

March 3, 2021

Dr. Thomas Rosenbaum
President
California Institute of Technology
1200 East California Boulevard
Pasadena, CA 91125

Dear President Rosenbaum:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 19, 2021. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation (TPR) of Accreditation Visit to Caltech October 13-16, 2020. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Caltech prior to the Accreditation Visit, and the institution's December 2, 2020 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues David Tirrell, Provost, Cindy Weinstein, Vice Provost, and Lindsey Malcom-Piqueux, Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Assessment. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of ten years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2030 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2030
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by March 1, 2026 that provides:
 - a. the most recent status report from the Core Curriculum Steering Committee that is shared with the faculty about any changes to and assessments of the Core.
 - b. the most recent annual report of the President's Committee on Inclusion and Diversity and the most recent annual report of the Caltech Center for Inclusion and Diversity.
 - c. the roster of the current Board of Trustees.

The Commission commends the Institute in particular for the following:

1. Carefully planned research investigations that led to critical self-reflection and meaningful program and co-curricular improvements and that generated widespread collaboration, engagement, and support for the accreditation process.
2. An unwavering commitment to excellence and rigor in both the educational and scholarly missions that emphasizes collective achievement and de-emphasizes competition.
3. Leadership in fostering a shared commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion as core values and essential to institutional success.
4. The involvement of a well-functioning faculty board in collaborative decision-making, facilitating active communication between the administration and faculty, and ensuring a strong system of shared governance.
5. The institutionalization of a number of key functions that advance evidence-driven approaches to Caltech's educational mission and commitment to student success.
6. The establishment of a data-rich, evidence-informed culture of assessment for academic and co-curricular support services and units.

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

1. Continue progress in evaluating and improving the Core Curriculum, placing emphasis on (CFRs 2.2a, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 4.4):
 - a. strategies to redeploy teaching resources in ways that will enhance student flexibility in navigating the curriculum and not further reduce it;
 - b. the value of humanities and social science courses in developing core competencies like written and oral communication, with a goal of achieving comparable levels of student achievement as reported in quantitative reasoning skills;
 - c. the preparation of students to be good citizens and leaders who are able to navigate moral and ethical issues and develop the empathy necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

The Commission appreciated learning about the discussions underway to introduce more flexibility in the Core.

2. Accelerate work in the area of equity, diversity and inclusion with a focus on increasing representation of historically marginalized groups, understanding and advancing a supportive and welcoming climate, addressing disparities in a variety of outcomes and experiences, and developing a comprehensive infrastructure supported by appropriate resources that will lead to sustainable, long term, and meaningful change. (CFRs 1.1, 1.4, 2.10, 2.13, 3.2 and WSCUC Equity and Inclusion Policy) The Commission appreciated learning about the new initiatives in diversity, equity and inclusion, including expanding opportunities for prospective underrepresented students and postdocs.
3. Consider the composition of the Board of Trustees, and how making it more inclusive and increasing its academic expertise could amplify its effectiveness in

governing the academic mission of the institution. (WSCUC Governing Board Policy and WSCUCU Governing Board Policy Implementation Guide)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that Caltech addressed the three Core Commitments and successfully completed the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, the Institute should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Caltech's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Caltech 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 the California Institute of Technology undertook in preparing for the 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/bgd

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Cindy Weinstein ALO
David Lee, Board Chair
Members of the TPR Accreditation Visit team
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President