

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM
SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 4**

For Institutions Seeking Initial Accreditation

To Coleman University
May 10, 2018

Team Roster

Thomas Stewart, Team Chair
President
Patten University

Susan Clapper, Team Assistant Chair
Executive Associate to the VPAA and Accreditation Manager
Dominican University of California

Susan Hippensteele, Team Member
Professor, Women's Studies
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Danielle Manning, Team Member
Vice President for Administrative Affairs and Chief Financial Officer
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Rebecca Sorell, Team Member
Director of Institutional Research and Registrar
San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Tamela Hawley
Vice President
WASC Senior College and University Commission

The team evaluated the institution under the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. Once an institution achieves either candidacy or initial accreditation, the team report and Commission Action Letter associated with the review that resulted in the granting of either candidacy or initial accreditation and the team reports and Commission Action Letters of any subsequent reviews will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

Table of Contents

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT.....	3
A. Description of Institution and Visit.....	3
B. The Institution’s Seeking Accreditation Visit Report: Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report.....	5
C. Response to Issues Raised in Past Commission Letters.....	6
Recommendation 1	6
Recommendation 2	7
Recommendation 3	8
Recommendation 4	9
Recommendation 5	10
SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC’S STANDARDS.....	11
Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability.....	11
Faculty and Staff.....	11
CFR 3.2.....	11
CFR 3.3.....	12
Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources	14
CFR 3.4.....	14
Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes	16
CFR 3.7.....	16
CFR 3.10.....	17
SECTION III. FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	18
Commendations	18
Recommendations.....	19

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Visit

Coleman is a private, nonprofit institution, operating a single 85,000-square-foot campus in the Kearny Mesa area of San Diego, California. The mission of Coleman University is to “deliver relevant education that prepares individuals for technology-focused careers, while providing an environment where they may develop to their full potential.” Coleman University (Coleman) began as the Automation Institute of San Diego in fall 1963 and progressively added associate and bachelor’s degrees in the 1970s. Coleman offered its first master’s degree program in 1982 and as of spring 2018, offers associate of science degrees in cybersecurity and software development; bachelor of science degrees in cybersecurity, software development, and game development; a master of science degree in information systems management; and a master of business administration degree. It currently enrolls 226 students and employs 33 administrators and staff and 67 faculty members (10 full-time and 57 adjuncts).

In 1967, the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) initially accredited Coleman, and in 2014, the institution received continued accreditation through December 2020. As a result of the U.S. Department of Education’s de-recognition of ACICS, effective December 12, 2016, Coleman, like many other institutions accredited by ACICS, finds itself nearing the end of the 18-month U.S. provisional accreditation period on June 12, 2018. On March 23, 2018, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia remanded to the secretary the December 12, 2016 decision of then-secretary John King, withdrawing the recognition of ACICS. However, on April 3, 2018, Secretary of Betsy DeVos ordered further review of the agency’s petition. Barring any federal decision reversals, and without accreditation from another federally recognized accrediting agency, Coleman will no longer be able to participate in Title IV, Higher Education Act financial aid programs.

Coleman has had a relationship with the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) since 2009 when it submitted its application for eligibility and was granted eligibility for a period of four years through fall 2013. A Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) visit was conducted in March 2011, followed by an Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) in March 2013, after which the Commission granted candidacy status for four years and scheduled a CPR for initial accreditation in fall 2016 and an EER in spring 2018. As part of the transition in the WSCUC accreditation review process, and with the institution's input, in September 2014, the scheduled CPR and EER visits were replaced with the Seeking Accreditation Visit 3 (SAV) for fall 2015. The March 2016 Commission Action Letter stated that the SAV 4 should be scheduled no later than spring 2018 to review compliance with the Standards and Criteria for Review (CFRs) that the Commission determined were not sufficiently met for Initial Accreditation.

The SAV 4 review team:

- reviewed Coleman's institutional report and attachments;
- hosted a team conference call on March 2, 2018; and
- conducted a one-day campus site visit on April 10, 2018, including 15 discrete meetings.

The WSCUC Steering Committee, the board of trustees, and Coleman faculty and staff who contributed to the discussions focused on diversity; enrollment and fiscal management; and faculty and staff orientation, evaluation, and professional development. Submissions to the confidential email account were also reviewed.

