

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
SPECIAL VISIT

To Golden Gate University

November 7-November 10, 2022

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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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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution, its Accreditation History, as Relevant, and the Visit

Background

Golden Gate University (GGU) is a private, nonprofit university that started in 1881 as a “night school” located in the San Francisco YMCA. In 1901, GGU offered the first evening law school program in California, followed by the first four-year accounting program on the west coast. In 1910, GGU moved to a location on Golden Gate Avenue and became the “YMCA Law School.” In 1923, GGU incorporated as Golden Gate College and received initial WASC accreditation in 1959 as a specialized institution in business, law, and related curricula.

GGU’s focus has always been providing working adults access to transformative education, and its mission seeks “to prepare individuals to lead and serve by providing high quality, practice-based educational programs in law, taxation, business, and related professions as a nonprofit institution in an innovative and challenging learning environment that embraces professional ethics and diversity.” The university offers undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees year-round through onsite, hybrid, and asynchronous and synchronous online learning modalities. (CFR 1.5)

As of fall 2021, GGU enrolled 690 undergraduate students, 1,246 graduate business students, and 488 law students, for a total of 2,424 students, marking a decrease from an enrollment of 2,512 in fall 2020, and up from 2,285 in spring 2021. In the 2021-2022 academic year, 5% of students attended courses solely in-person, 23% attended courses completely online, and 72% attended a combination of in-person, hybrid, and online courses.

GGU is governed by a board of trustees. Since the last Special Visit in spring 2021, the president appointed a provost, and aspects of the leadership of the organization have been restructured. Today, the president’s leadership team consists of the vice president of academic affairs and provost, the vice president for finance and administration and chief financial officer, and the vice president for university

advancement. The provost's executive leadership team includes the academic deans of the colleges, dean of undergraduate studies, director of enrollment marketing and strategic initiatives, chief of marketing and vice provost of marketing and enrollment management, dean of students, university librarian, associate vice provost for academic affairs, and vice provost of global affairs.

Accreditation History

Golden Gate University's last reaffirmation of accreditation review was in March 2019, followed by the WSCUC Commission Action Letter issued in July 2019 reaffirming accreditation for six years with a Special Visit in spring 2021. The Commission asked GGU to specifically address three areas in the 2021 Special Visit: 1. Finances, 2. Enrollment, and 3. Retention and Completion. As a result of the 2021 Special Visit, the WSCUC Commission issued a Notice of Concern in the July 12, 2021 Commission Action Letter (CAL) and scheduled 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, along with a few other issues. This team report is based on the Special Visit to GGU that was held from November 7-10, 2022, with the issues identified in the CAL:

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)

Substantive Changes Since Last WSCUC Special Visit in Spring 2021

Since GGU's Special Visit in spring 2021, new academic programs have been approved through the WSCUC Substantive Change process (based on the WSCUC Accreditation History Report dated June 3, 2022):

- Doctor of Business Administration (January 2022)
- Bachelor of Arts in Law (March 2022)
- LLM in Environmental Law (March 2022)
- LLM in Intellectual Property Law (March 2022)
- LLM in International Legal Studies (March 2022)
- LLM in US Legal Studies (March 2022)
- Master of Legal Studies (March 2022)

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The Special Visit (SV) team received GGU's institutional report and supporting materials in early September 2022. After reviewing the report materials, along with the 2021 Special Visit team's report and CAL, each team member submitted their independent assessment of each section of the institution's report, focusing on the key areas identified in the CAL. The assistant chair compiled each member's initial responses on the team worksheet in preparation for the team's two-hour conference call on October 18, 2022. Prior to the team call, the team chair held a call with GGU's president and shared a summary of the call with the team. During the conference call, the team discussed areas of focus for the Special Visit based on the team worksheet, compiled a list of additional requested documents from the institution, discussed the proposed visit schedule, and confirmed writing assignments for the SV team report.

Each team member served as the first author for various sections of the report and second author for other sections, and compiled a preliminary draft of the report based on written materials without forming judgments or conclusions before the visit. The team continued to refine the report throughout the visit based on interviews, additional materials, and findings. The full report draft was reviewed by the entire team and underwent multiple edits before the final report.

