created, extended, and verified through scholarly and creative work of students, staff, faculty, and collaborators; increase grant and contract activity in numbers, types, and size of awards; and, contribute to the economic development of Idaho. The self-study presented data for the chosen Indicators, and assessed this information against peer benchmarks. However, as reported to evaluation team members, these data are not currently widely published or made accessible for the campus so that deans, chairs and faculty members can use the information to set goals, make improvements, and develop plans to strengthen research. It may be that most were simply not aware these data existed. The planned campus-wide planning process should engage a much wider group in assessing research.

UI also consistently tracks the engagement of undergraduates and graduate students in research and production of publications or creative and scholarly works by undergraduate and graduate students. Currently undergraduate research is self-reported via a graduating senior survey, but UI plans to institute more comprehensive tracking through the Office of Research and Economic Development.

4.A.4. & 4.A.5. The self-study didn't include much discussion of the integration of research planning, implementation, assessment, and improvement with the other Core Themes. It is clear that a faculty that is very active in research and creative activity, as is the case with UI faculty, fosters a high rate of student participation in undergraduate research. Also, faculty hiring decisions are partly driven by academic program needs and partly by research potential, and that linkage is recognized in the self-study. The planned Research and Economic Development planning and prioritization process should give some attention to these and other linkages with the other Core Themes and Objectives.

4.A.6. The self-study didn't address the review of research assessment processes. The indicators used are, however, common among most research universities, and that facilitates inter-institutional comparisons. The research data appear to be collected, compiled, and analyzed by the Office of Research and Economic Development rather than the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, which is responsible for many of the other Indicators. It may be useful to have some form of central data warehouse, where all Indicator data can be accessed, which would facilitate a holistic approach to assessment and planning.

4.B. Core Theme Two Improvement

4.B.1. The self-study reports that students express a high degree of satisfaction with undergraduate research experiences and that students responding to the graduating senior survey think that there should be more emphasis on undergraduate research. UI leadership committed to hiring a Director of Undergraduate Research and to operating funding to expand undergraduate research opportunities.

The University of Idaho has experienced substantial decrease in research expenditures over the past decade as the numbers of faculty and other resources were reduced during financial downturns. However, there has been a moderate increase in research expenditures since 2009. Peer-reviewed scholarly and creative activities had a substantial increase for FY14. The self-study indicates strategies for improvement (increase faculty numbers, increase faculty productivity, and increase numbers of non-faculty researchers such as post-docs). However, it is not clear which of these approaches have been pursued, whether that involved resource reallocation, or how the strategies resulted in the improved performance. As noted above, it doesn't appear that the results of research assessment are widely communicated.

Core Theme Three: Outreach and Engagement

Standard 3.B. Core Theme Three Planning

3.B.1. & 3.B.2. Overall planning for the three components of Core Theme 3 (extension, external partners, and service learning) has been accomplished in compliance with the Standards. "Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015" includes extension and outreach goals. The specific objectives of Core Theme Three differ from those of the Strategic Plan, but overlap on expanding mutually beneficial partnerships with stakeholders; the Core Theme broadens partnership and adds an emphasis on student engagement. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education Strategic Plan 2015-2019 does not include outreach and engagement, probably reflecting the fact that only UI has the Land Grant elements in its mission. The Extension unit within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, individual departments and faculty, and community service/service learning support offices oversee planning for their respective outreach and engagement activities with communities and stakeholders. Longstanding and emerging connections to communities across the state are critical components of this planning.

Program and service planning for Extension is accomplished through annual statewide meetings of Extension faculty grouped into 15 topic teams. Planning for Extension programs is also driven through external stakeholders including county commissioners and constituents throughout the state. Planning work and outcomes reporting are tracked in a central database. Extension also utilizes a common "Logic Model" in program planning that links resources, inputs, outputs and objectives. The Logic Model also drives Extension's programmatic assessment and improvement process.

Compliment: The Extension Service's planning and assessment process is regular, inclusive, deeply connected to community needs, and well-documented.

Programmatic planning for external partnerships occurs through long-standing external relationships and via *ad hoc* processes in response emergent needs. Planning activities are often generated from the partner side (not just the university side). However, a process to engage university personnel with external partners to identify and address critical issues, Theme Three Objective B., is not articulated in the self-study.

Planning for community service and student service learning aligns with University Learning Outcomes 4 and 5, and it connects with the broader university planning objective of increasing opportunities for students to integrate learning across the curriculum and co-curriculum. Planning is overseen jointly by service departments in Academic and Student Affairs. Planning for this element of Core Theme Three is not coordinated across units, nor is it well-documented centrally.

