

July 20, 2018

Dr. Gary May  
Chancellor  
University of California at Davis  
One Shields Avenue  
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Chancellor May:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the University of California at Davis (UC Davis) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27-29, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to UC Davis April 4-6, 2018. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by UC Davis prior to the Special Visit. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Ralph Hexter and Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Carolyn Thomas. Their 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 Special Visit team report that focused on:
  - a. Assessment
  - b. Program Review
  - c. 2020 Initiative
2. Continue with the previously scheduled reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2023 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2024
3. Continue with the previously scheduled Mid-Cycle Review to begin May 1, 2019

### **Commendations**

The Commission joins with the Special Visit team and commends UC Davis for the following:

1. Making significant progress to address the three areas identified for the Special Visit: assessment, program review and strategic planning;
2. Discussing the challenges facing the institution openly and candidly, including the financial challenges that face the entire UC system;
3. Maintaining a strong commitment to first-generation student enrollment and success, establishing the First-Generation Faculty Initiative, and, more generally, demonstrating its commitment to the retention and academic success of all students;
4. Implementing an effective procedure for program review that includes a thoughtful process for reflection and feedback, attention to "closing the loop,"

- mechanisms for linking assessment results to budget decisions, and holding departments accountable for making changes based on program review;
5. Establishing a decentralized approach to assessment that allows each program to define its own assessment criteria, empowers the faculty to feel ownership over the assessment process, and increases its usefulness in enhancing pedagogy;
  6. Investing in advising and its success in reducing student/advisor ratios and advisor caseloads, and in changing the campus advising culture from bureaucratic compliance toward a focus on student learning, advisor training and professional development, and improvement of advising processes and organization.

## **Recommendations**

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following issues for its next reaffirmation:

1. Strengthen the assessment of General Education by: (CFRs 2.2a, 2.6, 4.1)
  - a. establishing a rigorous process of GE course approval;
  - b. ensuring that GE courses meet and maintain the standards for the GE literacies for which they were approved;
  - c. making certain that all GE instructors understand these goals and that courses deliver promised outcomes.
2. Determine and provide the type and level of support needed to keep the assessment workload manageable and meaningful. More specifically, provide appropriate resources to colleges for assessment activities and personnel. (CFRs 2.6, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)
3. Enhance the reviews of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental undergraduate programs by: (CFRs 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 4.2)
  - a. establishing a responsible point of contact for each program among senior leadership;
  - b. clarifying what the program should expect from the process;
  - c. defining what resources are available to support assessment in this context.
4. Clarify Lecturer with Potential Security of Employment (LPSOE) appointments by: (CFRs 3.1, 3.2)
  - a. defining more clearly the role that LPSOEs should play in carrying out research into disciplinary pedagogy and introducing pedagogic and assessment innovations into the community at large;
  - b. clarifying expectations for LPSOE merit reviews and promotions;
  - c. explicitly considering the appropriate balance between lecturer and ladder-rank appointments.
5. Derive the full benefits of the 2020 Initiative by: (CFRs 3.1, 3.4, 4.1)
  - a. completing the faculty hiring component;
  - b. securing faculty office and research space;
  - c. enhancing teaching facilities.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of the Regents of the University of California in one week. A copy of this letter will also be sent to the president of the University of California. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the UC Davis 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 University of California at Davis undertook in preparing for and supporting this 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: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair  
Carolyn Thomas, ALO  
George Kieffer, Board Chair  
Janet Napolitano, President  
Members of the Special Visit team  
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President