

March 9, 2017

Dr. Aftab Omer
President
Meridian University
47 Sixth St.
Petaluma, CA 94952

Dear President Omer:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Meridian University (Meridian) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 15-17, 2017. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Seeking Accreditation Visit 4 to Meridian November 16-19, 2016. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Meridian prior to the Seeking Accreditation Visit 4. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues: Melissa Schwartz, Vice President/Chief Academic Officer; and Susan Shaw, Board Chairperson. 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 4 team report
2. Grant Initial Accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2022 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2022
4. Schedule a Progress Report due March 1, 2018 on the Program Review for the EdD in Organizational Leadership and MEd in Educational Leadership
5. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2020
6. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by March 1, 2020 to address the four recommendations in this letter.

Commendations

The Commission commends Meridian in particular for the following:

1. Strong sense of mission and commitment to encouraging students' personal transformative experiences
2. Commitment to exploring and adopting a range of supportive administrative and academic resources toward developing a culture of evidence
3. Deep engagement with the process of accreditation and the institutional transformation required to meet the Standards of Accreditation
4. Thorough integration of strategic planning, operational plans, and feedback from key constituents
5. Excellent post-graduation licensure pass rates
6. Redistribution of administrative responsibilities to faculty and staff.

Recommendations

The Commission identifies the following issues for further development:

1. Clarify learning outcomes with attention to measurability, specificity, rigor, and accurate alignment within curriculum maps to generate meaningful and actionable data (CFR 2.2b, 2.4, and 4.1).
2. Advance program review process to include long-range planning and expand the collection and use of internal and external evidence (CFR 2.7).
3. Support ongoing efforts to achieve institutional goals around diversity in faculty, staff, and student populations (CFR 1.4).
4. Build capacity in financial management to safeguard institutional resources during the period of planned growth ahead (CFR 3.4).

In taking this action to grant Initial Accreditation, the Commission confirms that Meridian University has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the institutional review process for Initial Accreditation 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.

Accreditation status is not granted retroactively. Meridian University must use the following statement if it wishes to describe its accreditation status publicly:

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

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.

This action encompasses the degrees offered by Meridian University at the time of this action as listed at the end of this letter as the Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees. Additional programs planned by the institution must undergo review through the Substantive Change process through the institution's first reaffirmation of accreditation. New locations will 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 Meridian'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 Meridian'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 Meridian University 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,



Mary Ellen Petrisko
President

MEP/ro

Cc: William Ladusaw, Commission Chair
Rob Gall, ALO
Susan Shaw, Board Chair
Members of the Seeking Accreditation Visit team
Richard Osborn, Vice President

Attachment: Consolidated List of Currently Offered Degrees

CONSOLIDATED LIST OF CURRENTLY OFFERED DEGREES

PsyD Clinical Psychology

PhD Psychology

EdD Education in Organizational Leadership

MA Psychology

MA Counseling Psychology

MEd Educational Leadership

MBA Creative Enterprise