

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
SPECIAL VISIT**

To University of Antelope Valley

April 10-12, 2018

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). 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. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution, Accreditation History, and the Visit

Description of Institution

The mission of the University of Antelope Valley (UAV) is to provide quality graduate, undergraduate, certificate and continuing education to their local and global community. The University of Antelope Valley offers higher education that enables students to achieve their academic, career, professional and personal goals, thereby allowing them to become valuable assets to their communities.

The University of Antelope Valley founders, Marco and Sandra Johnson, grew up in the Antelope Valley. After graduating from university and playing football in the NFL, he became a Los Angeles City Firefighter and Paramedic. After witnessing what he believed to be too many preventable deaths, Marco began teaching community CPR and First Aid classes in the winter of 1997. This service quickly grew and became the CPR and First Aid Company. As a response to community demands for more classes, the Johnsons founded Antelope Valley Medical College (AVMC). In 2002, six months after its inception, AVMC applied for and received national accreditation from the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES). Upon receiving accreditation, AVMC received approval from the State of California and the County of Los Angeles to provide training in Emergency Medical Technology. AVMC was also granted approval to administer Allied Health Instruction in the following career fields: Medical Assistant, Medical Administrative Assistant, Medical Clinical Assistant, Emergency Room Technician, Paramedic, Nursing Assistant, Medical Billing, Phlebotomy, Administrative Assistant, and Vocational Nursing. Marco retired from the Fire Department so that the couple could devote their full attention to health-related education in the region.

The Johnsons invested personal resources into expanding the programs and opportunities at AVMC. Over time, AVMC moved from a 500 square-foot starter location to a 45,000 square-foot, high technology training facility. The founder's vision refocused on developing AVMC into the four-year university that the Antelope Valley sorely needed. In 2007, the couple visited Dr. Richard Winn, a WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Vice President who worked with emerging institutions. Dr. Winn recognized their vision and passion, and recommended that the new institution begin the journey toward WSCUC accreditation by preparing for and achieving accreditation through an agency that allowed the delivery of Bachelor's and Master's degrees. This phase allowed the founders to build essential infrastructure and processes.

In June 2009 AVMC received national accreditation from the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), which allowed the institution to offer Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degree programs. Upon receiving this accreditation the institution underwent a name change to the University of Antelope Valley. In 2010, UAV expanded and relocated to a 5.7-acre campus within a mile of the founding location. The property, which serves as the university's main campus, is a repurposed hotel and restaurant site that has been completely remodeled to meet the needs of the growing university. UAV expanded its Bachelor's and Master's level programs after relocation and began offering night and online programs. Currently, UAV is approved to offer 20 Master's, Bachelor's, Associate's degree and 11 non-degree certificate programs at their campuses in Lancaster, CA.

Since the last WSCUC team visit the university has acquired approval for three new academic programs: Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Bachelor in Hospitality Management, and an Associate's degree in Paramedic Science. Throughout the application process of all three

programs, the university developed internal processes and improvements to assist with future substantive changes, including the refinement of its new program Feasibility Study to include specific data points that demonstrate the strategic fit, program rationale, employment opportunities, employment demand, market trends, and regulatory trends for the proposed new program.

WSCUC Accreditation History

In April 2010, UAV applied for WASC accreditation eligibility. The Eligibility Review Committee suspended the application in order to allow the institution to prepare for pursuing accreditation under the new policy for applicants that hold accreditation with a USDOE-approved institutional accrediting agency. In late 2012, UAV resubmitted its application for eligibility and eligibility was granted for four years in April 2013. In January 2014, the Capacity and Preparatory Review for Candidacy was conducted following UAV's submission of its candidacy application in June 2013. In March 2014, the university was informed of the visiting team's recommendations and commendations via staff letter and that the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) for candidacy would take place in Spring 2016. The institution requested that the EER visit be moved to Fall 2015; in July 2014, the EER visit was changed to a Seeking Accreditation Visit following adoption by the Commission of new procedures for institutions seeking initial accreditation and the visit scheduled for Fall 2015. In March 2016 WSCUC granted UAV initial institution accreditation for a period of six years with a Special Visit in spring 2018 to address the recommendations from the fall 2015 visit. In addition, UAV will have a Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2019, and a reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2021 and the Accreditation Visit scheduled for fall 2021.

