

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



NWCCU

NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) seeks a collaborative, forward-thinking, and innovative President and Chief Executive Officer who will be a respected voice in the national and international conversation for independent accreditation in the rapidly changing higher education landscape.





THE COMMISSION

NWCCU provides institutional accreditation for public and private institutions of higher education, including Tribal and Faith-Based, throughout the United States and internationally. The overriding purpose of NWCCU accreditation is to assure stakeholders that an NWCCU-accredited institution has been rigorously evaluated and that it meets or exceeds the criteria required to maintain accreditation. In addition, NWCCU promotes a culture of data- and evidence-informed continuous institutional improvement, validates institutional integrity, and provides opportunities for feedback that improve the accreditation process.

NWCCU promotes institutional efforts to advance student achievement, student learning, and student success; strengthens educational quality and institutional effectiveness; facilitates analytical self-assessment and critical peer review; ensures accountability and transparency; and advances research and engagement.

The Commission is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) as an accreditor of

higher education institutions throughout the United States. NWCCU is a Washington State nonprofit corporation, recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

Further details regarding NWCCU can be [found in its bylaws](#) and a full list of institutions accredited by NWCCU can be [found in its directory](#).

MISSION

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accredits institutions of higher education by applying data- and evidence-informed standards and processes to support continuous improvements and promote achievement and success for all students.

VISION

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities aspires to be the premier accreditation agency whose member institutions foster access, belonging, and success for every student.

THE COMMISSION (CONT.)

HISTORY

NWCCU was founded in 1917 as a voluntary, nongovernmental organization for the improvement of educational institutions. Originally known as the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges and Universities, the Commission on Colleges and Universities separated from the Association of Secondary Schools in 2002. On May 7, 2003, the Commission was renamed the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

Since 1952, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has listed the NWCCU and its predecessors as a nationally recognized accrediting agency for institutions offering programs at the postsecondary level of at least one academic year in length. The Commission was re-recognized by USDE and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

NWCCU COMMISSIONERS

The NWCCU Board consists of up to twenty-six Commissioners, serving staggered three-year terms without compensation, with a majority representing institutions accredited by NWCCU, at least one representing tribal colleges, one-seventh representing the general public, and two commissioners from non-member institutions. The [NWCCU Board currently consists of 19 commissioners](#) and the president, who is ex-officio.

The Commission is dedicated to the integrity of its peer review process, for the member institutions and members of the public that rely on accreditation as a trustworthy authority of educational quality. The responsibilities of the Commission include:

- Maintaining official records of Commission actions on institutions.
- Maintaining institutional reports, materials, and evaluation reports through two complete evaluation cycles.
- Sharing the member status (accredited, candidate, etc.) of institutions with other recognized accrediting bodies.

- Taking the actions of other accreditation agencies into account when considering whether to grant Candidacy or Initial Accreditation status.
- Taking the adverse actions of other accreditation agencies or state agencies into account when considering whether to reaffirm the accreditation of a member institution.
- Filing notifications with the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) within thirty (30) working days regarding the actions it has taken on institutions.
- Filing copies of correspondence immediately to institutions that involve adverse actions, such as Probations or Show-Cause.
- Responding to USDE inquiries regarding institutional eligibility for Higher Education Act programs, including Title IV (Student Assistance).
- Notifying institutions about claims of Title IV fraud and abuse.
- Sharing clear evidence of possible Title IV fraud and abuse with the USDE.

The Commission is charged with establishing accreditation criteria, evaluating institutions against that criteria, and approving the institutions that meet that criteria. As part of that process, NWCCU provides expert analysis by peer evaluators, commendations for accomplishments, and recommendations for improvement. Since the accreditation status of an institution is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged toward continued self-study and improvement. NWCCU staff provide counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions throughout this continuous process.

