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## Letter - Letter from the President Regarding WASC Reaccreditation

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## Letter from the President Regarding WASC Reaccreditation

August 24, 2010

To the University Community:

As you know, Pacific is midway through the reaccreditation process with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). I would like to congratulate the entire University community on the very successful WASC team visit in April. The team commented that Pacific "is a fine institution on its way to getting better." We should all be proud.

WASC reaccreditation takes place every ten years and involves two reviews. The first, a Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR), evaluates our ability to operate effectively. The second, an Educational Effectiveness Review (EER), reviews our educational effectiveness with a particular focus on how we use evidence about student learning to improve our programs. A WASC team visited all three campuses in March 2010 as part of the CPR. The same visit team will return in spring 2012 as part of the EER.

WASC has notified us that it has accepted our Capacity and Preparatory Review report, continued the accreditation of the University, and rescheduled Pacific's Educational Effectiveness Review from fall 2011 to spring 2012, in order to give us more time to prepare.

The WASC visit team commended Pacific for a number of strengths after its April visit:

- Nationally recognized general education program
- Faculty dedication to students and student learning
- Inculcation of experiential learning into core curriculum
- Institution-wide learning objectives and outcomes
- Strong learning assessment in Student Life
- Strong enrollment, budgeting, and change management

The last stage of the CPR is an "Action Letter" summarizing the issues WASC considers to be most important for us to address as an institution. In the WASC Action Letter, there are four areas that they expect us to monitor and further develop:

*Governance and Leadership:*

1) Make our organizational pattern, including oversight and coordination of the three campuses, more efficient and accountable; 2) As we look at an alternative budgeting system, keep WASC informed of the changes; 3) The Board of Regents should clarify the reporting role of the President Emeritus.

*Faculty Workload:*

WASC wants us to address faculty workload in a systematic fashion, considering class size, number of university initiatives, scholarship expectations, and the tenure and promotion processes and practices.

*Student Success:*

WASC is concerned that our retention and graduation rates are not as high as they should be, especially among ethnic groups. They want us to examine this, see if financial aid practices have an impact, develop a strategy for domestic diversity, and help commuting/transfer students develop a sense of community.

*Assessment of Student Learning and Program Review:*

We must make progress on the assessment of student learning at all levels, especially at the program and institutional level, since that will be the primary focus of the WASC team's return visit. In addition, our program review process and sample program reviews will be studied in depth by the visiting team.

The full set of materials related to our WASC reaccreditation process is accessible to the University community on Inside Pacific at: <https://insidepacific.pacific.edu/>. This includes Pacific's original proposal to WASC, the University's CPR Self-Study, the WASC Team Report, our response to the team report, and the WASC Action Letter.

The April WASC visit was a great success, and reflects the major accomplishments made at Pacific over the years. I welcome the issues that WASC has raised for our attention, as they are areas that we have been aware of and are committed to address. I would like to thank the excellent team that prepared the CPR Self-Study, the people who coordinated and participated in the WASC team's CPR visit last March, and the many faculty, staff and administrators preparing the EER Self-Study Report for the next visit.

I especially wish to extend my thanks to all our dedicated and talented faculty and staff for making Pacific the fine institution it is today. Working together, we will continue to develop Pacific into one of the nation's great universities.

Best regards,

Pamela A. Eibeck, PhD

President