3.B.3. Extension collects and analyzes a considerable amount of information on its programs and activities. Much of this relates to participant numbers and to their satisfaction (via surveys). Increasingly extension is working to gather additional data on impacts of extensions programs, i.e., whether recommended practices are being adopted. Extension makes use of the data they collect in planning future programming.

The self-study had numerous examples of community outreach activities, all of which appear to be of high quality and valued by the community. However, the self-study presented little evidence that data on community engagement outside of Extension was being used to plan those activities. Evidence for data use in planning of community service and student service learning was that data on numbers of participants per activity or program informed planning.

Standard 4.A. Core Theme Three Assessment

4.A.1. & 4.A.2. These standards have been partly met. While the self-study states that the objectives and indicators provide the basis for assessment of the Core Theme effectiveness, the evaluators could not find evidence of collection and analysis of data for all objectives/indicators for Core Theme Three. The Extension component of Core Theme Three does collect data related to the objectives and indicators (e.g. the “Logic Model,” specific program survey instruments, and tracking of participants served). However, for the external partners component, there is a lack of alignment and clarity between some of the specified Indicators and the assessment data reported, particularly as regards the Indicators for Objective B: i, ii, and iii. Similar to the standards immediately above, evidence of improvement measures is not present for the external partners component. Evidence of improvement for the community/service learning component includes improvements to the scope and location of service opportunities. For the student community service and service learning component of the core theme, the university tracks participation data well, but does not present evidence on the impact of participation on student learning through formal service learning courses. The Service-Learning Center has plans to address the lack of assessment and intends to implement these plans in the future.

Standard 4.A.1. Concern: Data for the External Partners (Objective B) Indicators are not reported in the self-study and do not appear to be tracked by the University.

4.A.4. & 4.A.5. These standards are partly met. The Extension components of Core Theme Three meet the standards. Extension collects and analyzes data through the Logic Model, program surveys, and other assessments. Within Extension, programs are well-integrated to meet Objective A, and Extension also makes its data and assessments widely available to other areas of the University and to the community. Community service and service learning uses student feedback and community partner needs assessments, but it appears those assessments are mainly used within those activity areas rather than for more holistic evaluations. The team of evaluators was not able to determine that the external partners (Objective B) component meets the standards because of insufficient evidence.

4.A.6. With the exception of Extension, there was no evidence presented that the assessment processes for Core Theme Three have been reviewed.

Standard 4.B. Core Theme Three Improvement

4.B.1. This standard is partially met across the three components of the core theme. The Extension component shows strong evidence of fulfilling these standards through rigorous full-cycle assessment programs, accounts of improvement steps taken to date, and identification of next-step assessment approaches, such as extending assessment to determine the extent to which constituents/participants adopt recommended practices. Extension communicates results to constituents regularly, primarily through county extension offices.

Evidence of improvement based upon assessment results was not provided for the External Partners (Objective B) component.

According to the self-study the community/service learning component utilizes assessment results to evaluate the effectiveness and capacity of the programs. The numbers of locations and programs involved, and the numbers of student and community participants, have been collected and are certainly useful for assessing demand and deciding which programs should continue. There was less evidence collected relative to effectiveness, except for community partner feedback. It was not clear from the self-study whether that feedback is largely anecdotal, or is being collected in an intentional and systematic way.

Core Theme 4: Purposeful, Ethical, Vibrant, and Open Community

Standard 3.B. Core Theme Four Planning

3.B.1. & 3.B.2. Core Theme Four is aligned with the UI comprehensive strategic plan “Leading Idaho: Strategic Plan 2011-2015.” The Strategic Plan objectives include: Be a community committed to access and inclusion; Be a community committed to civility and respect; and Be a community committed to productivity, sustainability, and innovation. The related Core Theme Four Objectives include professional development for skills and for multicultural and international perspectives; recruitment of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff; and improved processes and practices to enhance access, inclusion, collaboration, and efficiency. The Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education Strategic Plan 2015-2019 includes only one related benchmark, concerning postsecondary student diversity. Additional campus-wide planning bodies or processes related to Theme Four include: the President’s Diversity Council; the divisions of Student and Academic Affairs and the Diversity and Human rights programs; Human Resources; and the Focus For the Future process. Evidence of planning for appropriate programs and services for the three core theme objectives includes:

- the development of faculty/staff learning and professional development programs to enhance development and retention;
- the implementation of central student retention programs and policies (Academic Support and Access Programs and a freshman live-on requirement);
- the reorganization of Diversity and Human Rights programs to increase capacity and effectiveness;
- the restructuring of leadership organizational reporting for enrollment management;
- the consolidation of compliance processes.

