



Eastern Oregon University

Ad Hoc Self-Evaluation Report

Containing

EOU Response to Recommendation 1 from the fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation Report

&

EOU Response to Recommendation 2 from the fall 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation Report

February 29, 2020

Introduction

This Ad Hoc Report was requested as a follow-up to the NWCCU Comprehensive Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation, which was conducted on-site via peer review committee in October 2018. Eastern Oregon University received four recommendations from the Commission as a result of this visit, and this report addresses Recommendation #1 and Recommendation #2.

Recommendation 1, Standard 1.A.2

The Commission recommends that Eastern Oregon University further refine its definition of mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations and better articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

Eastern Oregon University Response

In response to this recommendation, the Assessment Coordinating Committee (ACC) and the Provost, in conjunction with Valerie Martinez (then NWCCU Vice President), engaged in conversations about EOU's definition of mission fulfillment and how to ensure that the definition allows EOU to fully articulate outcomes representing an acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment. Specific concerns articulated by the peer review committee and addressed by this report were that cases could theoretically arise under EOU's definition in which EOU would be able to assert mission fulfillment while nevertheless failing to meet essential quality indicators; and that the mission fulfillment definition does not make a clear distinction between a near miss and a very poor performance.

After extensive discussions, EOU ultimately addressed Recommendation #1 and the related concerns by retaining the original definition of mission fulfillment, and focusing attention on the second part of the definition, which mandates the institution's engagement in a cyclical assessment process requiring that all measures, indicators and thresholds are reviewed in detail and all shortcomings are addressed in order to ensure continuous improvement.

EOU's definition of mission fulfillment is:

EOU Mission Fulfillment Statement
Mission fulfillment is demonstrated through meeting or exceeding the majority of thresholds for each core theme. We interpret mission fulfillment as engaging in a continuous cycle of planning, assessment and improvement of the objectives, indicators and measures associated with our core themes and guided by our institutional values and principles.

The first sentence in this definition provides a straightforward declaration, but can give the impression that EOU's mission fulfillment process is not nuanced. However, the merit of this straightforward definition is that mission fulfillment can be ascertained "at a glance" without any need to go through

complex visualizations or calculations. This makes awareness of EOU's mission fulfillment status easy to communicate widely throughout the institution. We feel that this is an important feature to retain because awareness of mission fulfillment and EOU's performance on key indicators plays an active role in many venues. One pertinent example is the meetings of the Budget and Planning Committee, which is asked to use EOU's success or failure in meeting thresholds to inform recommendations on which initiatives to fund.

The second sentence in the definition describes how EOU interprets mission fulfillment. This statement directly addresses the concerns of the peer evaluation committee; the cyclical process mentioned ensures that EOU does not accept poor performance on fundamental indicators or measures, and ensures that EOU does engage in robust analyses of data to differentiate between a near miss and a very poor performance. An excerpt from Page 18 of EOU's 2018 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Self-Evaluation Report clarifies how EOU actualizes the last part of the mission fulfillment statement, providing a process for continuous improvement:

EOU Mission Fulfillment Analytic Process

EOU defines mission fulfillment as meeting or exceeding a majority of thresholds across all core theme objectives, showing either full or substantive achievement. Additionally, all indicators not meeting thresholds or showing a downward trend over three cycles of data collection must show signs of improvement, even if meeting the thresholds. In the case of continuously exceeding thresholds by a substantial margin, the measure and indicator are examined for meaningfulness. Thus, mission fulfillment requires continued commitment and energy from the campus community.

This definition requires that EOU engage with mission fulfillment as a process. With this process as part of the definition of mission fulfillment, EOU is required to take a deeper look at vital indicators and assess our performance on these indicators, in particular for indicators where the performance might be substandard or where the thresholds are exceeded so substantially that they lose meaningfulness. In-depth reviews of indicators are triggered under three circumstances. These are:

- The indicator does not meet the threshold;
- The indicator shows a downward trend; or
- The indicator continuously and significantly exceeds the threshold over three cycles.

The in-depth reviews are conducted by the units identified as having primary responsibility for the measure, and shared with ACC, which ensures that they are incorporated into the institutional effectiveness cycle. In addition, ACC looks annually at measures and thresholds and recommends changes to ensure that the data remains meaningful. By spending time and effort setting thresholds and basing these thresholds on clearly defined data sets or generally accepted guidelines, EOU ensures our institutional outcomes represent an acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment.