The SV was held in-person from November 7 - November 10, 2022. Throughout the visit, the team took an inquiry approach to each meeting with the goal of gathering evidence and support for the institution's responsiveness to the areas outlined in the CAL. While the team requested and reviewed additional documents during the visit, new information impacting institutional finances continued to be shared with the team throughout the visit. The team regularly monitored the confidential email account to ensure that all institutional representatives had an opportunity to participate fully in the visit.

C. Institution's Special Visit Report: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The team concluded that GGU's report was focused on the main issues outlined in the 2021 CAL. The report addressed each of the issues and discussed the progress made since the last SV, and provided evidence of consequential actions that have been taken as a response to the Commission's findings. The team found the report demonstrated the institution's focused efforts to respond to the issues with seriousness, with GGU making greater progress in some areas than others.

According to GGU's institutional report, the university created a Special Visit Steering Committee consisting of faculty, staff, and administrators who were responsible for collecting and sharing information and implementing improvements to the Commission's recommendations. The board of trustees also created an Accreditation Oversight Task Force that collaborated with the Steering Committee in ensuring progress on the recommendations.

While the team found GGU to satisfactorily report on how the institution has been addressing each issue specified in the CAL, it was evident that some issues need further attention and development, as desired progress was not uniform. In particular, the team found that the university has made significant reinvestments in staffing and is pursuing new alignments with third party partners that will provide significant financial infusions that support some of this restaffing. Nonetheless, the overall financial success of the university is dependent on additional cash infusions, most notably from leveraging the value of its real estate, that have yet to be realized. While GGU has made clear strides in

establishing new leadership and guidelines for shared governance, some of the institution's conclusions as written in its institutional report appeared broad and lacked a clear and detailed plan of the institution's roadmap ahead with metrics to assess the effectiveness of action plans.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. Finances and Enrollment (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)

The last Special Visit team report noted multiple years of reductions in net assets. Total increases in operating net assets in FY 2021 and FY 2022 were the result of GGU undertaking significant cost reduction measures, strong investment earnings in FY 2021, and one-time PPP loan forgiveness. In the CAL, the Commission called on the institution to “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)

Subsequent to the Commission's most recent CAL, the university developed a comprehensive, five-year financial plan that includes a “bridge” to what Golden Gate University sees as a sustainable and prosperous future. The plan includes strategic enrollment planning, the addition of new academic programs, global and online expansion, further revenue diversification through increased philanthropy, and a significant capital infusion through the sale of GGU's real estate holdings.

The plan includes new programs which have recently been approved by WSCUC, including a BA in Law and a Master's in Legal Studies, and a recasting of existing online programs to a global audience. The university is also planning to introduce additional tech-focused classes. Recent initiatives are showing signs of early success, with the university reporting more than 200 new students in the summer of 2022, and 250 new students in the fall of 2022. GGU also hired a new vice provost of global affairs to further its international focus. In all, GGU expects year-over-year enrollment growth of 5-10% or more in each of the next five fiscal years.

Last year, GGU evaluated its database of donors and, with a new VP of advancement, expects significant fundraising growth beginning in FY 2023. Further, the university has launched a “Meeting the Moment” campaign that is expected to raise \$25M - \$50M over the next five years.

In the law school, GGU had received a notice of non-compliance with bar pass standards, which it has addressed through efforts that included heightening entry requirements to the program and providing free access to the law school for qualified applicants. This decreases the opportunity to raise revenue through the traditional law program.

In order to reach its ambitious goals, GGU has significantly increased staffing, which has led to an increase of annual expenses of close to \$5M, in addition to another \$4.1M funding for student services. In combination, those investments have put pressure on the budget, pending the realization of funding commitments and/or sale of real estate.

The newly appointed chief of marketing and vice provost of marketing and enrollment are expected to bring added focus on enrollment and student success. GGU placed significant emphasis on a new vendor relationship with UpGrad, anticipating the UpGrad partnership will result in \$60M-\$80M in net benefit to the university over the next five years.

The team that has been hired to increase enrollment appears to be strong and experienced. It is, though, as yet unclear whether the expected growth in tuition and the retention goals will be realized. Based on quarter one results, enrollment is up and net tuition is above budget. It is, though, as yet unclear whether the long term expected growth in tuition and the retention goals will be realized.

