

July 18, 2024

Dr. Mark Milliron  
President  
National University  
9388 Lightwave Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear President Milliron:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning National University (NU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting Friday, June 28, 2024. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to National University April 30- May 3, 2024, using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by NU prior to the Special Visit and the institution's response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues John Cicero, Provost; and Joseph Hoey, Assistant Chief of Staff, Vice President for Assessment and Accreditation. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) institutional issues (strategic plan, change management, systems integration, financial sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and board structure); (2) student issues (resources for student success, bar passage rates, and retention and graduation); and (3) faculty issues (faculty qualifications, workloads and expectations, part-time faculty development, doctoral faculty and student support, and complaint received by WSCUC)
2. Continue with the previously scheduled reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2027 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2028.
3. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by August 9, 2025, to address
  - a. financial issues. Please provide:
    - i. FY 2024 audited financial statements
    - ii. FY 2025 unaudited final statements
    - iii. FY 2026 approved budget
  - b. faculty handbook. Please provide the final version of the faculty handbook.
  - c. faculty governance. Please provide an update on progress in addressing faculty governance issues.

## **Commendations**

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. Navigating the period following the merger with effective leadership and organizational focus, ensuring a strategic approach, transparent communication, and a commitment to student success.
2. Demonstrating an intentional and deliberate strategy to manage change and create a new culture post-merger.
3. Fostering a consistent message and maintaining focus on implementing the strategic plan.
4. Making progress in carefully sequencing systems implementation and successfully integrating or adding several new systems.
5. Leveraging key data to inform strategic initiatives, thereby enhancing curriculum development, student support services, and institutional policies.
6. Implementing institutional structures, notably the Curriculum Review Committees spanning colleges and schools, to promote faculty leadership in reviewing and developing new curriculum.
7. Recognizing the importance and significant contributions of NU's part-time faculty and integrating them into the fabric of the institution.

## **Areas for Development**

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Address the year-over-year financial deficit caused in part by planned strategic investments and other expenses from the merger. Identify and resolve areas of financial strain while optimizing resource allocation to achieve long-term financial stability. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
2. Continue efforts to address concerns regarding faculty governance structures by providing clearly identified opportunities for faculty to voice concerns and contribute to decision-making. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7)
3. Further enhance faculty opportunities to propose, review, and implement changes to existing curriculum and courses. (CFRs 2.5, 2.6)
4. Finalize the faculty handbook in partnership with the faculty, ensuring it aligns with the university's evolving needs and goals. (CFRs 3.1 - 3.3)

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of NU's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on NU'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 National University 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,



Jamiene S. Studley  
President

JSS/bgd

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair  
Joseph Hoey, ALO  
Ruthann Heinrich, Board Chair  
Members of the Special Visit Team  
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President