

March 17, 2023

Dr. David Vasquez-Levy  
President  
Pacific School of Religion  
1798 Scenic Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94709

Dear President Vasquez-Levy:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Pacific School of Religion (PSR) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 24, 2023. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to Pacific School of Religion November 2-5, 2022. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Pacific School of Religion prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's January 28, 2023 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Susan Abraham, Vice President for Academic Affairs and ALO; Murry Evans, Vice President of Enrollment and Marketing; and Natasha Lee, Vice President for Finance and Administration. 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 six years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2028 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2028
4. Schedule a Special Visit in fall 2025 to address all recommendations in this letter
5. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by March 1, 2024 to address:
  - a. Distance Education approvals and State Authorization
  - b. budget planning
  - c. HR structures

The Commission commends Pacific School of Religion in particular for the following:

1. A mission that permeates all decisions and functions.

2. Visionary leadership and a spirit of innovation, courage, and creativity giving rise to such changes as the implementation of a stackable curriculum and the Ignite program.
3. Creating an environment in which faculty, staff, and students experience a sense of belonging and a passion for education.
4. Attentiveness to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the changing landscape with respect to faith communities' emerging needs.
5. Diversifying revenue streams including successful sales and leases of properties resulting in moving to replenish endowment.

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

1. Create a proactive compliance plan that prioritizes Subchange approval for programs with more than 50% online, state authorizations for remote learning, and regular review of risk and compliance across all departments. (CFR 1.6, 1.7, 2.2, 3.5)
2. Use best practices for budgeting that include strategic marketing and enrollment, growth support, and assessment of deferred maintenance. (CFRs 1.7, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6)
3. Develop a clear, cohesive, and realistic plan for fundraising, involving key stakeholders. (CFR 1.7, 3.4)
4. Develop protocols in HR structures, processes, and procedures that support hiring practices, essential training, and support for all students, faculty and staff. (CFR 1.6, 1.7, 3.2, 3.4)
5. Develop systematic institutional research functions to inform data-driven decisions, including a program review process with direct assessment of student learning in relation to Program Learning Outcomes. (CFR 4.2)
6. Develop clear operational objectives, evaluative metrics, monetization strategy, enrollment, and marketing plans for the Ignite Institute. (CFR 4.1, 4.3, 4.7)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that Pacific School of Religion addressed the three Core Commitments and successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, Pacific School of Religion 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 is being sent to the chair of Pacific School of Religion's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Pacific School of Religion'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 Pacific School of Religion 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jamiene S. Studley".

Jamiene S. Studley  
President

JSS/mbg

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair  
Susan Abraham, ALO  
Sandra Nathan, Board Chair  
Members of the Accreditation Visit team  
Mark B. Goor, Vice President