Despite significant progress since the last visit, the financial circumstances of the institution remain uncertain due to a brand new set of ambitious programs and an enrollment model that depends on an influx of new capital. The university stated that its current cash reserves provide an 18-20 month runway given expected expenditure rates, placing a dependency for longer-term sustainability on

expected significant capital infusions from UpGrad and/or the sale of one or both buildings owned by the university in a volatile real estate market.

While preliminary indicators are encouraging, it is premature to be certain about the speed with which these programs will grow and how the school will be able to respond to the extensive shift in student mix and delivery modalities. The team heard several times during the visit that the projections may be very conservative, which leads to caution about whether the university has the infrastructure to support such a large increase in students if actuals exceed projections. There was also uncertainty about the extent to which the on-campus program would grow. As such, it may be difficult for GGU to know the best approach in terms of monetizing all or part of its real estate portfolio. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5) In light of the current financial status of GGU, the team makes two recommendations:

1. Given the anticipated liquidity needs, continue to closely forecast cash balances to ensure that spending doesn't outpace the realization of new revenues. (CFR 3.4)
2. To strengthen financial understanding and improve decision-making, standardize financial forecasting and update targets as annual forecasts vary from plans. (CFR 3.4)

B. Retention and Completion (CFRs 2.10, 2.13, 4.3)

During the 2021 Special Visit, the team found GGU had implemented several student support strategies, such as mandatory online orientation, and developed new technology-based communication channels with students through the adoption of new digital tools. Additionally, the dean of students who led a committee on retention departed in 2020, and the position was not replaced nor had the committee met since the departure. As a result, the team recommended greater attention be given to retention efforts and that strategy be put into place to assess the effectiveness of recent investments in technological systems and tools intended to support student success. The 2021 CAL recommended GGU “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)

Retention and Completion

In the 2021-2022 academic year, GGU experienced a dip in its year-to-year undergraduate retention to 62%, from 65% in 2020-2021, although that represented an increase from 59% in 2019-2020. Graduate non-law student retention also experienced a dip in year-to-year retention at 59% in 2021-2022, down from 62% in 2020-2021, and 60% in 2019-2020. Law school full-time student year-to-year retention saw an uptick from 73% in 2019-2020 to 81% in 2020-2021, and maintained at 81% in 2021-2022. Part-time law school year-to-year retention was 79% in 2021-2022, 78% in 2020-2021, and 83% in 2019-2020.

GGU experienced an increase in the six-year graduation rate for undergraduates at 53% in 2021-2022, reflecting an increase from 43% in 2020-2021 and 48% in 2019-2020. GGU's five-year graduation rates for non-law graduate students experienced a slight decrease, from 68% in 2020-2021 to 66% in 2021-2022. Graduation rates for graduate law students remained unchanged at 71% in 2021-2022 and 2020-2021.

In response to the 2021 CAL's recommendation to develop retention goals and milestones, GGU provided undergraduate and graduate one-year retention and graduation rate goals for the next five years. One-year retention goals for undergraduates are set at 62% for 2022 and projected to grow anywhere between 2%-5% each year, with a target of 80% in 2027. One-year graduate retention goals also reflect this growth, with a 59% goal for 2022 and 77% in 2027. Graduation rate goals for undergraduates are projected at 53% in 2022 with annual increases between 2% and 8% for the next five years, with a goal of 73% in 2027. Similarly, for graduate students, retention rates are projected to increase from 66% in 2022 to 83% by 2027. The report did not delineate how these milestones and projected retention and graduation rates were determined or what data and modeling were used to set these projections in light of GGU's plans to increase global students and decrease veteran students. During the visit and in the meeting with the student support and retention group, the team learned that

the deans, ALO, institutional research, and enrollment services were involved in creating these projections based on historical data. Further, the group emphasized that these goals and milestones were very aspirational and are a work-in-progress that will require continuous refinement since creating retention and graduation goals have never been undertaken in the past.

