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**PRESIDENT**  
Ralph A. Wolff

July 11, 2012

John MacArthur  
President  
The Master's College and Seminary  
13248 Roscoe Blvd.  
Sun Valley, CA 91352

Dear President MacArthur:

At its meeting June 13-15, 2012, the Commission considered the report of the Special Visit team that conducted an on-site review of The Master's College and Seminary (TMCS) February 9-10, 2012. The Commission also reviewed the Special Visit report and exhibits submitted by the Seminary prior to the visit and its April 17, 2012 response to the visiting team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you; John Stead, accreditation liaison officer; and Richard Mayhew, dean. Your observations were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations.

When the Commission considered reaccreditation of TMCS in 2009, it identified different issues that required further attention in the College and the Seminary. The Commission requested a Special Visit to the Seminary in spring 2012 to address four issues:

1. Faculty scholarship for those teaching at the Master's and doctoral levels, and the advancement of the doctoral culture in the Seminary.
2. Assessment and program review for all Seminary programs, with the demonstrated use of assessment data for improvement of learning.
3. Comprehensive, data-supported strategic planning, with linkages to assessment and retention data, and referencing enrollment management.
4. Broadened academic engagement with women's experiences and spiritual perspectives within the Seminary curricula.

The Commission concurs with the team's finding that TMCS has made "substantial efforts" and has responded "seriously and diligently" to address the Commission's concerns as outlined in its June 26, 2009 letter. The Commission was also impressed that the community of administrators, faculty, and students have been fully engaged with these issues, which shows great potential for continued progress. In particular, TMCS's system for evidence-based assessment and program review shows greater maturity and has been operationalized into an effective program for the improvement of student learning. Similarly, the strategic planning processes have improved and show the potential for becoming an even more important part of TMCS's ongoing planning for the future.

The Commission likewise supports the need for further attention to three areas of ongoing concern, as identified by the team. In receiving the team report, it endorsed the findings, commendations, and recommendations of the Special Visit team and

highlighted the need for continued progress and monitoring of the issues identified below:

**Encouraging faculty scholarship.** The Commission was encouraged to learn that expectations about faculty scholarship have been given a more central role, with additions to the Faculty Handbook and the hiring of new faculty members who bring a record of publication of scholarly work. These steps will help broaden the base of publications for the TMCS faculty beyond the current emphasis on publishing in TMCS's own journal and will enhance the graduate culture at TMCS. The Commission recognizes the faculty's concern about transitioning to "more external, peer-reviewed publications" but notes that while "visible progress is small..., a way forward has been identified." In the next report to WASC, the Commission expects evidence to be presented of broader engagement of the faculty through publication of research and scholarly work in non-TMCS publications and through greater faculty participation in scholarly higher education conferences. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.8, 3.3, 3.4)

**Engaging with women's experiences and spiritual perspectives.** The Commission understands the underlying tension between the sponsoring church's theological position that only men are allowed to be students and professors at the Seminary, and WASC's expectations that students learn about and understand diverse viewpoints. (CFR 1.5 and the WASC *Statement on Diversity*) WASC does not prescribe the theological teachings in religious institutions and seminaries. At the same time, under Commission standards it is the expectation of the Commission that graduates of professional programs have the competencies required to work with all of their constituents. In the case of a seminary, students are being prepared to minister in congregations where half or more of the parishioners are female; therefore, the Commission expects the perspectives and experiences of women to be included in the curriculum. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2) Some efforts have been made by TMCS to address this recommendation through curriculum initiatives, elective courses, library books and journals, and workshops led by women from the College, where female faculty members teach in the Bible Department. The Commission was disappointed to learn from the team, however, that "the inclusion of women's perspectives in the curriculum is neither systematic nor integrated, and learning goals [related to women's perspectives] appropriate for graduate-level education have yet to be developed or assessed."

In its next report to the Commission, TMCS is expected to show evidence of a more intentional effort to identify clear student learning outcomes related to women's experiences and spiritual perspectives, with appropriate assessment strategies. The Commission also endorses the team's recommendation that TMCS have broader engagement with women who have done scholarly work on women's issues and may be able to enrich the dialog on these critical issues for future ministers. (CFRs 1.5, 2.1, 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)

**Addressing broader issues of diversity.** In the context of educating pastors to understand and thus effectively serve an increasingly diverse global population, the Commission encourages the seminary to become more intentional in addressing the multiple dimensions of diversity in its curriculum, faculty, and board composition. (CFR 1.5)

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Special Visit report and continue the accreditation of The Master's College and Seminary.
2. Continue the previous Commission request for an Interim Report focused on the College in the areas of scholarship for Master's level faculty, continued deployment of assessment and program

review activities, and data-supported strategic planning for the College, including plans to improve minority and female retention, to be due in spring 2013.

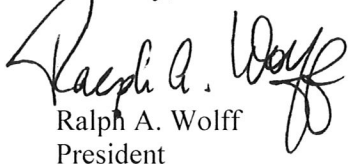
3. Request an Interim Report focused on the Seminary in the areas of faculty scholarship, academic engagement with women's experiences and spiritual perspectives, and a systematic approach to integration of diversity across the institution, to be due in spring 2014.
4. Affirm the next scheduled comprehensive review of the College and Seminary with the off-site review scheduled for spring 2018 and the visit tentatively scheduled for fall 2018.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of The Master's College and Seminary governing board in one week.

In keeping with WASC policy adopted in November 2011, this letter and the underlying team report also will be posted on the WASC website in approximately one week. If you wish to post a response to the letter and/or team report on your own website, WASC will also post a link to that response on its website. Any link that you wish to provide should be forwarded to the attention of Teri Cannon so that it may be included on the WASC website. As noted in the Commission policy, team reports and action letters are foundational for institutional accountability and improvement. Institutions are expected to disseminate these documents throughout the institution for the purposes of promoting ongoing engagement and improvement and encouraging internal communications about specific issues identified in team reports and action letters.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that The Master's College and Seminary undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WASC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while assuring public accountability, and we are grateful for your continued support of our process. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Ralph A. Wolff  
President

RW/ro

cc: Linda Johnsrud, Commission Chair  
John Stead, Senior Vice President, Dean of The Master's Seminary  
Richard Mayhue, ALO  
James Rickard, Board Chair  
Members of the Special Visit team  
Richard Osborn  
Richard Winn