

July 12, 2019

Mr. George Neau
Chancellor
SUM Bible College and Theological Seminary
1107 Investment Blvd Suite # 290
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

Dear Chancellor Neau:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning SUM Bible College and Theological Seminary (SUM) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 28, 2019. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 to SUM March 26-28, 2019. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by SUM prior to the Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 and the institution's May 10, 2019 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Bob Hornick, Chief Financial Officer, Teresa Reiger, Chief Operating Officer, L. William Oliverio, Associate Academic Dean and Chair of Graduate Studies, and Gary Munson, Chief Academic Officer and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). 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 Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 team report
2. Grant Initial Accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2024 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2025
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review to begin on May 1, 2022
5. Schedule a Special Visit in fall 2021 to address
 - a. Engagement with historic and contemporary issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as educational objectives incorporated into programs; seeking and valuing multiple dimensions of diversity.
 - b. Multi-year financial plans based on realistic as opposed to optimistic projections of enrollment and expenses and informed by historic financial performance.
 - c. The Chief Operating Officer's job description clarifying level of responsibility and line of authority.
 - d. Faculty governance and academic leadership.
 - e. Professional development for the Board of Directors and a formalized committee structure.
 - f. Underperforming student groups and data-supported efforts to improve their success.

g. Institutional research capacity and effectiveness.

The Commission commends SUM in particular for the following:

1. A focused, well developed, and robust mission empowering leaders for the ministry.
2. An innovative and forward-thinking student cohort model that builds community across the world.
3. An authentic commitment to quality improvement.
4. A comprehensive faculty evaluation process that includes effective record-keeping and improved communication.
5. Comprehensive program review guidelines and the completion of the initial cycle of program reviews that demonstrated a diligent analysis of student learning outcomes and prioritization of action items.

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

1. Consistent with its purposes and character, SUM should demonstrate commitment to and engagement with the general principles of the WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy including by not limited to better exemplifying the diverse backgrounds of SUM's student body in its board, administration, and faculty. SUM would be well advised to formulate a sustainable approach reflecting best practices, which might benefit from external consultation. (CFR 1.4)
2. SUM should establish multi-year financial plans based on realistic projections of enrollment and expenses and informed by historic financial performance. (CFR 3.4)
3. In order to support clear and effective decision-making, SUM should clarify and communicate throughout the institution the Chief Operating Officer's level of responsibility and line of authority. (CFR 3.6, 3.7)
4. SUM should empower faculty to more fully exercise their roles, rights, and responsibilities in academic leadership. (CFR 3.10)
5. The SUM Board of Directors should seek professional development and develop a formalized committee structure to increase its effectiveness. (CFR 3.9; WSCUC Governing Board Policy)
6. SUM should disaggregate student success data (to include race, ethnicity and gender), identify underperforming groups, and use these data to inform efforts to improve student achievement, in general, and among these groups in particular. (CFR 2.10)

7. SUM should develop its institutional research capacity and effectiveness to standardize data collection and reporting processes and clearly delineate roles and responsibilities for data integrity. Professional development and benchmarking with peer institutions will improve this area. (CFR 4.2)

In taking this action to grant Initial Accreditation, the Commission confirms that SUM has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the institutional review process for Initial Accreditation conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, SUM should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

SUM must use the following statement if it wishes to describe its accreditation status publicly:

SUM Bible College and Theological Seminary is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001.

Federal law requires that the WSCUC address and phone number appear in your catalog.

The accredited status of a program should not be misrepresented. The accreditation granted by WSCUC refers to the quality of the institution as a whole. Because institutional accreditation does not imply specific accreditation of any particular program at the institution, statements such as “this program is accredited” or “this degree is accredited” are incorrect and misleading. The phrase “fully accredited” is also to be avoided, since no partial accreditation is possible.

The Commission stipulates that this action encompasses the degrees offered by SUM at the time of this action, as listed at the end of this letter as the Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees. Any proposed new degree programs, off-campus sites, online offerings, and/or changes in governance or ownership require review and approval through the Substantive Change process. Degree programs that have been reviewed and included under this action may be extended to other currently approved campuses of the institution without prior Substantive Change action. Offerings at new locations may need to go through Substantive Change approval, in accordance with the requirements stated in the Substantive Change manual.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of SUM governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the SUM’s 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 SUM 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,



Jamienne S. Studley
President

JSS/mam

Cc: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair
Gary Munson, ALO
Richard Picone, Board Chair
Members of the Seeking Accreditation Visit team
Maureen A Maloney, Vice President

Attachment: Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees

Degrees	Degree Level	Modality
Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies	Bachelors	On-Site
Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies	Bachelors	Distance Education
Master of Arts in Biblical Studies	Masters	Distance Education
Master of Arts in Christian Leadership	Masters	Distance Education
Master of Divinity	Masters	Distance Education