Compliment: The development of new professional development opportunities and intercultural competence programs attests to the university’s efforts to enhance the campus climate and address staff attrition. Participants of these programs spoke to the high quality of programming

and learning, and they hope to see these efforts continued as vital contributions to their effectiveness and satisfaction as employees.

The efforts of the International Programs Office have contributed to intercultural competency, a more diverse student body, and enrollment growth. The recent reduction in recruiting and marketing resources may impact the capacity of this department to continue the breadth and depth of its operations.

Standards 3.B.1. & 3.B.2. Concern: Planning for this core theme appears to occur at times through informal, rather than intentional, channels and processes. Review team interviews with various campus members demonstrated different understandings across parties regarding which office or division has responsibility and accountability for planning and outcomes. For example, depending on the audience, review team members received different answers in response to the question “Who has responsibility for planning the institution’s overall retention strategy?”

Given that the university is not meeting its current targets for retention and graduation of undergraduate students (current retention = 77% while target = 82%; current 6-year graduation = 58% while target = 61%), the informal planning process and the lack of emphasis on disaggregating student success data is of concern.

3.B.3. This standard is satisfied through data collection and deployment in support of planning. Evidence of data utilized in planning includes: data on faculty and staff retention rates; salary data with regional and national comparators; student success data (retention and graduation rates); and evaluations of the quality of professional development programming.

Standard 3.B.3. Concern: Several individuals interviewed cited a lack of attention to disaggregated student success data by demographics, particularly race/ethnicity. There is evidence of strong, successful support for 1st year retention of Native American and Latino students, but staff also noted that institution-wide planning conversations do not adequately discuss the needs of these specific populations and others in the overall support network for students. The committee also notes that the needs of African American/Black students were never raised in meetings with university faculty, staff or administrators – nor were they raised in the report. This is concerning, given the achievement gaps for these populations, especially in graduation rates.

Standard 4.A. Core Theme Four Assessment

4.A.1 & 4.A.2. There is substantial evidence of assessment through tracking of student retention and graduation rates, staff retention, new programs initiated for professional and diversity development, and process and efficiency improvements. A shortcoming in assessment relative to this core theme is insufficient data on faculty retention, which is Indicator ii of Objective B. The institution reports that it is not currently able to report in an integrated, detailed manner on faculty retention, either for hire-to-tenure or generally.

4.A.4 & 4.A.5. There is a lack of evidence for holistic evaluation of the alignment, correlation, and integration of the component parts of the core theme with respect to achievement of the goals.

4.A.6. The self-study did not document a regular review of assessment processes.

Standard 4.B. Core Theme Four Improvement

4.B.1. The self-study and supplementary information obtained during the site visit provided evidence of improvements based on assessment outcomes and related new resource allocations, particularly in the areas of professional development, learning opportunities, and efficiencies realized through Focus For the Future. The report and on-campus meetings also indicate that the university is actively designing next steps to continue the improvement process in assessment and programmatic designs.

Standard 4.B.1. Concern: While staff express high satisfaction with the overall work environment, which they deem inclusive, family-like and collaborative, they report a lack of transparency during the recent job classification process and an atmosphere of intimidation and obscurity around the next steps and the appeals process. This has impacted staff morale. The new salary structure also appears to have an adverse effect on staff recruitment and retention. Salary ranges remain below regional and national benchmarks, and the requirement to hire in the bottom tier of the salary range for a given job category does not facilitate quality hires. Staff report that the high number of failed searches draws valuable time and resources away from their primary job functions. Staff also report that high turnover and delayed hiring adversely impact project timelines and business process efficiency. The evaluators are concerned that the staff job classification/compensation project may in fact worsen the current challenges in staff retention and recruitment.

VIII. Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Standard 5.A Mission Fulfillment

5.A.1 & 5.A.2. The university's recent efforts in completing the "Focus For the Future" constituted a formal assessment process for the institution. It is clear the campus at large was involved in the assessment of all programs, and comments from different groups that spoke with the evaluation team demonstrated significant campus engagement in the process. However, the criteria for the Focus For the Future prioritization (see the list in section 3.A.4. of this report) were mostly quite different from the indicators established in the Year One report and modified for this self-study and were not closely aligned with the UI Strategic Plan. The Focus For the Future process, required by the Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education, was designed as a *prioritization* process, to reduce or eliminate certain programs and activities that were weaker performers on the chosen criteria, and was not a holistic process designed to assess whether UI was fulfilling its mission. Hence, it is not sufficient for meeting this standard.

