

July 12, 2021

Dr. Tom Jackson
President
Humboldt State University
One Harpst Street
Arcata, CA 95521-8299

Dear President Jackson:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Humboldt State University (HSU) 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 HSU April 21 – 23, 2021. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by HSU prior to the Special Visit. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Jenn Capps, Provost, and Mary Oling-Sisay, Vice President and Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies and Accreditation Liaison Officer (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) budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources; and (2) a comprehensive university-wide assessment program.
2. Continue with the previously scheduled reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2025 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2026
3. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by November 1, 2023

The Commission commends HSU in particular for the following:

1. Securing senior leadership that approached the transition with a sense of urgency and empowered the faculty and staff.
2. Developing multiple, aligned assessment structures, ratifying new ILOs through shared governance practices, and demonstrating an administrative and faculty-driven commitment to assessment and program review.
3. Hiring a chief enrollment officer with notable experience in strategic enrollment management and student affairs, who was skillfully leading nuanced enrollment strategies and effectively implementing a well-developed strategic enrollment plan.
4. Increasing overall student success and decreasing the equity gap between URM and non-URM students, particularly as a result of learning communities.
5. Developing and implementing structures and processes that reflected transparency and regular communication to facilitate institution-wide awareness, understanding, and a sense of shared responsibility for budgeting, resourcing, and revenue diversification.
6. Eliminating long-standing structural deficits by 2022 and building back reserves over the longer term through a combination of efficiencies, new academic programs, and innovative new revenue streams.

7. Differentiating HSU's identity by highlighting its strengths in research, experiential learning, and community partnerships.

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

1. Consistently employ HSU's assessment structures and processes including the collection, analysis and interpretation of data to track learning over time. (CFR 4.1, 4.2)
2. Engage faculty and staff to collaboratively examine, interpret, and make recommendations for program improvements. (CFR 2.4, 2.6)
3. Identify and explore the systemic impacts of becoming a polytechnic university on enrollment, budget, revenue diversification, and assessment. (CFR 1.1, 3.4)
4. Building upon HSU's initial efforts and success: continue to review, evaluate, and align institutional structures, resources, and practices to ensure achievement of your six pillars of inclusive excellence. (CFR 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.7)

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of HSU's governing board. A copy of this letter is also being sent to Chancellor Castro, California State University. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the HSU'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 Humboldt State 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,



Jamiene S. Studley
President

JSS/mam

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Mary Oling-Sisay, ALO
Lillian Kimbell, Board Chair
Joseph Castro, Chancellor
Members of the Special Visit team
Maureen A Maloney, Vice President