Core theme tables from AY 2018/19 that summarize these activities are provided with this response as an illustration of how EOU actualizes the mission fulfillment definition and uses its process for continuous improvement. The tables show for each core theme, what data goes into setting the threshold, the rationale for each measure, which measures underwent a review, and whether the review resulted in an Action Plan for improvement or in a change to the measure, indicator, or threshold.

If EOU’s mission fulfillment was exclusively numerically driven, without the component of a continuous cycle of planning, assessment and improvement, then we agree that hypothetical cases could arise where the definition fails to truly support mission fulfillment despite poor performance, or conversely, a rigid definition could short circuit improvement because of continuous, exceptional performance. EOU addresses this potential pitfall by including a component in the mission fulfillment definition that requires an in-depth review of performance on objectives, indicators and measures. Not only does this process enable a nuanced understanding of our performance, but requires regular, evidence-based discussions of performance and continuous improvements throughout the institution.

Supporting Materials (Core Theme Tables)

Core theme 1: EOU has high quality liberal arts and professional programs that prepare students for the world beyond college.

Objective	Indicator	Measure	Benchmarks or data rationale	Review Triggered	Notes
Objective 1: Academic programs ensure student learning	1.1: Students demonstrate effective learning relative to GLOs	1.1.1 Median % of sampled students at “proficient” or “adequate”	EOU internal data for past three years. Threshold based on sound pedagogical expectations for lower division student General Education proficiency.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 1: Academic programs ensure student learning	1.2: Students demonstrate effective learning relative to PLOs as aligned with ULOs	1.2.1 Median % of sampled students at “proficient” or “adequate”	EOU internal data for past three years. Threshold based on sound pedagogical expectations for upper division student academic discipline-based proficiency.	N	Threshold met.

Objective 2: Effective Teaching Practices continually enhance academic quality	2.1: Faculty provide meaningful student faculty interactions	2.1.1 NSSE seniors' score for student faculty interaction	NSSE data. Comparative scores used to set threshold from peer institutions whose profiles align with EOU's in terms of being rural, size, Carnegie classification, and percentage of Pell recipients.	Y	Review triggered due to not meeting threshold. Measure retained; Action Plan developed.
Objective 2: Effective Teaching Practices continually enhance academic quality	2.2: Faculty engage in best practice interactive pedagogies.	2.2.1 NSSE seniors' score for effective teaching practices	NSSE data. Comparative scores used to set threshold from peer institutions whose profiles align with EOU's in terms of being rural, size, Carnegie classification, and percentage of Pell recipients.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 2: Effective Teaching Practices continually enhance academic quality	2.3: Faculty ensure graduates demonstrate readiness for a diverse and interconnected world.	2.3.1 NSSE seniors' score for engagement (Indicator 2C)	NSSE data. Comparative scores used to set threshold from peer institutions whose profiles align with EOU's in terms of being rural, size, Carnegie classification, and percentage of Pell recipients.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 3: Students engage in applied learning experiences that align with lifelong success	3.1: Graduates engage in High Impact Practices	3.1.1 Percentage of graduates who participate in a research, internship, or practicum experience (includes capstones).	EOU internal data for past three years.	Y	Review Triggered due to consistently exceeding threshold. Measure refined to include additional more specific data elements.

Core theme 2: EOU is a regional university with a deep sense of commitment to students where they are.

Objective	Indicator	Measure	Benchmarks or Data Rationale used to Calculate Threshold	Review Triggered	Notes
Objective 1: Student success is maximized through retention, completion and post-graduation outcomes	1.1: Effective academic and support programs ensure student success	1.1.1: Fall term to fall term on campus retention	IPEDS data. Threshold is based on fall to fall retention rate for peer institutions,* averaged over most recent three years. *Peer institutions are defined as: small, rural, Pell grants 25% - 50%, public, Carnegie M3.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 1: Student success is maximized through retention, completion and post-graduation outcomes	1.1: Effective academic and support programs ensure student success	1.1.2: Fall term to fall term retention for entering transfer students	Internal EOU data for previous three years.	N	New measure added because of strong emphasis on online students.
Objective 1: Student success is maximized through retention, completion and post-graduation outcomes	1.1: Effective academic and support programs ensure student success	1.1.3: 4 year completion rate for on campus students	IPEDS data. Threshold is based on 6-year graduation rate for peer institutions,* averaged over most recent three years. * Peer institutions are defined as: small, rural, Pell grants 25% - 50%, public, Carnegie M3.	N	Measure altered to align with strategic plan KPI.

