

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM

SPECIAL VISIT To Abu Dhabi University

April 17 - 19, 2019

TEAM ROSTER

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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 the Institution, Accreditation History, and the Visit

Description of the Institution:

Abu Dhabi University (ADU) was chartered in 2000 as a private, for-profit, comprehensive higher education institution by a group of prominent citizens of the United Arab Emirates through the Abu Dhabi University Holding Company (referred to hereafter in this report as the Holding Company). The University is also accredited by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Education and is regulated through its Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA). Abu Dhabi University is the largest private university in the UAE.

The members of the Holding Company for ADU envisioned “an institution that would be among the best of its kind in the United Arab Emirates, the Arabian Gulf region, and throughout the world” (*Self-study Report*, p. 1). The university opened its doors to students in 2003 with a total of 850 students on the Abu Dhabi campus and its branch campus in Al Ain, a city to the north of the main campus. In 2010, the university also began delivering, through competitive contracts, degree programs to the military at the Zayed Military College and the Joint Command and Staff College, both located in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. The university has continued to grow steadily in enrollment to 7,500 students in 2019 now at four different locations, as well as at various military sites. As of the team visit in April 2019, ADU offers one doctoral program, 16 masters programs, two postgraduate diplomas, and 22 undergraduate programs in such disciplines as engineering, architecture, business, law, health and environmental sciences, design, media, and education. Almost all programs are taught in English, the major exception being those for UAE military personnel and programs in law.

When the team last visited in December 2015, ADU was considering whether it could expand its enrollment and reputation by opening a branch campus in Dubai. The competition among colleges and universities in the healthy economic environment of the UAE has accelerated. Twenty years ago, there were only 15 universities in the UAE; now there are 79 CAA accredited universities alongside numerous ‘branch campuses’ of foreign universities

located in the Free Zones in Dubai and regulated by the Emirate's Knowledge and Human Development Authority. Of the approximately 10 million persons living in the UAE, approximately 85% of the residents are foreigners, most of whom are migrant laborers working in what, until recently, has been a flourishing growth economy.

In the past few years, however, an economic downturn driven by a decline in the oil market has sharpened the competition for students, especially for private universities such as ADU where over 50 percent of students are ex-patriates (the state universities are free to Emirati citizens). The university has continued its expansion with a full understanding of the economic situation, as described in Issue 1 following. Significantly for the university, the Holding Company moved forward to authorize the leasing of a new campus building in the UAE's largest city, Dubai, now hosting graduate programs, with undergraduate programs planned for fall 2019. Land has been identified in the area of Dubai called Academic City to build a new campus when enrollment warrants that expansion. Current capacity in Dubai is for 330 students at any given time or circa 750 in total. In addition, an impressive and completely new \$80 million campus is being built in Al Ain to sustain and increase enrollments there, and a new teaching center has been developed in Al Dhafra. Facility capital costs are being handled by the Holding Company with appropriate lease arrangements. The Appendix provides photographs that portray the expansion of ADU from the two campuses when the team visited in 2015 to the four-campus strategy now in operation. The Holding Company's investment in building the future of ADU is significant for the university's current stability and future growth.

A signature distinction for ADU in the competitive higher education environment of the UAE has been its commitment to achieving international accreditations that provide external testimonial to ADU's "high quality in program design and content, pedagogy, assessment and student experience" (*Self-study Report*, p. 2). The accreditations, in addition to WSCUC, include the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the European Quality Improvement System, the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, and the Royal Institute of British Architects. As ADU has become better known, it has achieved international recognition in the Quacquarelli Symond (QS) *World University Rankings*, including being named to the 'Top

150 Under 50' (years of age) institutions for two years in a row, and also identified by QS in 2018 as one of the 'Top 10 Risers' in the Arab region. It was also deemed by the QS World Ranking 2019 to have the third most diverse faculty and 10th most diverse student body. It should be noted that almost the entire faculty and senior staff are expatriates who are on two-year visas that can be renewed. There is no analog to tenure for faculty in any UAE institution for expatriates, although they receive a generous compensation and benefits package.

In 2017, ADU conducted a refresh of its strategic plan, now compiled as *Strategic Plan 2017-2022*. The university engaged its Board, student, faculty, staff, partners, and relevant stakeholders, including a review of its mission and vision statements, to focus more directly on high quality education, student success, and career opportunities:

Mission statement: *At Abu Dhabi University, students are at the heart of everything we do. We prepare graduates for dynamic careers through transformative world-class education, enriched by innovative and flexible programs, international accreditations, applied research, and impactful industry and community engagement.*

Vision statement: *Abu Dhabi University will be a leading university in the MENA region, providing graduates with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to become the leaders of tomorrow.*

A new nine-stage planning cycle incorporates market research, directional setting, institution-wide strategic planning, college and support unit planning, operational planning, and provides for coordination and integration with ongoing review mechanisms and monitoring of goals, initiatives, KPIs, and budget monitoring.

Accreditation History:

In May 2013, ADU submitted its application for WASC Eligibility. The Commission granted Eligibility for the subsequent four-year period until July 31, 2017. In December of 2013, ADU submitted its application for Candidacy status. Staff action was to schedule the Capacity and Effectiveness Review (CPR) for Candidacy in September 2014. In July 2014, the upcoming CPR visit for Candidacy was changed by staff action to a visit to Seek Accreditation status, thereby accelerating ADU's application through Candidacy to seeking Initial Accreditation.

The Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 took place September 24-25 and 27, 2014. The subsequent Commission Action in February 2015 was to grant Candidacy for five years and schedule a Special Visit, later amended to Seeking Accreditation Visit 2, in December 2015. That visit resulted in the Commission's granting Initial Accreditation for six years with a Mid-Cycle Review for spring 2019 and the Special Visit for spring 2019 that is described in this report. The Special Visit 2019 was organized to address the following four Commission-identified issues:

Issue 1: Continued Progress in Sustaining Revenue Streams

Issue 2: Implementation of the University's Strategic Plan

Issue 3: Effectiveness of the Enrollment Management Plan

Issue 4: Verification of the Effectiveness of the New Degree Programs

In addition to the above four issues, the 3/2/2016 Commission letter identified three issues for further development that are addressed in this report in the context of the above four issues. The issues identified for development were:

1. concluding the search for Director of Enrollment Management and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Enrollment Management Plan in terms of meeting program-specific enrollment targets and ensuring students are retained until completion of their degrees (CFRs 2.13, 3.1);
2. monitoring faculty and student research to insure that the University's ambitious plans and investments were achieving the desired goals CFRs 2.8, 3.5, 4.3); and
3. monitoring the KPIs related to the Strategic Plan to make adjustments in priorities, fiscal resources, and personnel (CFRs 4.5, 4.6).

The Commission has also scheduled an Offsite Review for fall 2021 and an Accreditation Visit for spring 2022. In addition, a number of Substantive Change Committee approvals were completed in 2015-2018.

B. Description of the Team's Review Process

As described in the *Accreditation History* above, ADU has received three WSCUC team visits: Seeking Accreditation 1 (7/2014), Seeking Accreditation 2 (12/2015), and now the Special Visit (4/2019). The team has been composed of the same four members for all three visits, with one additional member having served in 2014. This long-term association with the university enabled team members to become oriented quickly to this Special Visit and facilitated

awareness of changes; planning; financial progress; personnel changes and additions; and campus progress on many fronts.