The one-day visit schedule was finalized during the evening of March 9, 2018. However, during its first meeting of the day with the president, the team was provided important information about the source of a substantial financial gift and a strategic partnership focused on

enrollment growth. The disclosure of this information by the president at the very beginning of the visit, and later expanded upon by the board of trustees, challenged the team to refocus and direct its time and attention to clarifying and validating the new information in order to ensure it was providing the highest level of due diligence. While an additional meeting was scheduled and the discussion was able to provide greater clarity surrounding the financial gifts received by Coleman and the shared services agreement in place, it could have potentially redirected the team's attention to areas not within its purview. To maintain the integrity of the review process, the team held several debrief meetings throughout the day in which the scope of the team's review stayed central to Coleman's demonstrating and evidencing compliance with Standard 3 at a level sufficient for initial accreditation.

B. The Institution's Seeking Accreditation Visit Report: Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

The SAV 4 report was drafted by Coleman's WSCUC Steering Committee, which included the president, the vice president and chief operating officer (and accreditation liaison officer), the vice president for student success, the chief academic officer, and the general education program chair and faculty senate chair. Apart from diversity (CFR 1.4), the report was organized around Standard 3, and specifically the relevant CFRs, to evidence compliance with Standard 3 at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation (i.e., CFRs 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 3.10).

The team reviewed the report and the supporting attachments prior to the visit, followed by a team conference call to develop a number of questions and lines of inquiry to clarify the information provided by Coleman. The team requested additional documents be made available prior to the visit through Box that included information pertaining to the board of trustees and financial and organizational structures. Coleman was responsive to providing the team-requested materials ahead of the visit.

Because of the overlap in addressing the Commission's five recommendation areas and the five CFRs under Standard 3, Coleman's SAV 4 report at times was repetitive across the required sections. Coleman included a synthesis and reflection piece for Standard 3 that focused on the remaining challenge to achieve initial accreditation for future sustainability, areas of strength (e.g., information and human resource management, and student enrollment systems), and areas to be addressed or improved (e.g., departmental processes for gathering data survey administration). Because the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators and the Federal Compliance Forms were part of the SAV 3 report sections approved by the Commission, they were not required to be reviewed by the SAV 4 team.

Coleman's SAV 4 report provided the foundation for the one-day campus visit, while the onsite interviews and discussions with a cross-section of key stakeholders provided the additional information needed to answer outstanding questions and inform the team's findings. The team found that for the five recommendation areas (i.e., diversity; professional development, orientation, and evaluation; enrollment and fiscal management; and organizational structure and decision-making processes), smaller teams were charged by the steering committee to collect, review, and report on data and findings that could inform the Committee's writing of the SAV 4 report. The team confirmed that the report was widely disseminated across Coleman in final form and approved by the board of trustees prior to submission to WSCUC.

C. Response to Issues Raised in Past Commission Letters

Recommendation 1: *Continued commitment to diversity. While Coleman University has made noticeable progress with regard to improving student and staff diversity, the institution should take more deliberate action to increase faculty diversity. (CFRs 1.4, 3.1)*

Coleman has expressed a commitment to increasing diversity among its faculty, staff, and students. Citing a *Wall Street Journal* article on nationwide employment patterns in tech fields, along with San Diego regional demographics for benchmarks pertaining to gender and ethnic

diversity, Coleman reported exceeding the gender diversity benchmark of 20 percent (women represent 27 percent of faculty at Coleman) and attempting to reach an ethnic diversity benchmark goal of 48 percent (current percentage of 36 percent). The Presidential Task Force on Diversity (TFD) replaced a previous committee that faculty, staff, and students believed did not have adequate influence or authority. The current TFD is tasked with reinforcing the institution's commitment by guiding and monitoring diversity and inclusion activities. It appears to have significant autonomy to implement initiatives aimed at advancing faculty recruitment, hiring and retention goals, and concomitantly, the success of students typically underrepresented in technology. However, while in the SAV 4 report and in the meeting with the board of trustees, board diversity was noted as being addressed, specific planning details and timeline were not made available.

Recommendation 2: *Professional development. The institution should commit the necessary resources to faculty and staff for meaningful professional development and creative activities with the goal of enhancing teaching, learning, and support services. (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.4)*

Coleman recognized that a culture of continuous improvement is critical to its success, and it has evidenced a commitment to the importance of including faculty and staff professional development activities in its budgeting and resource planning. The SAV 4 report indicated that in October 2015 the board of trustees approved an algorithm for funding for faculty professional development of \$1,000 per year for full-time faculty and \$500 per year for part-time faculty. In the open faculty forum and in the orientation, evaluation, and professional development meeting, faculty expressed that while professional development is now more accessible, the practice of applying for and being able to use the \$1,000 had only recently been implemented. During its meeting with faculty, the team was told that some of them were using the \$500 to \$1,000 allocation during spring 2018.

