REPORT OF THE WSCUC REVIEW TEAM
FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

The Pacific School of Religion

November 21, 2016

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution’s status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.
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Component 1: Institutional Context, 
Response to Previous Commission Actions

Description of the Institution: Located in Berkeley, California, the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) has a rich and distinct history. For 150 years, it has played a key role in training future leaders within multiple faith communities. PSR is a progressive Christian seminary and has formal relationships with three major denominations: the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Half of PSR’s students come from these three traditions. Other PSR students come from faith traditions as diverse as Quaker, Buddhist, Roman Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and several other mainline denominations and new religious movements. Some have no religious affiliation.

PSR has provided graduate theological education for leaders in churches and in social change movements, representing an early voice for the equality of women, resistance against racial prejudice and war, and the promotion of rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and the economically disadvantaged. PSR has been identified as "one of the nation’s top two dozen innovative and inventive programs in theological education."

Over the past seven years, the institution has served between 95 and 157 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. It offers five degree programs and a host of certificates. Students can earn master’s degrees in divinity, in a combination of arts and divinity, and in theological studies. Students can also earn a MA in Social Transformation or a Doctor of Ministry (DMin).

PSR is also part of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), which grants PhD, ThD, and MA degrees in the fields of religious studies. The GTU is currently made up of eight theological schools representing a breadth of Christian traditions and eleven centers representing most of the world religions. PSR students can register for courses at any of the eight seminaries and GTU Centers. The opportunity to study throughout the GTU is one of the reasons students choose to come to PSR, and more
PSR students participate in course cross-registration than students in any other GTU school.

**Summary of PSR’s Accreditation History:** PSR was accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in 1938 and by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC, now WSCUC) in 1971. The institution’s last ATS and WSCUC reviews took place in 2009, when review teams from both agencies visited the campus and co-authored a report regarding PSR’s request for reaffirmation. In the 2009 report, three issues were raised:

- Application of the model of assessment used for the Master of Divinity (MDiv) review to other PSR degree programs, primarily the Master of Theological Studies (MTS) and the DMin through the formulation of course outcomes.
- Development of a comprehensive and coherent framework for program review.
- Evaluation of the efficacy of the shared CFO model, and the institution’s financial vulnerability in the face of an uncertain economy, enrollment declines, and lower returns on the institution’s investments.

Following the 2009 reaffirmation, PSR updated WSCUC on its progress in these areas in 2011, 2012, and 2015. The institution also submitted two substantive change proposals in 2015: one for a Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST) and one for an online DMin degree. The Commission approved both proposals.

**Description of Review Team Process:** The review team received PSR’s reaffirmation materials in January 2016. Committee members reviewed the documents independently and then met as a group for the Off-Site Review (OSR) in March 2016 to discuss the report and the associated documentation. During the OSR, the team identified areas of strength as well as areas in which greater examination was warranted. At the conclusion of the OSR, the review team shared its commendations and Lines of Inquiry (LOI) with key administrators at PSR.
Over the summer of 2016, PSR responded to the LOI and provided the review team with additional data and analysis. In September 2016, the review team examined the additional materials, discussed the LOI, and began to set an agenda for the accreditation visit. In October 2016, the review team met with the president, senior administrators, faculty, staff, students, and the Board of Trustees over a two-day period. Throughout the visit, the community provided thoughtful and honest comments on their work and on the future of PSR. Several faculty members, staff members, and students also provided positive feedback using a confidential email account. After the visit, the review team met to develop a set of commendations and recommendations and to draft the final report. It should be noted that the review team is grateful for the hospitality the PSR faculty, staff, and students demonstrated during the visit.

**Institution’s Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence:** The institutional report offers a well-written narrative about PSR’s history and describes its plans for the future. It is clear that the institution has a keen sense of its heritage and mission, with a commitment to preparing its students to become leaders and change makers. The report’s articulation of goals and outcomes for students was compelling. At the same time, the report did not seem to acknowledge the full extent of the current challenges that the institution is facing or the context that contributed to decisions about program development. As an example, the report included descriptions of the Ignite Institute and the MAST program, but did not provide as much information about the forces that prompted the institution to develop these programs. There was little evidence of a market study to justify enrollment forecasts. Another example concerned the sale of a large portion of the campus, including its current residence halls and chapel, and the renovation of the remaining campus building. Considering that the proposed sale will have a transformative impact on the culture and fabric of the institution, the review team felt that it would have been beneficial if the report had discussed the sale and renovation in greater detail.
The review team also felt that the institution could have provided a more focused and comprehensive analysis of data, in terms of student enrollment and student success. Although the report included useful descriptions of the process to analyze student learning, the review team was seeking more detailed analysis of data. Finally, the report appeared to have a single point of view. While this made for a clear and coherent document, there was not clear evidence that multiple voices were engaged in shaping the report.

Although the report had some limitations, the review team understands that staffing changes with the institution curbed its ability to provide deeper context and analysis. The review team also understands that a year had passed since the report was developed and that much had changed on the campus. Those changes included the hiring of new administrators, a delay in the timetable for sale of the property, and a drop in enrollment for fall 2016. The team was able to raise many of these issues during the visit, and the leadership was very transparent in providing the relevant information and perspectives.

Response to Previous Commission Action: Through its institutional report, PSR commented on several issues that were raised in its 2009 Educational Effectiveness review as well as in subsequent interim reports. Briefly stated, previous reports focused on three key areas: concerns about the institution’s financial vulnerability, development of course outcomes in the MTS and DMin programs, and development of a program review framework. Below is a summary of the institution’s work in these areas.

Financial Vulnerability: In its 2016 institutional report, PSR described its financial position as solid, with a $42.7 million endowment and real estate holdings of $35.1 million. It also provided a plan for strengthening its finances, eliminating operating deficits, curtailing borrowing from the endowment to cover operating deficits, and repaying the endowment. As part of its strategy, PSR called for judicious use of resources, greater focus on enrollments, reduction in the tuition discount rate, more deliberate deployment of course offerings, and a review of current programs and
services, with an eye toward reduction in operating costs. While the institution has laid out a reasonable plan, demonstrated its commitment to conserve resources, and identified a strategy to generate funding through the sale of property, enrollment instability is a pressing concern. Over the past seven years, the enrollment has declined from a high of 157 FTE to a current low of 95.8 FTE. Such a low enrollment places significant pressure on the operating budget, the endowment, and PSR’s long-term fiscal health. The sale of campus property will help address some of the recent operating shortfalls; however, PSR has extended the date when it expects the potential buyer will exercise its exclusive option to purchase the campus, and the transaction will be subject to Berkeley planning authorities and is facing some local opposition. Declining enrollment and continuing uncertainties about the time of the sale have increased the institution’s current vulnerability.

