



March 11, 2013

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**PRESIDENT**  
Ralph A. Wolff

Richard Kobritz  
President  
Columbia College Hollywood  
18618 Oxnard Street  
Tarzana, CA 91356-1411

Dear President Kobritz:

At its meeting February 20-22, 2013, the Commission considered the report of the Pathway B team that conducted an on-site review of Columbia College Hollywood (CCH) October 3-5, 2012. The Commission also reviewed the comprehensive report submitted by the College prior to the visit and the institution's extensive January 3, 2013, response to the visiting team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Alan Gansberg, Chief Academic Officer and ALO, and consultant Betty Sundberg. Your observations were very helpful in informing the commission's deliberations.

CCH was approved by the Eligibility Review Committee to pursue Pathway B for Initial Accreditation, for which the institution prepared a self-study responding to each of the WASC Standards and Criteria for Review. The team was impressed with the thoroughness of the institution's report and the level of institution-wide engagement exhibited in demonstrating alignment with WASC expectations. The team noted several areas of institutional practice worthy of specific commendation.

**Positive Student Experience.** As noted in the team's report:

All units within Columbia College Hollywood are responsive to supporting the "whole student" via small class sizes, the highest level of career development support, the commitment of staff and faculty to be accessible to students, the excitement of, and acknowledged faculty responsiveness to, the Columbia College Hollywood students, and the dedicated academic leadership (p. 23).

**Extensive Academic Planning.** Guided by insightful leadership, the institution has engaged in an extended period of academic planning. This has led to the infusion of learning outcomes throughout the curriculum and a focus on verifying educational achievement through assessment aligned with institutional mission. Faculty participation in these endeavors is particularly evident.

The Commission endorsed the findings and commendations of the visit team, and wishes to draw the institution's attention to the following areas for continuing attention.

**Governance Development.** As highlighted in the team report, the CCH Board of Trustees has exhibited considerable commitment to bringing the institution through a difficult period to its present level of effectiveness. As the institution moves forward, particular attention should be given to adding qualified members to the Board who have expertise in the areas of higher education practice and diversity. The reporting structures should also be reviewed to ensure that lines of accountability are clear and free from conflicts of interest. Shared governance should be expanded to include appropriate faculty input in the areas of academic planning and review. (CFRs 1.3, 1.8, 3.8, 3.9, 3.11, and 4.6)

**Educational Effectiveness.** Building on the sound academic infrastructure already in place, the institution should plan to complete a program review of each academic program, use the results from this process to implement improvements as required, and then evaluate the effectiveness of the program review process itself. This should be undertaken with a view to more fully embedding a culture of assessment that supports innovation and adoption of best practices. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.4, 4.6, and 4.7)

**Student Status upon Completion.** Being sensitive to the issue of educational debt, particularly with reference to earning potential within the industries it serves, the institution is expected to continue its efforts to assist with placement services within target industries. Enhanced focus on educational debt management, perhaps by providing counseling in connection with student aid disbursements, may also be useful. The Commission suggests that efforts to improve completion may include devising ways to help students complete their degrees even when finding early placement in the industry. (CFRs 2.6, 2.11, 2.13)

**Faculty Engagement.** Building on the significant progress achieved to date in engaging the faculty in core academic activities, the institution should clarify that faculty are in fact exercising demonstrated ownership over the curriculum, with sufficient autonomy of voice, to acknowledge the areas of expertise they bring. (CFR 3.10)

The Commission acknowledges the extensive work the institution has already undertaken in response to the recommendations of the visiting team. These achievements support the Commission's decision to grant Candidacy status to the institution, as it meets the Standards at least at a minimal level and shows promise for meeting all of them at a substantial level by the time of the next review. The Special Visit for Initial Accreditation, noted below in the Commission's action, will focus specifically on the institution's response to the four issues identified in the preceding paragraphs.

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Pathway B team report.
2. Grant Candidacy for a period of four years.

3. Schedule a Special Visit for Initial Accreditation in spring 2014 to address the issues identified in this letter.

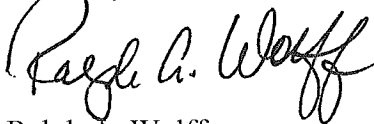
Once an institution has attained the status of Candidate for Accreditation, it should provide students with appropriate notice of its status, such as in the course catalog and on the institutional website. The institution must use the following statement whenever it describes that status publicly:

“Columbia College Hollywood has been recognized as a Candidate for Accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 985 Atlantic Avenue, #100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510-748-9001. This status is a preliminary affiliation with the Commission awarded for a maximum period of four years. Candidacy is an indication that the institution is progressing toward Accreditation. Candidacy is not Accreditation and does not ensure eventual Accreditation.”

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of Columbia College Hollywood’s governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement, and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in them. The team report and this action letter will also be posted on the WASC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that the College 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/rw

cc: Harold Hewitt, Commission Chair  
Alan Gansberg, ALO  
Patrick Zilliacus, Board Chair  
Members of the Special Visit team  
Richard Winn, Visit Staff Liaison