For staff, as of October 2017, Coleman allows each employee to spend \$100 per term for professional development activities without requiring management approval. Additionally, Coleman allocates five paid hours per term to each employee to engage in professional development activities.

Recommendation 3: *Orientation and evaluation. The institution should use best practices in higher education to inform faculty and staff orientation and evaluation processes to improve overall institutional effectiveness. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3)*

The team found that Coleman has combined orientation, evaluation, and professional development in a single cycle of continuous improvement for its employees. All employees are required to participate in an orientation process that includes pre-arrival activities, first-day activities, first-week activities, a 30-day check in, and a 90-day evaluation. For the evaluation component, Coleman created an evaluation policy and procedure guide and electronic employee evaluation forms for the employee and supervisor to use separately and then together to frame their evaluation discussion. Faculty are evaluated twice a year by peers or supervisors, but the method for determining who would perform the teaching-skills evaluation and the expected frequency of peer versus supervisor evaluations were not clear to the team. Faculty instruction is also assessed through student course evaluations.

During the visit, the team was provided with results from the SAV 4 Preparation Survey. Areas surveyed included professional development, evaluation, and shared governance. While the survey participation numbers included a breakdown of 25 faculty, 21 staff, and 4 people who held both roles at Coleman, the results for the three areas were not disaggregated by role and were instead displayed in aggregate by *agree*, *somewhat agree*, *somewhat disagree*, and *disagree*. Compared to the other two areas evaluated—professional development and shared governance— this area of evaluation indicated a lower responses for “agree” and a higher responses for “somewhat agree.” This may indicate that in aggregate, faculty and staff are more

responsive to the practices in place for professional development and shared governance than they are for evaluation.

Recommendation 4: *Enrollment and fiscal management. The institution should take action to improve enrollment management, ensure financial stability, and develop diverse revenue sources. (CFR 3.4)*

Since the SAV 3 review, Coleman has addressed this recommendation by obtaining outside assistance for enrollment management and financial operations and by attempting to diversify its revenue sources. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, one-third of Coleman’s revenue came from non-tuition sources—much of it from an anonymous gift. However, the team found that in its attempt to diversify its revenue sources, it may have moved from one extreme (i.e., tuition dependency) to the other (i.e., substantial financial donations in the amount of more than \$2.5 million) in order to support its financial operations.

Beginning in spring 2017, Coleman entered into an informal (i.e., no signed contract) support services agreement with the Center for Excellence in Higher Education (CEHE) for marketing, advertising, lead generation, and recruiting services at “no cost” in exchange for being a *beta test* for CEHE to develop these new services for other institutions in its portfolio. The team was able to confirm with the CEHE chief executive officer that the beta test is expected to last at through at least the end of calendar year 2018. To date, CEHE has worked with Coleman to restructure its admissions office and processes, redesign the Coleman website and digital marketing campaigns, and expedite responding times to potential leads. At the time of the SAV 4 visit, however, it was too early to evidence whether these support services have been effective in turning leads into inquiries, inquiries into admissions, and admissions into enrollments.

Beginning in spring 2017, Coleman entered into an informal (i.e., no signed contract) support services agreement with the Center for Excellence in Higher Education (CEHE) for

marketing, advertising, lead generation, and recruiting services at no cost in exchange for being a *beta test* for CEHE to develop these new services for other institutions in its portfolio. The team was able to confirm with the CEHE chief executive officer that the beta test is expected to last through at least the end of calendar year 2018. To date, CEHE has worked with Coleman to restructure its admissions office and processes, redesign the Coleman website and digital marketing campaigns, and expedite response times to potential leads. At the time of the SAV 4 visit, however, it was too early to evidence whether these support services have been effective in turning leads into inquiries, inquiries into admissions, and admissions into enrollments.

Coleman repeatedly emphasized to the team that the de-recognition of ACICS and the institution's 18-month provisional accreditation, along with the absence of WSCUC regional accreditation status have had and continue to have a negative effect on new enrollments. The team found that Coleman looks to regional accreditation as the ultimate solution needed to address declining enrollments versus clearly distinguishing who its local competitors may be, the student demand for specific degree programs, and how to effectively position itself within the higher education landscape.

