

March 8, 2022

Dr. Robert Humphreys, Jr.
President
Humphreys University
6650 Inglewood Avenue
Stockton, CA 95207

Dear President Humphreys:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Humphreys University (Humphreys) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 25, 2022. At that meeting the Commission acted to issue a Warning. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to Humphreys November 18-20, 2021. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Humphreys prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's February 8, 2022 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Jess Bonds, Dean of Graduate Studies 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 new status with WSCUC.

The Commission found that Humphreys has failed to meet WSCUC Standards One and Three and acted to issue a Warning. When the Commission finds that an institution fails to meet one or more of the Standards of Accreditation, it notifies the institution of these findings and gives the institution no longer than two years from the date of this action to correct the situation. If an institution has not remedied the deficiencies at the conclusion of the two-year sanction period, the Commission may take an "adverse action," in this case, the withdrawal of accreditation. An institution under sanction must address the areas cited by the Commission expeditiously, with seriousness and the full attention of the institution's leadership. It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine, at the end of the sanction period, whether the institution has corrected the situation and has come into compliance with Commission Standards.

The accreditation status of the institution continues during Warning. However, while on Warning, any new sites or degree programs initiated by the institution must be approved through the substantive change process.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Issue a Warning

3. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2023 to address:
 - a. compliance with Standard 1, particularly CFRs 1.2, 1.7 and 1.8; and
 - b. compliance with Standard 3, particularly CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 and 3.10.

Issues to be Addressed

1. **Integrity and Transparency:** The Commission is concerned with a lack of transparency on the part of the Humphreys senior leadership. The University's strategic plan is a dramatic departure from its stated educational objectives and seems to have been implemented without engagement from the campus community. Issues from previous visits have not been addressed and integrity of operations remains an issue. Humphreys must establish clear educational objectives with the full engagement of its internal and external constituencies and ensure communication with WSCUC that is transparent and candid. (CFRs 1.2, 1.7, and 1.8).
2. **Enrollment and Fiscal Viability:** Humphreys has experienced plummeting enrollment for five of the last six years which has led to significant financial deficits. The budget is created and controlled by the president without input from operational departments. Although financial functions have been outsourced, the CFO who works for the outsourced company functions more as a controller than as a CFO. Financial analysis of programs continues to be needed. Financial decisions should support degree quality and integrity which requires a CFO that engages with the campus community. Humphreys needs to provide data and analysis of the incremental costs of new and existing programs, including the impact on staff and faculty workloads to support student success. (CFRs 3.4 and 3.8).
3. **Board Governance and Independence:** The insulated relationship between the president and board is symptomatic of a governance system that is struggling, leading to a lack of decision-making and transparency in the culture of the institution. The governing board, made up of individuals with a long history with the university, has appropriate authority. However, both the current president and his father, the previous president, are members of the board. It concerns the Commission that the president's father was directly involved in the evaluation of the president. The Board needs to revisit its protocols to ensure independence. In addition, the Board should expand its membership to reflect the surrounding Stockton area and include a diversity of experience. The Board needs to establish a tradition of self-review and training in order to enhance its effectiveness. (CFR 3.8)
4. **Leadership and Decision-making:** The University's organizational structures and decision-making processes are not clear. Roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority are ambiguous. This can have a negative impact on the institution's ability to support strategic decision-making. In addition, the Commission is concerned that the CEO is fulfilling so many different organizational functions that it has become challenging to provide the leadership the university needs in areas like community visibility and fundraising. It is important that the university

place priority on sustaining institutional capacity and educational effectiveness by clearly defining leadership roles and decision-making structures. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8)

5. **Faculty and Academic Leadership:** The absence of designated academic leadership above the level of the deans threatens educational effectiveness. Deans do not have control of budgets and have no authority to make decisions about academic programs or establish educational priorities. Reductions in staff have exacerbated a heavy faculty workload which may have impacted other aspects of faculty work, including the assessment of student learning. Humphreys should prioritize ensuring academic leadership that is empowered to make decisions about programs, budgets, and faculty workload. (CFR 3.10)

Further Recommendations

1. Humphreys currently offers seven AA degrees, eight Bachelor's degrees, four Master's degrees, and one professional doctoral degree to 375 students. While the commitment to balance the budget is admirable, leadership needs an academic master plan to ensure that programs are effectively reviewed and resourced to maintain academic quality. (CFR 4.1)
2. Faculty workload remains an issue. While class sizes have declined, the number of courses taught by faculty has not and the number of course preparations do not allow time for faculty scholarship or work on outcomes assessment. The heavy teaching load also means that students in some programs are taught by the same individuals repeatedly. (CFRs 2.1, 2.8)
3. Assessment data and program review should be utilized to implement needed changes and improvements throughout all programs, including faculty development to foster a culture of assessment. Although the university has articulated a quality assurance program, outcomes assessment grounded in examination of student work resulting in program improvement has yet to be developed. The Law School has yet to assess its program learning outcomes, address its low Bar pass rates, or conduct ongoing program review. (CFRs 4.1, 4.4)

In keeping with WSCUC values, Humphreys should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

Institutions issued a Warning may request a review of this decision within 28 days of receiving the Commission's Action Letter according to the procedures outlined on pages 40-42 of the WSCUC 2013 Handbook.

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

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair
Jess Bonds, ALO
Ronald Guntert, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit team
Tamela Hawley, Vice President