**Development of Course Outcomes in the MTS and DMin:** In the 2011 and 2012 interim reports, as well as in the 2016 institutional report, the institution described its efforts to develop outcomes for the MDiv, MAST, MTS, and DMin programs and discussed its strategies to assess student learning. PSR also shared its revised curriculum map for the DMin, and it provided a detailed description of the use of the “Middler Review,” a narrative on one’s spiritual and educational journey written at the mid-point of the MDiv program. The review team was given copies of three actual reviews. It appears that PSR has made significant progress in the development of course outcome and assessment protocols to ensure that the examination of student learning takes place on an ongoing and systematic basis.

**Development of a Program Review Framework:** PSR has also taken substantial strides in establishing a program review framework. The institution has developed a five-year cycle that follows best practices established by WSCUC. In the appendices to the report, PSR provided an overview of the protocols and copies of recent MDiv and DMin program reviews. In both documents, it is clear that the institution and the faculty wrestle with complex issues surrounding enrollment, resources, and
curriculum. The documents also identified key issues facing the program and developed a timeline for addressing them.

In sum, PSR has worked diligently to address the three issues that were identified in the 2009 site visit. They have made progress in each area, but enrollment shortfalls, which affect the overall fiscal health of the institution, continue to be an urgent concern.

Component 2:
Compliance: Review Under WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives: Over the past five years, PSR has devoted considerable time and effort to define its mission, purpose, and direction. A primary fruit of those endeavors has been the development of its seven Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), which now clearly serve as a cohesive framework for both the college’s traditional programs and its innovative ones. The review team found the community to be quite unified around common goals and excited about new prospects. The ILOs appear to be closely aligned with course-level goals and outcomes, though the thoroughness of the assessment protocols across the programs is uneven (CFR 1.1 and 1.2). Recent financial challenges had created some pressures, but the resulting innovations have undoubtedly drawn from a common reservoir of values and objectives. With a strong need to enhance enrollment, PSR has placed considerable hopes on the new MAST degree and it is looking to the new Ignite Institute to cultivate greater non-tuition revenue. In both instances, the entrepreneurial efforts have been strongly rooted in PSR’s core values (CFR 1.1 and 1.2). The success of these ventures will most certainly require a close and candid rapport between the academic and business officers of the college, and the review team found the newly hired chief business officer to be transparent about the college’s finances, challenges, and
opportunities. As result of the lower-than-expected enrollments in the fall of 2016, the new CFO noted the appropriate adjustments in the operational budget (CFR 1.7).

A new website clearly and compellingly conveys the new directions of the institution, its central values, and the distinctions and requirements of its various academic programs (CFR 1.1). It also provides clear and direct access on the website to its policies, its admissions standards, and the practices of its Business Office. PSR has identified a need to update its grievance policy, and has taken steps to work with a consultant on that revision (CFR 1.7). In a desire for public transparency and operational acumen, the trustees approved the development of an Academic Dashboard that contains substantial information about enrollments, retention, graduation rates, academic probation, and the employment status of alums. Information about the results of its assessment of student learning is less extensive and accessible, and should be part of PSR’s continual improvements of the website and its efforts to make its educational outcomes more public (CFR 1.2 and 1.7).

Institutional statements—as well as ample testimony from students, faculty, and staff—reveal that PSR is genuinely committed to diversity in both policy and practice, and remains a vibrant progressive voice in promoting inclusion and individual dignity. That commitment is evident in a common language of hospitality and respect within the community, as well as in nuanced policies (such as the principled and helpfully practical statement on inclusive language). Several of PSR’s programs reach out to the multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and ideologically diverse communities in the Bay Area, and the institution’s “immersive” programs have taken students to places like Israel/Palestine and Ferguson, Missouri to explore opportunities for increasing racial and ethnic understanding. The institutional report and the discussions with administrators and faculty reveal some concern over the recent loss of diversity on the faculty, and that remains a major focal point in its current academic searches, including the search for a new chief academic officer (CFR 1.4).

The School has a faculty headcount of 13 and an FTE of 8.0. Full-time faculty at PSR can be on tenure tracks or non-tenure tracks. Regardless of faculty status, PSR appears to have promoted a culture of open inquiry and academic freedom
(CFR 1.3). There is a process of peer review for tenure and promotion candidates, though the institutional report notes that the tenure system needs further appraisal. An Academic Planning Task Force has been charged with recommendations about the size of the faculty. Their summary, included in the institutional report, does not identify recommendations for the future, but notes that the full-time faculty dropped from 17 (FTE 11.25) in 2014-2015 to 13 (FTE 8.0) in 2015-2016. An FTE of 8.0 is sufficient to cover the 57 credits that the Academic Planning Task Force deemed necessary for sustaining the institution's five degrees and three certificates, though it was unclear what additional expertise and personnel were necessary “in light of PSR’s new vision and direction.” Admirably, the institution identified in its report that it would “continue to think about faculty resources needed in areas of social and spiritual transformation.” At present, though, the faculty development program seems to be a loosely sketched plan related primarily to sabbaticals for tenured faculty. The review team encourages the evaluation and possible refinement of the tenure system and the faculty development program, especially in light of some of the shifting roles and responsibilities for faculty members during a period of program expansion (CFR 1.3 and 1.7).

**Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions:** Degree programs are appropriate in length, content, and standards, with a qualified faculty to teach in them (CFR 2.1). Requirements for admission and degree completion are clear (CFR 2.2). Over the past few academic years, as the faculty have crafted the ILOs, the outcomes for the MDiv have been the most developed and utilized (CFR 2.3; see also Component 4: Educational Quality). The faculty seems to have engaged with varying seriousness and depth in the process to develop outcomes. Those who have speak of the reward in working with students who understand what is expected of them and have language to work toward goals they hope to achieve. The syllabus review process incorporates federal requirements for credit hours as well as ILOs appropriate to the course. Syllabi that have been developed in this model are teaching documents in themselves, offering the framework and language for student achievement across a range of assignments and scholarly habits.
One challenge in PSR classrooms is that any given class may include students from three different kinds of degree programs (MDiv, other master’s degrees and doctoral degrees) and non-degree-seeking students. A few faculty spoke about their approaches to this challenge. Notable are two examples. The first is one in which the assignment is the same, but the guidelines are differentiated for different student populations. The second is one in which all students will complete all assignments, some of which are directly relevant and others that are a stretch. It is this kind of innovation for student populations—combined with continued commitment to a coherent institutional mission—that impressed the review team throughout the visit. Students feel that the mission is genuine and the coursework appropriate to the mission. The next steps will be to incorporate ILOs into the Middler Reviews and other signature assignments and to gather data from student assessments to use in program reviews (CFR 2.5 and 2.7).