Objective 1: Student success is maximized through retention, completion and post-graduation outcomes	1.1: Effective academic and support programs ensure student success	1.1.4: 2 year completion rate for online students	Internal EOU data for previous three years.	N	Threshold met Measure altered to align with strategic plan KPI.
Objective 1: Student success is maximized through retention, completion and post-graduation outcomes	1.2: Graduates are employed or enrolled in graduate school	1.2.1: % of graduates employed or enrolled in graduate school	NACE First Destination report. Threshold for mission fulfilment is based on Career outcome rate within 6 months of graduation for graduates with bachelor's degrees from the far west states.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 2: Programs and processes promote student access	2.1: Provide a supportive environment for underserved populations	2.1.1: Aggregate score from the "Teaching Environment", "Collaboration" and "Fairness" categories from the Great Colleges to work for survey	EOU score from previous years.	N	New measure added for closer alignment with EOU's strategic plan.
Objective 2: Programs and processes promote student access	2.2: Campus community includes people from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds	2.2.1: Proportion of on campus students from diverse backgrounds.	Threshold is based on 3 years of census data, % of population in the eastern Oregon 10 county area from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds. 10 County Region: Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wheeler.	N	Threshold met.

Core theme 3: EOU is the educational, cultural and economic engine of eastern Oregon.

Objective	Indicator	Measure	Benchmarks or Data Rationale	Review Triggered	Notes
Objective 1: Academic programs reflect regional needs	1.1: Oregon Community College graduates are served by EOU's well-articulated pathways.	3.1.1: Credit articulation is maximized, as measured by the average of non-articulated transfer credit from entering fall transfer students	EOU internal data for past 3 years.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 1: Academic programs reflect regional needs	1.2: Regional High School graduates are served by EOU's academic programs.	3.1.2: Matriculation from local schools	EOU internal data for past 3 years.	N	New measure added for closer alignment with EOU's strategic plan.
Objective 2: Ongoing engagement enriches our communities	2.1: EOU is making progress towards significant Community Engagement as defined by the Carnegie Foundation	2.1.2: Percentage of students participating in service learning or civic engagement.	EOU internal data for past 3 years.	N	New measure added for closer alignment with EOU's strategic plan.
Objective 2: Ongoing engagement enriches our communities	2.1: EOU is making progress towards significant Community Engagement as defined by the Carnegie Foundation	2.1.2: Percentage of students who participate in co-curricular activities.	EOU internal data.	N	New measure added for closer alignment with EOU's strategic plan.

Objective 2: Ongoing engagement enriches our communities	2.1: EOU is making progress towards significant Community Engagement as defined by the Carnegie Foundation	2.1.3: Percentage of tenured / tenure track faculty participating in outreach activities	EOU internal data. Threshold is set based on expectation of strong participation, which is in close alignment with our mission.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 3: Systems and processes ensure a sustainable university environment	3.1: Adequate financial resources for operations	3.1.1: Primary Reserve Ration	The Primary Reserve Ratio compares expendable net assets to total expenses and gives a picture as to how long the institution could function using its expendable reserves, without relying on any additional net assets from operations. Threshold is based on financial industry best practices.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 3: Systems and processes ensure a sustainable university environment	3.1: Adequate financial resources for operations	3.1.2: Debt Burden Ratio	The debt burden ratio is a tool to measure debt affordability. This ratio looks at the cost of borrowing to overall expenditures, comparing the level of current debt service with the institution's total expenditures. Threshold is based on financial industry best practices.	N	Threshold met.
Objective 3: Systems and processes ensure a sustainable university environment	3.1: Adequate financial resources for operations	3.1.3: Fund balance as percentage of annual revenue	Threshold is set by EOU Board of Trustees policy (Resolution No. 16-06)	N	Threshold met.

Recommendation 2, Standard 3.A.5

The Commission recommends that Eastern Oregon University complete, widely disseminate, and fully implement the emergency preparedness and continuity and recovery of operations plans that it is in the process of developing.