NWCCU STAFF

The president manages [a professional and administrative staff of fourteen](#), seven of which are vice presidents who serve as institutional liaisons and perform other commission work. The seven administrative staff members support the accreditation processes and institutional reviews, serve as staff to the Commission, and offer programs and support to help institutions enhance their effectiveness.





THE POSITION

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT/CEO

The Commission seeks a thoughtful, collaborative, and creative president and chief executive who understands that the delivery, acquisition, and accountability of postsecondary learning are rapidly changing and who is also ready to be a passionate advocate for the value of independent higher education accreditation.

The president will be a leader who works collaboratively with the Commission, its membership, and national accrediting bodies and governmental agencies to assure the quality and vitality of the institutions accredited by the Commission.

The president will be passionately dedicated to the value derived from a diverse network of postsecondary institutions voluntarily engaged in institutional effectiveness and student learning assessments to support high-quality academic programs and foster student success. The president will be a strong and articulate spokesperson for the values and viewpoints of the Commission to stakeholders, the public, and state, federal, and international government agencies.

Committed to expanding the quality of postsecondary education, the president will be a strong believer in the power of education to change lives, to elevate families, and to build better futures. The new president will be dedicated to high standards of academic quality and success rates among the populations of students served by NWCCU.

THE POSITION (CONT.)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENT/CEO

The president is the chief executive officer of the organization, reporting to the NWCCU Board of Commissioners and providing strategic leadership to the Commission in matters of research and policy development in accreditation and administrative effectiveness. The president contributes regionally and nationally to ongoing discussions on quality assurance in postsecondary education.

The president will possess an earned terminal degree and extensive experience in administration and accreditation and will have:

- Passion for the support of student learning and student retention and completion;
- Broad and deep understanding of the higher education environment (non-profit, proprietary, and online education, for example), as well as the contemporary issues facing higher education providers;
- Experience with accreditation and a grounded sense of student, faculty, and institutional interests in its enactment;
- Extensive administrative experience, including some at a senior level, preferably at a regionally accredited academic institution;
- Appreciation of the diversity of institutions within NWCCU and a demonstrated commitment to fostering access and belonging in higher education;
- Familiarity with current statutes and regulations related to accreditation and a willingness to stay current and contribute to ongoing changes in the legislative and regulatory landscapes;
- Proven record of success in working with engaged and active boards;
- Ability and willingness to lead and oversee changes needed in the Commission's standards and procedures that align with the needs and demands of current and future students;
- Evidence of incorporating strategic approaches to problem-solving;
- Ability to balance the leadership and management of internal commission operations and engagement in national issues and activities;
- Disposition and political acumen to provide leadership for national conversations about accreditation's role in quality assurance;
- Integrity, diplomacy, and presence to represent the Commission before multiple audiences and constituencies;
- Demonstrated leadership skills that will advance a commission-led association with institutional membership and volunteers;
- Strong managerial and supervisory skills;
- Demonstrated ability to attract, retain, and inspire talented staff and volunteers in the ongoing work of institutional review and to build and manage successful teams;
- Compassion and respect for co-workers at all levels of the organization;
- Excellent written, analytic, and communication skills; and
- Willingness and ability to engage in significant travel.





HOW TO APPLY

Applications should consist of a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae, and a list of five professional references with full contact information. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Confidential applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically to: NWCCUPresidentCEO@academicsearch.org

The position is open until filled but only applications received by **Monday, May 5, 2025**, can be assured full consideration. The Commission is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about this opportunity with lead consultants Ann Hasselmo and Chris Butler may be arranged by contacting Amy Bonsiero at Amy.Bonsiero@academicsearch.org. Further information about NWCCU is available at <https://nwccu.org/>. The anticipated salary range for this position is \$425,000-475,000.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities is committed to equal employment opportunity and makes employment decisions on the basis of merit. It will not discriminate based on race, color, creed, gender, religion, marital status, registered domestic partner, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, and medical condition (including pregnancy or childbirth), genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience.

Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

