

October 10, 2013

Dear Department Chairs:

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the progress of the reaccreditation process and to enlist your help in preparing the campus for the upcoming accreditation visit.

As many of you know, the campus is in the midst of review by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). On March 4, 2013, the campus submitted its Institutional Reaccreditation Report to WASC. Following the WASC team offsite review on May 13, 2013, the campus received the Summary of Team Findings report, which commended UC Davis's accomplishments and recommended the next step in the review: an accreditation visit. In anticipation of the accreditation visit, the WASC review team identified four primary areas of inquiry: Educational Effectiveness, Student Success, Budget and Finance, and Managing Growth. The WASC team requested that Academic Senate committee chairs from the following committees be available for meetings with the team during the accreditation visit: Courses of Instruction (general education course approval); General Education (general education assessment); Undergraduate Council; Graduate Council; and Planning and Budget. In addition, the WASC team wishes to meet with department chairs. Therefore, you should be prepared to respond to questions such as: Have assessment plans for your PLOs been completed? Have any assessments been carried out or are any scheduled in the near future? If not, what has your unit done to plan for outcomes assessment?

As the planning office for the visit, the Office of Undergraduate Education will coordinate those meetings. The WASC team also requested updates on various ongoing faculty activities indicated in the Institutional Reaccreditation Report.

Campus collaboration has had a tremendous positive impact on the accreditation process thus far. As we continue to prepare for the accreditation visit, April 9-11, 2014, we wish to enlist your continued assistance with Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) assessment.

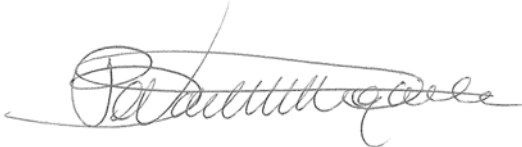
UC Davis has a number of resources that your unit can access to help you develop assessment plans. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) is staffed to assist programs with PLO assessment. Assessment coordinators in CETL provide consultative support to faculty and programs at any stage in the development of plans for evaluating educational effectiveness. Departments interested in assessment support are encouraged to visit the CETL website and contact the assessment coordinators directly: <http://cetl.ucdavis.edu/assess>. For those programs still developing assessment plans, CETL is presenting a fall faculty seminar series on academic assessment, starting this week, which may be of interest. For more information about the series, please see: <http://cetl.ucdavis.edu/assess/events.html>.

The Academic Senate, through its Undergraduate Council, has repeatedly confirmed the authority and responsibility of the program faculty in setting curricular goals and determining the best ways to assess instructional effectiveness (see communication from Undergraduate

Council Chair Matthew Traxler: <http://academicsenate.ucdavis.edu/documents/Learning-Outcome-Assessment.pdf>). All campus programs completed and submitted a statement of PLO by the end of February 2013. Some programs have already begun formulating plans for the periodic assessment of each of their PLO and a few pilot assessment studies have been done or are underway. Our goal is to have all units engaged in outcomes assessment planning during this academic year. We ask that all units will have completed such planning and launched their assessment by fall quarter, 2014.

We are counting on your attention to the important matters discussed in this memo and encourage you to take time now to prepare your department and faculty. More information concerning the WASC review at UC Davis is available at: <http://wasc.ucdavis.edu/>.

Sincerely,



Bruno Nachtergaele, Chair  
Davis Division of the Academic Senate



Carolyn de la Pena, Interim Vice Provost  
Undergraduate Education