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Ralph A. Wolff

July 13, 2010

Michael Harter
Senior Provost
Touro University California
1310 Johnson Lane, Mare Island
Vallejo, CA 94592

Dear Provost Harter:

At its meeting on June 16-18, 2010, the Commission considered the report of the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) team that conducted the visit to Touro University California, visiting both the Vallejo and Henderson campuses, on March 23 - 26, 2010. The Commission also reviewed the Educational Effectiveness report submitted by the University prior to the visit, as well as the institution's response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and Marilyn Hopkins, provost and chief operating officer, and Robyn Nelson, dean of the College of Health and Human Services and ALO. The updates and additional information you provided and your observations were helpful.

As with the visit and report from the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the Commission's deliberations encompassed two somewhat discrete institutions operating under singular executive leadership and thus addressed by a single accrediting action. Initially dividing itself into two units, the team was able to conduct evaluations at both the Nevada and California locations then consolidate their findings through a joint meeting at the conclusion. On each campus, the team found faculty and staff seriously engaged in and respectful of the review process, ready to speak to its beneficial impact. Though each campus has developed a somewhat distinctive character, they are bound together by a common mission that is visibly guiding their development. Touro's careful alignment of its self-study with its own assessment under each of the 42 WASC Criteria for Review allowed the team to quickly evaluate the institution's achievements in relation to the Standards.

The team was impressed in particular with the dedication of the faculty to providing an effective educational experience for their students, the respect demonstrated for stable and responsive leadership, and the significant physical facilities being developed in somewhat unconventional settings. The team noted that student learning outcomes were widely used to both frame and assess student learning in all programs and were integrated with the institution's larger quality assurance processes. The institution's relationship with its central office in New York, in which the complex interplay between support and autonomy continues to evolve, continues in a generally positive direction.

The Commission endorses the commendations and recommendations of the team and draws the institution's attention to the following areas for continuing attention.

Clinical Education. In a context of increasing competition for appropriate clinical training sites for medical students, it is critical that Touro University continue its diligent efforts to secure clinical settings for its students that are adequate in numbers, appreciative of the osteopathic tradition, and convenient to students. While this appears more critical for the California campus than for Nevada, both campuses also will need to press their endeavors to

ensure that clinical preceptors are appropriately trained for their educative functions. This would include both assessing and expanding preceptors' ability to participate in assessment of their students' clinical competencies and, subsequently, to submit achievement data for use in program review. Efforts currently under way to align clinical education outcomes with those expected for the COMLEX should be continued. Additional staffing in support of clinical rotations, as is being implemented at the Nevada campus, may be a model for the California campus as well. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2 and Guideline, 3.3)

Institutional Outcomes. The initiative being pursued at the time of the visit to establish and assess institution-level learning outcomes holds promise to solidify the mission and image of Touro University at both locations and to frame higher level collaborations between the campuses. Building on lessons learned from the assessment of the first two outcomes, the institution should continue these efforts with the remaining outcomes, ensuring that the results are used to enhance effectiveness. Student affairs personnel should participate, as appropriate, in defining and assessing these overarching outcomes. (CFRs 2.3, 2.6, 2.10)

Program Review. While the institution has been able to leverage quite effectively the benefits of professional accreditation toward its WASC reviews, the parallels are not always explicit with the expected outcomes from well-planned program review. The Commission urges the institution to build on the substantial groundwork that has been done for staging its program reviews by extending them to all degree programs. Plans to draw on multiple sources of data for these reviews, including from student affairs endeavors, should be diligently pursued. The expanding role of the Institutional Research offices on both campuses should be brought in more fully to support program review. As appropriate, results from program reviews should be linked to strategic planning and budgeting. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 2.11, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8)

Relationships with the Touro System. The Commission acknowledges the progress that has been made in establishing greater operational autonomy for the California and Nevada campuses in relation to the Touro College central offices in New York, while still preserving the many sponsoring benefits enjoyed through this relationship. Given the effectiveness of the operations of the two campuses, the Commission urges that further steps be taken to delegate more authority to the TUC leadership, particularly in relation to budget and policy matters. Processes that more readily facilitate decisions and actions at the campus level should also be explored. (CFRs 1.3, 1.6, 3.8, 4.6)

Faculty Development. Touro University has been able to recruit qualified faculty with commendable commitments to student learning. The Commission recommends that the institution expand its efforts around faculty development, including greater opportunities for faculty research, focused support for enhanced pedagogical skills, and more refined policies related to review and advancement, workload balances, and incentives. For clinical faculty, opportunities for participating in practice plans should be explored. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)

The Commission acted to:

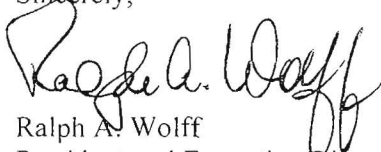
1. Receive the Educational Effectiveness Review team report and reaffirm the accreditation of Touro University California.
2. Schedule the Capacity and Preparatory Review for spring 2018 and the Educational Effectiveness Review for fall 2019. The Institutional Proposal will be due in spring 2016.
3. Request an Interim Report due on March 1, 2014 to ensure progress in matters related to institutional outcomes, clinical education, program review, system relationships, and faculty development as described in this letter.

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that Touro University California has satisfactorily addressed the Core Commitments to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness, and has successfully completed the three-stage review conducted under the Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review, the institution is expected to continue its progress, particularly with respect to educational effectiveness and student learning.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the president and CEO of Touro College and Touro University, and the chair of Touro University's governing board in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement, and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in them.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that the University undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WASC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while assuring public accountability, and we are grateful for your continued support of our process. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Ralph A. Wolff
President and Executive Director

RW/rw

cc: Sherwood Lingenfelter, Commission Chair
Robyn Nelson, ALO
Mark Hasten, Board Chair
Alan Kadish, President and CEO of Touro College and Touro University
Members of the EER team
Richard Winn