Eastern Oregon University Response

The following report of initiatives accomplished in the year since this recommendation was received demonstrates that EOU has not only completed and disseminated our emergency preparedness and recovery of operations plans, but has also implemented a number of additional proactive programs and practices relating to emergency planning.

In the area of contingency planning, EOU started by completing a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) for every department. These reports (completed in spring 2018) are the first step in understanding and mitigating potential impact to our work should a disruptive event occur. The BIA reports formed the basis for the development of several plans:

- A [Disaster Recovery Plan](#). This completed plan forms Appendix A of the EOU Emergency Operations Plan. The plan focuses on EOU's technical / IT operations and how to recover from a disaster that affects business processes that rely on IT. It includes links to policies that govern disaster recovery at the university: A [contingency policy](#); a [data backup policy](#); a [testing & revision policy](#); and a [training & awareness policy](#). It also includes a quick reference guide to responding within the first 15 minutes of an emergency, and an outline of disaster recovery responsibilities.
- An [Emergency Operations Plan](#). This plan was deliberately kept short, with a focus on providing general approaches that can be applied in multiple conditions and emergencies. The idea is that a short and general document will ultimately prove to be more useful than a longer document that anticipates and regulates every possible emergency situation.
- A [Business Continuity Plan](#). This plan uses the processes that were defined by each department as part of the Business Impact Analysis to further develop a plan to ensure that all important processes can be maintained in the event of an emergency. The plan is currently being finalized, with expected completion in spring 2020.

EOU was careful and deliberate in rolling out the plans, in order to make sure they were widely understood across campus. The Business Impact Analysis and Business Continuity Plans are based on bottom-up processes that involved all departments across campus, and thus did not need additional campus activities in order to ensure widespread understanding. However, the comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan was introduced via some additional exercises, in order to ensure wide understanding across campus. The Emergency Operations Plan was completed in summer 2019, and the roll-out included two different emergency tabletop exercises, one in late summer and one in fall. The exercises covered different potential emergency scenarios. [The first tabletop exercise](#) was completed with executive level leadership, and also involved selected emergency personnel from outside the

university. [The second exercise](#) was completed with a group consisting of EOU department directors and other identified campus leaders.

EOU also uses annual campus-wide training as a means of increasing awareness of what to do in an emergency. This year the training focused on armed intruder response, and all students and staff were encouraged but not mandated to attend. The training sessions were followed up with a survey so that improvements could be made if necessary. Attendance was high, with three sessions totaling 342 faculty and staff (75% of employees), and 300 students (20% of on-campus students).

As well as all of the above, EOU has implemented many of the recommendations from the 2017 in depth security assessment. The assessment featured a building by building walk-through with input from local law enforcement. (Note that for security reasons, this report was provided to the peer review team in print format only). Many of the vulnerabilities mentioned in this report have now been addressed. The main improvements are:

- Lighting: Starting in the spring of 2018, approximately 60 new lights have been installed around the perimeter of campus and older fixtures have been upgraded into LED fixtures.
- Classroom Locks: All classrooms on campus have been upgraded with locking mechanisms so that classrooms can be locked from the inside.
- Shatterproof Windows: All windows in classrooms, student lounges, and general campus spaces have been upgraded with shatter resistant window film.
- Security Cameras: Thirteen additional security cameras have been installed and another 6 are scheduled for installation early in 2020.
- Entry Systems: The residence halls, Quinn Coliseum, and Pierce Library have been upgraded to proximity locking systems.

As can be seen from this summary of activities, EOU has used Recommendation #2 as an opportunity to advance a holistic strategy related to emergency planning, safety and security. We have not only completed and implemented the specific reports mentioned in Recommendation #2, but have brought to fruition a wide variety of related efforts in safety and security.

Conclusion

Eastern Oregon University has thoroughly and comprehensively addressed both Recommendation #1 and Recommendation #2. In response to Recommendation #1, EOU has focused on the definition of mission fulfillment as well as the process by which that definition is actualized, and is confident that both the definition and related processes do allow for precise articulation of institutional accomplishments representing mission fulfillment. In response to Recommendation #2, EOU's plans covering emergency operations and disaster recovery have been completed; policies regarding operation and maintenance of the plans have been updated; and dissemination including the provision of training exercises has ensured that these plans are widely understood across campus.