Academic programs at UI are regularly assessed and there is evidence that the assessment results are used to evaluate quality and effectiveness. In addition to student learning outcomes assessment, all academic programs are required to undergo external program review on a seven-year cycle. Programs produce a self-study responding to a standard set of questions addressing such important matters as program quality, productivity, learning outcomes, service to external constituencies, and others, and external and internal evaluators review the report and make recommendations for improvement. In addition, twenty-eight UI programs have specialized accreditation, and those undergo periodic review by the relevant academic or professional organization.

Program student learning outcomes assessment is well-established. The general education learning outcomes assessment is the subject of a commendation. Assessment of research is also proceeding well.

However, the implementation of assessment constructed around the Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators has been variable, as discussed in the Standard 4 section of this report. Outside of learning outcomes assessment, academic program review, research assessment, and assessment of Cooperative Extension, there is little evidence of regular assessment for Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators. Some of the assessment instruments or processes are reportedly still under development or in a pilot-project stage. The assessment results were not clearly, systematically, and comprehensively incorporated into the institution's self-assessment of mission fulfillment.

The Year Seven self-study, including some assessment information, is available to the public on the UI Provost & Executive Vice President's web page, although the information is not in a form that would be readily understandable to most individuals outside of the UI community. Also, the Focus For the Future process and outcomes are well documented on a website. Student learning outcomes assessment information, however, is located on a secure website that the evaluation team could only access after it arrived at the University. Hence communication of assessment results to constituencies outside the university is limited.

Standard 5.A.1 Concern: The institution should improve assessment of its accomplishments, conducting assessment that is regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based. Although the self-study reported or referenced considerable assessment, mainly related to the Focus for the Future Process, that assessment was not strongly linked to the Objectives and Indicators, nor to UI's definition of mission fulfillment.

Standard 5.A.2. Recommendation: Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the evaluation committee recommends that the institution should consistently use assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfilment and should communicate its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.

Standard 5.B Adaptation and Sustainability

5.B.1. The self-study discussed only Focus for the Future in its response to this Standard, and notably did not use the framework of Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators to illustrate how UI evaluates the adequacy of its resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations. The Focus For the Future prioritization exercise was mandated by the Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education; it is a relatively new process (instituted in 2014) and so has not been in place for most of the time period under review. Focus For the Future included criteria that addressed the sustainability of the programs and activities reviewed. For example, the size & scope and the demand criteria are certainly related to program sustainability. However, as a program prioritization exercise, the Focus For the Future was not intended or designed to examine the question of sustainability holistically (as a well-designed system of core themes, objectives, and indicators should be). One gap appears to be that there is not full consideration of whether (or not) a program or activity is "right-sized" relative to others. There is also no obvious way to consider adding programs or activities that might be very important for the future, but are currently absent. Finally, and most importantly, the process does not seem to have an intrinsic way to assess whether the totality of all of the programs and activities UI delivers represents sustainable mission fulfillment. Although the name Focus For the Future suggests that the process addresses sustainability, in fact the assessment seems to be only retrospective.

If UI will be continuing the Focus For the Future process, it might be prudent to more fully align the Objectives and Indicators for the next cycle with selected Focus For the Future criteria. However, in addition, the assessment would need to be modified so that the whole and not just the parts are addressed, and so that there is explicit consideration of whether programs or activities (alone and collectively) can continue to be successful into the future.

Standard 5.B.1. Concern: Within the context of its mission and characteristics, the institution should improve the consistency, completeness, and documentation of the evaluation of the effectiveness of its operations, to document its ongoing potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

5.B.2. The University of Idaho has engaged in several planning and assessment processes during the review period, but the self-study does not provide clear evidence that a full cycle of planning, implementation (with necessary resource allocation), assessment, and improvement has occurred consistently across the university. Instead, the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan does not appear to have been systematically implemented, and in particular, was not a major driver of resource allocation. The Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators have some alignment with the Strategic Plan, but only part of the indicator data were collected, and, except in the case of learning outcomes assessment, there is not much evidence that the indicator data were reviewed to identify needed improvements. Most of the data collection and analysis efforts appeared to be subsumed by the new Focus For the Future process

Standard 5.B.2. Recommendation: The evaluation committee recommends that the institution should more consistently formalize, document and evaluate its cycle of planning practices, resource allocation, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It should use the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement and document the relationship between changes and assessment results.