In conducting its review, the team carefully read, analyzed, and discussed ADU's self-study for the Special Visit and supporting exhibits and related materials on its website. The Special Visit team chair assigned areas of focus to each team member based on his or her area(s) of expertise. During the conference call, the team reviewed the issues, discussed the report and how it related to the issues at hand, and logistics for the visit. The team members identified areas of strength and progress and remaining questions, including a request for additional materials. Prior to the visit, the team chair collaborated with the ADU Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) to ensure that all individuals with whom the team wanted to meet and all materials they might need to review would be available to the team. Given the growth and development of the Al Ain Campus and the new Dubai Campus, the team asked to see both locations and meet with relevant individuals at both campuses outside Abu Dhabi. The ALO was unfailingly accessible and helpful, and met the team's needs promptly and effectively.

Soon after arrival in the UAE, the team visited the existing Al Ain campus and also visited the nearby construction of the new campus. The team met with senior administrators, including the new campus director who will be starting his position in July 2019. The new campus plan was presented in great detail to the team, along with the proposed time frame and multiyear rollout plan for the campus. The first stage of the main campus building is fast-tracked to open in 2020.

Two members of the team, including the team chair, went to the new Dubai campus to tour the facility and meet with campus administrators. A large building that formerly was occupied by Zayed University has provided office and classroom space in a central location. In due course, if student enrollment numbers justify, ADU will begin planning for the aforementioned new campus near Academic City in Dubai, where other universities have campuses.

The team met the evening before the visit to the Abu Dhabi campus to review the visits to the branch campuses and other evidence relevant to the review, and to discuss the lines of

inquiry for the upcoming visit. Over the next two and a half days, team members furthered their understanding of the university through select meetings with faculty, staff, students, and administrative leadership, including the Accreditation Steering Committee, chancellor (also serving as acting provost), executive cabinet, new vice chancellor for administrative and financial affairs, and the new associate provost for student success. The team also met with members of the Board and the team chair met with a Commissioner for UAE's Commission on Academic Accreditation.

A number of emails to the team's confidential email account were read, assessed, and explored during the visit. Many of the emails expressed the hope that the current search for a provost would result in an Arabic-speaking appointment. While the team had hoped that the search for the provost would be concluded by the visit, the team was informed that an offer had been made, but there was not a confirmed appointment at the time of the visit.

The Special Visit report and supporting evidence provided the foundation for the visit, and the onsite interviews and discussions provided the necessary information to answer relevant questions and shape the team's findings. The relevant members of the university community seemed to be active in serving on committees, submitting evidence or data, providing feedback, and responding to issues. The appropriate personnel were involved in studying issues involving planning, research, strategic enrollment management, finance, institutional program growth and development, and other topics reviewed by the team.

Throughout the process, when asked to clarify data and/or provide more/other evidence, the ALO and other ADU staff responded quickly and supplied what the team needed. Without exception, the team was welcomed warmly and members of the team appreciated the hospitality, openness, and communication of all involved with the visit.

The accreditation visit concluded with a meeting between the team chair and the chancellor, followed by an exit meeting with the executive cabinet in which the team communicated its commendations and recommendations. Because the exit meeting was held

on a Friday, which is a weekend day for the university, other members of the campus community were not present.

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

The team found the institutional report to be well organized, complete, and clearly written, with each section responding fully to the recommendations of the Commission. The report analyzed effectively the considerable evidence that was provided, offered appropriate conclusions, and evaluated ADU's own action steps frankly and sufficiently.

The team was particularly impressed with the quality of the institutional research supporting strategic planning, marketing, enrollment, program review, and overall support of major university initiatives. The assessment and analysis functions of the Office of Organizational Planning and Strategy (also encompassing the functions of the previous Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness) are quite impressive. The strategic plans of the office of research and sponsored programs (ORSP), the *Annual Program Enhancement Reviews* (APERs), *ADU Vision 2022*, *Marketing Department Strategic Initiatives*, and *Marketing Communications Strategy* are all exceptionally well done, evidencing mature and sophisticated research support that enable an ongoing self-reflective analysis of university capacity and direction. The team found that the evidence in the Special Visit report provided what was needed to assess the condition of the university and its planning and future strategic directions. These were confirmed through the discussions held with the Board, administration, faculty, staff, and students during the visit.

All team members read and edited the final team report. As such, this report represents the team's collective understanding and evaluation of the university.

SECTION II – TEAM’S EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

Issue 1: Continued progress in sustaining revenue streams, including fund raising, continuation of the military contract, potential research grants, and Al-Ain campus enrollments

The ADU Special Visit Report describes the continued progress in sustaining and diversifying the university’s revenue sources and projected expenditures. The Team extensively examined the financial assumptions, audit reports, and statements of the University’s pro forma budget with the vice chancellor for administrative and financial affairs and with the Holding Company chief financial officer. Detailed, line-by-line analysis and exploration were pursued relative to assumptions, research evidence and the connection of the strategic plan with five-year projections for enrollment, building costs, program development, and research expenditures. The team especially sought to understand the connections between the finances of the Holding Company and ADU and the impact of a recent transfer of ownership of a significant part of the Holding Company.

The recent downturn in the UAE economy resulted in the inability of the university to meet its enrollment projections. Owing to contractions in the oil industry, expatriate employees have been laid-off in large numbers. Expatriates account for over 50% of ADU enrollment and UAE is largely tuition-driven in its income streams. That enrollment shortfall this academic year prompted the ADU leadership to take measures to assure that the university would not operate at a deficit, including freezing salary increases and creating efficiencies across campuses in management and by systematizing administrative practices such as standardizing discounts. All university administrative operations have been scrutinized for cost savings with adjustments made when feasible, such as moving the graduation ceremony from a public venue back to the university to save 50% of its cost. Regarding the process used to make budget adjustments, the team received comments indicating that some faculty members felt that a suspension in the faculty promotion process and the process of reducing budgets were not made entirely clear. Adjustments to the budget were made again during our visit with the result being that ADU’s revenues will exceed expenses for the current year by only 7 million Dirhams on a budget of

almost 400 million Dirhams. It was clear to the team that the Holding Company's first priority is commendably to quality and to investing in expansion, not to a specific rate of return (ROI). As the board chair made clear during the team's meeting with the board, the Holding Company's investment is to provide a social benefit to the UAE.

Another financial issue is that because enrollment has not met its goal, the university now has excess residence hall capacity for which it is obligated to make lease payments. While options are being considered for the use of that space, this is a matter of some concern.

For several years, ADU has benefited from several important contracts with the UAE military to provide opportunities for uniformed personnel to earn college degrees that would be of value to them as they transition to civilian life, as well as contribute to the conduct of their professional duties. Those contracts have accounted for as much as 20% of the university's income. Reliance on those contracts as an important source of revenue carries a risk, as these contracts must be rebid on a regular basis, thereby being a less stable source of income. To date, the university has lost some contracts, but has been able to extend some contracts and initiate others. The largest contract, with Zayed Military College enrolling 1074 students, has been renewed through 2023, and the Joint Command and Staff College and General Headquarters Armed Forces Contract also have been renewed. New contracts with the Air Force and Navy have been negotiated and ADU currently is in negotiation to provide curricula to the police academy. The campus in Dubai is in discussions to provide police courses at the new campus there. From conversations with ADU's vice chancellor for administrative and financial affairs, it is clear that there have been and will continue to be efforts by the military to squeeze the costs of those contracts to better align with available resources. Since the military contracts have a higher margin than ADU's major mission to serve traditional students and provide graduate training, this is a significant area of concern. ADU has hired a retired military general officer as a senior official, thereby strengthening ties with the military.