The team found that the GGU's report lacked an analysis of factors that are positively or negatively impacting retention and persistence and disruptions on student persistence during 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without careful analysis of factors that impact student persistence, the upward and linear retention and graduation projections for the next five years are unsupported by data and lack analysis of GGU's current and future student population. The team suggests a deeper dive into understanding the current and prospective student population at GGU and barriers to persistence and completion to assist in refining these goals and milestone projections. Further, it is critical to examine retention and persistence data disaggregated by program and student profiles in order to effectively plan for student support efforts and initiatives in order to be responsive to student needs. (CFR 2.10)

Student Support Initiatives

GGU hired a new dean of students in July 2022, after the position was vacant for nearly two years. The new dean of students is responsible for leading and setting goals and milestones for retention and graduation, particularly with non-law colleges, and overseeing the student lifecycle from orientation, early warning, intervention, tutoring, retention, and engagement, through the implementation of Upgrad. While the dean of students works in collaboration with the provost, college deans, and vice provost for marketing and enrollment management, GGU's institutional report noted that the organizational structure and reporting lines for retention and graduation are not finalized.

According to GGU's report, retention plans have historically been developed at the programmatic level, with retention and graduation rates that have been comparable to or exceeded

their peer institutions. The new restructuring of retention and graduation efforts will be under the dean of students and will include the centralization of retention planning efforts in collaboration with the provost, deans, and vice president for marketing and enrollment management. It is critical to examine the impact of the proposed centralization efforts in response to anticipated enrollment growth of international students, and assess the effectiveness of the new structure in light of retention and completion goals. The team learned from the dean of students that the restructuring will include the existing committees: undergraduate retention committee, graduate retention committee, and university retention committee. A steering committee focused on retention will also be created within this institutional framework and structure.

GGU has implemented exit surveys to graduating students and student focus groups for many years, and individual interviews throughout the degree program. These efforts demonstrate strides toward understanding the student experience at GGU. During the visit, the student success and retention group shared that while some strategies were implemented, they found no significant improvement in retention. Further, the student success and retention group shared plans for re-administering the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) in this academic year as one strategy to collecting data on undergraduate students. Plans for assessing interventions and support services have not been realized to date but the team was told that a plan will be ready by the end of this calendar year. It was evident to the review team based on the report and visit that GGU is in the early stages of data collection and the development of an assessment plan. It will be critical for GGU to systemize data collection and analysis in order to be responsive to student needs, provide data-informed interventions to support persistence, reduce attrition, and improve student success.

As GGU implements retention strategies for undergraduate and graduates (Exhibit 25 Undergraduate and Graduate Retention Strategies), develops a framework and structure for supporting student success, and creates on-going data collection and analysis, it will be critical for the student

success and retention committees to employ systematic assessment of the many outlined student support initiatives, interventions, and developing infrastructure in order to effectively support the success of current GGU students and the anticipated influx of global students on campus and online. Additionally, if the projected 5-10% enrollment increase over the next five years is realized, it will be essential for the student support and data infrastructure to adequately assess and respond to the evolving student needs. Lastly, as the institution assesses the impact of the many student support efforts and initiatives, examining which initiatives have the greatest impact on retention and completion and prioritizing how these different support strategies impact the different GGU student populations will be central to student success efforts. (CFR 2.13) The team makes two recommendations:

1. Ensure that the administrative and pedagogical infrastructure is commensurate with expected growth. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
2. Continue prioritizing retention by developing detailed data-informed goals at the university, school, and program level, assessing proposed student support initiatives, and establishing a student support infrastructure for on-going continuous data analysis and student feedback to keep pace with anticipated enrollment gains. (CFRs 2.10, 4.3)

C. Staffing Levels and Senior Leadership Team (CFRs 3.1, 3.3)

The CAL recommended that GGU “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.” That recommendation was consistent with the 2021 Special Visit team’s observation about a significant number of senior leadership vacancies, interim appointments, and extensive reductions in staffing levels. The team noted that the staffing challenges they observed represented a significant risk to GGU's ability to fulfill its mission.

Since the CAL, the university has filled a significant number of leadership roles. Collectively, the leadership team appears to be effective in positioning GGU to pursue an aggressive plan to reposition the university in the future. GGU provided a restaffing plan that identified positions that are expected to

be filled or created in the offices of the provost, the CFO, and the vice president for university advancement. Funding for two dozen additional positions was included in the five-year financial plan for new faculty, faculty support, student support, advancement, financial services, information technology services, and international and academic affairs. (CFRs 3.1, 3.3)