Co-curricular activities sponsored by the offices of Contextual Learning and Community Life are central to the PSR experience. The institution has impressive offices in both of these areas. Their goals and projects are aligned with the institutional mission, and they work with knowledge of ILOs. Both regularly assess their work and make decisions based on what they learn from these assessments (CFR 2.11). An area for growth is within the student support services that directly relate to student achievement and timely progress toward degrees (CFR 2.10 and 2.13). To their credit, the Enrollment Division knows it needs data on the reasons for leaves of absence as well as aggregated and disaggregated data on student achievement and timely progress. Of particular concern are the growing populations of online and part-time students, whose needs are different from the on-ground and full-time students. The institution has also been challenged recently to meet the unique needs of students of color and students with disabilities; both groups have life experiences that make them less accustomed to the delivery of content at PSR.

The institution is invested in lifting up the scholarly and creative work of its community, among both students and faculty (CFR 2.8). In particular, the new MAST program uses an online portfolio to showcase students' work, offering a relevant
platform for students’ products and public access to the work produced. The review team was concerned about the role of research and scholarship for full-time faculty without tenure and not on a tenure track. Though non-tenure-track faculty expressed confidence in their ongoing employment, the demands of teaching and administrative duties often leave less time for research (CFR 2.9). The team recommends clearer guidelines for contractual faculty, and encourages a reevaluation and definition of the kinds of scholarly products that are appropriate.

**Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability:** A review of student-to-faculty ratios data (less than 10 students per faculty member) and interviews with faculty and students indicate that current faculty staffing ratios appear sufficient at PSR, although there were some concerns expressed about changes in workload that could occur related to planned curricular efforts to boost enrollment and earned (i.e., non-tuition) revenues. Reviews of faculty and staff vitae as well as faculty, staff, and student interviews also indicate that the faculty and staff are appropriately qualified. The new president and senior administrative team all bring substantial expertise and energy to their roles. The employee and student demographics indicate that the faculty and staff are less diverse than the student body; interviews with faculty and senior administrators outlined efforts underway to further diversify the faculty and staff with emphasis on the recruitment of a new tenure-track faculty member as well as a new vice president and dean (CFR 3.1).

Faculty and staff handbooks reflect policies for evaluation and support for professional development (CFR 3.2). Interviews with faculty and staff verified the availability of time and resources for professional development (CFR 3.3). As noted in Component 2 above, the interviews also highlighted a need to clarify policies around professional development for faculty, especially in light of changing faculty responsibilities related to curricular efforts to bolster enrollment and to generate additional earned income for the institution.

PSR has experienced five consecutive years of deficit operations through FY 2016 (fiscal year ended June 30, 2016). These deficits are primarily attributed to a
five-year decline in enrollment from 157.0 FTE in fall 2011 to 117.7 FTE in fall 2015. The Fall 2016 enrollment of 95.8 FTE reflects a further decline and is projected to generate an operating deficit of $748,801 during FY 2017. The five-year operating budget projections generated by PSR indicate continuing, although shrinking, operating deficits through FY 2018 (CFR 3.4).

The five consecutive years of operating deficits have been underwritten by borrowing a total of $8.2 million from PSR's endowment funds through June 30, 2016, leaving a balance of $32.6 million in the endowment. In addition, the borrowing of $8.2 million from the endowment surpassed the balance of unrestricted board designated endowment funds as of June 30, 2016, which means that approximately $2.0 million in donor restricted endowment funds has been borrowed by PR to underwrite operating deficits. Borrowing against restricted endowment funds can raise stewardship issues, as the funds borrowed are not generating income to be expended for their donor designated purposes.

PSR's five-year operating budget projections reflect multi-faceted plans to increase enrollment-related revenues, enlarge gift revenues, and discover new sources of earned revenue. They also reflect plans to repay borrowed endowment funds from a portion of the proceeds from the sale of a majority of current PSR campus properties to a third-party senior housing developer. The balance of the proceeds from the sale of property would be used to grow the endowment fund and to renovate Holbrook Hall, which will not be sold to the developer, so that all PSR operations can be consolidated in one building to enhance efficiency and community building.

It should be noted that the sale of the campus properties is based on a formal real estate option and purchase agreement. The option and purchase agreement conditions the sale of the properties on the ability of the developer to obtain the necessary entitlements to develop the properties. The appearance of organized local community opposition to the development plans adds uncertainty as to the timing and outcome of the entitlement process, although PSR staff indicates that the latest estimate for the sale to occur is near the end of the option period in the agreement in October 2019.
The combination of projected operating deficits through FY 2018, the depletion of unrestricted board designated endowment funds, and the uncertainty around the projected closing date for the sale of campus properties create formidable timing challenges for PSR. These challenges will need to be addressed quickly through the finalization and implementation of contingency plans, which are currently under discussion by PSR. The need to develop and implement plans to address the operating deficits and the repayment of endowment funds was also mentioned in communication to the Board of Trustees by PSR’s independent auditor as part of the audit process for FY 2016 (CFR 3.4).

The property and facilities on the PSR campus appear to be more than adequate for the institution’s operational needs and also seem to justify the case for the sale of excess property and the consolidation of operations into one renovated facility (Holbrook Hall) as currently planned. In addition, faculty, staff, and students indicated that technology infrastructure and support, primarily provided through the GTU consortium, is adequate for current operational needs. The president, however, reported that the institution is still planning to upgrade its infrastructure for technology and simplify its delivery by centralizing all functions in one building once PSR renovates Holbrook Hall. Further upgrades of technology are also being considered in order to meet the changing needs of PSR and other members of the GTU consortium (CFR 3.5).

As noted previously, the PSR Board of Trustees hired a new president who took office approximately two years ago. In addition, the Board of Trustees hired a full-time chief financial officer approximately three years ago. Finally, the new president has been able to hire an experienced and qualified senior administrative team within the last two years and has begun to develop clear decision-making structures and processes (CFR 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8).

Minutes from the Board of Trustees’ meetings as well as interviews with members of the Board indicate an independent, engaged, and committed group of trustees. This is evident in revised bylaws, new Board committee structures, focused agendas, and enhanced orientation of trustees. Evidence of an 18-month
review of the new president was also provided, as was a record of self-evaluation by the Board (CFR 3.9).

Interviews with faculty and a review of the faculty governance structure provided evidence of effective academic leadership by the faculty. Their willingness to collaborate on curricular innovations was evident to the review team, and it was apparent that faculty understood and accepted their responsibilities to develop course-level assessment and academic program review processes (CFR 3.10).

**Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement:** PSR has achieved mixed success in its efforts to develop “Quality Assurance Processes” and foster “Institutional Learning and Improvement.” On one level, PSR has made significant strides in developing learning outcomes, course rubrics, assessment tools, and program review processes (CFR 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4). In its 2012 interim report, the institution shared its learning outcomes and rubrics for the MTS, MDiv, and DMin programs and identified sources of indirect and direct evidence of student learning. As part of the 2016 institutional report, the institution provided its revised degree outcomes for each program, protocols for program review, assessment results from the MDiv capstone essay and DMin thesis, and program review results from the MDiv and the DMin. A review of the MDiv Capstone analysis, for example, suggests that the institution is taking the assessment of student learning seriously and using it as a tool to refine the curriculum. Through this assessment, the faculty identified the need to reinforce the concepts of practical theologies within the coursework.

PSR has also made strides in including alums, practitioners, and students in the alignment and redesign of curricular programs (CFR 4.3 and 4.5). For example, the institution recently conducted an in-depth analysis of the MDiv program in which alums who serve as ministers and practitioners were surveyed and interviewed about their experience within the program. This qualitative feedback was then used to identify areas for improvement within the MDiv program.

It is also clear that PSR has engaged its faculty, staff, and students in conversations about its strategic future and its place within the larger higher
education environment (CFR 4.6 and 4.7). Over the past several years, the institution has entered into detailed conversations about the changing nature of theological education, its role within the cultural landscape, and efforts to strengthen its position as a leader in the development of transformative change makers. Through the review team’s conversations with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students, it was clear that each group had an opportunity to provide insight and had a deep commitment to PSR’s vision.

While the institution has made advances in strategic planning and the assessment of student learning, there is work to be done in the realm of institutional research (CFR 4.2). PSR currently employs a decentralized data reporting function, which seems to contribute to confusion with regard to data definitions, data collection, and data reporting. A more detailed analysis of this issue is discussed in Component 6.

**Federal Requirements**

**Federal Requirement 1: Credit Hour and Program Length Review:** Syllabi from the institution describe the length of a credit hour and the amount of work outside class that supports each credit hour. Documentation for work in on-ground classes is less clear and extensive than documentation for online courses. The review team encourages equivalency of credit hours across delivery formats. The length of degree programs is consistent with comparison schools and requirements of accrediting bodies.

**Federal Requirement 2: Marketing and Recruitment Review:** A review of PSR publications and websites indicates that the institution is complying with federal requirements to provide information about the typical length of time to degree, the overall cost of a degree, the types of jobs graduates can expect to qualify for, and the types of employment graduates have secured.

**Federal Requirement 3: Student Complaints:** A review of PSR publications, websites, and files indicates that PSR has formal policies and procedures for student
complaints, appears to be complying with these policies and procedures, maintains records of the complaints, and periodically reviews these records.

**Federal Requirement 4: Transfer Policy Review:** There is a clear policy for application of units and quarter/semester equivalents. It is also clear which supporting documents are required in order to transfer. Less clear is the number of credits that may be transferred relative to degree requirements.

**Educational Effectiveness Indicators:** There is evidence to suggest that PSR completed the Educational Effectiveness Indicators in a meaningful and reflective way. The institution surveyed key constituencies on their understanding and perceptions of the indicators. While this was a valuable process, these constituencies identified most of the indicators as a high priority. Given limited resources, the institution will need to focus and prioritize its work on these indicators.

**Component 3: The Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees**

PSR has recently completed its five-year process to clarify its mission, purpose, and future direction, and that formal endeavor has indeed sharpened its focus. The institution has a strong sense of its heritage as a “progressive” institution, dedicated to exploring questions of faith, equity, and justice. The institutional report accents PSR’s “all-encompassing and tolerant tradition of boldness” as well as its spirit of hospitality toward people of many ethnic backgrounds and religious perspectives and identities. That spirit was clearly evident in the review team’s conversations with students, who spoke with considerable praise for the ways that the institution welcomes and honors a diverse community of learners.

The institutional report speaks eloquently of the college’s nineteenth-century origins and the values that have endured. At the same time, PSR recognizes its need
to “continually evolve” in response to the changing social and educational landscape of the twenty-first century (CFR 4.7). In this regard, the curriculum stresses “the purposeful and conscientious study of past and present,” and challenges students to read historic texts in light of new contexts (CFR 2.5). To ensure coherence and integrity in its programs, PSR has developed a lucid and compelling set of ILOs that provide common threads for all programs (CFR 2.3).

Among the changes confronting the institution has been the decline of students pursuing careers in the clergy of mainline Protestant denominations commonly served by the institution. Accordingly, PSR has expanded its offerings to serve a broader array of students and professions, most notably through the new MAST. This degree underscores a desire to build upon the institution’s reputation as an agent for progressive social change. It also seeks to draw upon its connections to social organizations in Berkeley and the larger San Francisco Bay Area region. While enrollment for the MAST programs is developing more slowly than planned, the faculty and leadership affirm how the process of developing the MAST has enriched their reflections on the future of the MDiv—and vice versa. Other areas of programmatic and entrepreneurial development—such as the Ignite Institute, the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (CLGS), and the Certificate of Sexuality and Religion (CSR)—have invigorated efforts in curricular innovation. As desired by PSR, a few of the students who have come to complete certificates have already chosen to continue their studies by enrolling in degree programs. The CLGS has already established an impressive record of securing grants, especially in its collaboration with churches, organizations, and advocacy groups beyond PSR. All told, though, the future of the MAST and these latest initiatives will depend largely on more robust partnerships with external organizations, and recruitment efforts for these programs may well require helping prospective students see the vocational opportunities and benefits of the MAST and the certificates.

In its discussions of its learning programs, PSR underscores the co-curricular activities provided by the institution. As it serves many students already working in various jobs and ministries, PSR values “applied learning and praxis,” or what they
often call “incarnational pedagogy.” The institution does emphasize the importance of “social location” in the process of learning, and several endeavors—from speakers, cross-registered classes, a “meet your neighbors” tour—show a desire to root learning in the Bay Area social context. The Office of Community Life has supported several forums and projects designed to help students engage in cross-cultural conversations, confront issues of race, diversity and inclusion, and draw upon local political and educational settings. Several “immersive” experiences have taken students outside the state and the nation to explore issues in new contexts (CFR 2.11).

