

July 20, 2018

Dr. Sheldon Schuster
President
Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences
535 Watson Drive
Claremont, CA 91711

Dear President Schuster:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences (KGI) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27-29, 2018. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to KGI March 7-9, 2018. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by KGI prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's May 15, 2018 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues: Teri Cannon, Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO); Michael Jones, Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Vicki Chandler, Dean of the Minerva Schools at KGI; and, Steven Casper, Dean of the School of Applied Life Sciences. 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 fall 2025 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2026
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review to begin May 1, 2022
5. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by March 1, 2020 to address
 - a. Integrative planning across functional areas and financial decisions based on generating surpluses from operations
 - b. Development and implementation of a plan to significantly reduce debt incurred to fund operational growth
 - c. Continued dialogue on transparency, shared governance, research support, and faculty expectations for research, teaching, and service in personnel reviews, ensuring faculty have an influential voice in the leadership of the institution

Commendations

The Commission commends KGI in particular for the following:

1. A clear and concise institutional report that conveyed the institution's understanding of, and commitment to, its mission. The essay on the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree was particularly thoughtful and well documented.
2. The expanded portfolio of mission-aligned programs. This included the Minerva Schools at KGI (MSKGI), which has introduced innovative pedagogical practices to the broader institution.
3. A high level of confidence in the institution's leadership, and a highly involved and effective Board of Trustees.
4. Deep exploration of transparency, shared governance, the role of research in personnel reviews, and the productive lives of faculty. These efforts included numerous faculty surveys and focus groups and, most recently, the appointment of four committees of faculty and administrators to offer recommendations on these matters.
5. Strong retention, persistence, graduation and placement rates by relative and absolute standards. These include uniform rates across gender, race and ethnicity.
6. Student learning outcomes that are clearly stated, linked to core competencies, aligned to institutional outcomes, and a part of program review. Student development and assessment of intended outcomes are well supported by rubrics, capstones and externally benchmarked instruments. Evidence indicated that students are achieving the standards established by faculty.
7. A commitment to active and experiential learning, as articulated by faculty and administrative leadership across the institution.

Recommendations

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

1. Manage growth by integrating planning across functional areas including finance, facilities, technology, and staff and faculty levels, and by basing decisions not primarily on their impact on cash but also on the extent to which they generate surpluses from operations. (CFR 3.4, 3.5, 3.7)
2. Develop and execute a plan to significantly reduce debt incurred to finance operational growth to improve debt capacity for future capital growth. (CFR 3.4)
3. Translate KGI's diversity statement into action in a way that reflects the value KGI places on diversity in backgrounds, disciplines and thought. Such action should include broadening participation in graduate education by underrepresented students. (CFR 1.4, 3.1)

4. Continue the productive dialogue about transparency, shared governance, research support, and faculty expectations for research, teaching, and service in personnel reviews. Ensuring the faculty has an influential voice in the leadership of the institution will evidence progress. (CFR 2.8, 3.2, 3.10)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that KGI has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review for reaffirmation, the institution is encouraged to continue its progress, particularly with respect to student learning and success.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of KGI's governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the KGI'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 KGI 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/mam

Cc: Reed Dasenbrock, Commission Chair
Therese Cannon, ALO
James Widergren, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit team
Maureen A Maloney, Vice President