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The COSMA Board of Commissioners (BOC) met on September 30, 2022, to discuss your application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation and all supporting materials. Based on the self-study, the site visit team report and your written response, the BOC determined that the following degree program is substantially in compliance with all COSMA Principles:

### **Master of Sports Leadership**

Northeastern University's sport management academic unit is awarded "**Accreditation with Notes and Observations.**" Accreditation is awarded for a maximum of seven years, until September 2029.

According to COSMA's *Accreditation Process Manual* (May 2016), Reaffirmation of Accreditation is granted to those programs judged by the COSMA Board of Commissioners to be substantially in compliance with the COSMA accreditation principles. The program must be current with its membership dues and the site visit expenses must have been paid to COSMA before Reaffirmation of Accreditation is granted. The program is notified, in writing, of its accreditation status.

"Accreditation with Notes" indicates that **certain principles of COSMA have not been met** and these principles are identified in Notes summarized below. Notes represent concerns of the Board of Commissioners, and until those concerns are dealt with by the program and accepted by COSMA, the Notes must be addressed each year in the program's Annual Report to COSMA. The program has up to **two years** to eliminate the deficiencies identified in the Notes. When a program that has been accredited with Notes does not remove those deficiencies within the required designated period, the BOC may place it on probation.

**Observations** are suggestions for improvement intended to meet COSMA's philosophy of "continuous improvement" and to assist the academic unit/sport management program in achieving excellence in sport management education. Action on observations is recommended, but not required.

If not included in this letter, the Action Item from the site visit team report is considered resolved.

**The following areas constitute the "Notes" to which you must respond within two years in your Annual Report to COSMA.**

#### **Principle 1: Outcomes Assessment**

**Action Item 1:** Realign the Graduate Student Exit Survey questions to align with the student learning

outcomes it is supposed to be assessing. Other options for meeting this deficiency may include: Identifying/Creating new indirect measurement tools, revising the wording of the student learning outcome(s), or others.

**Response:** The response indicated the program will adjust the goals and survey instruments for the indirect measures for better alignment with corresponding SLOs.

**Note 1:** Provide a copy of the modified goals and survey instrument (Graduate Student Exit Survey) questions to demonstrate alignment with the student learning outcomes it is assessing. Provide a copy of the new instrument and/or any new or revised measurement tools or indicate any rewording of SLOs.

### **Principle 2: Strategic Planning**

**Action Item 3:** Submit an updated, program-level strategic planning document that covers the required areas outlined in the *Accreditation Principles and Self-Study Preparation Manual* (Spring 2022), p. 13-14.

**Response:** The program has created a Master of Sports Leadership Program Marketing Plan and Strategic Planning Tracking Matrix, which details strategic planning goals and a timeline for implementation and resources required for the strategic plan.

**Note 2:** Provide a copy of the completed Sports Leadership Strategic Plan – based on the Spring 2022 Principles Manual – as part of the 2022-23 Annual Report.

### **Principle 3: Curriculum**

**Recommendation 1:** Develop a method to track the significant time faculty spend cultivating sport industry relationships and how this additional service benefits faculty, staff, students, and administrators through up-to-date curriculum and adjunct faculty engagement with sport industry.

**Response:** During the 2022-23 academic year, full-time Sports Leadership faculty will track the significant time spent cultivating sport industry relationships and how this additional service benefits all stakeholders related to the program.

**Note 3:** This recommendation was elevated to a “Note” as it is not clear how this time will be tracked and it is directly related to Principle 4, Action Item 4/Note 4. Respond to Notes 3 and 4 together.

### **Principle 4: Faculty**

**Action Item 4:** Working with the CPS Dean’s office, submit a plan to address the equity of faculty work plans, with particular focus on program administration, to ensure they are appropriate and equitable with other similar programs.

**Response:** As part of the upcoming fifth year, the Senior Associate Dean is preparing a review that will be presented to the Office of the Provost. Assuring equity of faculty workplans so that they are appropriate and equitable with other similar programs will be included in that review. This review is expected to begin in the Fall [of 2022] and conclude within the academic year.

