

July 12, 2019

Dr. Carlos Larreategui
Rector
Universidad de las Americas
Avenida Los Granados E12-41 y Colimes Esquina
Quito, Pichincha, Ecuador

Dear Rector Larreategui:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Universidad de las Americas (UDLA) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 28, 2019. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to UDLA April 23-24, 2019. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by UDLA prior to the Special Visit and the institution's June 6, 2019 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Gwen Bloomsburg, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's current status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on the university's (1) governance structure, (2) support for its faculty in pursuit of advance degrees, and (3) UDLA 2020 strategic plan
2. Continue with the previously scheduled reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2021 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2022

The Commission commends UDLA in particular for the following:

1. A demonstrated serious commitment to the WSCUC accreditation process, including addressing the three issues identified by the Commission for this Special Visit.
2. A strong student-centered organizational culture, which drives its processes and priorities.
3. Compliance with the WSCUC Governing Board policy in the context of a constrained structure mandated by the previous higher education law.
4. The university's leadership that contributed to the improvement of Ecuadorian higher education policy and legislation.
5. A substantial resource commitment to faculty research and professional development, and continued efforts to improve the effectiveness of its support efforts.

6. UDLA 2020, an effective guide to the development of the institution's operational plans and resource allocation through its annual budgets.

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

1. Clearly and promptly establish the roles and responsibilities of the University Council, the Board of Regents, and the Advisory Board in the new governance structure. (CFR 3.9)
2. Build a body of evidence that clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the new governance structure. (CFR 3.9)
3. Expand a culture of collaborative research across disciplines and among PhD and master-level faculty. (CFR 2.8, 2.9, 3.3)
4. Leverage the big data/business intelligence asset to further tighten the linkage of strategic objectives to resource allocation in the next cycle of strategic planning. (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.6, 4.7)

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of UDLA's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the UDLA'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 Universidad de las Americas undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jamiene S. Studley
President

JSS/mam

Cc: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair
Gwen Bloomsburg, ALO
Members of the Special Visit team
Maureen A Maloney, Vice President