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Providence College

Director of the Commission
BARBARA E. BRITTINGHAM
bbrittingham@neasc.org

Deputy Director of the Commission
PATRICIA M. O'BRIEN, SND
pobrien@neasc.org

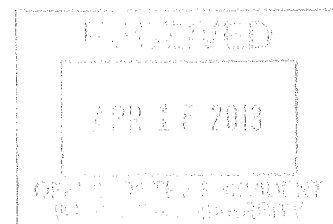
Associate Director of the Commission
CAROL L. ANDERSON
canderson@neasc.org

Associate Director of the Commission
ROBERT C. FROH
rfroh@neasc.org

Associate Director of the Commission
PAULA A. HARBECKE
pharbecke@neasc.org

April 10, 2013

Dr. Michael S. Roth
President
Wesleyan University
229 High Street, South College Building
Middletown, CT 06459



Dear President Roth:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on March 7, 2013, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education took the following action with respect to Wesleyan University:

that Wesleyan University be continued in accreditation;

that the University submit a fifth-year interim report for consideration in Fall 2017;

that, in addition to the information included in all interim reports, the University give emphasis to its success in:

1. assessing the impact of recent financial decisions on the institution's mission and financial sustainability and assuring the appropriate participation of the University's constituencies in decisions about resulting operational adjustments;
2. identifying and promoting the contributions of the institution's graduate programs, particularly its Ph.D. programs, as part of the University's mission and strategic vision;
3. establishing an effective advising model to assist undergraduate students in articulating their learning over the four years;

that the next comprehensive evaluation be scheduled for Fall 2022.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

Wesleyan University is continued in accreditation because the Commission finds the institution to be substantially in compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation*.

The Commission commends Wesleyan University for its informative and candid self-study, the product of a "time of intensive self reflection," that

provides a framework to further enhance the University's distinctive role as a "large small liberal arts college." We concur with the team that Wesleyan University is well managed and are pleased to learn that one area of focus of the institution's strategic plan, *Wesleyan 2020*, is to "work with a sustainable economic model while retaining core values." The work of the institution's faculty to maintain a balance between their scholarship and teaching duties exemplifies the scholar-teacher model of the University in which research feeds the work done in the classroom. We share the team's judgment and note with approval the vibrancy of the institution's open curriculum requiring students, with the support and guidance of faculty, to take responsibility for their own education. The variety of interdisciplinary Colleges/programs available to Wesleyan students, including the College of the Environment, Allbritton Center for the Study of Public Life, and the Disability Studies Cluster developed over the past five years, is laudable. In addition, we acknowledge the progress made to evaluate student achievement and note the establishment of a centralized committee to oversee general education assessment and to coordinate assessment efforts across departments including student affairs. Overall, the "intense" loyalty and commitment of the trustees, faculty, staff, and students position Wesleyan University well to continue to build on its strengths – academic and financial – consistent with its history and shared vision for the future.

Commission policy requires a fifth-year interim report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution's current status in keeping with the Policy on Periodic Review. In addition to the information included in all fifth-year reports the University is asked, in Fall 2017, to report on three matters related to our standards on *Mission and Purposes, Organization and Governance, Financial Resources, and Faculty*.

The University is commended for taking steps to ensure its long-term financial stability, proactively addressing the economic downturn by choosing to renovate laboratory space rather than construct a new Molecular and Life Sciences building, reducing the budget by \$25 million, and eliminating 60 staff positions. We recognize that while most of the campus community understood the rationale for the University's decisions to move from "need blind" to "need aware" admission for roughly 10% of applicants and to slow the rate of tuition increases in line with inflation, not all agreed with these decisions. We understand that the institution's leadership is committed to engaging all constituencies in the process of institutional decision-making, and note with favor that the ad-hoc budget priorities committee established in 2009 increased collaboration between faculty and administration. We ask that the Fall 2017 report give emphasis to the institution's success in assessing the impact of the financial decisions made on the institution's mission and financial sustainability, involving, as appropriate, the University's constituencies in decisions about operational adjustments made as a result. Our standards on *Mission and Purposes, Organization and Governance, and Financial Resources* provide this guidance:

The mission of the institution defines its distinctive character, addresses the needs of society and identifies the students the institution seeks to serve, and reflects both the institution's traditions and its vision for the future. The institution's mission provides the basis upon which the institution identifies its priorities, plans its future and evaluates its endeavors (1.1).

In accordance with established institutional mechanisms and procedures, the chief executive officer and the administration consult with faculty, students, other administrators and staff, and are appropriately responsive to their concerns, needs, and initiatives. The institution's internal governance provides for the appropriate participation of its constituencies, promotes communications, and effectively advances the quality of the institution (3.9).

The institution and its governing board regularly and systematically review the effectiveness of the institution's financial aid policy and practices in advancing the institution's mission and helping to ensure that the institution enrolls and supports the student body it seeks to serve (9.5).

The institution establishes and implements its budget after appropriate consultation with relevant constituencies in accord with realistic overall planning that provides for the appropriate integration of academic, student service, fiscal, development, information and technology and physical resource priorities to advance its educational objectives (9.8).

Along with the team, we find the institution's small number of graduate programs – eleven master's programs and six doctoral programs – “contribute to Wesleyan's character” and differentiate it relative to its peer group of selective liberal arts colleges. While these programs are distinctive and well resourced, little attention appears to be given to increasing their visibility. We understand that a study was recently undertaken to review the benefit of the graduate programs to the institution. As informed by our standard on *Mission* (cited above and below), the Fall 2017 report will provide an opportunity for the institution to update the Commission on the institution's success in identifying and promoting the contributions of its graduate programs, particularly its Ph.D. programs, as part of the University's mission and strategic vision:

The mission and purposes of the institution are accepted and widely understood by its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. They provide direction to the curricula and other activities and form the basis on which expectations for student learning are developed. Specific objectives, reflective of the institution's overall mission and purposes, are developed by the institution's individual units (1.4).

From the self-study, we understand that Wesleyan continues to focus on the role of faculty advisors in guiding student itineraries and in assessing students' achievement of their intellectual goals critical to the success of the open curriculum model. To address inequities in advising loads, particularly with respect to the need for quality pre-major advising, the University established a task force to review faculty advising. We understand that the task force has completed its report and that among its recommendations are balancing the number of pre-major advisees with those in the major and limiting advisees assigned to junior faculty. We note that this report, together with the results of the Committee on Service's review of faculty workload in general due by the end of Spring 2013, will next be debated by the faculty as a whole. We anticipate being apprised, in the Fall 2017 report, of the University's success in assuring that it “has in place an effective system of academic advising that meets student needs for information and advice and is compatible with its educational objectives” (5.19).

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2022 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years.

You will note that the Commission has specified no length or term of accreditation. Accreditation is a continuing relationship that is reconsidered when necessary. Thus, while the Commission has indicated the timing of the next comprehensive evaluation, the schedule should not be unduly emphasized because it is subject to change.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the self-study prepared by Wesleyan University and for the report submitted by the visiting team. The Commission also welcomed the opportunity to meet with you and Andrew Shennan, representing the team, during its deliberations.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its

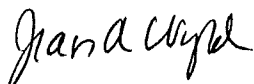
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accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Joshua Boger. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with Commission policy.

The Commission hopes that the evaluation process has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, Director of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jean A. Wyld

JAW/jm

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Joshua Boger
Visiting Team