During the team visit, the Board met on campus. One of the topics discussed was the question of segregating campus services and undergraduate classes by gender, which has been a practice at the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain campuses at the undergraduate level, although it is not required by any government agency. The action of the Board has not been announced as of this writing, but a proposal was approved to desegregate engineering, architecture, health and mass communication programs alongside desegregation of student services. The desegregation of the remaining programs would be considered in light of this experience. The elimination of the duplication in offering these courses separately to each gender would have a positive major impact on the financial bottom line and would also support the university's goal of facilitating the employability of graduates. The BSc Aviation program is currently desegregated, and three undergraduate programs for working students in the evening are offered in desegregated format (BBA, BSc IT, and BSC Environmental Health and Safety). All UG programs proposed to launch in Dubai will be desegregated, and the proposed new health science cluster of programs will also be desegregated. The provision of postgraduate courses is already co-educational.

The University has prioritized research support and outside sponsorship and has achieved some notable success in increasing revenue from external sources for research and sponsored activities, although the team was told that the UAE government does not extensively support research grants. As a result, ADU has turned to the business sector for these purposes. Members of the Board expressed their commitment to supporting faculty development, as well as investments in student life, such as recreation spaces and the health clinic, and attention to quality assurance as the university expands. ADU is working to increase efficiencies across campuses, such as achieving synergy in services and rent and management charges, as well as deferring some expenses until the next fiscal year.

While the Holding Company sees its commitment to ADU as an investment in the economic and social health of the nation, it is imperative that the university operate in a manner that reflects sound business practice. The recent strengthening of ADU's fiscal management, combined with adherence to its strategic plan, is a solid step in this regard. The

strength of ADU's efforts to diversify funding through a substantial expansion of community relations and development is another important step in this direction and one that will strengthen its fiscal condition.

Issue 2: More complete implementation of the University's Strategic Plan, particularly related to its research initiatives

WSCUC's specific recommendation (number 2 in the 2016 Commission Action Letter) to ADU indicated that the university's "ambitious plans for increasing faculty and student research, supported by the allocation of seed funding for the next five years, should be carefully monitored to ensure that the initiative is achieving its goals. (CFRs 2.8, 3.5, 4.3)."

The recommendation naturally touches on the university's Strategic Plan as a whole, but the focus of the Special Visit Institutional Report was on the faculty and student research elements of that plan. The ADU response thus related almost exclusively to the research initiatives portion of the recommendation, rather than a more general appraisal of the implementation of the Strategic Plan as a whole. This is probably a fair reading of the context of the original recommendation, and the Site Visit Team accordingly attended primarily to the research theme.

ADU responded that it was prioritizing its research agenda through the following means: the contributions of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP); targeted research funding as part of the development of a culture of research; and the cultivation of external research funding through partnerships and sponsorships. To further assess these areas, the team met over two days with over 30 students and approximately 20 faculty members (as well as with senior administrators including budget managers) regarding the institution's research culture, programs, and support.

The team's observations coalesce around two somewhat related, but different, aspects of the research topic: students and faculty. The findings regarding the involvement of undergraduate students in individual, group, and faculty collaboration research were that these teaching and mentoring relationships are remarkable. Students confirmed the university's assertion that research opportunities were widespread, well-communicated, supported, and encouraged by individual faculty and by the university as a whole.

The Innovation Centre (established in 2017) is a prime example. In a dedicated, attractive space (the décor of which was designed by students), students work on projects with a small but highly effective staff to pursue a wide range of interests. Students can also be involved in an innovation course that has been made available through the university's acquisition of a Stanford d. school course. In fact, some students are selected through a competitive process and are sponsored on a visit to the Stanford campus and its d. school.

The Innovation Centre activities culminate not only in research products per se, but with truly innovative and entrepreneurial results. In some cases, the students are closely engaged with university faculty, in others with external businesses and other institutions. Students who are participants in the Centre enthusiastically described the remarkable results and the effects on their own professional and personal lives.

While the Innovation Centre touches many students, there are additional opportunities – and in some cases requirements – for student engagement in research. There are curricular requirements in certain programs for research projects (with alternatives available) within the context of the academic major. However, there are also voluntary options for students to pursue a wide range of research, usually related to their discipline.

Many of the projects are developed for a remarkable competition that the university annually sponsors (now in its 7th year): the “Undergraduate Research Competition.” Starting as a purely internal program, it has grown to include many other institutions as well, garnering

over 700 submissions in 2019 and serving as the largest such event in the UAE, now also encompassing Oman and Saudi Arabia. Competition is strong within the university, with some 80 individual or small group proposals coming forward every year. Successful applicants are awarded financial supports for their projects, including equipment or other materials necessary to complete the research. The team learned that In the 2019 competition which took place a few days after the visit, Abu Dhabi University students were awarded joint first place (with the University of Sharjah) for the number of awards won.

Students noted that this competition, as well as student research more generally, is very actively promoted throughout the university. They unanimously recognized that their research experiences not only support their academic programs while enrolled in the university, but are at the same time preparing them for their future professional goals and are an important part of their c.v.'s as they move on to their next endeavors. In the groups that met with the team, fully 100% of the undergraduate participants indicated their goal of moving into graduate programs. The students clearly described a culture of research that has developed within the undergraduate population.

In terms of faculty scholarship (beyond student/faculty collaboration, which is extensive), the university continues to espouse its commitment to its support and development. Most internal and external elements of faculty research are coordinated and/or sponsored by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. The team met multiple times with the Director of ORSP (who is also a faculty member), and who contributed to the institutional self-study report.

Both faculty research and faculty development activities come under the auspices of ORSP. Documentation indicates a steady increase in awards through ORSP from FY 13/14 through 17/18, with the last of these totaling some 7.8 million Dirham (approximately \$2.1 million). The pace may be slowed or diminished somewhat due to the current year budgetary

constraints; however, the data indicate a strong and growing commitment on the part of the university to internal funding.

Research grants and initiatives (most apparently from external sources) also show strong numbers. Support for faculty conference travel has been regularly budgeted and reasonably strong but, again, the current year may prove a bit different to the recent historical trend. Lastly, internally funded research conferences and development activities have experienced a decline in recent years.

While the overall commitment to both student and faculty research remains clear and a priority under the current strategic plan, the student portion appears more robust and effective. This is not to say the faculty element has been neglected, but it does appear to have become a bit more tentative in the current state. The team would like to encourage the university to stay the course with its excellent student research programs, and attempt, within realistic budgetary adjustments, to do the same with faculty research. (CFR's 2.8, 4.3)

Issue 3: Demonstration of effectiveness of the Enrollment Management Plan, including impact on retention and completion rates as specified in the Strategic Plan

In its 3-2-2016 Action Letter, the Commission recommended for further development that ADU:

...conclude its search for a qualified Director of Enrollment Management and demonstrate the effectiveness of its Enrollment Management Plan in terms of meeting program-specific enrollment targets and ensuring that students are retained until completion of their degrees. (CFRs 2.13, 3.1)

Since the last WSCUC visit, ADU hired a Director of Enrollment and Marketing who resigned for personal issues shortly before the team's arrival. The University has initiated a search, and the previous Director continues to provide support for the marketing function on a part-time contract basis until a suitable replacement is found.