**Note 4:** Provide an update of the content and outcome of the review from the Provost’s Office. Be specific about indicating how equity of faculty work plans was considered. Indicate how the current load allows for the implementation of strategic initiatives. Respond to Note 3 in the same response. Use the self-study guidelines in Principle 4.2, Faculty Load (pp. 31-32), to demonstrate compliance with this Principle, worded as follows:

Excellence in sport management education and academic quality requires that **faculty members have adequate time to devote to teaching, service and scholarly activity. Therefore, a faculty member should not be expected to teach an excessive number of credit hours per academic term**, nor should a faculty member be expected to have an excessive number of course preparations per academic term. **Appropriate reductions in**

**teaching loads or professional responsibilities should be provided for faculty members who teach graduate courses; have significant administrative or service duties; manage accreditation process(es); direct multiple graduate theses, projects, or dissertations; or are engaged in extensive approved research. [emphasis added]**

**The following areas constitute the “Observations” (a response is highly recommended, not required).**

**Principle 4: Faculty**

**Recommendation 1:** Consider a more flexible faculty scheduling model that allows faculty to devote more time to program management, curriculum development, etc. With full-semester classes each term, faculty are constantly teaching and cannot devote significant time to these other critical program elements (see Action Item 4).

**Response:** No response.

**Observation 1:** As this recommendation is aligned with other Notes related to faculty load, a response is recommended and may be included in the response to the Notes.

**Recommendation 2:** Consider course releases for initiatives and projects requiring significant time and effort such as the COSMA accreditation process which requires annual reporting.

**Response:** While a direct response was not included in the rejoinder, it was communicated that the calculation of release time is based on the number of courses assigned in a given year as well as the number of sections of those courses that will be taught, which corresponds to the number of adjuncts faculty.

**Observation 2:** As the updated Principles document directly asks a question related to release time for significant administrative or service duties and to manage accreditation processes (see citation above), a response is strongly recommended.

**Principle 5: Scholarly and Professional Activities**

**Recommendation 1:** Provide faculty access to additional funding to attend and/or present at professional conferences and to engage in other types of professional development.

**Response:** Sports Leadership faculty will apply for faculty fund assistance and request additional funds when necessary to cover costs for attendance over the \$1,000 allotment.

**Observation 3:** Provide an update on the decision regarding the application of funding assistance for additional funds over the \$1,000 allotment.

**Principle 6: Resources**

**Recommendation 1:** Conduct an analysis of the new flexible workspace to assure it meets faculty needs given the increased presence of international students and resulting requirements for on-campus expectations within the program.

**Response:** Sports Leadership faculty members will respond to these recommendations and report in the 2022-23 Annual Report.

**Observation 4:** The BOC supports the official reporting on this Recommendation in the next Annual Report.

**Recommendation 2:** Provide a follow-up explanation as to how the goals and action steps concerning student and faculty infrastructure needs have changed, or may be different from, University needs.

**Response:** Sports Leadership faculty members will respond to these recommendations and report in the 2022-23 COSMA Annual Report.

**Observation 5:** The BOC supports the official reporting on this Recommendation in the next Annual

Report.

**COSMA accreditation covers a maximum time period of seven years, through September 2029.** COSMA will notify you in advance concerning the timing of reaffirmation of accreditation, so that you can apply for reaffirmation in a timely manner.

Now that Reaffirmation of Accreditation has been granted to Northeastern University's sport management academic unit, **you must continue to denote this status** in your official publications and advertising with the exact language below, use of the accreditation seal (which you may personalize) and posting of your most recent data from student learning outcomes and operational effectiveness goals (see enclosed student achievement public disclosure template and reference the *Accreditation Process Manual*, May 2016, p. 28-29):

**The sport management degree program at Northeastern University has received specialized accreditation through the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) located in Fort Collins, Colorado, USA. The sport management program with the following degree is accredited by COSMA:**

- **Master of Sports Leadership**

Using the feedback provided in this letter, submit your response to the Notes **as part of your Annual Report document**. You have up to two years to respond to the Notes.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-329-1189 or [commissiononsmaccrreditation@gmail.com](mailto:commissiononsmaccrreditation@gmail.com).

Sincerely,



Heather Alderman  
Executive Director

cc: Dr. Joseph Aoun, President  
Dr. David Madigan, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Dr. Radhika Seshan, Dean, College of Professional Studies