

July 11, 2022

Dr. Adam Morris
President
Azusa Pacific University
901 E. Alostia Avenue
Azusa, CA 91702

Dear President Morris:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Azusa Pacific University (APU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 24, 2022. At that meeting, the Commission acted to issue a Warning. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to Azusa Pacific University April 6-8, 2022. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Azusa Pacific University prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's May 25, 2022 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Andrew Barton, Interim President; Rukshan Fernando, Provost; Stephanie Juillerat, Former Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and ALO; Dale Kemp, Interim Chief Financial Officer; and Robert Duke, Interim Associate Provost and 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 new status with WSCUC.

The Commission acted to impose the sanction of Warning because it found that Azusa Pacific University has failed to meet WSCUC Standard 3. When the Commission finds that an institution fails to meet one or more of the Standards of Accreditation, it notifies the institution of these findings and gives the institution no longer than two years from the date of this action to correct the situation. If an institution has not remedied the deficiencies at the conclusion of the two-year sanction period, the Commission may take an "adverse action," in this case, the withdrawal of accreditation. An institution under sanction must address the areas cited by the Commission expeditiously, with seriousness and the full attention of the institution's leadership. It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine, at the end of the sanction period, whether the institution has corrected the situation(s) and has come into compliance with Commission Standards.

The accreditation status of the institution continues during Warning. However, while on Warning, any new sites or degree programs initiated by the institution must be approved through the substantive change process.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Issue a Warning
3. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2024 to address:
 - a. compliance with Standard 3, particularly CFRs 3.4, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.9.
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by March 1, 2023 to address:
 - a. creation of a three- to five-year strategic enrollment plan tied to budget planning.
 - b. development of a shared governance plan that includes faculty, staff, administration, and board.
 - c. assessment of campus climate and development of an action plan to address areas needing improvement.

Issues to be addressed

- **Financial Sustainability:** APU has experienced multiple years of declining enrollment and deteriorating finances resulting in reductions in faculty and staff positions, hiring freezes, and furloughs. Despite a series of Progress Reports to WSCUC to address these financial issues in the past, efforts to develop a strategy to improve finances and stabilize the university have been ineffective. Working with the entire campus community, including faculty, staff, students, administration, and the board, APU must develop a three- to five-year strategic enrollment plan tied to budget planning to strengthen the financial viability of the institution. (CFRs 3.4, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.6)
- **Shared Governance:** Given the recent layoffs experienced by faculty and staff, APU needs to rebuild a culture of trust with members of the campus community. To live out the mission of the university, a robust shared governance system that includes faculty, staff, administration, and board of trustees is needed to accomplish the following:
 - (1) clarification of the roles and responsibilities of board of trustees, administration, staff, and faculty. (CFRs 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.9)
 - (2) process for faculty input into decisions regarding educational practices and programs. (CFRs 1.3, 1.5, 3.1, and 3.10)
- **Board Effectiveness:** Appropriate boundaries are necessary for the board of trustees. APU needs to seek board development opportunities to strengthen board effectiveness while ensuring regular and consistent communication with the campus community. (CFRs 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 3.6, and 3.9)
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Campus Climate:** Despite designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), APU does not have a university-wide strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion that includes a regular cycle of assessing campus climate. In order to execute the existing campus commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, APU needs to evaluate campus climate for all students, faculty and staff, and develop a strategic plan that ensures equitable support and outcomes for the diverse population of students the university serves. These matters also have an effect on enrollment and in turn sustainability. (CFRs 1.4, 2.10, and 4.3)

Further Recommendations

1. Communication: In order to strengthen the campus community's ability to live out the mission of APU, the campus leadership needs to implement effective pathways for regular internal communication. (CFRs 3.7 and 4.6)
2. Academic Program Assessment and Review: Align assessment and program review processes and use the results to inform the annual budget planning process to ensure quality of the academic programs. (CFRs 2.7, 3.7, 4.3, and 4.4)
3. Data Collection, Analysis and Use: Continue to integrate and enhance data collection and analysis to facilitate insightful decision-making to effectively carry out the mission of the institution. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3)

The Commission also requires a meeting between the WSCUC staff and representatives of Azusa Pacific University, including the CEO, representatives of the governing board, and senior faculty leadership within 90 days from the date of the Commission action. The purposes of the meeting are to further clarify the reasons for the Commission's finding of noncompliance and to discuss the institution's plans for responding to this action.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Azusa Pacific University's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on Azusa Pacific University'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.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jamiene S. Studley
President

JSS/so

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Robert Duke, ALO
Tom Miller, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit team
Susan Opp, Vice President