Recommendation 5: *Organization structure and decision-making processes. The team recommends the university engage appropriately qualified academic leadership to improve decision-making and communication processes. (CFRs 3.7, 3.8, 3.10)*

The SAV 4 report stated in detail the improvement to faculty governance and departmental decision making, and the faculty and staff endorsed this during the team visit. Noticeable communication improvements between faculty and administration and among academic departments were observed by the team. Coleman faculty have clearly been supported and encouraged to make significant gains in establishing the faculty senate, only in existence for one year at the time of the site visit.

Coleman retained a consultant and incorporated a shared governance model that was specific to its culture. The team was originally concerned that the Faculty Roles and Responsibilities document read as an administration-authored document reviewed by faculty (as opposed to authored by faculty and reviewed by administration). However, after discussions with faculty academic leadership, the team was encouraged by extremely positive statements regarding their new-found authority in qualified academic leadership to support Coleman's mission alongside administration.

Finally, while the report described data sharing among discrete internal stakeholders to make better-informed decisions, it did not address how ongoing problems are initially identified and what processes are memorialized to facilitate problem solving at the department and institution levels. Discussions with the various groups during the site visit did not indicate that systematic processes were in place. Instead, Coleman continues to demonstrate a relatively informal and reactionary approach of identifying issues and communicating them up and down the reporting structure and between the faculty.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC'S STANDARDS

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

Faculty and Staff

CFR 3.2

Faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, workload, incentives, and evaluation practices are aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives. Evaluation is consistent with best practices in performance appraisal, including multisource feedback and appropriate peer review. Faculty evaluation processes are systematic and are used to improve teaching and learning.

Coleman reported *right-sizing* its faculty and staff since the SAV 3 review in response to

a continued decline in student enrollment. Since 2013, Coleman student enrollment declined nearly 71 percent from 833 to 226 students at the time of the SAV 4 visit. Coleman cited lack of accreditation for the recent 18-month enrollment drop of 40 percent since 2016.

Faculty turnover at Coleman has been dramatic; the institution reports a loss of 57 percent full-time and 34 percent of adjunct faculty since 2014 due to retirement, resignation, or termination. The institution currently employs 67 faculty members of which 10 are full-time and 57 are adjunct. However, during the SAV 4 visit, faculty reported that these changes have strengthened Coleman's program quality and reflect increased faculty influence over peer evaluations.

Coleman reported implementing structured and effective faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, and evaluation practices. During the SAV 4, faculty reported to the team that they were directly involved in revising these new processes. Coleman faculty and staff also reported the university is now facilitating and engaging them with significantly expanded professional development opportunities and resources. For example, a few faculty, who departed Coleman previously because of "leadership challenges" and "other concerns," have returned and reported a noticeable improvement.

CFR 3.3

The institution maintains appropriate and sufficiently supported faculty and staff development activities designed to improve teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes.

As a result of the SAV 3 review, Coleman was encouraged to use best practices to inform faculty and staff orientation and evaluation processes to improve overall institutional effectiveness. In October 2017, Coleman implemented a new policy to improve professional development for faculty and staff. The team reviewed the policy as an attachment to Coleman's SAV 4 report and implementation of the policy was confirmed during the open forums with faculty and staff during the SAV 4 visit. The policy as described is robust. Results from a faculty

and staff survey administered in January 2018 indicated that respondents had already participated in more than one of the professional development offerings and on a variety of subjects. This was confirmed during the SAV 4 visit through the open forums with faculty and staff. Most indicated that they were using the available resources, especially Go2Knowledge (an online training tool used for webinars), and taking two webinars each term. In addition, all faculty and staff could spend \$100 on development events without prior approval, \$500 with prior approval if part-time status, and \$1,000 with prior approval if full-time status. This option, however, had not been used by faculty and staff as often as the online webinars.

Although professional development opportunities are being utilized at a higher rate than at the time of the SAV 3 review, the topics tend to be mundane, relating to classroom management or gaining more subject matter expertise. Although professional development opportunities are being utilized at a higher rate than at the time of the SAV 3 review, the topics include classroom management or simply gaining more subject matter expertise. There was little evidence of the professional development opportunities specific to pedagogy and the assessment of student learning. Reference was made to internally developed assessment training, but it was unclear about the content of the sessions or how well the sessions were attended. While student learning outcomes assessment data were available on the website (<https://www.coleman.edu/about/student-achievement.php>), findings were based on course grades and grade-point averages. The team was unable to find student learning outcomes that were assessed independent of course grades. Coleman is doing an admirable job in developing teaching and learning skills for their faculty and staff, but could apply a greater emphasis on the assessment of teaching and learning.