The “meaning” and the “integrity” of a PSR degree have been augmented by the recent curricular revisions. In promotional materials as well as the review team’s conversations with trustees, administration, faculty and students, there was a noteworthy consistency and the expression of core values and ethos (CFR 1.1). Efforts to ensure the “quality” of the programs will hinge on the continued improvement of its relatively young assessment endeavors. Most of the language used in the discussion of quality is aspirational in tone, drawn from the recent process of reformulating the curriculum. It will need to be tested with fuller and more rigorous appraisals of student outcomes (CFR 2.5). PSR has adapted its vision quite well to address changes in its traditional consistency, social location, and the state of seminary education. As it looks to the future, its efforts to sustain quality, build financial support, and raise enrollment will require very aggressive efforts to articulate the meaning and merits of a PSR education to a wider range of community partners, employers, and supporters (CFR 3.4).

**Component 4: Educational Quality:**

**Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation**

PSR’s mission statement is lived across campus. Interviews with students produced multiple affirmations of the institution’s welcoming community as well as its integrity in living out its mission. In addition, the recently adopted Community
Covenant sets forth important values for shared academic and social life. PSR is to be commended for the coherence of its mission for spiritually rooted social transformation across all areas of its curriculum and community life. The students even gave examples of gaining a sympathetic listening ear when they invoked the mission to challenge institutional practices. The authenticity and coherence of the mission are among the core strengths of the institution (CFR 1.1).

The institution demonstrates strength in experiential and immersive learning, supported by a range of community partners who are invested in the mission and the students' learning processes. In addition, the institution shows commitment to ongoing reflection that interrogates its intentions and impact, resulting in a high degree of self-knowledge (CFR 4.3). This process has unearthed concerns about diversity and privilege, resulting in questions about some loss of diversity among faculty and commitment to increase diversity through upcoming hires. A few faculty and staff also talked about the importance of decision-making based on institutional alignment, which will require not pursuing all good ideas.

When asked about PSR’s capacity to support innovative programming, the faculty acknowledged that there was a gap in the expertise to teach organizational leadership and non-profit management. Students with a business degree or prior corporate background were grateful for that previous experience because it offered practical skills to complement their learning at PSR. In the next stage of institutional development, PSR may be able to utilize the skills and experiences of its student population as it works to grow capacity to offer instruction in organizational leadership and non-profit management (CFR 4.3). Of particular interest in this regard is PSR’s partnership with Encore Fellows, as the institution will now benefit from the professional expertise of an intern with business skills as it develops non-degree programs for working professionals through the Ignite Institute.

The variety of student experiences prior to matriculation is both a strength and a challenge for PSR. Students spoke movingly about the wide welcome for people of all backgrounds and experiences and truly feel they learn a good deal from their peers. For faculty members, the challenge is in developing program
requirements that are relevant and possible for many different types of students. The process of developing outcomes is most advanced in the MDiv. Some outcomes are more apparent across the curriculum than others, and the criteria for evaluation are more clearly developed in some areas. Though faculty spoke about the tremendous work involved in crafting ILOs and integrating them into their classes, they also said that using the ILOs offered rich rewards in communicating with students about expectations and achievements (CFR 2.3). In addition, faculty members are developing rubrics to guide student learning and map student achievement. Interviews with faculty gave insight into the process of developing and using rubrics. The faculty finds the development of rubrics to be labor-intensive, and yet spoke about the positive results of using them with students (CFR 2.4). Rubrics seemed particularly helpful in the foundational course on Spiritual Formation.

Students in the MDiv program still comprise more than half of the student population, so it stands to reason that that particular program is the most developed. Clear communication about the MDiv was also a pressing need in the wake of the work of the Committee on Strategic Direction, whose work inadvertently caused concern on the part of denominational partners that PSR was abandoning its commitment to the MDiv. A good number of matriculated students for Fall 2016 seem to show that PSR has reversed the downward trend in numbers and confidence. Sustained commitment to ILOs along with use of student work in the next program review is likely to increase confidence in the central importance of the MDiv. The next steps will be development of fully articulated ILOs across all PSR’s degree programs (CFR 2.3).

PSR has committed to a regular cycle of program review. With the support of a grant from the Wabash Center, PSR evaluated the MDiv program through interviews with 36 recent graduates. Insights from those interviews are still being processed and evaluated, but an immediate need to provide tools for reflection on privilege has already been introduced into the curriculum. Examples of student work in the Middler Review showed excellent personal reflection in dialogue with course material (CFR 2.7). Though it was clear students were in dialogue with advisers during this process, it is not clear they knew what to produce or in what
format. Faculty feedback was also not readily accessible. For such a significant milestone in the degree it seems reasonable to expect something akin to the rubrics on syllabi to indicate expectations for achievement (CFR 2.4). Faculty feedback will also be most useful if it follows the same categories asked of students. As PSR develops similar milestones or capstones in other programs (e.g., digital portfolios in the MAST), clear guidance and corresponding feedback will contribute to the development and demonstration of core competencies. As a practical matter, such digital portfolios could be more explicitly linked to PSR so that student work itself manifests the quality of the degree.

PSR holds out hope that the MAST will meet the needs of a student population trying to effect organizational change outside of traditional congregational settings. Classes have begun on the ground and online, two different formats with unique needs. Coursework is complemented with “learning journeys” to organizations in the community that offer opportunities to see social change at work. Online learners design solo learning journeys that make sense in their settings. Future plans include consultation with experts on contextual learning to develop guidelines and rubrics for site-specific immersive learning. Future plans also include reaching out for partnerships with organizations. Possible partners include departments at UC Berkeley (business, education, social sciences) as well as organizations in the community. The MAST is led by a talented scholar-teacher employed on a renewable contract (CFR 3.10).

The DMin program has been expanded to include online components and a Hawaii cohort. The review team initially worried about the intense focus on this degree and the allocation of resources toward a small number of students. Interviews showed that this expansion of the program bears out PSR’s commitment to have a student population that better resembles the ethnic diversity of California. Hawaii was chosen because a PSR faculty member doing research there had multiple contacts, and those contacts made it possible to facilitate the offering of the degree. Several of those contacts are themselves part of a network of Samoan pastors, many of whom hope to elevate the legitimacy of local Samoan theological education through obtaining advanced degrees from institutions like PSR. Currently
the model is a combination of a professor traveling to Hawaii and online coursework. The next program review of the DMin should include an analysis of the financial viability of the program vis-à-vis cost to the institution and number of students (CFR 3.1).

PSR houses three distinctive centers on its campus: the Badé Museum of Biblical Archaeology, the CLGS, and the Ignite Institute. The Badé Museum is an inheritance from a former faculty member and is continually maintained by a current faculty member who has course releases to do so. The review team toured the current space for the museum, noting that its large footprint and infrequent use made it different from the other centers discussed in this report. In the proposed renovation, the Museum will be relocated into a smaller yet appropriate space. The review team did not interview the director of the museum, though other staff reported that its holdings are available for research. The museum did not impress external reviewers as a vibrant contributor to campus community. The review team therefore recommends a full program review of the museum, including use of its holdings, its draw on resources of faculty and operating funds, and its contribution to academic and community life.