As mentioned in the introduction and Section I of this report, the loss of 250,000 UAE ex-patriate workers due to the downturn in the economy impacted ADU's enrollment since over half of their students are ex-patriates. The university missed its 2018-19 enrollment goals by over 300 students. Making the necessary budget adjustments but also stepping up both retention and recruitment have become major priorities of the university. The team reviewed the enrollment plans that have been developed for each campus and enrollment goals for the university overall. The campus construction projects are intended to increase future Al Ain enrollments from 1,500 to 2,500 in the first phase and to 5,000 in the second phase. The enrollment in Dubai is projected to grow from 280 students to 1,200 in five years. In addition to adding campuses, the University is expanding its geographic recruitment markets, focusing on the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, South Asia and, later, China (see Appendix B for the current footprint). The university is also exploring education beyond traditional-aged populations to include working professionals who wish to further their education.

The new chancellor confirmed that aggressive enrollment growth is his highest priority. A detailed *Strategic Marketing Recruitment Plan* has been written that includes action items assigned to teams for specific responsibilities, start and end dates, and priority action rankings. Regular status updates are required. *The Marketing Communication Strategy* and *Marketing Department Strategic Initiatives* are very well done and represent excellent analytical and collaborative work. Additional degree programs are being targeted and evaluated that research shows to be of strategic importance to the UAE. An example is the initiative now underway to form a new College of Health Sciences to include bachelors degrees in Biomedical Science – Laboratory Medicine, Human Genetics and Genetic Counseling, Pharmacy, Radiography and Medical Imaging, and Human Nutrition and Dietetics. A masters program is planned for Human Nutrition and Dietetics and a graduate program in Pharmacy is envisioned for the future. Existing programs in Environmental Health and Safety and Public Health will be reassigned to the new College. The initiative is being developed in partnership with Trinity College Dublin. The ADU Board has particular interest in this development and may consider the possibility of an eventual establishment of medical and dental programs.

In addition to recruitment, over the past two years ADU also has prioritized the improvement of retention and completion. The chancellor explained to the team that his aspirational intention is to compete with other universities on the basis of student experience and satisfaction. The team reviewed the many investments that have been made in this latter regard. The student government structure now includes student appointments to all university committees to represent student interests and requests. Not only have these appointments been effected across the university, the students also are receiving training in how to be an effective participant on those committees. Student participation in designing the new Al Ain campus and in developing student lounge and student government spaces, and the new Academic Success Center on the Abu Dhabi campus, have ensured more comfortable gathering spaces and bright colors that administrators attributed to student input.

The chancellor developed a position and recruited a senior-level, experienced Associate Provost for Student Success who has direct accountability for improving student retention. During the visit, the associate provost was meeting with deans and directors to develop and align core student attributes (or anticipated graduate outcomes) that would cross departments and create a unified approach toward the education of a defined ADU graduate.

University projects implemented since the last WSCUC visit to address retention include:

- Procurement of two new Blackboard modules (*Blackboard Analytics for Learning* and *Blackboard Outcomes* for learning outcomes assessment) for tracking student progress, attendance, achievements, and learning outcomes assessment and to alert faculty to students with attendance and grade problems
- A student engagement dashboard and analytics designed to provide academic advisors and mentors with early signs of students at risk
- An e-advising dashboard developed and used by academic advisors
- A peer mentoring program
- Addition of course assistants to high-failure gatekeeping courses
- Redesigned and refurbished Academic Support Center

- Restructured General Education staff structure to create two new leadership positions in student retention and teaching and learning
- Faculty-student mentoring to secure for students a meaningful personal contact able to provide timely advice, help, and support with appropriate referrals to resource centers, including the Learning Support Center and the Counseling Center

The team is aware of how difficult it is to move the needle on retention at any university. Abu Dhabi University is to be commended on the considerable intentional and coordinated efforts that have assisted the retention task force led by University College to identify early student disengagement and academic challenges by providing intervention measures. The new *Students First* project was launched to improve the student journey from application to graduation, and includes such initiatives as a new website, new online application form, and the Student Hub, a convenient, integrated access point for all student services.

The Abu Dhabi campus also has taken important steps to enrich campus gathering and recreation areas. The new ADU Community Center now houses a minimarket, male and female mosques, a nursery, coffee shops, gyms, salons, recreation area, and playground. In addition, library discussion rooms, the Innovation Center, Academic Success Center, international standard soccer field, a running track, an international-standard cricket ground, outdoor basketball and tennis courts, all have been developed or expanded since the team visit over three years ago.

The result of these investments in the enrichment of campus space, the inclusion of students in campus governance, expansion of faculty mentoring and advising, and the development of enrollment tracking and analytics to identify early risk issues have contributed to increasing student retention rates from 81% to 85% in 2017-2018. The goal is to reach 90% retention and 80% graduation rates. (CFRs 2.13, 3.1)

Issue 4: Verification of the effectiveness of the new degree programs being initiated at this time and subsequent to this action

ADU has developed a strategic set of new academic degree programs, which are in various stages of accreditation. The new programs have been conceptualized based on the future needs of the UAE and the population as determined by multiple measures of the external environment. Discussions with employers, government entities (specifically related to innovation), alumni, and the continued reviews of offerings in the region have helped the colleges focus on which programs to develop, enhance, or eliminate. The goals of ensuring a positive student experience with significant student engagement and a focus on employability is leading to increased student satisfaction in all quarters.

In its 3-2-2016 letter, the WSCUC Commission identified the following recommendation for further development:

The multi-dimensional Strategic Plan that sets the directions for the University going forward should be monitored in terms of key performance indicators in order to make needed adjustments in priorities, fiscal resources, and personnel (CFRs 4.5, 4.6).

Since the last visit, ADU has implemented a comprehensive Annual Program Enhancement Review (APER) internal review process for all programs offered by the university. During the first round of APERS completed in spring 2018, action plans were written to address noted observations concerning each aspect of review. This process seems to be comprehensive with a high degree of institutional research informing the review, including recruitment and enrollment trends, retention and graduation rates, employability of graduates, student academic achievement, curriculum, program learning outcomes, teaching and learning, program synergy, program profitability, and identified risks to be addressed. Deans, program chairs, and faculty are using real-time data and information to enhance the student experience, make programmatic decisions, and allocate academic resources.

Continued improvement in program enrollment levels, profitability, and sustainability remains a significant emphasis. The system of review is providing opportunity for capitalizing on

synergies among programs and eliminating courses with low enrollments. Enhancing the student experience, including facilitating appropriate learning progression, increasing technology-based and experiential learning, and supporting successful graduation and post-graduation employment, were deemed to be priority areas. Faculty professional development and innovation were identified as areas of need, as were program curricula, study plans, co-curricular activities, and program alignment to professional certifications.

ADU also completed a *Program Profitability Assessment* which led to effective discussions with College Deans regarding the outcomes of assessment and required actions and allow for early identification of issues and interventions to ensure the sustainability of all programs. A new focus on external competitive factors contributing to program enrollment has provided evidence upon which Deans and other leaders can base key decisions about program pricing, viability, and competitive context.

