



June 30, 2005

Denice D. Denton  
Chancellor  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
1156 High Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Dear Chancellor Denton:

At its meeting on June 16, 2005, the Commission considered the report of the Educational Effectiveness Review team that visited the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) on February 2-4, 2005. The Commission also had access to the Institutional Presentation for the visit and your letter of April 13, 2005, in response to the team report. The Commission found the opportunity to discuss the review with you and William Ladusaw, Interim Vice Provost/Dean of Undergraduate Education and Accreditation Liaison Officer, helpful in better understanding the University, your plans and your new initiatives. Your thoughtfulness and candor in the discussion were appreciated.

The Capacity and Preparatory Review and the Educational Effectiveness Review were framed by the goals for the review process as set forth in the University's September 2002 Proposal for Reaffirmation of Accreditation. The Commission noted the University's goals and expected outcomes as those of increasing graduate programs that are responsive to student and societal needs; gaining a more comprehensive understanding of patterns of student engagement and developing ways to strengthen the UCSC experience; reassessing the role of the college system; and restructuring the departmental review process to place greater emphasis on assessing undergraduate curricula. Pertaining to the Educational Effectiveness Review, the Commission further noted the University's attention to two broad topics. The first topic was the growth and improvement of graduate student programs, including developing performance indicators of graduate student success and achievement and providing "value-added" opportunities for mentoring and training across disciplines. The second Educational Effectiveness topic was enhancing undergraduate academic engagement, including increasing opportunities for faculty-student interactions, increasing opportunities for students to participate in research activities and academic internships, assessing the effectiveness of capstone experiences, and improving overall campus advising. The Commission highlighted several areas for institutional consideration following the Capacity and Preparatory Review in its action letter of June 28, 2004, which the University responded to in its Educational Effectiveness Review

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Report. One area noted by the Commission for continuing attention was program review, and you indicated that this will be a continued focus over the next few years.

The Educational Effectiveness Review site visit was conducted at a time of considerable institutional transition, with your appointment having been announced just before the team's visit, and with an acting chancellor and interim provost in place during the preparation for the review and throughout the visit. The Accreditation Liaison Officer was new to his position, having been appointed after the Capacity and Preparatory Review. These circumstances made University planning and decision making somewhat tentative. Still, the University was able to prepare an effective Institutional Presentation and organize a productive and inclusive visit. Two aspects of the review deserve special commendation: the full inclusion of faculty in the preparation of the report and the organization of the visit to engage a broad spectrum of faculty, staff, and administration in small-group discussions about review topics, including a futures planning discussion the final day of the visit that included you before you had taken office. The openness and willingness to share, explore, and learn collaboratively among campus constituents were very positive elements of the review process.

The visiting team found many reasons to commend about UC Santa Cruz during its site reviews for both Capacity and Educational Effectiveness. President Dynes has called Santa Cruz "a campus on the move," and the institution and team reports describe significant markers for the University's trajectory in the last decade, including major enrollment growth, addition of highly qualified new faculty teacher/scholars, a building renaissance, the founding of two additional residential colleges, the establishment of new graduate and professional degrees, successful fund-raising ventures, growing extramural research support, and the establishment of new research institutes.

The reaffirmation of accreditation process confirmed the University's strengths, including high quality students and faculty, an emphasis on undergraduate teaching, a campus in a physically beautiful location, and a residential college system which promotes whole-person learning, all in the context of a major research university environment. In its review, the team also confirmed the innovative and pioneering spirit of a faculty and administration that have secured national rankings among public universities for disciplinary impact and scholarly productivity. At the same time, the University has done exemplary work with interdisciplinary approaches to research and teaching, and has developed interconnected communities of scholars. Much has been accomplished in the last decade.

