****

**SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION STATUS**

**Liberty University**

In accordance with the *April 2016 COSMA Accreditation Process Manual* (p. *28)*, this summary of accreditation status describes the formal action taken by the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) Board of Commissioners with regard to an academic unit/sport management program seeking accreditation for its sport management programs by COSMA.

**Profile of Accredited Academic Unit/Sport Management Program**

Type of Programs: Bachelor of Science, Sport Management

 Master of Science, Sport Management

**COSMA Accreditation Information**

History:

Undergraduate: “Accredited with Notes” in June 2011

Graduate: “Accredited with Notes” in March 2015

The COSMA Board of Commissioners reviewed Liberty University’s Bachelor of Science degree in Sport Management in June 2011 and Master of Science degree in Sport Management in March 2015. The review was based on the eight COSMA accreditation principles that require an academic unit/sport management program to show that its program(s) displays excellence in undergraduate and graduate sport management education and continuous improvement through COSMA’s developmental approach (June 2010 *COSMA Accreditation Principles and Self Study Preparation*, p. 1).

Undergraduate:

On June 1, 2011, the COSMA Board of Commissioners determined that Liberty University demonstrated that it meets these principles, that its program is consistent with the continuous improvement and excellence in sport management education that COSMA has established and should receive recognition for a period of up to 7 years.

Graduate:

On March 25, 2015, the COSMA Board of Commissioners determined that Liberty University demonstrated that it meets these principles, that its program is consistent with the continuous improvement and excellence in sport management education that COSMA has established and should receive recognition until September 2018, when both programs will be up for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

**Additional Reporting Requirements - Undergraduate**

The Liberty University Bachelor of Science degree is “Accredited with Notes.” “Accredited with Notes” indicates that certain principles of COSMA have not been met. The program is required to address the Notes on an annual basis until those concerns are dealt with by the program and accepted by COSMA. The program has up to three years to eliminate the deficiencies identified in the Notes. If the deficiencies are not removed within the required three-year period, the BOC may place it on probation (April 2016 *COSMA Accreditation Process Manual*, pp. 30-31).

**Notes:**

Principle 2: Strategic Planning

**Issue**: Reorganize the strategic plan to include the program’s learning objectives, strategies, action plans, outcomes assessment processes, and operational objectives, into the action plan section of the outcomes assessment plan (Principle 1) rather than only in the WEAVE Report.

**Note 1**: Clarify how the strategic plan is implemented and show how it links back to the outcomes assessment process.

**Resolved: September 2011.**

Liberty University will provide an Annual Report, due by July 31 each year, that addresses the “Notes” specified by the Board of Commissioners in their letter of accreditation. The purpose of the annual report is to keep the COSMA apprised of the activities of and the changes that take place within the academic unit/sport management program each academic year so a determination can be made that the academic unit/sport management program remains in compliance with COSMA accreditation principles, policies, and procedures. Any activity or change within the institution and/or the academic unit/sport management program that materially alters the status of the sport management faculty, the sport management curriculum, the resources in support of the academic unit/sport management program, or other issue that might impact its compliance with COSMA accreditation principles must be reported in the annual report to the COSMA.

**Additional Reporting Requirements - Graduate**

The Liberty University Master of Science degree is “Accredited with Notes.” “Accredited with Notes” indicates that certain principles of COSMA have not been met. The program is required to address the Notes on an annual basis until those concerns are dealt with by the program and accepted by COSMA. The program has up to three years to eliminate the deficiencies identified in the Notes. If the deficiencies are not removed within the required three-year period, the BOC may place it on probation (June 2013 *COSMA Accreditation Process Manual*, pp. 20-21).

**Notes:**

**Principle 1: Outcomes Assessment**

**Issue:** Articulate how changes are made to the program based on the analysis of student learning outcomes data (“closing the loop”).

**Note 1:** At the completion of each cluster rotation for a minimum of two direct and two indirect measures, report data even when results “meet and/or exceed expectations” to demonstrate that data are being used to drive curricular decisions.

**Outcome: Resolved.**

**Issue:** Provide a revised comprehensive exam whose questions better measure “critical thinking” as articulated in the student learning outcomes.

**Note 2**:Changes to the exam were noted and appreciated. Continue to review, revise and add questions that are structured to measure critical thinking skills in all sections. Critical thinking may be measured best by adding some open-ended or essay questions to the exam. As the exam is revised, submit a new version in the Annual Report.

**Outcome: Resolved.**

**Principle 2: Strategic Planning**

**Issue:** Describe how the information collected in the outcomes assessment process is used in the strategic planning process.

**Note 3:** When the outcomes assessment rotation is complete, provide this information in the Annual Report.

**Outcome: Resolved.**

**Principle 3: Curriculum**

**Issue:** Provide a narrative that describes how the department readies students admitted to the program who do not come from a sport management background or undergraduate degree program and how it prepares students for higher-level graduate work.

**Note 4:** The response indicated several *voluntary* methods by which students may obtain assistance, though none are required. The BOC is concerned that faculty working one-on-one with students is not possible with such a large population of online students (584 listed in the Self-Study). Provide a more detailed narrative that describes how many students fall into this category (not from a SM background or undergraduate degree program) and how the department plans to come into compliance with this principle.

**Outcome: Resolved.**

**Principle 7: Internal and External Relationships**

**Issue:** Provide a detailed description of the admission policies for the master’s degree and indicate how the admission of students to the master’s degree conforms to the approved admissions policies, and identify any exceptions. Describe how your graduate admissions requirements attempt to ensure that students admitted to the master’s degree program have a reasonable chance to succeed in the program.

# Note 5: The response provided admissions procedures and requirements for the University Graduate College and Program with an explanation that the department admissions policies and procedures are very flexible and the department has chosen to “exclude” these policies, procedures and standards. However, the response does not clearly address “how your graduate admission requirements attempt to ensure that students admitted to the master’s degree program *have a reasonable chance to succeed* in the program” (emphasis added, Principle 7.2).

**Outcome: Resolved.**

**Issue:** Provide a narrative that describes how key student learning outcomes are communicated to the public.

**Note 6:** Principle 7.8 External Accountability states: “Provide a description of the ways in which you communicate information concerning key student learning outcomes to the public. Provide copies of this information and explain how the public can access this information.” Provide a response to this Principle in your Annual Report.

**Outcome: Resolved.**

Liberty University will provide an Annual Report, due by July 31 each year, that addresses the “Notes” specified by the Board of Commissioners in their letter of accreditation. The purpose of the annual report is to keep the COSMA apprised of the activities of and the changes that take place within the academic unit/sport management program each academic year so a determination can be made that the academic unit/sport management program remains in compliance with COSMA accreditation principles, policies, and procedures. Any activity or change within the institution and/or the academic unit/sport management program that materially alters the status of the sport management faculty, the sport management curriculum, the resources in support of the academic unit/sport management program, or other issue that might impact its compliance with COSMA accreditation principles must be reported in the annual report to the COSMA.

**Most Recent Accreditation Action - Graduate**

Date: March 25, 2015

Decision: Granted Accreditation with Notes to the Master of Science, Sport Management program.

**Reaffirmation of Accreditation: September 2018**

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Information pertaining to student learning and achievement in the sport management program accredited by COSMA can be obtained by visiting Liberty University’s [website](http://www.liberty.edu/academics/education/sport/index.cfm?PID=33493) or by contacting Dr. Laura Hatfield at lmhatfield@liberty.edu.