The CLGS is funded through grants, and supports a wide range of work across the country to highlight issues related to LGBTQ populations. It supports in-person roundtables and conferences, and preserves and makes available archival material. The Center’s core functions are outside the purview of the institution, and yet the institution benefits greatly from its presence. Students have opportunities to partner for research and grant-writing, may be employed as program support staff, and enthusiastically attend on-campus programs. CLGS is a credit to PSR, which accepted its initial funding and gave it institutional space when other institutions for graduate theological studies were wary of association with lesbian and gay issues. PSR’s partnership with CLGS has offered a physical footprint and institutional stability to CLGS and has resulted in enriched programming and financial support for PSR (CFR 2.11).

By contrast, the Ignite Institute is an entrepreneurial arm of PSR, through which PSR aims to deliver resources of graduate theological education to
populations other than degree-seeking students (CFR 4.7). Though Ignite has had some success with ReIgnite—its program for late-career professionals or early retirees—as well as with its workshops in empathy and compassion, it has not yet produced the earned income for which the institution hopes. A part-time Encore Fellow is working with Ignite on a growth strategy, which includes focus on core programs, monetization of services, and impact in the Berkeley area. Ignite has a bold and exciting vision, yet it bears enormous pressure from the institution to deliver earned income—and to deliver it quickly.

The Offices of Community Life and Contextual Learning contribute greatly to the quality of education at PSR, and they demonstrate the most consistent use of assessment loops to gather feedback on objectives (CFR 2.11 and 4.3). Contextual learning has long been a signature piece of the MDiv program. More recently the director of that office has been consulting with faculty members to offer immersive and contextual learning as part of regularly offered classes. The director enjoys the challenges that faculty members present, and faculty members report the enrichment of the learning environment through these experiences.

Component 5: Student Success:
Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation
Over the past fifteen years PSR has achieved respectable graduation and retention rates, though just over half of the students complete their degrees in the advertised time. Among the cohorts that entered PSR between 2003 and 2008, 81% did eventually finish their MDiv degrees, yet only 58% completed that objective in three years. Similarly, 77% of the MTS students earned their diplomas, but only 53% arrived at that goal in the standard two years. Such results place PSR in the middle of the pack in comparison with peer institutions. For instance, the graduation rate for MDiv students in the San Francisco School of Theology has averaged about 90% in recent years, with over 80% completing the degree in the conventional timeframe; at Eden Theological Seminary, about 68% of MDiv students graduate in 3-4 years. Graduation rates for the DMin program have fluctuated notably from year to year, due in large part to the small cohort. Over the six years from the entering
cohort of 2003 to the entering cohort of 2008, 46 of 60 DMin students (77%) completed their degrees; 34 of the 60 (57%) finished in the expected three-year period (CFR 2.7 and 2.10).

In PSR’s institutional report, one of the notable trends in enrollment was the shift to part-time students. In the fall of 2010, 29% of the 191 students were listed as full-time; in the fall of 2015, only 14% of the 161 students were full-time. The report notes that this part-time status is often appealing to students who must be bi-vocational, preparing for congregational ministry as they pursue their degrees. At the time of the visit, though, PSR staff noted that this reported increase was overstated, since there was some inconsistency in the interpretation of FTE status over the last several years. Nevertheless, there does appear to be an increase in the number of students on academic probation (one student in the fall of 2013 to 18 in the fall of 2015) or leaves of absence. This should be a matter of concern. About half of the students on leave (19 out of 39) have cited financial concerns as the primary reasons for taking time away from the pursuit of their degrees (CFR 2.10). Additionally, PSR speculates that enlarging their programming to serve new populations may have led to an increase of students on probation. The institution is clearly conscious of its need to support diverse students (13 of 18 students on probation in the fall of 2015 were students of color), and they have entered into several new initiatives to improve retention and persistence rates (CFR 2.10 and 2.13). Those efforts include expanded student access to the Writing Center and collaboration with other institutions on Project Access—an initiative that provides training in research, critical thinking skills and communication to those students from “diverse and non-traditional communities.” An administrative team—dean, registrar, and director of community life—meets weekly to discuss strategies for interfacing with those students who are at-risk of not flourishing.

The review team found the faculty and leadership to be deeply committed to students’ success, and eager to find new ways of supporting them in their educational pursuits. Some of those efforts have been hampered by the decentralized system of gathering data. Fundraising to provide greater aid to the
students may be necessary to reduce the percentage of students who choose to take a leave. With declining enrollments, efforts to support students on probation and efforts to increase the number of full-time students will be critical to PSR’s efforts to achieve greater sustainability.

PSR has endeavored to develop or enhance features of its curriculum to promote student success. The faculty’s efforts to build assessment protocols often started at the course level with the crafting of course rubrics; faculty have found that such rubrics have been helpful in enabling students to mark their progress and focus on skills and outcomes. The Middler Review is a significant milestone and checkpoint in the students’ progress toward the degree, and the review team was impressed by the creativity, passion, and reflectiveness in the Middler Reviews that it read. The Reviews appeared to be effective in prompting students to think about their theological perspectives (CFR 2.5). Adapting the rubrics of the Middler Reviews to accent program goals and career trajectories could strengthen the ways that the Reviews encourage persistence toward the degrees.

Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement:
Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence

As noted above, the issue of developing sound quality assurance measures was raised in PSR’s 2009 accreditation visit. Since that time, PSR has made significant strides in developing a coherent process of program review, revising learning outcomes for each program, developing and conducting assessments of key courses, and using data to improve the delivery of instruction (CFR 4.1).

In its 2012 interim report, PSR shared its learning outcomes and rubrics for the MTS, MDiv, and DMin programs and identified sources of indirect and direct evidence of student learning. As part of the 2016 institutional report, the institution provided its revised degree outcomes for each program, protocols for program
review, assessment results from the MDiv capstone essay and DMin thesis, and program review results from the MDiv and the DMin.

A review of the MDiv Capstone analysis and the DMin thesis assessment suggests that PSR is taking the assessment of student learning seriously and is using it as a tool to rethink the curriculum, assignments, and student learning. In the MDiv capstone, for example, the faculty identified the need to reinforce the concepts of practical theologies within the coursework, whereas the faculty was satisfied with the student learning in DMin analysis (CFR 2.4 and 4.3).