The table below shows the academic programs that have been approved since the University received accreditation in 2016:

New Programs/Tracks Since Initial Accreditation in 2016	
Program	Date of Launch
Master in Strategic Leadership (full program)	01/2016
Master in Mechanical Engineering (full program)	04/2016
BBA in Digital Marketing Communications (a new pathway)	05/2016
BBA in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (a new pathway)	08/2017
MBA in Tourism and Event Management (a new pathway)	12/2017

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS, AS APPROPRIATE

Significant changes in governance and administration have been effected since the last WSCUC visit. While ADU's ownership remains unchanged (98% owned by the ADU Holding

Company), a number of minority shareholders of the Holding Company have consolidated to form an entity called AH Alpha Investments Holding 1 Ltd. In turn, that entity has partnered with Amanat Holdings, a Dubai-based company with interests in healthcare and education, including a large network of hospitals in the UAE and the Middle East. Daily operations and management of the university, as well as of the Holding Company that owns ADU, remain unchanged. Several distinguished and exceptionally well-connected board members have joined the Holding Company Board of Directors and a new vice chairman has been appointed.

New administrative leadership includes the appointment of Professor Waqar Ahmad as Chancellor and CEO. He was appointed ADU Provost in May 2017, and subsequently appointed Chancellor in May 2018 after an open competition search. In January 2019, Ian Mathews, previously Chief Financial Officer at Trinity College Dublin, became Vice Chancellor, Administrative and Financial Affairs. Also in January 2019, Dr. Philip Hamill was appointed to the newly-created position Associate Provost for Student Success. Previously he was the Director of the learning division at the Emirates Institute for Banking and Financial Studies, and Dean of the Institute of Banking in Ireland where he led its development as a recognized college of University College Dublin.

Administrative developments not otherwise discussed in the foregoing include the establishment of a Community Relations Department reporting to the Chancellor. Heading this department is a UAE military retired general, with whom we were unable to meet, although we did meet with the senior manager for university development. One of the challenges that ADU faces in attracting private and philanthropic support is that as a for-profit entity there is no incentive to give, other than for specific purposes, because of that status. Other administrative developments include the combination of the Enrollment and Marketing Departments into one unified department, and an Accreditation Department established to further quality assurance and oversee adherence to the various accreditation standards.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SPECIAL VISIT TEAM REVIEW

The Special Visit Team finds that Abu Dhabi University has responded appropriately and thoroughly to each of the four Special Visit issues raised by the Commission in its March 2, 2016 action letter. Summary statement findings for each of the four issues discussed in the foregoing report are included following.

Summary Findings Relative to the Commission Action Letter

1. Abu Dhabi University has continued its progress in sustaining revenue streams and has taken appropriate cost-saving measures to balance its budget despite the shortfall in enrollment projections caused by the downturn in the UAE economy. Investments have been made in new program development, student communal space, and significant building projects. The University opened its Dubai campus and the Al Dhafra Teaching Center. (CFR 1.7, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7)
2. The University's Strategic Plan aligns closely with university purposes, addresses key priorities and future directions, and provides for ongoing monitoring. Institutional research capacity is systematic and results-oriented. The team encourages the prioritization of research initiatives when feasible going forward. (CFR 1.1, 2.8, 3.5, 4.3, 4.6)
3. The Enrollment Management Plan is in a mature stage of operation with key stakeholder involvement, ongoing monitoring in place, the implementation of several important initiatives, and resulting improvement in retention. (CFR 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5)
4. The new degree programs appear effective with a sophisticated *Annual Program Enhancement Review* process and a *Program Profitability Assessment* established. (CFR 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6)

Commendations

1. The growth in student enrollment through thoughtful initiatives undertaken in the region's current challenging economic climate and competitive higher education environment. The degree programs implemented and planned for the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain campuses are sound. Beginning with its first stage completion in 2020, the investment in the impressive new Al Ain campus promises to attract additional enrollments. The opening of the new building in Dubai in 2017 marked the University's entry into the competitive Dubai student market, and the campus is off to a good start offering several graduate programs with plans to initiate undergraduate programs in the next academic year. (CFR 4.1, 4.7)
2. The strategic investments made by the Holding Company, led by its visionary Board Chair, have provided the necessary support to the university to add programs and campuses, address marketing and enrollments, enable the development of new buildings, and achieve Abu Dhabi University's updated ambitious mission, vision, and plans. (CFR 1.7, 3.9)
3. The commitment to financial and faculty support of student research activities, including the ADU Innovation Center. Students appear to be well-informed about research opportunities and motivated to participate both by curricular requirements and by the active encouragement of the faculty. The many on-campus and external opportunities include the annual Undergraduate Research Competition sponsored by the university, now having grown to include other regional institutions. (CFR 2.8, 2.9)
4. Successful and mature strategic planning, institutional research, and assessment and analysis functions. These include the excellent and sophisticated planning documents that the team reviewed, including the *Strategic Plan*, *Annual Program Enhancement Review plans*, *ADU Vision 2022*, *Marketing Department Strategic Initiatives*, and *Marketing Communications Strategy*. The university-wide, data-based decision-making

processes have contributed to helping the institution grow and develop effectively. (CFR 2.3, 2.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

5. The process of planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating new, innovative academic programs that match curricular offerings with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and attributes necessary to gain work in diverse fields and in the new knowledge economy, with specific relevance to the UAE and the region. (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.6, 4.7)

6. The external validation of quality as evidenced by the fast track to WASC accreditation and achieving accreditation from professional accrediting bodies such as AACSB, ABET, and RIBA. The QS World Ranking 'Top 150 Under 50' and the identification by QS in 2018 as one of the 'Top 10 Fastest Risers' in the Arab Region are additional markers of excellence and recognition. A distinctive feature of the University was noted by the QS Ranking of ADU as 3rd in the world for faculty diversity and 10th for student diversity. (CFR 4.1, 4.3)

7. The development of high-level participation of students in university governance, committees, and campus life. The investment in facilities and support services that enrich the student experience. (CFR 2.10, 2.13)

Recommendations:

1. Continue to make adjustments to revenue projections and expenditures based on the UAE economic situation, applying strategic budgeting practices across the university. (CFR 3.4)

2. Continue to develop and manage realistic targets for enrollment growth in light of the region's economic challenges, while maintaining quality and stability in the student population. (CFR 3.4)

3. Prioritize, when feasible, the completion of the commitment to the Strategic Plan's support of faculty research and development, including appropriate funding. (CFR 2.8, 2.9)

4. Continue to research ways to support students in their studies with initiatives that target, evaluate, and assess the current trajectory of increasing retention rates, expanding the focused analytical approaches developed in University College to full development in the other colleges. (CFR 2.13)

Appendix A: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE FOUR CAMPUSES OF ABU DHABI UNIVERSITY
Abu Dhabi



Al Ain



Dubai



Al Dhafra



Appendix B: MAP OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY CALLER COUNTRY CODE



Appendix C

OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS REVIEW - AL AIN CAMPUS OF ADU

Institution: Abu Dhabi University
Type of Visit: Special Visit
Name of reviewer/s: Elizabeth Griego (report in conjunction with Mohammed Parakandi, ALO)
Date/s of review: April 16-19, 2019

1. Site Name and Address

Abu Dhabi University – Al Ain Campus
Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Street
Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2. Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a branch campus standalone location, or satellite location by WSCUC)

The Al Ain campus of Abu Dhabi University delivers 19 undergraduate programs and 4 postgraduate programs (Out of the 19 UG programs, 7 are Bachelor of Business Administration pathways).

