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Mary Ellen Petrisko

March 6, 2015

Nicholas Dirks
Chancellor
University of California, Berkeley
200 California Hall, #1500
Berkeley, CA 94720-1500

Dear Chancellor Dirks:

At its meeting February 18-20, 2015, the Commission considered the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit (AV) to the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) October 22-24, 2014. Commission members reviewed the institutional report prepared by UC Berkeley prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), any supplemental materials requested by the team following the OSR, and the institution's response to the visiting team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the review with you and your colleagues Catherine Koshland, Vice Chancellor, Under-graduate Education, and Cynthia Schraeger, Assistant Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education. Your comments were helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations.

This reaffirmation review was conducted in keeping with the *2008 Handbook of Accreditation*, which requires institutions to address several components in their institutional reports. With regard to each of these components, as specified for institutions in the transitional Pilot 2 category, the team found the following:

1. *Meaning, integrity, quality, and rigor of the degrees:* The institution had consistently implemented the approach of "locally defined, discipline specific, and faculty-driven" in addressing these quality measures into each of their degree programs. A detailed survey, to which 100% of the 72 divisions and schools responded, verified that the process had been deployed, achievement data had been obtained, and needed improvements implemented – though also noting that some units are in early stages of full integration. The focus on teaching excellence, particularly at the undergraduate level, has been both broadly supported and highly productive.
2. *Achieving core competencies:* The process of setting, assessing, and evaluating learning outcomes is broadly deployed at the department level, particularly with upper-division outcomes in the major. The Reimaging Undergraduate Education initiative has been effectively embraced across the institution.
3. *Defining and promoting student success:* The team reported that academic affairs and student affairs are well integrated around a commitment to evidences of academic achievement as well as degree completion.

4. *Ensuring capacity, effectiveness, and response to changes:* Having reckoned with the severe challenges of the economic downturn and related reductions in state support, the review team was impressed with the manner in which UC Berkeley has deployed its resources. The team was concerned, however, about the environmental elements over which the University has limited, if any, control that will continue to challenge its ability to sustain its world-class reputation.

The Commission commends UC Berkeley in particular for the following:

As noted by the team, the University is commended for its resilience and visionary response in the face of the recent economic downturn and the related financial cutbacks. As noted by the team, these outcomes encompassed strategies “including cutting expenses through the Operational Excellence program, developing metrics-driven assessment of Operational Excellence, generating new revenue through student recruitment and philanthropy, and investing in new programs, particularly those relating to enhancing undergraduate education.”

The team’s report also frequently referenced the University’s multiple initiatives that, together, comprise the Undergraduate Initiative. The Commission commends the University for the vision, coordination, broad support, and promising outcomes related to this core dimension of Berkeley’s mission.

The team was impressed with the pervasive implementation of the values “relating to equity, diversity and inclusion” and the ways in which these values are “central to planning at all levels of the institution.” The Commission commends the degree to which this critical aspect of Berkeley’s mission is so clearly integrated into the fabric of the institution.

The Commission endorses the other commendations made by the team in their report. In the context of encouraging the continuation of the outstanding initiatives and processes already under way at the institution, the Commission wishes to emphasize the following areas:

Undergraduate Initiative. The Commission is impressed with the multiple initiatives under the heading of the Undergraduate Initiative. As expressed by the team, the Commission wishes for this cluster of thoughtful processes to become even more “innovative, expansive, and ambitious,” as it has large potential both for this institution and as a model for others. In particular, the Commission urges the institution more intentionally to evaluate the many undergraduate strategies in support of student success with the purpose of providing adequate resources for those with the highest demonstrated effectiveness. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.13, 4.1, 4.3)

Faculty Roles and Deployment. The Commission acknowledges the trend at Berkeley, as at most other institutions, to rely more broadly on non-tenure track and adjunct faculty, especially in the delivery of the lower division curriculum. In this context, the Commission urges the institution to continue its evaluation of the most effective ways to fulfill its promises for undergraduate students to enjoy full participation in the benefits of a major research university, including meaningful engagement with research faculty. These efforts to enhance the undergraduate experience should continue to be integrated with Berkeley’s exemplary equity and inclusion programs to ensure that all students equally enjoy the benefits the research university offers. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 4.7)

Given the above, the Commission acted to:

1. Receive the team report and reaffirm the accreditation of the University of California Berkeley for a period of ten years.
2. Schedule the next comprehensive review with the Offsite Review in spring 2024 and the Accreditation Visit scheduled for fall 2024.
3. Schedule a Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2020.

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that the University of California Berkeley has satisfactorily addressed the Core Commitments to Student Learning and Success, Quality and Improvement, and Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability. The University of California Berkeley has successfully completed the multi-stage review conducted under the 2008 Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review, the institution is encouraged to maintain its compliance with WSCUC standards and uphold its commitment to continuous quality improvement.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to UC System President Janet Napolitano. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the University's website and widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in this letter. 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.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that UC Berkeley 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 participation in this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen Petrisko
President

MEP/rw

Cc: William Ladusaw, Commission Chair
Cynthia Schrager, ALO
Janet Napolitano, President, UC System
Members of the reaffirmation team
Richard Winn, Senior Vice President