PSR also provided the review team with recent examples of program review for the DMin and the MDiv. Both reports provide an in-depth examination of each program, describe the curriculum, discuss student success, review the assessment of student learning, and identify areas for improvement (CFR 4.3). Both reports were solid in that they provide clear roadmaps for the future; however, the DMin report offered a richer discussion of the assessment of student learning. For the future, all program reviews should make assessment of student learning their central focus.

Broadly speaking, the institution appears to have made significant strides in using assessment and program review to inform decision-making and to improve student learning. As previously noted, the assessment documents that were provided indicate that the faculty used data gleaned from assessment to improve teaching and learning functions. In terms of next steps, the institution will want to ensure that the same assessment approaches are applied to the MTS program and the online DMin. It will be critical to ensure that students who are in different program tracks (MDiv, MAST, certificates) but are taking the same course have assessment strategies that are tailored to their specific program outcomes (CFR 2.2 and 2.3). PSR may also want to reconsider or reframe the use of the Middler Review as an assessment tool. While the external review team enjoyed reading the Middler Reviews and found them to be deeply moving documents, they did not appear to be useful as tools to demonstrate student learning.

In terms of the use of data to inform decision-making and the capacity for institutional research, there is significant room for improvement (CFR 4.2). Based on conversations with key faculty and staff, it appears that data collection occurs in
several different units, including the Office of the Dean, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of the CFO. The decentralized structure, coupled with unclear definitions about data, suggests that there is room for improvement in collecting and reporting data. As an example, a section of the institutional report suggests that the number of part-time students is increasing. However, during the review team’s visit, there were comments that the institutional report may have overstated the number of part-time students and that the issue may be tied to how full-time and part-time status are defined. Another example of issues with data quality was evident in the reports of the Fall 2016 enrollment. There were approximately two hundred students listed in the student enterprise system, but only 120 students were registered for courses. Recognizing this issue, the newly hired registrar took immediate action to remove non-registered students from the system (CFR 4.2). The problem was rectified, but the fact that it emerged in the first place speaks to a larger issue about the structure needed to ensure accurate and timely data. Those offices that manage data must work together to strengthen the collection, storage, and reporting of key data to ensure that there is accurate information to inform planning and decision-making (CFR 4.1, 4.2, and 4.7).

Component 7: Sustainability:
Financial Viability and Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

Financial Sustainability: PSR has experienced five consecutive years of operating deficits and has borrowed $8.2 million from its endowment funds, including $2.0 million in restricted endowment funds. In addition, PSR’s five-year budget projections indicate two more years of operating deficits and related increases in endowment borrowing.

A new president and senior leadership team, working with the Board of Trustees, has developed a series of multi-faceted plans to boost enrollment-related revenues, secure more gift revenues, and identify new sources of earned revenues
to eliminate operating deficits by FY 2019. They have also developed plans to repay borrowed endowment funds from a portion of the proceeds from the pending sale of a majority of current PSR campus properties to a third-party senior housing developer. Finally, they are beginning to review and discuss contingency plans to address the real estate sale timing challenges and operating uncertainties faced by PSR while new operational plans are implemented and before the operational plans are able to generate their projected results. The ability to develop and implement these contingency plans will therefore be critical to the short and long-term financial sustainability of PSR (CFR 3.4)

**Alignment with Institutional Priorities:** Following an intensive and collaborative process, a seminal document, *PSR: A Future Envisioned*, was published in October 2012. Its publication resulted in a new statement of institutional direction being adopted by the Board of Trustees along with seven major goals to guide the institution into the future (CFR 1.1).

Interviews with various members of the PSR campus community and a review of current academic program, financial, and facility plans indicate alignment with the stated institutional direction and goals adopted by the Board of Trustees. It is expected that the direction and goals will continue to act as guideposts for PSR as it further refines and prioritizes its strategic plans within the bounds of its staffing and resource limitations (CFR 3.4 and 3.7).

**Infrastructure and Continuous Planning:** The Board of Trustees has reorganized itself, a new leadership team is in place, and the institution is more focused on planning and assessment. Interviews with trustees and administrators indicate that progress is being made in building an infrastructure for continuous planning. An Academic Dashboard is tracking key components of institutional performance, which are shared regularly with the Board of Trustees. Interviews also indicate, however, that some members of the senior leadership team are still in the early phases of developing and refining institutional research capacities with an initial focus on data discovery and data integrity. After conversations with staff and
consultation of PSR’s organizational charts, the review team was concerned that there is no one individual or office responsible for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of institutional data at PSR.

Reliable institutional data should prove to be a key factor in the successful development, implementation, and assessment of continuous planning efforts at PSR. The timely availability of accurate institutional research data and its analysis should also help assure the success of quality assurance processes as well as facilitate institutional learning and improvement efforts so that PSR can stay true to its institutional direction and realize its goals (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4).

Component 8: Institution-Specific Themes

Not used by PSR.

Component 9: Conclusion

By all reports, the Pacific School of Religion is in the midst of significant transition. While invoking a rich heritage as a place of courage and tolerance, the leadership and faculty are certainly conscious that the institution’s recent history has been one of declining enrollments and financial stress. The fluctuating landscape of higher education—and, specifically, seminary education—presents further challenges, uncertainties, and opportunities. After developing a very strong sense of community and belonging on its campus, PSR is preparing to sell a large portion of its land and residential facilities, which will no doubt require great communication and creativity in reconstructing much of its community ethos in a single hall.

With all of these challenges, though, enthusiasm for PSR and its mission does not appear to have abated, and in a relatively short span of time the institution has recruited an experienced, articulate, and forward-looking group of leaders. The review team was impressed by the energy and discernment of the trustees and
senior administration, all of whom seem ready to face the challenges with great
vigor.

That sense of vitality and aspiration was evident in the concluding sections of
the institutional report. The report offers some compelling words about addressing
injustice and division in a world that is “not as it should be,” and this vision for
making change invokes the “progressive Christian tradition” and the “boldness
inherent in our DNA.” The conclusion to the report outlines how the Board of
Trustees has articulated four major outcomes for the next half decade that draw
upon the DNA of the institution. The PSR heritage is certainly apparent in the
Board’s call for “embracing and supporting diversity,” as well as in the desire to
promote leaders who are “respectful of difference,” culturally competent, and
committed to “critical thinking and theological and spiritual inquiry.” One of the
major goals—to “seek excellence in our academic programming”—acknowledges
the importance of strengthening assessment, program review, and faculty
development to fulfill the institution’s purposes. PSR has made some commendable
steps in developing a program of assessment, though that effort still remains in
relatively early stages and has not stretched fully across all of its degree programs.

