March 9, 2017

Robert W. Brown, Esq.
President
University of West Los Angeles
9800 S. La Cienega Blvd, 12th Floor
Inglewood, CA 90301-4423

Dear President Brown:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning the University of West Los Angeles (UWLA) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting on February 17, 2017. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 to the University of West Los Angeles on December 5-8, 2016. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by UWLA prior to the Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 and the institution’s January 31, 2017 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues: Jay Frykberg, Dean and ALO, and Talon Brown, Dean. 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 SAV 1 team report
2. Grant Candidacy for a period of five years
3. Schedule an SAV 2 in spring 2018 to focus on progress in areas noted below:
a. The development and implementation of a clear plan to achieve financial stability and a sustainable financial model
b. The appointment of a permanent CFO who will work closely with the President and the Board of Managers to continue to develop, refine, and implement a sustainable financial model and balanced budgets. Relatedly, that UWLA take steps to ensure that the Board has the knowledge and tools to be effectively engaged in the budget process.
c. The development and formalization of organizational structures and decision-making processes that are clear and consistent with the institution’s purposes and that support effective decision-making
d. In an effort to ensure the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of the Degree, increased attention to the improvement of:
   i. Student Services to nurture student community and learning needs (e.g., ADA trained staff, tutoring and co-curricular opportunities)
   ii. Curriculum Development and Academics including Program Learning Outcome alignment to professional standards for the undergraduate business degree as well as alignment to the Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (or similar framework) to ensure adequate and appropriate degree rigor.
   iii. Institutional Research as a central focus and the use of data for strategic planning and decision-making.

Commendations

The Commission commends the University of West Los Angeles in particular for the following:

1. Its comprehensive development of student learning outcomes. Team members found clear evidence of measurable, mission-driven outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level that are clearly mapped and differentiated according to the level of development. UWLA has taken significant steps to assess these learning outcomes systematically and create pathways to improvement of educational effectiveness.
2. Its clearly serving its social justice-driven mission to deliver high-quality, practice-oriented legal education to a diverse and underserved population with the aim to democratize the legal profession. The commitment to the mission by the faculty, staff, students, alumni and Board members is commendable and sincere. The team was impressed with how many students, alumni and adjunct faculty took time to come to campus to meet with the team.
3. The engaging of successful professionals in their fields to offer courses and work closely with students, and the level of engagement of all faculty, including those who serve as adjuncts, on faculty committees.
4. The implementation of an organic and inclusive process to prepare for this review. In particular, the creation of the WSCUC Steering Committee and enhanced communication across the institution were evidence of broad engagement with and buy-in for the WSCUC process.
Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The Commission finds that the University of West Los Angeles has demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 1 at a level sufficient for Candidacy.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objective through Core Functions

The Commission finds that the University of West Los Angeles has demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 2 at a level sufficient for Candidacy.

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

The Commission finds that the University of West Los Angeles has demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 3 at a level sufficient for Candidacy.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

The Commission finds that the University of West Los Angeles has demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 4 at a level sufficient for Candidacy.

In taking this action, the Commission confirms that the University of West Los Angeles has met all of the WSCUC Standards a level sufficient to grant Candidacy. The Commission has scheduled the Seeking Accreditation Visit for spring 2018.

The University of West Los Angeles must use the following statement if it wishes to describe its accreditation status publicly:

_The University of West Los Angeles has been recognized as a Candidate for Accreditation by WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001. This status is a preliminary affiliation with the Commission awarded for a maximum period of five years. Candidacy is an indication that the institution is progressing toward Accreditation. Candidacy is not Accreditation and does not ensure eventual Accreditation._

Federal law requires that the WSCUC address and phone number appear in your catalog.

Institutions granted Candidacy are required to:

1. Submit an Annual Report in the format required by the Commission
2. Keep the Commission informed of any significant changes or developments, especially those that require prior approval according to the Commission’s Substantive Change Policy.

Please consult the Substantive Change Manual and confer with your WSCUC liaison about any proposed new degree programs, off-campus sites, online offerings, and/or changes in governance or ownership, to determine if these matters should be approved in advance by WSCUC.

3. Pay Annual Membership Dues prorated from the date of this action. An Annual Dues statement will be sent under separate cover.

In keeping with WSCUC review protocols, the required subsequent review and Seeking Accreditation Visit 2 will focus on the recommendations provided above and those noted in the team report.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of UWLA’s governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be 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 UWLA 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,

Mary Ellen Petrisko
President

MEP/gc

Cc: William Ladusaw, Commission Chair
    Jay Frykberg, ALO
    Jay Askari, Board Chair
    Members of the Seeking Accreditation Visit #1 team
    Geoff Chase, Vice President