

July 12, 2021

Dr. David Fike
President
Golden Gate University
536 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear President Fike:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Golden Gate University (GGU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 25, 2021. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to GGU April 6 - 9, 2021. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by GGU prior to the Special Visit and the institution's June 11 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues Joshua Burgher, COO and CFO, Barbara Mendelson, Chair of the Board, and Barbara Karlin, VP Academic Affairs Emerita and ALO. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) finances; (2) enrollment; and (3) retention and completion
2. Issue a Formal Notice of Concern
3. Schedule a Special Visit in fall 2022 to address compliance with Standard 3, particularly CFRs 3.1, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.10, and all the requirements listed in this letter.

The Commission commends GGU in particular for the following:

1. A strong and deeply held commitment to GGU's historic mission and the success of a diverse student body that is widely shared by the board, administration, faculty, and staff.
2. The dedication of staff and faculty who have stepped up during the pandemic and worked long hours to focus on students' educational needs, often by taking on additional responsibilities due to the remote environment and budget cuts.
3. Recognition of the precarious situation of GGU's long-term viability, and making difficult decisions on expenditures, while developing new programs and beginning a branding exercise as foundational to student recruitment.

4. Successful fundraising efforts and the establishment of the Helen Diller Center for Veterans of US Military Service, which aligns with GGU's mission and strategy.

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following issues:

1. Continue to focus on long-term viability, ensuring that the expenditure reductions are appropriate and sustainable, while also emphasizing revenue generation and creating a strategic enrollment plan. (CFR 3.4)
2. Place greater priority on retention by developing a plan with goals and milestones, assessing the effectiveness of recent student support initiatives, and putting in place an infrastructure for continuous data analysis and student feedback. (CFRs 2.10, 4.3)
3. Review staffing levels to ensure they are adequate and sustainable for operational effectiveness and meeting student needs, and solidify a senior leadership team with fewer interim appointments and clearly defined responsibilities. (CFRs 3.1, 3.6, 3.7)
4. Develop protocols to assess the effectiveness of communication between the faculty and the administration, and make improvements as needed to provide meaningful opportunities for faculty input. (CFR 3.7)
5. Develop and codify a definition of shared governance that clarifies roles and responsibilities of the board, administration, and faculty, as well as processes and timelines for faculty input into decisions affecting GGU's educational purposes, quality, and character. (CFRs 3.7, 3.10)

A Formal 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. Institutions issued a Formal Notice of Concern are scheduled for a Special Visit within four years. If the issues are not addressed within four years, a sanction could be imposed as described in the 2013 *Handbook of Accreditation*. A Formal Notice of Concern is public information and will be posted on the WSCUC website.

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



Jamienne S. Studley
President

JSS/bgd

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Barbara Karlin, ALO
Barbara Mendelson, Board Chair
Members of the Special Visit team
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President