During the visit of the review team, administrators gave wide-ranging and
extremely ambitious plans for the recruitment of students, the securing of funds,
and the development of community relations. While such plans were impressive in
scope, the review team offers a couple cautions. First, given the relatively modest
size of the staff, it will be vital for PSR to focus its enrollment and advancement
strategies on the most relevant and promising objectives, avoiding the prospect of
stumbling from trying to reach too many ends all at once. Plans need to be carefully
honed and prioritized in order to ensure the wisest use of time and resources in
these critical next few years. Second, it is apparent that faculty may well find
themselves wearing multiple hats as entrepreneurial ventures increase. Demands
for quality teaching and research will continue. Additionally, the compulsion to
design and refine programs, reach non-traditional learners and new constituencies,
and work with new centers, co-curricular projects, and community partners will
inevitably fill faculty members’ time. It will be important for the academic program to shape its policies on faculty rewards (including promotion and tenure), responsibilities (including teaching loads and administrative duties), and professional development to enable faculty to thrive in the midst of such institutional change.

Despite some wistfulness about the sale of land, the faculty and staff have embraced the vision of reshaping its primary building—Holbrook Hall—into a hub of student life and academic community. Plans for the renovation call for a blend of contemporary and historic elements in the décor and design of the building. PSR has quite thoughtfully anticipated how the sale of land presents risks for the sense of unity and belonging, and they have wisely considered how to communicate and underscore the vision for a new unity and community life centered in Holbrook.

While PSR recognizes that the sale of current residential facilities will “get them out of the housing business,” the institution does recognize that many students will now be worrying about housing options and grieving the loss of community created by campus housing. PSR understands its acute need to explore MOUs or other arrangements in Berkeley to simplify the search for housing and to keep alive some sense of community that is currently part of the residential students’ experience.

Both the institutional report and site visit gave ample testimony to the ways that recent conversations—including the efforts of the Commission on Strategic Direction—have unified the campus around a common set of objectives. That unity has been enhanced by confidence in the new leadership team. Such unity will be vital as the institution endeavors to adapt to shifts in theological education, nurture new programs, and reverse several years of declining enrollment. Even with the weight of these challenges before them, all sectors of the PSR community had a great sense of anticipation. Conversations with faculty, staff, and students revealed a spirit of joy—and hopefulness—about the shared mission and project at PSR. That spirit will be needed to provide strength as PSR proceeds through this time of rapid change and renewal and faces urgent and significant fiscal and enrollment challenges.
Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. An independent, engaged, and committed Board of Trustees (CFR 3.9).
2. The hiring of a new president and the assembly of a senior administrative team of qualified and experienced professionals (CFR 3.6 and 3.9).
3. A collaborative, dedicated, and qualified faculty and staff (CFR 3.1), who have fostered the coherence of mission across all constituencies and functions (CFR 1.1), and have fully engaged in conversations about strategic position and direction in light of current challenges in graduate theological education (CFR 4.6 and 4.7).
4. The development of learning outcomes and rubrics (CFR 2.3 and 4.1) and robust co-curricular programming that is integrated into student experience and regularly assessed for its effectiveness (CFR 2.11).
5. The development and preliminary implementation of strategic plans, strategies, programs, and related financial projections to boost all operating revenue sources and to begin to prioritize the allocation of existing and new resources (CFR 4.3 and 4.7).
6. The development and implementation of a strategy to sell large portions of the PSR campus, and the related consolidation of institutional operations into Holbrook Hall (CFR 4.7).
7. The collaborative and thoughtful process used to develop plans for the renovation of Holbrook Hall so that it will meet the future operational needs of PSR and foster a sense of place and community for all of the institution’s constituencies (CFR 3.5 and 4.6).

Recommendations

1. Strengthen the fiscal health of the institution by advancing the timeline for the repayment of funds borrowed from the institution’s endowment, especially restricted endowment (CFR 3.4); by advancing the timeline for breakeven
operating budget results (CFR 3.4); and by developing an operational contingency plan in the event of further operating budget deficits and/or delays in the sale of campus properties (CFR 3.4 and 4.7).

2. Further develop and coordinate the institutional research capabilities at PSR to help assure data-informed planning and decision-making (CFR 4.1, 4.2, and 4.7).

3. Focus and prioritize the institution’s enrollment, advancement, and curricular plans to ensure that they continue to be aligned with the institution’s mission, vision, and strategic plans and are attainable given the realities of current staffing and resources (CFR 2.3, 3.1 and 3.7).

4. Continue to develop the institution’s assessment and program review processes with a focus on the assessment of online and hybrid learning, as well as learning of different tracks of students within the same course (CFR 2.1, 2.6, and 2.10).

5. Develop clearer policies for faculty loads, tenure, promotion, and professional development (CFR 3.2 and 3.3) in light of changing faculty responsibilities as the institution takes on more entrepreneurial ventures.
1. CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Under the federal requirements referenced below,WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy on credit hour</td>
<td>Is this policy accessible? If so, where is the policy located? Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour</td>
<td>Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? YES NO</td>
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<td>Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet</td>
<td>Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? YES NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? AA/AS [ ] BA/BS [ ] MA [ ] DOCTORAL [ ]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are students doing the amount of work to warrant the credit awarded? YES NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)</td>
<td>How many syllabi were reviewed? Two</td>
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<td>Program information (catalog, website or other, no ram materials)</td>
<td>How many programs were reviewed?</td>
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<td>What kinds of programs were reviewed?</td>
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<td>What degree level(s)? AA/AS [ ] BA/BS [ ] MA [ ] DOCTORAL [ ]</td>
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<td>Are students doing the amount of work to warrant the credit awarded? YES NO</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
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Signatures:

[Signature] 10/20/16
Under federal regulation §602.16(a)(1)(vii), WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

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<th>Material Reviewed</th>
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<td>Degree completion and cost</td>
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<td>Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? Yes</td>
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<td>Careers and employment</td>
<td>Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Does the institution provides information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Section 487(a)(2) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible Institutions from providing Incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These requirements do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.**

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**Patra Mitchell 10.20.2016**
J - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation §602-16(1)(ix) WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the Institution’s student complaints policies, procedures, and records. (See also WSCUC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.)
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections of this table as appropriate.)</th>
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<td>Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? YES</td>
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<td>If so, where? HD</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process(es)/procedure</td>
<td>Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? YES</td>
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<td>If so, please describe briefly</td>
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<td>If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? YES</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Records</td>
<td>Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, when?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 - TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW FORM
Under federal requirements*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting, transfer, and admissions practices accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections of this table as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Credit Policy(s)</td>
<td>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for reviewing and receiving transfer credit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, is the policy publicly available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, where?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>comments:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that:

1. Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(1); and
2. Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WSCUC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

[Signature]
10/20/16