Special Visit

Summary of the Eight Issues the Special Visit will address:

- 1.** In order to design and implement programs that support all students' academic, personal and professional development, the university should continue its move to the next level of assessment, documenting student learning outcomes for its non-academic areas and identifying specific metrics to assess the effectiveness of its student support programs. (CFR 2.10, 2.11)
- 2.** While UAV has undertaken significant steps in the disaggregation of student data, it is recommended that this work continue and broaden beyond ethnicity and age to enable the university to better understand student preparedness and support needs and to implement effective support services. (CFR 4.1)
- 3.** The University should commit additional resources to intentional professional development for the student affairs and related support services leadership team. It is critical for the university to implement best practices in order to enhance the entire student life cycle. (CFR 3.3)
- 4.** It is strongly recommended that the University expand and deepen its capacity in the areas of financial analysis; cash management modeling; vigilance to 90/10 and composite scores; integration of its budget projection model with enrollment management, strategic planning, and revenue projections; understanding of GAAP, and financial accounting systems. (CFR 3.4, 3.5, 3.8)
- 5.** It is recommended that the University continue to refine and strengthen its enrollment management, marketing, student advising, and admissions models. (CFR 4.7)

6. UAV should further promote and sponsor regular engagement for both academic and non-academic senior and middle-management leadership in relevant professional associations so as to ensure currency of knowledge regarding standards, and compliance. (CFR 3.3, 3.8, 4.7)
7. The University should continue to assess its organizational structure and capacity as the institution grows in order to provide a closer alignment with academic programs and student support. (CFR 4.7, 3.8)
8. It is recommended that the Board of Trustees engage in additional professional development activities that will enhance their knowledge of higher education compliance matters and financial implications that affect the university's sustainability. (CFR 3.9)

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The team received the UAV Special Visit report and other supporting documents on February 1, 2018. Team members participated in a team conference call on February 20, 2018. The onsite review was conducted by the team at the UAV campus April 10-12, 2018. During this visit, the team utilized the lines of inquiry that were created during the team conference call to conduct interviews, examined institutional documents, and reviewed the confidential email account.

C. Institution's Special Visit Report: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The February 1, 2018 Institutional Report was well-written and evidence-based, addressing all eight areas identified in the Special Visit report, and accurately portraying the condition of the institution. It included the required data exhibits to support assertions in the

report. The team found there was broad involvement of all stakeholders in the preparation of the report. Ultimately, the institution's self-review led to a greater understanding of its effectiveness, areas for growth and improvement, and student learning.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

A: Issue: Recommendation 1 - Non-academic Assessment

In order to design and implement programs that support all students' academic, personal and professional development, the university should continue its move to the next level of assessment, documenting student learning outcomes for its non-academic areas and identifying specific metrics to assess the effectiveness of its student support programs. (CFR 2.10, 2.11)

The university presented plans for a majority of the areas outlined in this recommendation. Since the visit, UAV has made a concerted effort and great strides regarding assessment in the non-academic areas and has developed several initiatives to support the assessment infrastructure.

UAV implemented Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) and Co-curricular Learning Outcomes (CCLOs) to address both, evaluation of student satisfaction using SAOs, and knowledge that students gain from engaging with support services (CCLOs). This effort was developed with participation by key stakeholders. The university has also continued to strengthen and focus the work of the Institutional Research Committee (IRC). Additionally, UAV has initiated the Leading the Pioneer Path (LPP), and NAIA competencies scorecard initiatives. These measures are utilized to evaluate: Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Affairs, Career Services, Learning Resource Center, Housing, and Athletics (CFR 2.10, 2.11, 4.1, 4.4). The plan calls for each department to review their data and complete a report that identifies

areas of strength and gaps that are then to be utilized to identify areas of improvement. While it is too early to have substantive data, these steps represent significant improvement since the last visit.

However, most of the data collection is based on student satisfaction or utilization of services. While student satisfaction is an important element of continuous improvement, the current process still does not address specificity in measurable outcomes of student learning and progress. In some instances grades and GPA are cited as the metrics utilized to determine attainment of CCLO goals but relying on grades and GPA alone does not adequately address outcomes for the non-academic areas. While the CCLO and SAOs have been developed, the metrics focus on aspects of service utilization and not student progression and learning. UAV needs to continue working on streamlining metrics to assess the effectiveness of its student support programs. Further, benchmarks to demonstrate effectiveness of the identified SAOs need to be identified and implemented (CFR 2.10, 2.11). Overall, UAV is to be commended for the attention and diligence that they have placed on developing learning outcomes for its non-academic areas.