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

CFR 3.4

The institution is financially stable and has unqualified independent financial audits and resources sufficient to ensure long-term viability. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. Resource planning is integrated with all other institutional planning. Resources are aligned with educational purposes and objectives.

The team reviewed the last three audited financial statements for the fiscal years ending (FYE) in June 30, 2015, 2016, and 2017. Coleman's unrestricted net assets increased from \$2.5-million in FYE 2016 to \$2.8 million in FYE 2017, largely due to a gift pledge receivable of \$2-million. Coleman's operating performance remains weak. Tuition income and fee revenue for the period FYE 2015 to FYE 2017 declined by 34 percent, from \$9.7 million to \$6.4 million, due to year-over-year declines in student enrollment. Coleman right-sized its operations during this same period and reduced its operating expenses from \$13.3 million to \$9.2 million. The institution experienced operating losses of 38 percent in FYE 2015 and 53 percent in FYE 2016 and achieved a 2 percent operating surplus in FYE 2017 as a result of one large donation. Coleman has received an additional \$2.52 million commitment from the same donor for the remainder of calendar year (CY) 2018.

The institution remains highly tuition dependent and ongoing enrollment declines are negatively impacting its financial stability. Coleman's weak operating performance has created cash flow concerns. For example, the institution was unsuccessful in its attempts to secure a bank line of credit to help with cash flow and continues to face periodic monthly cash flow shortfalls which have been covered by gift pledge payments. The accounts payable balance increased from \$215,000 in FY2016 to \$574,000 in FYE 2017.

Coleman has taken several actions since SAV3 to achieve financial stability under challenging circumstances. The institution has intensified its focus in the areas of fiscal management, enrollment management, operating efficiency, and revenue diversification. Coleman is addressing past internal control weaknesses, financial oversight and regulatory compliance concerns and overcame A-133 Title IV audit repeat findings. Management indicated they are exploring non-tuition revenue sources such as increasing facility rentals to external organizations. The institution, however, has not been able to increase its alumni giving or reverse declining student enrollment.

Although Coleman has engaged an outside marketing and advertising firm to help drive student demand, student enrollment has declined by 43 percent since 2015–2016. In anticipation of a successful marketing campaign, Coleman set aggressive FYE 2017 budget goal targets of increased enrollments from 360 to 600 students (67 percent). However, the marketing and advertising campaign did not result in increased enrollment, and Coleman was forced to lower its FYE 2018 enrollment budget target to 263. At the time of the SAV4 visit, enrollment was 226 and preliminary FYE 2018 projections show tuition income further declining.

Coleman provided an enrollment management plan for 2018–2020 but did not have an accompanying financial plan. The institution appears to be in discussions with several educational and governmental agencies to enter into partnerships and articulation and transfer agreements to increase student enrollment. Coleman confirmed it is seeking out new student markets to increase enrollment, however, uncertainty regarding its accreditation status has limited its ability to secure new partners.

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

CFR 3.7

The institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear and consistent with its purposes, support effective decision making, and place priority on sustaining institutional capacity and educational effectiveness.

In the Commission letter following the SAV 3 review, Coleman was encouraged to engage appropriately qualified academic leadership to improve decision-making and communication processes. Coleman went into great detail about the improvements in faculty governance and departmental decision making in its SAV 4 report—details which were enthusiastically echoed by faculty during the visit. Faculty indicated marked improvement in communication between them, academic leadership, and senior administration.

On the other hand, the review team's interactions with key stakeholders indicated a lack of common or shared knowledge of Coleman's financial challenges and enrollment plan. The review team members heard inconsistent responses from key administrators regarding important data points, such as the break-even student headcount number, its chief competitors in the area, and a potential strategic partner that had pledged vital and "free support" for marketing and enrollment. The variance between the information reported by key leaders, including the board of trustees, raised many unanticipated concerns about Coleman's capacity to reverse its enrollment decline and growing deficit.