The report of the Educational Effectiveness Review team includes a very large number of recommendations, the most important of which are grouped under 15 areas listed as "Major Recommendations." Some of these recommendations emanated from the futures planning discussions in which the team engaged the campus. Others relate more directly to the team's evaluation of the University under the framework of the Standards of Accreditation. The Commission views all of the recommendations as being potentially useful to the ongoing planning and improvement efforts of the University. In addition, the Commission wishes to highlight the following for the University's consideration:

**Planning for growth in graduate education and research while sustaining undergraduate excellence:** In the context of these two defined University priorities (which also formed the nucleus of the University's Educational Effectiveness self-study), the Commission noted that planning at UCSC over the last decade has been responsive to continuous enrollment growth and a growing resource base. The University is keenly aware that budget reductions caused by the state budget crisis threaten its plans for further expansion of graduate programs. Much of the team review focused on discussions with the faculty and administration about possible planning and growth approaches that could help UCSC move from conceptual understandings to consideration of initiatives. These opportunities include the extension of programs to off-campus sites, such as Silicon Valley and the Monterey Peninsula; expansion of technology-distributed learning; and, especially, the establishment of additional professional schools and degree programs, which you commented on as having given you and the campus cause to think more broadly and critically about growth possibilities. The University seems well aware that in order to embark on these programs, it will need significant success with fund raising and grant-seeking, and careful consideration of what programs might be realigned or even discontinued in order to create funding for new programs based on evidence of educational quality and market need. It is also apparent from your recent discussions with the Santa Cruz City Council that there will need to be extensive communication and planning with the Santa Cruz community about the University's intended growth of 6,000 additional students in 15 years.

The Commission concurred with the team recommendation that the UCSC vision for growth carry an equally strong commitment to protect its historic strengths of undergraduate excellence and strong faculty engagement. The team made a number of suggestions to expand UCSC's quality commitment to graduate education by replicating aspects of its hallmark undergraduate model, such as by extending graduate student living/learning arrangements on campus, by locating graduate facilities centrally on campus, and by further developing teaching assistant training programs. In its examination of these suggestions, the Commission urged the University to continue the participatory planning model it adopted during the course of this review and to heighten its reliance on good data, including financial, enrollment, and personnel projections, on alternative forecasting, and on multi-year planning.

**Considering organizational structures to support planned growth:** The Commission Panel discussed with you the different organizational structures that may need to be developed with further growth in graduate education. Your plans to create two separate positions, a full-time dean of the graduate school and a vice chancellor for research, seem sound. You also discussed your intention to delegate more authority to deans and department chairs to better balance their responsibilities and accountability, and to possibly reconsider the tradition of short-term chair appointments. The Commission acknowledged your statements and wished to encourage the University to find ways to streamline and make institutional decision making more efficient.

**Integrating general education with the major to ensure a coherent curriculum.** The Commission would expect that the University will now rely on its growing body of information to expand the collective faculty inquiry into the most effective ways to integrate general education with

the major. It is recommended that the UCSC Committee on Educational Policy consider how it might build its several probes of the curriculum into a University-defined philosophy of general education, with learning outcomes identified across the curriculum that describe and define the educational experience expected of all UCSC undergraduate students.

**Achieving a diverse campus through targeted recruitment, academic experiences, and better retention:** Your remarks in the Commission meeting acknowledge the strong connection between social diversity and academic excellence. The Commission understood that you welcome the challenge of building diverse learning communities of students, faculty and staff, and it appreciated hearing about recent diversity initiatives and policy plans. The Commission agrees that the University could further enhance its excellence through a more explicit agenda of social diversity and inclusion and by strengthening the bridges connecting research with civic action and policy debate so that each informs the other, leading to stronger collaboration and consensus building. Criterion for Review 1.5 addresses diversity within the context of the WASC Standards of Accreditation.

**Retention.** While noting the team and University expectations that the relatively low retention-to-graduation rates will improve with increasing numbers of student applicants and increasing matriculant selectivity, the Commission believes that the University can and should do more to employ further institutional research to better understand and improve its graduation rates. This is important when retention of undergraduates is the lowest (with UC Riverside) among the UC campuses, with 65 percent of students graduating in six years or less compared to a public flagship cohort graduation rate of 76 percent and the UC average of 79 percent. The six-year graduation rate of UCSC African-American students is only 56 percent. The Commission urges the University to make a priority the future work of the Academic Senate and administration to develop more effective measures to better understand and to improve retention as outlined in Criteria for Review 4.4 and 4.5.