B. Issue: Recommendation 2 - Disaggregation of Student Data

While UAV has undertaken significant steps in the disaggregation of student data, it is recommended that this work continue and broaden beyond ethnicity and age to enable the university to better understand student preparedness and support needs and to implement effective support services. (CFR 4.1)

UAV has made considerable progress in the disaggregation of student data and the categories for review have been broadened. UAV selected two institutions to make comparisons regarding IPEDs data (Ashford University and Grand Canyon University).

However, the team believes the process could be improved by selecting new and appropriate WSCUC benchmark institutions that are more similar to UAV in key characteristics (i.e. not largely online). Also, these benchmark institutions should be similar in scale and should include both for-profit and nonprofit entities.

The University articulated benchmarks for retention (70% and above at the program level and 80% and above at the overall University level) and exam/license Pass rates benchmarks, placement, faculty to student ratios, and states the aspiration of a 63% overall graduation rate (150%). Retention rates presented are high for most programs, but is not clear what strategies the university is employing as a result of this data. Additionally, the Team learned about the University's considerable efforts to support student athletes and to integrate athletes into UAV student life. These are all steps in the right direction in terms of planning. What remains is the mechanism to track these benchmarks. The Team believes that UAV could benefit from further work in understanding the data for disaggregated student subpopulations, including veterans and international students.

The University reports taking an in-depth review of its Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) and the result was the refinement of KPIs. The report showcases statistics about academic probation. It is not clear, however, how and when struggling students are identified. UAV has disaggregated student data based on entry characteristics including GPA, degree level, etc.; age; curricula delivery modality; and ethnicity. Graduation rates for all programs for the years 2013, 2014, and 2015 were presented. In the Bachelor's programs there is some improvement, but the RN to BSN have seen a huge decline from 83% in 2013 to 66% in 2015. The Master's programs are also showing declining graduation rates. The report and

discussions during the visit do not specify an understanding of the reasons for this downward trend or specific planning and action steps to turn around the trend for the better.

The Team observed a major commitment from UAV in its efforts to continue to streamline the disaggregation of student data in ways that informs their understanding of overall student progression and success. The IEP names broad areas for inquiry and is an inclusive process chaired by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness. The streamlined KPIs have the potential to support the University's efforts at gaining data points to aid in institutional effectiveness. Several programs have implemented online delivery and student progression in online courses need to be incorporated as a line of inquiry. UAV should to continue work on refinement to obtain a specific set of priorities to support a more systematic disaggregation of student data. Because some aspects of the IEP are still new, there is not yet much by way of data to review.

C. Issue: Recommendation 3 - Leadership Professional Development

The University should commit additional resources to intentional professional development for the student affairs and related support services leadership team. It is critical for the university to implement best practices in order to enhance the entire student life cycle. (CFR 3.3)

UAV is to be commended for identifying professional development avenues. Since the last visit, the University has established a budget and outlined specific activities and memberships for staff professional development. In-Service Training sessions have also been implemented, and a professional development plan and request form is in place.

These activities signify the seriousness with which the university approached this recommendation and they are to be commended.

The next stage of this effort is for UAV to close the loop with more intentionality by: articulating how these efforts will be leveraged beyond the individual; measure and showcase change over time; and a plan for how this effort will be sustained. Additionally, the Team observed that these current efforts are centered largely around conference and meeting attendance. It is important for the professional development plan to go beyond these two elements to incorporate other elements such as benchmarks for performance, etc. Soon, it should be possible for the University to assess the effectiveness of this approach and demonstrate improvements that result from these activities, or alternatively, to make changes in order to do so. Having clear and defined structures will enable UAV to further streamline its professional development activities.

D. Issue: Recommendation 4 - Financial Analysis and Management

It is strongly recommended that the University expand and deepen its capacity in the areas of financial analysis; cash management modeling; vigilance to 90/10 and composite scores; integration of its budget projection model with enrollment management, strategic planning, and revenue projections; understanding of GAAP, and financial accounting systems. (CFR 3.4, 3.5, 3.8)

There have been a number of developments in the areas of financial leadership and processes since the Commission Action Letter of March 2, 2016. First, in the area of leadership, the CFO who moved into the position early in 2016 was replaced in April 2017 by the former CFO/COO. In addition, two other staff members in accounting operations were replaced.

