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July 25, 2012

Dr. Susan Wolff  
Dean and Chief Executive Officer  
Great Falls College Montana State University  
2100 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Great Falls, MT 59405-4909

Dear Dean Wolff: *Susan*

On behalf of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, I am pleased to report that the accreditation of Great Falls College Montana State University has been reaffirmed on the basis of the Spring 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Evaluation which was expanded to address Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Spring 2011 *Mission and Core Themes* Peer-Evaluation Report.

In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission rescinded Recommendation 1 of the Spring 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Peer-Evaluation Report and renumbered the remaining Recommendations accordingly. The Commission also revised the new Recommendation 1 of the Report to read as follows:

1. While the College employs appropriately qualified faculty members, the evaluation committee is concerned that the institution's inability to employ qualified part-time faculty on a sustained basis may negatively impact the College's ability to achieve its educational objectives, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs (Standard 2.B.4).

The Commission requests that this Recommendation be addressed in an addendum to its Spring 2015 Year Seven *Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability* Self-Evaluation Report. The Commission also requests that renumbered Recommendation 2 of the Spring 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Self-Evaluation Report be addressed in an Ad Hoc Self-Evaluation Report without a visit in Fall 2012. A copy of the renumbered Recommendations is enclosed for your reference.

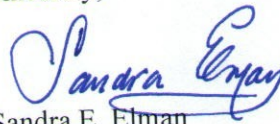
In making these requests, the Commission finds that Recommendation 1 of the Spring 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Peer-Evaluation Report is an area where Great Falls College Montana State University is substantially in compliance with Commission criteria for accreditation, but in need of improvement. However, the Commission finds that Recommendation 2 of the Spring 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Peer-Evaluation Report is an area where Great Falls College Montana State University does not meet the Commission's criteria for accreditation. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation 34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy A-18, *Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period* (enclosed), the Commission requires that Great Falls College Montana State University take appropriate action to ensure that Recommendation 2 is addressed and resolved within the prescribed two-year period.

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If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes for a rewarding academic year.

Sincerely,



Sandra E. Elman  
President

SEE:rb

Enclosures: Recommendations  
Policy A-18

cc: Dr. Heidi Pasek, Associate Dean and Chief Academic Officer  
Dr. Waded Cruzado, President, Montana State University  
Mr. Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System  
Ms. Angela McClain, Chair, Board of Regents

**Year Three *Resources and Capacity* Peer-Evaluation Report**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Great Falls College Montana State University**  
**Recommendations**

1. While the College employs appropriately qualified faculty members, the evaluation committee is concerned that the institution's inability to employ qualified part-time faculty on a sustained basis may negatively impact the College's ability to achieve its educational objectives, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs (Standard 2.B.4).
2. The committee found evidence that one program, AAS Fire and Rescue Technology accepts credit for prior experiential learning that exceeds 25% of the total credits required for the degree. This is in conflict with Standard 2.C.7 and all programs must meet the Standard (Standard 2.C.7).

## ***Policy A-18 Commission Action Regarding Institutional Compliance Within Specified Period***

If the Commission determines that an institution it accredits is not in compliance with a Commission standard for accreditation, the Commission will immediately initiate adverse action against the institution or require the institution to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance within a time period that shall not exceed: 1) twelve months, if the longest program offered by the institution, is less than one year in length; 2) eighteen months, if the longest program offered by the institution, is at least one year, but less than two years, in length; or 3) two years, if the longest program offered by the institution, is at least two years in length.

The Commission may extend the period for compliance noted above should it reasonably expect that, based upon the institution's progress toward meeting the Commission's standard for accreditation, the institution will come into full compliance within a reasonable timeframe. Should an institution deem that as a result of mitigating circumstances it is not able to comply with the standard for accreditation within the specified period of time, the institution may submit a written request to the Commission for additional time to come into compliance with the standard for accreditation. The request is to be submitted prior to the time limit for corrective action set forth by the Commission, provide a detailed explanation of the reasons why the institution cannot comply with the standard for accreditation within the designated time period, and demonstrate that the institution is making good progress in meeting the standard for accreditation. Following a review of the request, the Commission will make a determination as to whether the institution has based its request on valid reasons. If the Commission determines that the institution has substantiated good cause for not complying within the specified time period and is making good progress to come into compliance, the Commission will extend the period for achieving compliance and stipulate requirements for continuing oversight of the institution's accreditation during the extension.

Adopted 1997/Revised 2002