

July 20, 2018

Dr. David Steele-Figueroa
President
Woodbury University
7500 Glenoaks Boulevard
Burbank, CA 91510-7846

Dear President Steele-Figueroa:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Woodbury University (WU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27-29, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to WU March 6-9, 2018. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by WU prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's May 31, 2018 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues: Randall Stauffer, Senior VP, Academic Affairs; David Lachina, VP, Accounting & Finance; and Marty Tippens, Accreditation Liaison Officer. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2023 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2024
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2021
5. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2020 to address all recommendations in this Commission action letter
6. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by February 1, 2019 to include audited financial statements and progress toward financial sustainability

Commendations

The Commission commends WU in particular for the following:

1. The highly qualified, hard-working, and dedicated mission-driven faculty and staff.
2. The university for creatively engaging students in curricular and co-curricular high-impact practices such as internships, work experiences, capstone courses, community partnerships, the Woodbury Integrated Student Experience program, student services, and the library.

3. The Enrollment Management Committee for the development and application of the Strategic Enrollment Plan, which enjoys wide buy-in and stakeholder investment for an improved future, and related budget planning, which reflects multiple realistic scenarios tied to the plan.
4. The university for its progress in conducting program reviews with special recognition given to the 2017 Attrition and Retention Report as a strong example of the potential of using institutional research to inform university-wide decision-making.
5. The university for its progress in developing a sustainable cycle of assessments in General Education core competencies, in specifying the learning outcomes, and in conducting outcomes assessments.

Recommendations

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following issues:

1. The university must follow through on achieving a balanced budget in order to ensure long term financial sustainability. The university has experienced unqualified financial audits and managed its resources to provide adequate reserves to make up for recent budget deficits but this trend needs to be reversed, utilizing the plans and detailed projections prepared for multiple scenarios.
2. WU should initiate the development of a comprehensive longer-term strategic plan that integrates operating plans such as enrollment, advancement, and marketing, with resource allocation based on strategic priorities. (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)
3. The university should develop and implement a diversity plan that is aligned with Woodbury's core mission to serve diverse students, and underscores the university's commitment to diversity as a strength and value. The diversity plan, under the university's comprehensive strategic plan, should guide the university's: 1) recruitment of diverse students, including those from international settings; 2) prioritization on enhanced student support services to improve student success, retention, and graduation rates, particularly for underrepresented students and international students; 3) recruitment, and promotion of diverse faculty, staff, and administrators; and 4) greater emphasis on WU's classification as a Hispanic-serving institution. (CFRs 1.4, 2.10, 3.1)
4. The university should expand the culture of assessment and data-driven institutional decision-making through continued assessment efforts that include student support services, co-curricular programming, General Education, and core competencies. (CFRs 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 4.1)

5. WU should continue the process of developing procedures and guidelines of program review that meet WSCUC standards. (CFRs 2.7)
6. The university should continue the analysis of faculty workload to ensure equity in salary, stipends, course release, and professional development, and to ensure that faculty workload is sustainable. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2)
7. The Board of Trustees bylaws should be revised to come into compliance with the WSCUC Governing Board Policy. (CFR 3.9)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that WU has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review for reaffirmation, the institution is encouraged to continue its progress, particularly with respect to student learning and success.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of WU's governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the WU website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that WU undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jamiene S. Studley
President

JSS/do

Cc: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair
Marty Tippens, ALO
Gregory Lippe, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit team
Richard Osborn, Vice President