The Board of Trustees approved the securing of a new external audit firm as part of a normal rotation following three years of service by the previous firm. In addition, the university has engaged the service of a separate accountancy firm to provide ongoing consulting services to the CFO and her team. The university also highlighted a number of changes in operations and performance. Among these was the establishment of a month end closing, financial projections by program, long term strategic planning and management, enhanced enrollment projects, and classroom usage efficiencies.

A number of improved metrics were reported by the university, including a 2.7 Composite Score. This change was the result of the refinancing of a note with a private party that called for a \$2.9 million payment in 2019. The note has been restructured as a more traditional 30-year note with a local bank. Other metrics also improved, including an 82% 90/10 ratio, and a 12% enrollment growth in academic year 2017/18, with consequent revenue increase. The team noted these changes, some of which directly addressed the elements of Recommendation 4, and urged the university to continue to focus on the positive financial results reported in these areas.

At the same time, the team observed and expressed concern regarding some of the areas in Recommendation 4 that require further attention. The team reiterates the section of Recommendation 4 that the university and its financial team in particular must ensure “integration of its budget projection model with enrollment management, strategic planning, and revenue projections.” Budget information supplied to the team was minimal and only addressed general categories. Revenue projections appear to be mere simple estimates of future enrollments based on the prior three-year actuals. Given the small scale of the

institution and historic volatility in enrollments, it would be prudent to have a much more sophisticated model for this vital process.

While there has been a focus on recruitment and admissions, and related projections for the coming academic year, there does not appear to be a comprehensive plan and projection process for a true integrated enrollment management system. Such a system must encompass the entire student life cycle, essentially every department in the university, the strategic and operational planning processes, and ultimately an annual (and longer term) financial plan that takes into account as many aspects and variables as can be evaluated. Ultimately, that plan must be reviewed at every senior operational level, culminating in the CFO, CEO, and the Finance Committee as well as the entire Board. As it relates to the financial leadership and capacity also referred to in Recommendation 4, the effective development and implementation of such an enrollment management system and plan requires a high degree of technical financial expertise, from resources that must be available to the university from internal and, as necessary, external sources.

The team discerned an additional concern related to financial planning and management. Recommendation 4 indirectly addresses the issue of financial expertise. It should be noted that the former COO/CFO, who returned to the position a year ago, did so as an interim. While the CFO's efforts were central to stabilizing the institution at that time, the Board should closely examine whether she has the requisite professional experience and expertise to implement the sort of integrated systems discussed above, in a university that is growing in size and complexity, and in a particularly challenging higher education financial environment. Furthermore, the CFO's status as co-founder of the University, spouse of the president, and a voting member of the Board may make objective assessment of performance

difficult at times. It will be important for the Board to review and make certain that the position is staffed appropriately. (CFRs 1.7, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9)

E. Issue: Recommendation 5 - Enrollment Management, Marketing, Advising, and Admissions

It is recommended that the University continue to refine and strengthen its enrollment management, marketing, and student advising and admissions models. (CFR 4.7)

UAV articulated an enrollment forecasting process as well as a Marketing and Recruitment Plan. This is a great step forward. The enrollment forecast is reviewed and approved annually by the Strategic Planning Committee and this process demonstrates great progress towards enrollment management.

However, the plan is largely focused on marketing and recruitment. The next stage of this development is for UAV to implement an enrollment management plan that comprises not only recruitment, but includes retention, program mix etc., and connected to the data to inform the disaggregated student data and university strategic plan. The university should consider what their process is for staying abreast of enrollment and demographic trends.

The Team did not find a pro forma financial, enrollment management, and academic plan that is designed to support the projected growth in enrollment. Since several new programs have been added and enrollment has increased significantly in the last two years, the enrollment management plan, once developed, needs to be aligned with the academic master plan. The emphasis on enrollment growth through new programs does not seem to reflect either expanded costs or the possible need to reduce/eliminate non-productive programs. Ergo, once more the need for serious financial analysis and planning. There does

not appear to be an articulated academic master plan that is integrated into an enrollment management plan to address this issue. Furthermore, while the increased enrollment has brought in additional resources, it has also brought an increased workload for the staff and faculty. Additionally, student advising and processes are still not clear, and the university needs to articulate the process of support for online student success.