Leadership turnover coupled with new mandates from its Board posed challenges for UI in maintaining consistency during this cycle, but such changes are not unusual for universities. While it is sometimes necessary to change plans or assessments, better documentation of the reasons for change and a stronger effort to maintain threads of continuity would improve the next self-study.

5.B.3. The university appears to be poised to engage in a new strategic planning process and has started broadly evaluating program effectiveness through the Focus For the Future exercise. Involvement of advisory boards and other key stakeholders has been helpful in providing advice, mainly to individual units or programs. There is little evidence, however, that systematic monitoring of internal and external environments for emerging trends, patterns, and expectations was accomplished over the review period. UI administrators told evaluation team members that most such monitoring is done at the unit level by deans and directors, and indeed much of this sort of effort does need to occur there. However, although individual units may think that they have external trends well in hand, there could be cumulative effects that are not being appropriately considered. In addition, there are external issues that are broadly affecting many universities, for example demographic trends, student demand for e-Learning, mounting public concern about student loan debt, and others. A specific issue raised in discussion at UI is the goal of increasing enrollment by 50%, which would have institution-wide impacts if achieved. Another UI challenge, reported during many of the discussions of the evaluation team had with faculty, staff, and administration, is difficulty in recruiting and retaining employees at all levels given below-market compensation and limited pay increases or, for staff, limited chances for promotional increases. A central process to compile, consider the impacts of, and develop responses to such challenges is needed.

Standard 5.B.3. Recommendation: The evaluation committee recommends that the institution should monitor its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends and expectations. Through its governance system, the University of Idaho should use those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, and goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.

IX. Summary

The University of Idaho is clearly fulfilling its mission and has the resources and capacity to continue to be a highly successful Land Grant institution for many years to come. UI has many loyal and enthusiastic students, alumni, faculty, and staff, who speak highly of the university's quality, supportive community, and long tradition of serving the State of Idaho. New initiatives in General Education and in active learning through student research and service learning are reinvigorating the student experience at UI.

UI has experienced considerable turnover of leadership since the 2011 Year One report. Also, the course of institutional planning and assessment has been affected by the Idaho Board of Regents/State Board of Education-mandated Focus For the Future prioritization process. These factors, coupled with the adjustment to the new NWCCU accreditation standards and report format, resulted in a self-study that didn't quite cover all expected points relative to the planning, implementation, assessment, and improvement cycle. However, it is clear that UI is developing the required processes and in some cases, as with student learning outcomes, research, and Extension, the full cycle was fairly well-documented. Leadership changes have likely contributed to the limited holistic evaluation of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to accomplishment of the Core Theme objectives and mission fulfillment. In general, the parts of the university are functioning well, but there is perhaps less integration and alignment in some areas than would be optimal.

The strategic planning process planned for next academic year should begin the new accreditation cycle on a firm footing. The University of Idaho, with new leadership, a remarkable faculty, staff, and student body, and sufficient resources, is well positioned for future success.

X. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The University of Idaho is commended for its innovative and interdisciplinary General Education reforms. The General Education Integrated Seminars (ISEM) courses are developmentally sequenced and connected with the majors, which is an excellent model for other universities seeking to enhance their General Education curriculum. Also notable is the well-designed General Education assessment process, which is multifaceted and robust. These assessment practices include an evaluation of students' writing in the first-year Integrated Seminar (ISEM 101) courses, as well as other direct and indirect assessments.
2. The University of Idaho is commended for its Leadership Academy and its multiyear effort to promote professional development, build capacity for the institution, and train staff and faculty leaders.
3. The University of Idaho is commended for its significant initiatives over the past four years to improve public safety on campus and engage the University Community in taking personal responsibility to ensure the welfare of others.

Recommendations

1. Standard 1.A. The articulation of an acceptable degree of mission fulfillment is stated in terms of peer benchmarks and national norms. If that articulation is retained, the evaluation committee

recommends that the benchmarks or norms used must be clearly identified and used in the assessment of mission fulfillment. This was particularly a concern for Core Themes 1, 3, and 4.

2. Standard 5.A.2. Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the evaluation committee recommends that the institution should consistently use assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment and should communicate its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.
3. Standard 5.B.2. The evaluation committee recommends that the institution should more consistently formalize, document and evaluate its cycle of planning practices, resource allocation, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It should use the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement and document the relationship between changes and assessment results.
4. Standard 5.B.3. The evaluation committee recommends that the institution should monitor its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends and expectations. Through its governance system, the University of Idaho should use those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, and goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.