

March 3, 2021

Dr. Lori Varlotta
President
California Lutheran University
60 West Olsen Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Dear President Varlotta:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning California Lutheran University (CLU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 19, 2021. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to CLU December 2 – 4, 2020. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by CLU prior to the Special Visit and the institution's February 5, 2021 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Leanne M. Neilson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Taiwo Ande, Associate Provost for Educational Effectiveness. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) diversity among students, faculty, staff, and board; student achievement gaps for students of color, particularly African-American students; and campus climate related to fostering diversity; (2) leadership structures that support and promote graduate education; and (3) a university faculty governance structure that accommodates growth in graduate education.
2. Issue a Formal Notice of Concern
3. Schedule a Special Visit in fall 2022 to address the recommendations in this letter.

The Commission commends CLU in particular for the following:

1. A significant increase in the percentage of underrepresented minority groups among the faculty and staff since the 2015 reaffirmation visit.
2. A new Faculty Senate structure that has fostered more productive discussion and opportunities for engagement in governance among the faculty.
3. The work of the Center for Cultural Engagement and Inclusion, which has served as an active hub for supporting and encouraging students from diverse backgrounds.
4. The implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion programming that includes student success programs, anti-racist curriculum, and reading lists that have been shared with students.

5. The formulation, subsequent to the site visit, of substantive plans and strong commitments to making improvements in the areas of concern noted by the Visiting Team.

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

1. Consistent with CLU's strong commitment and substantive plans to address the areas of concern, further develop a campus-wide vision and strategy to promote and sustain a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion that reflects an inclusive process and leverages shared governance, including attention to:
 - a. Increased diversity at the senior leadership level including Deans, College Council, Faculty Senate, Cabinet, and Board of Regents to broaden the perspective and elevate the concerns of underrepresented groups across campus.
 - b. Resources dedicated to recruiting, supporting, mentoring, advising and retaining faculty of color.
 - c. Benchmarks of progress on indicators of improved campus climate and distribution of relevant data to appropriate constituencies to assist in decision-making that improves campus climate. (CFRs 1.4, 1.7, 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 4.7, and WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy)
2. Consistent with the university's core commitments and learning outcomes, coordinate more intentional efforts to implement culturally sensitive pedagogical practices and clear outcomes to measure the execution of a diversity-enhanced curriculum. (CFRs 2.2a, 2.11, and WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy)
3. Clarify policies and processes that hold individuals on campus accountable for inappropriate behavior or conduct with specific and clear consequences. (CFRs 2.10, 3.5, and 4.7)
4. Expand information resources available to faculty and students to support academic offerings, research, and scholarship. Consider ways to enhance the participation of librarians in the shared governance processes, campus-wide strategic planning, and assessment of information literacy. (CFRs 2.2b and 3.5)
5. Provide more consistency in staff hiring processes as well as a more systematic mechanism for elevating staff concerns to the senior administration. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)
6. Reevaluate the effectiveness of support services for graduate students. (CFR 2.2b)

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

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Taiwo Ande, ALO
Bill Camarillo, Board Chair
Members of the Special Visit team
Tamela Hawley, Vice President