



Dear Dr. Saunders:

At the outset, please accept our sincere apologies for taking this long to respond to your complaint against Seattle Pacific University (SPU), filed on September 27, 2022 on behalf of the Faculty Council.

Your complaint has been reviewed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

Consistent with NWCCU Standards (2.A – Governance, 2.D - Institutional Integrity, ER 2 – Operational Focus and Independence, ER 7 – Non-Discrimination, ER 8 – Institutional Integrity, ER 9 – Governing Board), we requested the institution to provide a copy of the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees and materials related to management of conflicts of interest for members of the Board. We also asked the institution to respond to five questions related to the issues described in your complaint. SPU has responded to our request.

The issues raised in your complaint were also a significant part of the onsite Peer Evaluation Visit for SPU’s Year 7 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness team, because similar concerns were raised through the third-party comment process.

The NWCCU Board of Commissioners considered these issues and responded with a Recommendation to the institution as follows:

Recommendation 4: Spring 2023 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - The authority, roles, and responsibility of the Board of Trustees and all related entities (i.e., the Free Methodist Church) be clearly delineated, be described on its website and in its public documents, and provide SPU with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission. (2020 Standard(s) 2.A.1; ER 9)

In the Letter of Action regarding the SPU’s accreditation, this Recommendation has been identified as an area in which the institution is non-compliant with NWCCU’s Standards for Accreditation, which must be addressed in the short term.

Please note that NWCCU will continue to monitor the institution’s response to Recommendation 4 through the standard accreditation review process.

We have determined that this is the appropriate response to the issues raised by your complaint. Since this action by the Commission has been taken, we consider the case closed.

Thank you and please contact Dr. Ron Larsen, NWCCU’s staff liaison to SPU, if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sonny Ramaswamy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping underline.

Sonny Ramaswamy
President