

Dear WASC Senior College and University Commission:

Saybrook University is grateful for the Commission's continuing support for the peer review process in the reaffirmation of accreditation. As a not-for-profit, graduate institution, we are driven by a humanistic mission focused on social justice. It was with that lens through which we first chose to engage in the self-study process over two years ago. Since then, the Saybrook community has critically examined our programs, structures, policies, and processes as we explored our organization and the delivery of academics. Faculty, staff, administrators, board members, and students participated in numerous internal and external trainings and gathered together to discuss best practices in higher education. We committed to transparency with the reviewers and, perhaps, more importantly, with ourselves. As a result of this multi-year self-study, we identified both strengths and areas for growth as a university. We have also gained great respect for the significance of this process in higher education and wish to thank all involved.

Throughout this process, we have leaned on and learned from our liaison at the WSCUC office, Dr. Barbara Gross Davis. Always responsive and supportive, she was instrumental in preparing us for a successful site visit. Led by Dr. Katrina Rogers, our review team was well-prepared, engaged, dialogical, and unconditionally collegial. It was a pleasure to have the team on site and their feedback was outstanding. Their time and efforts to truly understand the Saybrook story in combination with their knowledge of best practices will serve to strengthen the future of our University.

We believe that the WSCUC self-study process, feedback from the site visit, final commendations and recommendations, and our future goals position Saybrook for a strong and sustainable future, one that continues to be driven by its humanistic mission, vision, and values. We "provide rigorous graduate education that inspires transformational change in individuals, organizations, and communities, toward a just, humane, and sustainable world." It is because of this historic mission and our students, that the President, Provost, Board, administration, faculty, and staff remain committed to building a Saybrook that not only survives but thrives well beyond the year 2025.

We now offer the following responses to the 2018 report of the WSCUC team:

**Finance:** Financial viability remains the key priority for Saybrook University. We are currently investing greater marketing resources to increase the potential applicant pool. We have also identified a strategy for investing in a financial push for resources in early spring, 2019 to increase the enrollment prospects. Resources continue to be placed into our grassroots/outreach efforts, which include increased presence regionally and nationally at graduate fairs, professional conferences, and events that provide the university both high visibility and access to potential new students. In the last six months, the Director of Outreach and Advancement has attended over 30 recruitment events. We are also pursuing new partnerships with a variety of businesses that include branded degree and credentialing programs, leveraging our virtual learning platform such that we can appeal to employees' needs for flexibility.

The Board of Trustees recently completed strategic visioning that paves the way for the institution's next strategic plan (to be completed by summer/fall 2019). Their expectation is that during the plan development process, the university identifies multiple avenues for expanding revenue beyond tuition inclusive of institutional advancement. Presently, the institution is on track to exceed pledges and donations by about 10% over last year with the goal of increasing pledged giving next year by 15% to 20%. Efforts to expand the development function will begin in fall 2018 with the objective of giving portfolios, donor cultivation plans, and paving the way for a capital campaign to take place in FY 2020.

**Program Pricing:** We continue to review program pricing on an ongoing basis and anticipate adjustments to pricing especially as we seek to build organizational/corporate partnerships that expand on

the use of cohorts. As we further align our tuition rates across the colleges and build enrollment volume, we will review pricing to ensure greater competitiveness and accessibility for students.

**Use of Data in Retention:** At the end of this year (2018), graduation data that is in line with traditional graduation rate formatting will be produced by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) using the first full set of available data from 2014. Since Saybrook's affiliation with TCS ES, OIR has collected this data and will now be able to provide a more in-depth analysis on retention and available graduation data by college, program, ethnicity, age and college experience. This data will be used to inform the direction of the Retention Committee planning and resources. Saybrook will have a short-term retention and graduation plan in place by fall 2018 which will cover a year timeline focused on building out infrastructure support and a 3-year long-term plan in place by the end of fall 2018.

**Program Review and Assessment:** In summer, 2018, a Program Review Task Force committee will begin meeting to prioritize university-wide standardization in the program review process. Programs across colleges have been charged to adopt relevant parts of the Counseling Department's exemplary Program Review process. Representatives from across the university will comprise committee membership. Saybrook will continue to work with OIR to institutionalize the collection and dissemination of data and to use the results for program improvement and allocation of resources.

**Addressing Faculty Workload:** One of Saybrook's top priorities during the next fiscal year includes continuing to address faculty morale through the adoption of a faculty workload and evaluation plan. We will also focus on clarifying decision-making roles in a shared governance model. In direct response to the WSCUC recommendation, two new task forces created to address faculty morale will begin meeting in summer, 2018. These committees (Faculty Evaluation and Shared Governance) include representatives from faculty, adjunct faculty, staff, and administration. Currently, the Provost, College Deans, and finance department continue to review and adjust a recent iteration of the workload formula proposed by the Faculty Workload Committee. A ranking proposal also continues to be reviewed and adjusted by a Faculty Senate sub-committee.

**Reduction of Organizational Silos:** The Saybrook Academic Affairs Leadership Council (AALC) and University Leadership Council (ULC) with representation from faculty, staff, students, and administration will continue to work across the university and solidify their roles in the shared governance structure of the university. The two councils will identify opportunities for standardization to further unify the community. For example, revisions to academic policy, new programs, and new academic and university-wide policy proposals are now brought to the councils for review and adoption. The Office of Academic Affairs (AA) continues a project that began last year to revise and standardize all syllabi. AA will continue to work on clarifying policies and procedures in the catalog to cut down on disparate policies that may still exist in the degree programs and colleges. The Diversity Task Force, comprised of representatives from faculty, staff, administration, and the student body, will address issues of diversity and further a culture of mutual respect and inclusion. Student Leadership Council (SLC) is increasingly engaging student leaders from both colleges. The university-wide residential conference will continue to focus on building one community for Saybrook faculty, staff, and students. In all our meetings, events, and committees, we continue to prioritize the breakdown of silos as we build a unified Saybrook across all disciplines, programs, and colleges.

Thank you again for your stewardship of this educational opportunity.

Saybrook University