F. Issue: Recommendation 6 - Leadership Engagement in Professional Associations

UAV should further promote and sponsor regular engagement for both academic and non-academic senior and middle-management leadership in relevant professional associations so as to ensure currency of knowledge regarding standards, and compliance. (CFR 3.3, 3.8, 4.7)

UAV has allocated resources for professional development of its leaders. The University implemented a mechanism for both faculty and staff to request these resources. The team found that this initiative has improved communication and awareness of the importance that the university places on professional development. UAV is also benefiting from the shared learning gleaned from involvement in these professional organizations. The University is to be commended for taking this step.

G. Issue: Recommendation 7 - Organizational Structure and Capacity

The University should continue to assess its organizational structure and capacity as the institution grows in order to provide a closer alignment with academic programs and student support. (CFR 4.7, 3.8)

The University is still a relatively new and growing institution. In the past, almost all staff appointments have been made from within, a common feature of small, locally-based, family-founded institutions. The Team believes UAV could benefit in further refinement of

its organizational and decision-making structures. The current structure has everyone reporting to the Interim CFO, President, or the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

While everyone seems to work hard and with passion for the mission, the fact is that the institution is insular and isolated from some best practices. There have been efforts at professional development (such as professional memberships and conference attendance), but there is little cross-fertilization or benchmarking, either formal or informal). There is no one on the leadership team with significant higher education experience outside UAV. The seeming lack of stability in the academic affairs leadership is also concerning. The prior newly appointed Chief Academic Officer departed soon after the last visit. The Team strongly suggests that UAV pays immediate attention to the issue of a qualified and experienced Chief Academic Officer and the necessary skills appropriate for an accredited institution of higher education.

As the University grows, it will need to align itself more closely to best practices in academic, student support areas, and financial areas in particular. The professional development efforts are useful and well received, but an infusion of external experience and expertise would be salutary. It is not that the institution needs additional staff, but rather a different mix of professional staff organized into a more traditional reporting and assessment structure. There is also a need for a more typical, systematic, informative organization chart.

H. Issue: Recommendation 8 - Board of Trustee Professional Development

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees engage in additional professional development activities that will enhance their knowledge of higher education compliance matters and financial implications that affect the university's sustainability. (CFR 3.9)

The university reports that the Board of Trustees has begun professional development efforts through securing a membership in AGB. In addition, the CEO and one board member are expected to attend AGB annual meetings. Following those meetings, he/they provide “in-service” training to their board colleagues regarding the topics presented at the AGB meeting.

While this is a commendable first step toward board professional development, particularly in light of the newness of the university’s board, the team encourages the board to seek additional opportunities. Among the most helpful, given the nature of the university board with which some of the members may not be sufficiently familiar, would be a customized education session (or, better, sessions) with an experienced board advisor or consultant. This could be tailored to some of the needs of the board, which can be identified through members’ own reflection and self-assessment. Such a practice, perhaps annually at first, would be a very positive next step in the direction of meeting the board’s professional development needs, to its and the university’s benefit.

WSCUC best practices entail an expectation that boards are independent and have the ability to exercise oversight over such areas such as: institutional integrity, financial stewardship, and to evaluate the president. In the last visit, the Team stated that the board needs to engage in appropriate professional development and to expand to include members who possess knowledge and experience required to govern an accredited institution. The Team observed that further work in this area is needed to assure the board understands expectations of them in overseeing finances, academic affairs, and planning.

Of particular concern is the need to revise the institution’s board by-laws and policies and procedures to bring them into line with WSCUC standards for governance found in the WSCUC Governing Board Policy and Governing Board Implementation Guide (CFRs 1.7,

3.9). The Board currently has no policy for conflict of interest, related party transactions and similar issues, a potentially dangerous position for an institution that has significant transactions and distributions of this sort. The Board will not be able to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities until these issues are addressed appropriately. Attention to this should be prompt and thorough.

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS, AS APPROPRIATE

None to report.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Institutional Report and Special Visit, as evidenced in Section II of this report, the team concluded the following Commendations and Recommendations relevant to WSCUC standards and CFRs.