Resident faculty on the campus number 71 full-time and 12 adjuncts, supported by the pool of faculty based out of the Abu Dhabi campus as necessary.

Current enrollment at the Al Ain campus is 1,305.

The Al Ain campus was an integral part of the initial establishment of ADU. The University began operation with 850 students in two campuses, with the main campus located in Abu Dhabi and the branch campus in Al Ain. The Al Ain campus represented, and continues to represent, an effort to fulfill a critical part of the student-centered ADU mission - to meet the growing higher education needs of the Al Ain community and surrounding area. Al Ain is a standalone branch campus.

3. Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

Visit to the new campus site and presentation on the project history, timeline, design, development and construction, and planned launch.

Dr. Mohamed Fteiha – Campus Director

Anwar Ali – New Campus Site Project Manager

Mohammed Parakandi - ALO

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<p><i>For a recently approved site.</i> Has the institution followed up on the recommendations from the substantive change committee that approved this new site?</p>	<p>The Al Ain campus was part of the initial establishment and accreditation of ALU.</p>	
<p><i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1)</p>	<p>The Al Ain campus was a critical part of the initial establishment of ADU. The team visited the construction site of the new campus slated to open in Spring 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Al Ain campus continues to represent a strong effort to fulfill an important component of the student-centered ADU mission - to meet the growing higher education needs of the Al Ain community and surrounding area. o Campus operations are managed by a Campus Director. 	
<p><i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)</p>	<p>All major aspects of the institutional culture at the main campus of ADU are evident at the Al Ain campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students are actively incorporated into the larger ADU community by way of provision of access to all ADU academic and non-academic support services via both the common facilities at the main Abu Dhabi campus and several academic and administrative support services that are provided online. o ADU systems are accessible around the clock from any location on or off-campus. o It is anticipated that the launch of Al Ain's purpose-built campus will result in enhanced student engagement and participation. The campus itself was planned and designed with an extensive amount of input and involvement from students, and ADU plans to carry this student-centered design model forward for application to new buildings and campus sites. 	
<p><i>Quality of the Learning Site.</i> How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The new Al Ain campus will have facilities occupying more than 28,000 square meters, and include 70+ lecture halls and laboratories, 137 offices for staff and faculty, and state-of-the-art scientific equipment. o The Al Ain campus has WIFI access throughout and the classrooms are configured to encourage close interaction between students and with the instructor. o Faculty office hours play an important role in facilitating faculty-student interactions outside classroom. The ADU Office Hour Policy requires each faculty to hold weekly 2 hours of office hours on site for every section taught to allow for one-to-one consultation with students outside the classroom. o The Campus Director, with whom the Team met, ensures the efficient operation of the site. 	

Student Support Services. What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)

- o The new Al Ain campus is equipped with all the facilities required to provide a superior educational experience including state-of-the art computer laboratories, a micro-teaching laboratory dedicated to the teaching programs, a Learning Support Center, a library with electronic resources available via the library portal 24/7, fully equipped classrooms and audio/visual rooms, dedicated graduate program classrooms, and recreational facilities.
- o Full-time professional academic advisors provide regular counsel and assistance to students on academic matters and study planning. They advise students on academic and career goals, assist them with registration, and offer them guidance in course selection.
- o Students at the Al Ain campus are also assigned faculty mentors who check on their academic progress and assist them with their career planning throughout their academic pursuits.
- o The Abu Dhabi campus library offers a wide range of e-resources to support all students and faculty in their teaching, learning, and research, and these are available at any location. The library offers electronic access to over 100 databases, accessible to all faculty, students, and staff, both on campus and off-campus, and access to more than 250,000 books on different subjects through the online library catalogue. These books are available online for the Al Ain students, in addition to the resources at the physical library at the Al Ain location. Coordination between the ADU library personnel and the library staff at the Al Ain campus is in place to ensure that all students and faculty at the Al Ain site have full access to relevant resources.
- o All of the offices, classrooms, and library at Al Ain are equipped with the latest computers, internet connectivity, and common printing facilities.
- o Admission, enrollment, course registration, payment of fees, etc. are managed online through ERP systems and are equally available to all students across locations. Al Ain campus has physical offices onsite for these services as well.
- o Data from student satisfaction surveys indicates a high rate of student satisfaction with student services and with the library.

Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty is involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)

Resident faculty at the Al Ain campus include 71 full-time and 12 adjunct faculty, with extra faculty support from the common faculty pool from the Abu Dhabi campus as necessary.

Systems are in place to ensure that all faculty are equally involved in the academic oversight of programs offered:

- o Each University College's committees are represented by faculty and staff from all sites. Attendance at the College's periodic faculty meetings is mandatory for all faculty, irrespective of their physical locations; video-conferencing is arranged for faculty to participate from a distance.
- o A Faculty Development and Planning Institute is conducted at the beginning of each academic semester for faculty orientation

	<p>and to provide updates and a College faculty retreat is conducted every semester.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The annual faculty performance evaluation system is another tool for connecting and integrating all faculty activities. The faculty evaluation process is communicated to all faculty and spells out expectations about teaching responsibilities, student evaluations, research output, and services to the University and the community. o Faculty members who teach in each discipline area are assigned to participate in the development of the curriculum, the instructional learning activities, market research, and the recruitment of new instructors. 	
<p><i>Curriculum and Delivery.</i> Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1-2.3, 4.6)</p>	<p>An inclusive approach to program planning and development is employed at ADU, identical for programs across all locations, which takes into consideration the knowledge and viewpoints of multiple stakeholders related to the profession in question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Input and information is gathered in a co-creation workshop process from those individuals and groups that are best representative of the particular proposed program field. o Faculty members associated with the program are assigned to participate in the development of the curriculum, the instructional learning activities, market research, and the recruitment of new instructors. o The decision-making process for curricula development and modification is dictated by the University’s Curricula Approval and Revision Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new degree proposal is developed academically at the department/College level and is then considered by the College Curriculum Committee and Dean/College Council. • If the new program is supported, it is then considered by the Program Development and Accreditation Committee. • If approved by the Program Development and Accreditation Committee, the program is considered by the Academic Success Committee and the Provost, who then takes the proposal to the University Strategic Governance Committee. • Once approved by the University Strategic Governance Committee, a degree proposal earns ‘ADU Board Approval’ status, with approval needed from the Academic Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and finally, the full Board of Directors. The Board minutes must approve a new degree proposal for ADU to then initiate ADEK, CAA and WASC accreditations. o ADU ensures that students at the Al Ain campus have the exact same learning experience as those students on the main campus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations across all locations, including quality of programs offered, faculty sufficiency, and facilities, are governed by the CAA Standards and the relevant international accreditation bodies. 	

- ADU monitors and evaluates all of the aspects of its operations at the Al Ain campus and follows a proactive approach in ensuring high quality education.
- ADU has a Campus Coordination Manual which dictates the systematic process and procedure regarding the way operations at various locations are coordinated. The Manual includes the chain of command and delegation of authority and ensures smooth working relationships among different units across the locations and their coordination with the main campus. This ensures effective accomplishment of inter-campus tasks through improved coordination, communication, and accountability.

Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)

Data on retention and graduation rates are collected from all campus locations, including Al Ain. Aggregate data shows an increase in retention rates, from +/- 80% to 85% in 2017-18, with graduation rates remaining stable at an average of 73% in recent cohorts.

Graduation and retention rates for Al Ain campus are provided below:

Retention by Campus

Campus	Fall 15/16	Fall 16/17	Fall 17/18
Abu Dhabi	77%	76%	80%
Al Ain	95%	80%	80%
Overall Institution	87%	77%	79%

Campus	Spring 15/16	Spring 16/17	Spring 17/18
Abu Dhabi	78%	70%	78%
Al Ain	86%	82%	80%
Overall Institution	81%	74%	78%

Graduation by Campus

Undergraduate Programs (6 Years)

Campus	Fall 10/11	Fall 11/12	Fall 12/13
Abu Dhabi	60%	64%	63%
Al Ain	47%	54%	46%
Overall Institution	57%	62%	61%

Campus	Spring 10/11	Spring 11/12	Spring 12/13
Abu Dhabi	53%	56%	60%
Al Ain	51%	38%	40%
Overall Institution	48%	52%	56%

Graduate Programs (3 Years)

Campus	Fall 13/14	Fall 14/15	Fall 15/16
Abu Dhabi	80%	77%	71%
Al Ain	87%	77%	65%
Overall Institution	82%	77%	69%

Campus	Spring 13/14	Spring 14/15	Spring 15/16
Abu Dhabi	68%	69%	65%
Al Ain	73%	82%	76%
Overall Institution	69%	72%	67%

Graduation and retention initiatives recently implemented University-wide include:

- An Associate Provost for Student Success (with direct accountability for improving student retention)
- A formalized student success strategy (still in draft form)
- A student engagement dashboard and analytics designed to provide academic advisors and mentors with early signs of students at risk
- Procurement of two new Blackboard modules (*Blackboard Analytics for Learning* and *Blackboard Outcomes* for learning outcomes assessment)
- A peer mentoring program
- Addition of course assistants to high-failure gatekeeping courses

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesigned and refurbished Academic Support Center • Restructuring of General Education staff structure to create two new leadership positions in student retention and teaching and learning • Faculty-student mentoring to establish for students a meaningful personal contact able to provide timely advice, help and support with appropriate referrals to resource centers including the Learning Support Center and the Counseling Center. 	
<p><i>Student Learning.</i> How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)</p>	<p>Course files and learning outcomes assessments are completed for every course that the University offers, every term. The process is the same regardless of campus site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o At the end of each semester, faculty members upload course files to ADU’s intranet for each course taught during the semester. The course file includes descriptions of the pedagogical approaches used and the activities that took place in the course, along with an assessment of the learning report that addresses achievement of course learning outcomes. o Each semester, the Department Chair organizes a meeting of the faculty delivering the program to examine the effectiveness of delivery and assessment strategies, discuss any recommended changes in the curriculum and devise a unified set of recommendations to be implemented in the forthcoming semester. o The University Course Coordination Policy ensures that assessments for academic courses are equitable for students enrolled across all campuses. <p>Student learning is assessed as an overall aggregate, and not at the individual campus level.</p>	
<p><i>Quality Assurance Processes:</i> How are the institution’s quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)</p>	<p>The University has a Quality Management System to enhance the design, development and delivery of its academic programs and associated support services across all campuses and locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The system facilitates continuous institutional improvement by the regular measurement of performance against organizational quality standards to ensure alignment with the University’s strategic goals and objectives. o Measures applied to all sites include performance indicators such as student retention, student faculty ratios, direct costs per student, student engagement, total enrollment, new enrollment, student assessment of teaching, six-year graduation rates, student satisfaction, employee satisfaction, direct educational cost per student, and support cost per student, among others. o An annual program enhancement review process was introduced to formalize quality assurance at the program level and to encourage a reflective and consistent view of mutually agreed-upon quality measures and criteria across all programs at all locations. 	

Appendix D

OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS REVIEW - DUBAI CAMPUS OF ADU

Institution: Abu Dhabi University
Type of Visit: Special Visit
Name of reviewer/s: Elizabeth Griego, team chair (with Mohammed Parakandi, ALO)
Date/s of review: April 16 – 19, 2019

1. Site Name and Address
Abu Dhabi University – Dubai Campus
Dubai Knowledge Park
P.O. Box 410896, Dubai, UAE
2. Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a branch campus standalone location, or satellite location by WSCUC)

The Abu Dhabi University – Dubai campus offers the delivery of ten postgraduate programs:

1. Master of Education in Educational Leadership
2. Master of Business Administration
3. Doctor of Business Administration
4. Master of Engineering Management
5. Master of Project Management
6. Master of Public Law
7. Master of Private Law
8. Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching - Arabic
9. Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching – English
10. Master of Strategic Leadership

Resident faculty at the campus include 6 full-time and 5 part-time faculty, with extra faculty support from the common faculty pool based out of the Abu Dhabi campus as necessary. Current enrollment at the Dubai campus is 206.

In line with the vision of Abu Dhabi University to be an internationally recognized university for quality education and applied research that drives economic and social development in the region and beyond, the Dubai campus was launched in 2017 with the intention to further expand ADU. Over the course of the preceding three years, University administration had conducted market studies and met with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), the organization that oversees schools and universities in Dubai, to determine the need for, and appropriately design, a campus that would offer a set of strong graduate programs. The Dubai location is a standalone campus.

3. Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)
Dr. Ibrahim Sidawi – Campus Director
Mohammed Parakandi - ALO

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<p><i>For a recently approved site.</i> Has the institution followed up on the recommendations from the substantive change committee that approved this new site?</p>	<p>Previous WASC recommendation: ADU must monitor the sufficiency of all student services for the Dubai campus to ensure that services are commensurate with those offered on the main campus.</p> <p>The recommendation has been followed up on satisfactorily, see below observations regarding student service availability and accessibility on the Dubai campus.</p>	
<p><i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Dubai campus is well-aligned with Abu Dhabi University's student-centered mission statement, specifically as it pertains to accommodating a diverse population, including working professionals. o Campus operations are managed by a Campus Director and service department representatives, with administrative oversight and academic controls provided by ADU's main campus in Abu Dhabi. 	
<p><i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)</p>	<p>All aspects of the institutional culture at the main campus of ADU are evident at the Dubai campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Students are actively incorporated into the larger ADU community by way of the provision of access to all ADU academic and non-academic support services via both the common facilities at the main Abu Dhabi campus and several academic and administrative support services that are provided online. o ADU systems are accessible round the clock from any location on or off-campus. o The Dubai campus is also equipped with Microsoft Surface Hub - a collaboration device that combines Whiteboard, audio and visual conferencing, applications, projection and cross platform integration - to provide a more connected education experience. 	
<p><i>Quality of the Learning Site.</i> How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5)</p>	<p>The Dubai campus environment successfully fosters engaged learning, supported by its physical environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Campus facilities include high speed Wi-Fi connectivity, 18 classrooms with multimedia projectors, faculty office areas, computer labs with total 45 computers, large library and reading areas, and a cafeteria/recreation hall. o Classrooms are configured to encourage close interaction between students and with the instructor. o Faculty office hours play an important role in facilitating faculty-student interactions outside classroom. The ADU Office Hour Policy requires each faculty to hold weekly 2 hours of office hours on site for every section taught to allow for one-to-one consultation with students outside the classroom. <p>The Campus Director ensures the efficient operation of the site.</p>	

