

February 27, 2025

Dr. Donna Woo
President
Pacific College
3160 Red Hill Avenue
Costa Mesa, CA

Dear President Woo:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Pacific College (PacificC) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting on February 14, 2025. At that meeting the Commission acted to place Pacific College on Notice of Concern. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to Pacific College on October 9-11, 2024, using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Pacific College prior to the Special Visit and the institution's response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague George Harbison, Chief Financial Officer. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report
2. Issue a Notice of Concern
3. Continue with the scheduled Offsite Review in spring 2027 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2027 and address the requirements in this letter as part of the institutional report submitted for this reaffirmation review
4. Schedule an Interim Report on November 1, 2025 to (1) provide 2023 and 2024 audited financial statements and (2) to respond to issues 14 and 15 identified in this letter

Commendations

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. Progress that has been made in developing and implementing program review criteria, particularly in the context of a significantly disruptive externality (i.e., the failed sale transaction).

2. At the initiation of the institution and in keeping with the institution's mission, commencing efforts to effectively increase diversity of the student population to better reflect the local population.
3. Implementing the student-centric approach to ensure student engagement and wellness.
4. Supporting academic progress and providing student services in support of student learning and achievement within a challenging external environment.

Notice of Concern

A Notice of Concern provides notice to the institution that, while it currently meets WSCUC Standards, it is in danger of being found in noncompliance with one or more Standards if current trends or findings continue. If the issues are not addressed, a sanction could be imposed as described in the 2023 Handbook of Accreditation. A Notice of Concern is public information and will be posted on the WSCUC website.

Standards at Risk of Non-Compliance and Requiring a Response

1. Standard 3; CFR 3.5: A financial audit for calendar year 2023 has not been provided.

Areas for Development

The Commission also requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Simplify the annual program review process. (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 2.4)
2. Revise the 2012 Program Review Policy to reflect existing practice and differentiate between the annual versus five-year comprehensive program review. (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 4.1)
3. Advance use of program review to guide academic policy and planning. (CFRs 2.4, 3.4)
4. Prepare program learning outcome data assessment plans that define, for each program learning outcome, the assessment tool or measure, benchmark, timing, and party responsible for analysis. (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 2.7, 2.9)
5. Measure how effective the actions taken in response to program learning outcome data analysis have been (e.g., closing the loop). (CFRs 2.4, 2.7, 2.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6)
6. Collect information on student satisfaction with student services and use the results to make improvements. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.6)
7. Centrally distribute aggregate data that measure program effectiveness, such as retention rates, graduation rates, employment rates, and licensure exam pass rates. (CFRs 3.10, 4.2)
8. Establish realistic institutional benchmarks for program effectiveness data (for example, graduation rates, employment rates, and licensure pass rates) and analyze institutional data to compare quality among programs. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.6)
9. Establish a centrally curated repository for aggregate institutional data, including historical data. (CFRs 3.10, 4.2, 4.4)
10. Invest in professional development to enhance institutional research expertise. (CFRs 3.10, 4.2, 4.4)

11. Define criteria and metrics of faculty career success by formalizing expected standards of scholarship and setting up formal institutional support and faculty career development capabilities. (CFRs 2.8, 3.2, 3.3)
12. Periodically review, assess, and update board bylaws. (CFRs 3.7, 4.7)
13. Engage in board development. (CFR 4.7)
14. Clearly define and document current procedure for classification of employees and independent contractors. (CFRs 1.4, 3.5)
15. Document process for disbursement of funds to ensure appropriate controls and industry standard practices (such as segregation of duties) are in place. (CFRs 1.4, 3.5)

Next Steps

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Pacific College's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on Pacific College's website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that Pacific College 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,



Christopher N. Oberg, PhD
Interim President

CNO/lp

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Paul Bott, ALO
John Wagner, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Linda Petersen, Vice President