**Continuing progress on accountability for student learning:** The Commission noted the many and varied ways that the University is assessing student learning, including capstone courses and projects, portfolios, comprehensive examinations, nationally-normed surveys, a graduate senior survey, and faculty narrative evaluations. The Commission further notes that UCSC is the only campus in the system with a senior exit requirement for all students. The reaccreditation review appeared to generate internal discussion and evaluation of the exit requirement, with some reexamination of the use of comprehensive examinations and shifts to other forms of summative learning assessment. One of the foci of the Educational Effectiveness Review was the active and thoughtful engagement of faculty with their students, confirmed by survey results evidencing high satisfaction of student access to faculty. The living-learning residential colleges, core college writing seminars, new freshman discovery courses, and the extensive co-curricular opportunities are evidence of considered and creative approaches to enriching and extending student learning and engagement with faculty early in students' tenure at UCSC. The Commission encourages UCSC to continue cross-departmental faculty conversations about learning results that were so effective during the Educational Effectiveness Review. It also acknowledges your intention to bring faculty

research expertise on learning to bear on these issues. This is in line with the Commissions' expectations in Criteria for Review 2.4, 2.5, and 4.7.

The Commission also commended the approach taken to encourage and facilitate faculty discussions on defining program objectives for student learning. It acknowledged your intention to start with those programs, such as Engineering, that have already developed program objectives, and then encourage the extension of defined learning objectives to as many other programs as possible over the next few years so that exit requirements and summative learning assessment might be better guided by the explicit intentions of the faculty. Also, during the course of the review process, the University has demonstrated its intention to incorporate "what kinds of benchmarks can be used to evaluate program effectiveness at both the graduate and undergraduate levels" (UCSC Proposal for the Review), and the Commission encourages your full attention to this process. The provision of portfolios of data to support faculty in their evaluation of programs during the program review process is a good first step. As stated in Criteria for Review 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, and 2.7, the University is expected to have processes that assure itself that all graduating students have the composite and comprehensive learning habits and skills expected of them by the time they leave the University.

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Educational Effectiveness Review Report.
2. Reaffirm the Accreditation of the University of California, Santa Cruz.
3. Schedule the Proposal for the two-stage comprehensive review to be due on October 15, 2013. Schedule the Capacity and Preparatory Review for spring 2015, and the Educational Effectiveness Review for fall 2016. In its June meeting, the Commission reviewed comments from institutions on the timing between the Capacity and Educational Effectiveness Reviews. At the initiation of institutions and at the recommendation of Capacity Review teams over the past two years, the Commission has acted to extend the Educational Effectiveness Review from one year to 18-24 months following their Capacity Review for a majority of institutions. The normative schedule will be 18 months after the Capacity Review, and the University's Educational Effectiveness Review has been set in accordance with this action.
4. Request five copies of a Progress Report to be due November 1, 2010 on the issues raised in this letter. Enclosed is a memorandum providing guidance on the format and content of a progress report.

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that the University of California, Santa Cruz has satisfactorily addressed the Core Commitments to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness, and has successfully completed the multistage review conducted under the Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review, the University is expected to continue its progress and be prepared to respond as expectations of

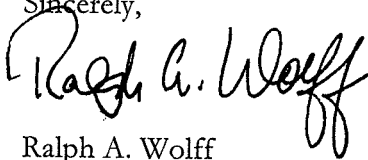
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institutional performance, especially with respect to Educational Effectiveness and student learning, further develop under the Standards of Accreditation.

In accordance with Commission policy, we request that you send a copy of this letter to President Robert Dynes.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph A. Wolff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "W".

Ralph A. Wolff  
Executive Director

RW/brn

cc: John D. Welty  
William Ladusaw  
Members of the team  
Elizabeth Griego

Enclosure

## Progress Report Format

Under the *WASC Handbook of Accreditation*, when taking accreditation action, the Commission may request additional reports focused on identified issues of concern. The institution is asked to prepare a Progress Report as described below. The Interim Report Committee reviews the Progress Report and recommends a response to the institution.