Student Support Services. What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)

The Dubai campus provides all of the student services available to the students at the main campus. The Dubai campus currently only serves a postgraduate student population. Advising and mentoring services are low demand, and it is unnecessary to provide full-time advisors onsite:

- o The Abu Dhabi campus library offers a wide range of e-resources to support all students and faculty in their teaching, learning, and research, these are available at any location. The library has electronic access to over 100 databases, accessible to all faculty, students, and staff, both on campus and off-campus, and access to more than 250,000 books on different subjects through the online library catalogue. These books are available online for the Dubai students. In addition to the digital resources, there exists a physical library at the Dubai site. Coordination between the ADU library personnel and the library staff at Dubai campus is in place to ensure all students and faculty at the Dubai site have full access to relevant resources.
- o Offices, classrooms, and library at Dubai are equipped with the latest computers, internet connectivity, and common printing facilities. Classrooms feature state-of-the-art design and technological capabilities.
- o Microsoft Surface Hub is enabled on the ADU - Dubai campus.
- o Admission, enrollment, course registration, payment of fees etc. are managed online through ERP systems and equally available to all students across locations. There also exists a physical admissions department at the Dubai site.

Data from student satisfaction surveys indicates a high rate of student satisfaction with student services and with the library.

Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty is involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)

Resident faculty at the Dubai campus include 6 full-time and 5 part-time faculty, with extra faculty support from the common faculty pool based out of the Abu Dhabi campus as necessary.

Systems are in place to ensure that all faculty are equally involved in the academic oversight of programs offered:

- o Each University College committee is represented by faculty and staff from all sites. Attendance at the College's periodic faculty meetings is mandatory for all faculty, irrespective of their physical locations; video-conferencing is arranged for faculty to participate from a distance.
- o A Faculty Development and Planning Institute is conducted at the beginning of each academic semester for faculty orientation and to provide updates and developments, and a College faculty retreat is conducted every semester.
- o The annual faculty performance evaluation system is another tool for connecting and integrating all faculty activities. The faculty evaluation process is communicated to all faculty and spells out expectations about teaching responsibilities, student evaluations, research output, and University services.
- o Faculty members who teach in each discipline area are assigned to participate in the development of the curriculum, the instructional learning activities, market research and the recruitment of new instructors.

Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1-2.3, 4.6)

An inclusive approach to program planning and development is employed at ADU, identical for programs across all locations, which takes into consideration the knowledge and viewpoints of multiple stakeholders related to the profession in question:

- o Input and information is gathered in a co—creation workshop process from those individuals and groups that are best representative of the particular proposed program field.
- o Faculty members associated with the program are assigned to participate in the development of the curriculum, the instructional learning activities, market research and the recruitment of new instructors.

The decision-making process for curricula development and modification is dictated by the University’s Curricula Approval and Revision Policy:

- A new degree proposal is developed academically at the department/College level and is then considered by the College Curriculum Committee and Dean/College Council.
- If the new program is supported, it is then considered by the Program Development and Accreditation Committee.
- If approved by the Program Development and Accreditation Committee, the program is considered by the Academic Success Committee and the Provost, who then takes the proposal to the University Strategic Governance Committee.
- Once approved by the University Strategic Governance Committee, a degree proposal earns ‘ADU Board Approval’ status, with approval needed from the Academic Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and finally, the full Board of Directors. The Board minutes must approve a new degree proposal for ADU to then initiate ADEK, CAA and WASC accreditations.

ADU ensures that students at the Dubai campus have the exact same learning experience as those students on the main campus:

- Operations across all locations, including quality of programs offered, faculty sufficiency, and facilities, are governed by the CAA Standards and the relevant international accreditation bodies.
- ADU monitors and evaluates all of the aspects of its operations at the Dubai campus and follows a proactive approach in ensuring high quality education.
- ADU has a Campus Coordination Manual which dictates the systematic process and procedure regarding the way the operations at various locations are coordinated. The Manual includes the chain of command and delegation of authority and ensures smooth working relationships among different units across the locations and their coordination with the main campus. This ensures effective accomplishment of inter-campus tasks through improved coordination, communication, and accountability.

<p><i>Retention and Graduation.</i> What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)</p>	<p>Data on retention and graduation rates are collected from all campus locations, including Dubai.</p> <p>As Dubai campus was launched less than two years ago, there is no historical data to provide for graduation rates as of yet. However, retention rates for the campus are provided below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Campus</th> <th>Fall 15/16</th> <th>Fall 16/17</th> <th>Fall 17/18</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ADU</td> <td>77%</td> <td>76%</td> <td>80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Al Ain</td> <td>95%</td> <td>80%</td> <td>80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dubai</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>69%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overall Institution</td> <td>87%</td> <td>77%</td> <td>79%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Campus</th> <th>Spring 15/16</th> <th>Spring 16/17</th> <th>Spring 17/18</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ADU</td> <td>78%</td> <td>70%</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Al Ain</td> <td>86%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dubai</td> <td></td> <td>100%</td> <td>81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overall Institution</td> <td>81%</td> <td>74%</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Campus	Fall 15/16	Fall 16/17	Fall 17/18	ADU	77%	76%	80%	Al Ain	95%	80%	80%	Dubai			69%	Overall Institution	87%	77%	79%	Campus	Spring 15/16	Spring 16/17	Spring 17/18	ADU	78%	70%	78%	Al Ain	86%	82%	80%	Dubai		100%	81%	Overall Institution	81%	74%	78%	
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<p><i>Student Learning.</i> How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)</p>	<p>Course files and learning outcomes assessments are completed for every course that the University offers, every term. The process is the same regardless of campus site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of each semester, faculty members upload course files to ADU's intranet for each course taught during the semester. The course file includes descriptions of the pedagogical approaches used and the activities that took place in the course, along with an assessment of the learning report that addresses the achievement of course learning outcomes. Each semester, the Department Chair organizes a meeting of the faculty delivering the program to examine the effectiveness of delivery and assessment strategies, discuss any recommended changes in the curriculum and devise a unified set of recommendations to be implemented in the forthcoming semester. The University Course Coordination Policy ensures that assessments for academic courses are equitable for students enrolled across all campuses. <p>Student learning is assessed as an overall aggregate, and not at the individual campus level.</p>																																									

<p><i>Quality Assurance Processes:</i> How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)</p>	<p>The University has a Quality Management System to enhance the design, development and delivery of its academic programs and associated support services across all campuses and locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The system facilitates continuous institutional improvement by the regular measurement of performance against organizational quality standards to ensure alignment with the University's strategic goals and objectives. o Measures applied to all sites include performance indicators such as student retention, student faculty ratios, direct costs per student, student engagement, total enrollment, new enrollment, student assessment of teaching, six-year graduation rates, student satisfaction, employee satisfaction, direct educational cost per student, and support cost per student, among others. o An annual program enhancement review process was introduced to formalize quality assurance at the program level and to encourage a reflective and consistent view of mutually agreed-upon quality measures and criteria across all programs at all locations. 	
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