

February 26, 2020

Dr. Lynnette Zelezny  
President  
California State University, Bakersfield  
9001 Stockdale Highway  
Bakersfield, CA 93311

Dear President Zelezny:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 14, 2020. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to CSUB October 8-10, 2019. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by CSUB prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's January 8, 2020 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Thom Davis (CFO), Debra Jackson (ALO), John Nilon (Foundation Board Chair), and Vernon Harper (VPAA/Provost). 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.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of eight years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2027 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2027
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review to begin May 1, 2024
5. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2023 to address:
  - a. Institutional research capacity. Please provide:
    - i. Proactive data reporting and analysis strategy
    - ii. Evidence of useable data sets to inform decision-making
    - iii. Description of data education and outreach to the campus community
  - b. Program review. Please provide:
    - i. Description of revised program review process and realistic program review schedule
    - ii. List of scheduled, performed, and completed program reviews
    - iii. Two examples of using program review results for continuous improvement
  - c. Academic support services. Please provide:
    - i. Data on students served, disaggregated by demographic variables
    - ii. Organizational charts, staffing ratios, and resource allocations to service units
    - iii. Evidence of effectiveness of academic support services
  - d. Retention and graduation rates. Please provide:

- i. Graduation rates from spring 2019 to spring 2022 disaggregated to assess equity gaps
  - ii. Retention rates for the same period disaggregated to assess equity gaps
- e. Diversity. Please provide:
  - i. Diversity plan or strategy
  - ii. Numbers of underrepresented faculty and staff from spring 2019 to spring 2023
- f. Strategic plan. Please provide:
  - i. Metrics for strategic goals
  - ii. Update on progress in meeting goals
- g. Plan for the regular assessment of administrative units

The Commission commends CSUB in particular for the following:

1. Taking steps to improve graduation rates through several student success initiatives, including advising roadmaps, 15 to Finish, block scheduling, and promise programs.
2. Ensuring a coherent, holistic approach to a comprehensive university life experience, including mental health counseling, the establishment of the Dream Resource Center, the food pantry, civic engagement, and wellness programs. This approach includes the commitment to a culture of assessment and continuous improvement.
3. Establishing a coherent approach to graduate education, including redesigning graduate learning outcomes, developing and sustaining a Graduate Student Center, and promoting a graduate-going culture in its undergraduate students.
4. Increasing the university's involvement and presence in the region through academic programs, student engagement, and community and workforce development partnerships.
5. Developing the first comprehensive capital campaign, designed to strengthen and support student success.
6. Exhibiting a collaborative culture, as demonstrated by the university's preparation for the institutional accreditation report and visit.
7. Creating an inclusive, transparent process for strategic planning.

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

1. Further develop the capacity of institutional research to provide high quality, accurate data and analysis for use in program review, assessment, planning, student success initiatives, resource allocation, and overall institutional effectiveness. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4) The Commission appreciated learning that CSUB will undertake a strategic review of its institutional research capacity and structure.
2. To foster a culture of continuous improvement, re-establish a system for completing rigorous and consistent program reviews. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1)
3. Ensure consistency, effectiveness, and quality of academic support services, including advising, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and course scheduling, to enhance student success for all students. (CFRs 2.12, 2.13) The Commission appreciated learning about the launch of the Council for Faculty Advising, additional staff for tutoring and supplemental instruction, and other changes in this area.
4. Demonstrate considerable progress toward achieving the institution's goals for GI 2025 first time freshman 4-year and 6-year graduation rates. (CFR 2.10)

5. Through a comprehensive institutional strategy, demonstrate substantial progress toward increasing faculty and staff diversity. (CFRs 1.4, 3.1)
6. Continue the implementation of the new strategic plan by identifying key metrics of success, and aligning the plan to budget, resource allocation, and organizational structure. (CFR 4.6)
7. Establish the process of regular assessment of administrative units, including external reviews where appropriate, to engage in continuous improvement and ensure effectiveness. (CFR 4.1)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that California State University, Bakersfield has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, CSUB 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.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of California State University, Los Angeles' governing board. A copy of this letter will also be sent to Chancellor Timothy P. White. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the CSUB 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 California State University, Bakersfield 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/ bgd

Cc: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair  
Debra Jackson, ALO  
Adam Day, Board Chair  
Timothy P. White, Chancellor, California State University  
Members of the Accreditation Visit team  
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President