Progress Reports should follow the format described below. Such Reports are intended to be limited in scope, not to be comprehensive evaluations of the institution. The Report should help prepare the Interim Report Committee to understand the progress made by the institution in addressing the issues identified by the Commission and the major recommendations of the last visiting team. Five copies are to be submitted to the WASC office by the date specified in the Commission action letter.

A Progress Report should include the following:

1. *Cover Sheet.* The cover sheet should specify that the document is a Progress Report. It should include the date of submission, the name and address of the institution, and the name of the person submitting the Report.
2. *Table of Contents.*
3. *Nature of the Institutional Context.* The purpose of this section is to describe sufficiently the nature of the institution so that the Interim Report Committee can understand the issues in context. Describe the institution's background; mission; and history, including the founding date, year first accredited, geographic locations, etc.
4. *Statement on Report Preparation.* Describe in narrative form the process of Report preparation, naming those who were involved in it. Because of the focused nature of a Progress Report, the widespread and comprehensive involvement of various institutional constituencies is not required. Faculty, administrative staff and others should be involved as appropriate to the topics being addressed in the preparation of the institutional response. Campus constituencies, such as faculty leadership and, where appropriate, the Board of Trustees, should review the report before it is submitted to WASC, and such reviews should be indicated.
5. *Institutional Summary Data Form* ([http://www.wascweb.org/senior/SUMMSHT\\_02.pdf](http://www.wascweb.org/senior/SUMMSHT_02.pdf))
6. *Response to Issues Identified by the Commission and the last visiting team.* This main section of the Report should address those issues highlighted by the last team and identified

by the Commission as topics for the Progress Report. Each topic identified in the Commission's action letter and each major recommendation in the team report serve as a focus. The institution should not respond to every issue discussed within the body of the team report. Identify each key issue, providing a full description of the issue, and the action taken by the institution, along with an analysis of the effectiveness of the response. It is important that this section of the report include not only a description of the responses undertaken by the institution, *but equally important*, an assessment of the impact of these changes. Have they been successful in resolving the problem? What is the evidence supporting progress? What further problems or issues remain? How will such issues be addressed, by whom, and under what timetable?

7. *Identification of Other Changes or Issues Currently Confronting the Institution.* This brief section should identify any other significant changes that have occurred at the institution (e.g., changes in key personnel, major new programs, modifications in the governance structure, or significant financial results) that are not otherwise described or identified in the preceding section. This will help the Interim Report Committee gain a clearer sense of the current status of the institution and understand the context in which the responses of the institution discussed under #6 have taken place.
8. *Institutional Plans to Address the New Expectations of the 2001 Handbook.* Effective July 1, 2002, all reviews are being conducted under the *2001 Handbook of Accreditation*. Progress on issues identified for the Progress Report are to be reviewed within the context of the 2001 Standards of Accreditation and institutions should review them in assessing the effectiveness of actions in response to Commission concerns under the Standards of Accreditation which led to the Progress Report. Looking to the future, since the new *Handbook* identifies higher expectations for institutional data analysis and evidence, and the review and improvement of student learning, it will be important to begin plans to address the new Standards of Accreditation. This section of the Progress Report is intended to be brief and only identify the plans or process the institution intends to use to prepare itself for its next comprehensive review under the 2001 Standards of Accreditation and the new multi-stage review process.
9. *Concluding Statement.* Reflect on how the institutional response to the issues raised by the Commission has had an impact upon the institution, proposing recommendations and follow-up steps.
10. *Required Documents.*
  - current catalog(s);
  - completed Set of Required Data Exhibits ([http://www.wascweb.org/senior/Data\\_Exhibits.pdf](http://www.wascweb.org/senior/Data_Exhibits.pdf))
  - most recent Annual Report to the Commission;
  - budget for current year;
  - most recent financial statement and audit by an independent professional agency or, if a public institution, by the appropriate state agency; management letters, if any; and organization charts or tables, both administrative and academic, highlighting any major changes since the last visit.