During the second half of the one-day visit, the review team was faced with growing doubt the university has policies and practices currently in place to facilitate effective and clear decision making—paramount to addressing the school's issues in a holistic manner. For instance, the institution provided neither contractual evidence of the \$3 million donation nor proof of, or a

contract pertaining to, the marketing and enrollment services agreement. The institution, namely several board members, made an unsuccessful last-minute attempt to produce these documents when the team expressed concern that Coleman has relied exclusively on a verbal commitment for the previously referenced large monetary donation and the marketing and enrollment services. (CFR 1.7) The SAV 4 report, in retrospect, was also largely devoid of information that would explain the significant role the board of trustees played in helping the university navigate its immediate finance and enrollment challenges, as well as establish the institution's priorities.

CFR 3.10

The institution's faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure that both academic quality and the institution's educational purposes and character are sustained.

During the SAV 4 visit, team members observed Coleman faculty embracing shared governance and exercising effective academic leadership with a renewed sense of energy and commitment to student success. The faculty have deployed an iterative, agile approach to curriculum development that facilitates multidisciplinary collaboration among programs whose students reported working together on challenging and innovative applied projects with encouragement and targeted mentorship from the faculty.

The SAV 4 team met with a diverse group of more than 25 Coleman students that included both traditional and nontraditional students, as well as several members of student leadership. Students cited faculty expertise and extensive one-on-one attention as vital components of their degree programs. Of note, a number of Coleman students offered specific examples of faculty using their industry contacts to open professional doors, and several reported that their professors check in regularly to make sure they are building strong résumés by participating in community events, competitions, and extracurricular projects.

Faculty involvement in navigating Coleman's fundamental shift from being a trade school to a regionally accredited university that emphasizes general education and offers a rigorous set of undergraduate and graduate degree programs has gained significant momentum. During their meeting with the SAV 4 team, faculty specifically noted that increased enrollments will enable Coleman expand general education course offerings to meet the needs of their increasingly diverse student population in areas of world and U.S. history, arts education, and the physical and social sciences. The SAV 4 team noted that faculty and staff appear to have the necessary support and guidance to effectively assume more demanding roles and responsibilities in setting appropriate and sustainable academic trajectories for the campus.

SECTION III. FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The March 2, 2016, Commission Action Letter stated that Coleman had met Standards 1, 2, and 4 as part of its SAV3 review. Therefore, the SAV4 review was specifically focused on assessing Coleman's capacity to meet the CFRs associated with Standard 3 as detailed in the action letter. After extensive analysis and consideration of the evidence provided before and during the visit, the team concluded that Coleman has not met Standard 3 (specifically CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 3.8, and 3.9) at a level sufficient for initial accreditation.

It is important to note that only the Commission is authorized to make the final determination as to whether or not an institution is in compliance with the Standards and, in this case, whether an institution will be granted initial accreditation. Below are the salient commendations and recommendations made by the SAV4 team to Coleman.

Commendations

- *Warm hospitality and enthusiasm.* The team commends the entire Coleman community for the friendly reception and willingness to accommodate the team's requests.

- *Student professional development.* Coleman is commended for facilitating multidisciplinary collaboration among programs whose students report working together on challenging and innovative applied projects with encouragement and targeted mentorship from the faculty.
- *Academic leadership.* Coleman's faculty is commended for exercising effective academic leadership with a renewed sense of energy and commitment to student success and for their willingness to embrace shared governance to deploy an iterative, agile approach to curriculum development.
- *Employee orientation and evaluation.* Coleman is commended both for implementing structured and effective faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation and evaluation practices and for including faculty and staff in revising these new processes.
- *Faculty and staff engagement.* Coleman is commended for facilitating and engaging faculty and staff with expanded professional development opportunities and resources.

Recommendations

- *Improve board engagement.* The board of trustees should consistently ensure appropriate oversight of institutional outcomes, financial viability, and the performance of the chief executive officer and other members of the senior administration or management team. (CFR 3.9)
- *Secure sufficient qualified financial leadership.* The institution should secure experienced, independent financial leadership capable of providing effective management and guidance in the areas of financial planning and fiscal sustainability. (CFR 3.8)
- *Institute effective decision-making protocols.* The institution should develop and formalize systems and clarify roles for effective decision making. (CFR 3.7)

- *Develop effective budget modeling.* The institution should develop a realistic budget model and budgeting processes that includes diversifying revenue sources and aligning reasonable and consistent enrollment projections and marketing to attain financial sustainability. (CFR 3.4)
- *Improved transparency.* The institution should commit to being as forthcoming as possible with WSCUC about its response to the structural and financial realities it faces within the changing higher education landscape. (CFR 1.7)