There appears to be broad support among trustees, faculty, and staff for the staffing plans that have been developed. More importantly, there was widespread trust across constituencies in the current leadership team and the vision they have developed for GGU's future. The sense of optimism was broadly expressed. The team heard statements of confidence about the outcomes of GGU's current trajectory, with very limited expressions of concern about the prospects for success. Aggressive hiring has put pressure on the budget and has begun to relieve what many described as an unsustainably high workload during the transformation of programs and structure underway. (CFRs 3.1, 3.3)

D. Communication (CFR 3.7)

The 2021 CAL recommended GGU "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) In order to determine whether the institution developed protocols to assess the effectiveness of communication and provide meaningful opportunities for faculty input, the team reviewed the development and implementation of a new Shared Governance Working Group (SGWG), including its internal website; new organizational charts; and conducted interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators to supplement the institutional report. While many efforts to improve communication are underway and planned, protocols that would allow assessment of the impact of those efforts are not in place. The pace of change contemplated, which will require adoption of unfamiliar processes and the hiring of new people, could increase the difficulty of effective communication.

Among other actions, SGWG disseminates information to the GGU community. The documents created to guide that steering committee, which are now used to orient new community members, include an explicit commitment to greater communication, stating the “Implementation of a robust communications strategy that ensures that all stakeholders are able to communicate ideas, concerns and aspirations with one another is essential not only for informed participation in decision-making processes, but for the cohesiveness and vitality of the campus community as a whole.” The SGWG modeled improved communication practices by posting information on an internal website and enabling more opportunities for dialogue.

As a result of these efforts, consultation with faculty increased, and academic administration was centralized under a newly-hired provost and vice president of academic affairs. Faculty have been consulted with respect to the new provost position, search, and hire as well as compensation plans for FY 2023 and new program development. Faculty have also had the opportunity to interact with the board chair directly and participate in video meetings held by the president’s office to share information more broadly. The provost’s office was charged with enhancing coordination and collaboration; the new provost appears to be exercising personal leadership in the new structure, thereby increasing two-way communication.

Examples of ways GGU is increasing communication and engagement include strengthening participation of leaders of the faculty senate, student government, and alumni association in board meetings, distributing information about board agendas prior to board meetings and board actions after meetings, creating a budget advisory committee of faculty, staff, and students, and holding regular briefings by the CFO and other campus leaders to the GGU community on key issues and concerns.

The protocols for increased communication that the SGWG was explicitly asked to develop remain unfinished, and as a result, the sustainability of these enhanced communication efforts and academic restructuring are yet to be determined. Given the growth in staff across many offices, the

multitude of new programs being launched, and the plan to increase enrollment, ongoing effective communication will be essential to offer new and continuing administrators, faculty, staff, and students a shared sense of purpose and knowledge of institutional operations.

E. Shared Governance (CFRs 3.7, 3.10)

The 2021 Special Visit team found that there had been little progress on the Commission's 2019 recommendations to strengthen shared governance and clarify roles and responsibilities. The team was concerned that this undermined GGU's ability to address its key challenges, and noted "if current trends continue, the institution may find itself out of compliance with WSCUC Standards." GGU's 2022 report outlined how the board, administration, and faculty are addressing the issue of shared governance, and described steady and deliberate progress, although a final board-approved decision-making matrix endorsed by faculty is still in development and incomplete.

In August 2021, the board and president created, in consultation with faculty leadership, the Shared Governance Working Group (SGWG). Its task was to develop a mission statement, guiding principles, and operational principles that include a decision-making matrix. The SGWG's coordinating team consisted of a trustee, the faculty senate chair, and the president, along with an AGB consultant. Faculty senate minutes and the executive summaries of the SGWG meetings indicate that this trio engaged in open and frequent communication. Early on, the SGWG developed a community-wide employee survey on shared governance sent by the president's office to full-time faculty, part-time faculty, staff, and board members to serve as a baseline. Faculty senate minutes confirm that the shared governance survey results were widely shared, and the instrument and results were described as "transparent and objective" with clear "opportunity for improvement" (April 21, 2022). Faculty senators noted that the results provided a realistic assessment and should not be disappointing since the survey was administered prior to any definition or agreement of shared governance. Senate minutes and SGWG

executive summaries indicate that faculty feedback on the shared governance survey was shared with the faculty by the senate chair.