Commendations

1. UAV provided a well-written report; materials were clear and articulate, well-organized, and directly responded to all the issues that were raised from the last visit
2. UAV has implemented and provided training for a student, faculty, staff, and employer portal that provides access to: grades, GPA, assignments, jobs, and many other resources that enhance institutional effectiveness and the student experience.
3. UAV has articulated Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) and Co-curricular Learning Outcomes (CCLOs) for its non-academic programs. The SAOs assess student satisfaction and the CCLOs assess the knowledge that students attain through the support programs.

4. UAV has articulated a “high touch” approach to engaging students and in addressing timely interventions to enhance student success.

Recommendations

1. Issue: Recommendation 8, from previous Commission Action Letter, - Board of Trustees Professional Development.

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees engage in additional professional development activities that will enhance their knowledge of higher education compliance matters and financial implications that affect the university's sustainability. (CFRs 1.7, 3.9)

The university responded to the recommendation by joining AGB and by committing to the participation of the CEO and one other Board member in AGB annual conferences. The information obtained thereby is to be communicated to Board colleagues as part of their professional development efforts.

Given the relative newness of the Board, the somewhat limited experience of members in similar board contexts, and the increasing complexity of the fiduciary and financial responsibilities of the Board in the context of a growing university, the team recommends a much more thorough and comprehensive professional development plan for Board members.

This should include some form of intensive, directed professional development of the Board as a whole, stressing the fiduciary responsibilities of an institutional Board under the WSCUC guidelines. Workshops, the use of qualified consultants, and other means could all prove helpful. Furthermore, the Board should promptly develop and implement a set of by-laws and policies consistent with the *WSCUC Governing Board Policy* and the *WSCUC Governing Board Policy Implementation Guide*, including conflict of interest policies and processes. (CFRs 1.7, 3.9)

2. Issue: Recommendation 4, from the previous Commission Action Letter, - The previous WSCUC review team and the WSCUC Commission stated it was “strongly recommended that the University expand and deepen its capacity” in the complex nexus of financial management issues.

It is recommended that the University diligently address its growing need for financial management capacity, in terms of experienced leadership, the development of an appropriate enrollment management model, and best practices in financial decision-making policies and procedures. (CFR 3.4)

The University’s earlier effort to address this by hiring an external financial professional was unsuccessful. In the interim, the former CFO returned to the position to provide short-term financial leadership. Significant progress has been made in stabilizing the financial picture and preparing for the next steps for the institution. Of particular note is the University’s success in transforming a large private debt note due in 2019 into a regular and manageable debt vehicle with a financial institution, resulting in a major improvement in the institution’s composite score. This effort also includes the reorganization of the financial and accounting staff, the hiring of new and qualified personnel and the engagement of an external accounting firm to provide assistance and guidance.

However, it is the continuing concern of the review team that the University must address longer term implications of the structure and staffing of this vital position. There are at least four considerations discussed by the team: 1) the professional profile and skill set of any individual selected to serve in the permanent CFO role; 2) the capacity of the institution’s financial management operation to properly manage internal accounting and financial transactions, records and reports; 3) the ability of the financial operation to provide accessible,

timely and pertinent financial information to relevant stakeholders, including the Board, senior administrators and faculty; 4) the expertise to link financial information and projects to both strategic management and integrated enrollment management groups within the University. The completion of a fully integrated enrollment management plan, with linkage to academic, financial, student support, and strategic plans should involve the CFO, but all other department leadership as well. Finally, the University must confront the risks imposed by failing to articulate and implement policies on conflicts of interest, related party transactions and other measures of financial probity and alignment consistent with WSCUC expectations and general best practice. Thus financial operations capacity, leadership, planning, and policies remain concerns that require the focused attention of University administration and the Board. (CFR 3.1, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9)

3. Issue: Recommendation 7, from the previous Commission Action Letter, - The University should continue to assess its organizational structure and capacity as the institution grows in order to provide a closer alignment with academic programs and student support. (CFR 4.7, 3.8)

In order to enable the University to accomplish the Recommendation above, it is of importance that the UAV administration recruit and retain qualified and experienced senior leadership in both academic and non-academic areas to assure institutional sustainability and stability, effectiveness, and success. It is recommended that the University increase its efforts to attract external talent (while not neglecting the development of internal talent at the same time), in order to gain the benefit of additional perspectives and experiences of key team members who can bring to bear broader higher education backgrounds drawn from the rich diversity of institutions across the region and beyond. The continued infusion of external talent,

blended with that of the current University community, can also assist the University in the development of more effective organizational structures that its growth and maturity require.

(CFR 3.10)