



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
200 CALIFORNIA HALL #150

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720-1500

February 9, 2004

Ralph A. Wolff
Executive Director
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
985 Atlantic Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Executive Director Wolff:

I appreciate this opportunity to respond to the Report of the WASC Visiting Team for the Educational Effectiveness Review, as well as to provide an update on some of the key issues raised in the report.

The campus has benefited greatly from the opportunity to engage in a sustained self-study process over the last two and a half years. Despite the abbreviated timeline we had to work with, I am pleased at the amount we were able to accomplish. Most importantly, I am proud of the extent to which we were able to engage a very broad cross-section of the campus community—faculty, staff, students and senior administrators—in productive dialogue and discussion as part of the accreditation process.

The evaluation contained in the Visiting Team Report was encouraging and helps to dispel some of the stereotypes we labor under concerning the nature of undergraduate education at a large research university. In particular, the Team recognized many of our campus successes and model programs, such as Educational Technology Services, the Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Center, the Mellon Library/Faculty Fellows for Undergraduate Research, and faculty innovations in large enrollment course in Physics, Anthropology, History, and Computer Science, to name just a few. The Team acknowledged our energy and commitment to undergraduate education and encouraged us to find ways to sustain them beyond the accreditation review process.

The team also recognized important challenges the campus faces if we are to build on our successes around undergraduate education, and I would like to address two of these issues and to update you on changes since the site visit:

1. Academic Program Review

The Visiting Team report raised some concerns about progress on improvements to the campus's academic program review process. Given the abbreviated timeline of our educational effectiveness review, we were not able to make as much progress in this area as we would have liked. Nevertheless, we were pleased that the Team endorsed the recommendations of the Academic Program Review Working Group, contained in the Educational Effectiveness Report, and urged us to move forward without delay to implement those recommendations.

Since the site visit, the campus has taken several important steps toward this end. The Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost has consolidated all administrative functions and responsibilities related to academic program review

under the Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Facilities, situating the program review function in a single office (previously it was split between the Graduate Division and the Division of Undergraduate Education) directly under the Provost's aegis. Although the leadership of that office is in transition, owing to the recent retirement of the incumbent, the function will be one of the primary responsibilities of his successor. The Office of Planning and Analysis has been empowered to serve in a chief coordinating role vis-à-vis all institutional research data related to the program review process and to work closely with the Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Facilities to oversee the data function. These changes strengthen and reinforce the existing relationship between the Provost's Office and the Office of Planning and Analysis, which had been eroded in recent years, but which was historically a strong one. We are confident that these administrative and organizational realignments will enable us to move forward rapidly to implement the working group's recommendations.

2. Implementation and Institutional Planning

The Visiting Team also raised important questions regarding how the campus will move forward with the implementation of the various recommendations contained in the WASC report. How does the WASC self-study relate to other campus-wide planning efforts (e.g. the Strategic Academic Plan) and how will the momentum generated during the self-study process be sustained and carried out? The Team rightly notes that what it calls "the strength and genius of the 'Berkeley Way'—a commitment to academic quality through individual excellence, strong faculty governance, and a decentralized administration" must also be balanced by strong leadership that will enable us to meet our institutional goals. I agree with this analysis, and, together with the senior administrators who comprise my Cabinet, I have developed a Cabinet Plan which serves as the primary campus mechanism for tracking our progress as a campus.

The Cabinet Plan is intended to coordinate and create linkages between the recommendations and content of key planning documents (e.g. the Strategic Academic Plan, the Educational Effectiveness Report) and to tie them to the five major priorities I announced upon becoming chancellor, to Cabinet goals and initiatives, and to specific metrics for success. It is a living document, which is revised on an on-going basis, and which serves as an important tool for measuring our annual progress. The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education serves as the cabinet sponsor for several initiatives related to teaching and learning, specifically those related to my second priority: "Advance student learning by integrating the benefits of technology, curriculum, innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and research opportunities." This mechanism ensures that the valuable recommendations generated during our accreditation self-study are incorporated into the campus's long-term institutional planning.

I would like to extend my deep appreciation to Chair David Ward and all of the members of the Preparatory Review and Educational Effectiveness Visiting Teams for their thoughtful insights and recommendations. I know that we will continue to benefit from their input as we move into the future.

Best regards,

/s/

Robert M. Berdahl
Chancellor

cc: Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Gray
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Christina Maslach
ALO Charles Upshaw