Executive summaries of the SGWG meetings indicate thorough discussions, clear agendas, and progress on the mission statement and guiding principles. Early on, a website was created for all employees, later shared with board members, that included a primer on shared governance, an initial presentation from the SGWG consultant, additional resource materials, and an opportunity for feedback. The feedback was regularly reviewed and discussed at subsequent SGWG meetings according to the executive summaries. Overall, the picture that emerges from the SGWG is an iterative process that included review and input by board, senate, and employees, with a special board meeting reviewing the work of the SGWG in January 2022, with ratification of the guiding principles.

Shared governance was bolstered by the hiring of a provost. Faculty had significant input in shaping the job description, participating in the search, and recommending the hire of the new provost. Both the hiring process and qualifications of the new provost were broadly praised by community members. The provost meets regularly with the faculty senate and appears to support shared governance and robust communication. Based on faculty senate minutes, shared governance appears to be a regular agenda item. The senate executive committee's letter to the president noted that "[t]he provost has also made a difference with personal leadership; listening skills and willingness to adjust his actions based on feedback," a sentiment the team heard from many constituents during the visit.

During the course of the past year, the board chair met with the faculty senate three times (November 18, 2021, February 17, 2022, and June 16, 2022) and stressed that shared governance was a board priority, and that the board had spent some time discussing and seeking to understand the implications of shared governance. The faculty senate minutes reflect the board chair's stated commitment to shared governance, along with an openness to fielding open-ended questions while listening to faculty concerns. In addition, conversations between the faculty senate and the board chair

are noted in the minutes, and are ongoing. The meetings with board members, the leadership team, and faculty confirmed the turn-around in shared governance.

One outstanding issue in shared governance that remains is a board-approved decision-making matrix that defines and clarifies roles and responsibilities related to university decisions. A draft was discussed as early as November 20, 2021 at the SGWG meeting and updates appear regularly thereafter, and the document was requested by the team to review prior to the visit. The team received the document on the first day of the visit, and confirmed that it is a work in progress as a visual representation of shared governance as represented by the institution. The decision-making matrix and accompanying narratives document noted a March 2023 completion date. While GGU has made progress in articulating a definition and principles of shared governance since its last special visit in 2021, and the team noticed increased collaboration among the faculty, administration, staff, and board, shared governance is yet to be codified in a final way, and clear decision-making processes have yet to be operationalized across the institution. It will be important for GGU build on its successes in shared governance by continuing its progress in defining roles and responsibilities in decision-making and codifying the shared governance process, particularly at the speed in which the university is making financial decisions and rapidly developing academic program offerings. (CFRs 3.7, 3.10)

SECTION IV – COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The team commends GGU for:

1. Broad, extensive engagement from constituents across the university in responding to the Notice of Concern, which reflects the success of the leadership team's efforts to communicate the university's financial, enrollment, and shared governance challenges.
2. Dramatic improvement in shared governance and communication practices, with more people feeling heard, more leaders willing to share information, and greater efforts to clarify decision-

making processes. Efforts to build a culture of collaboration and to create effective working relationships have had a dramatic and positive impact.

3. A highly regarded and strong leadership team and well-qualified support staff realized through a broadly participative process.
4. Willingness of the board and leadership to consider and communicate alternative approaches to funding growth that has generated enthusiasm and created opportunities for institutional recovery in a challenging, competitive economic climate.
5. Confidence about the future that permeates trustees, faculty, and staff that is rooted in new leadership, spending, and a new vision of global and mission-driven growth. GGU's vision is supported by the board and is being made possible by partnerships and internal collaboration and consensus that has taken hold since the last team visit.

The team recommends that GGU:

1. Given the anticipated liquidity needs, continue to closely forecast cash balances to ensure that spending doesn't outpace the realization of new revenues. (CFR 3.4)
2. To strengthen financial understanding and improve decision-making, standardize financial forecasting and update targets as annual forecasts vary from plans. (CFR 3.4)
3. Ensure that the administrative and pedagogical infrastructure is commensurate with expected growth. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
4. Continue prioritizing retention by developing detailed data-informed goals at the university, school, and program level, assessing proposed student support initiatives, and establishing a student support infrastructure for on-going continuous data analysis and student feedback to keep pace with anticipated enrollment gains. (CFRs 2.10, 4.3)

5. Codify a shared governance and decision-making process that is well understood (through, for example, the university's efforts to develop a decision-making matrix). (CFRs 3.7, 3.10)