

REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 1

To LOS ANGELES PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

November 14 – 16, 2017

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The team evaluated the institution under the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. Once an institution achieves either candidacy or initial accreditation, the team report and Commission Action Letter associated with the review that resulted in the granting of either candidacy or initial accreditation and the team reports and Commission Action Letters of any subsequent reviews will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and Visit

The institution submitting their Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 (SAV1) Report is the Los Angeles Pacific University (LAPU), currently doing business as University College (UC) and operating as a division of Azusa Pacific University (APU). This section of the team report provides a chronological history of the institution beginning in 2010 and summarizes LAPU's WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) eligibility and candidacy experiences.

Los Angeles Pacific University began serving students using technology-mediated approaches to postsecondary education under the name of Azusa Pacific Online University (APOU). According to the SAV1 Report prepared by LAPU, "APOU's educational programs were to be Christ-centered, of high academic quality, accessible, affordable, sustainable and market relevant" (p. 5).

In October 2010, members of the APU and APOU administration shared their plans with WASC and it was agreed that the newly formed entity would seek initial accreditation under what was then called Pathway B. APOU would begin as a separate division within APU and would develop its initial academic programs under the aegis of APU. In December 2011, the WASC Eligibility Review Committee granted APOU eligibility status, thus permitting the institution to move forward to seek accreditation under the terms of Pathway B. At that time, the following areas warranted attention.

1. Operational independence of the board,
2. Full-time Chief Executive Officer (by initial accreditation),
3. Adequate numbers of APOU faculty,

4. Faculty designated to oversee General Education,
5. Faculty development for online learning, and
6. In-house institutional research and planning.

In September 2012, APOU submitted the Pathway B self-study report and a site visit team found most concerns addressed; some work remained. The early outlines of the distinctive APOU online education were visible, most notably the development of “life coaches,” now referred to as “student success coaches.” Life coaches provided student support and assistance for both academic work and personal issues in partnership with faculty members and staff in the service units. At that time, it was unclear whether the institution would be able to scale up the life coach model as enrollment grew or maintain efforts to create a sustainable and responsive organizational model to provide the capacity for further growth. It was too early in APOU’s efforts to review the process by which APOU would develop online degree programs or to evaluate whether the institution was prepared to implement, monitor, and evaluate those organizational efforts. It was also unclear how well the institution would adapt, develop, and deliver a larger and growing array of academic programs in response to the demands of changing professional practice, and to revise them regularly based on a study of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic quality and outcomes of the programs. Similarly, it was too soon to tell whether APOU would be able to sustain its commitment to offering a four-year undergraduate degree whose cost was to be no more than median household income in the United States, and to create the financial stability required to support this ambitious goal.

In January 2013, in response to the expectation that APOU would develop a separate identity from APU, APOU underwent a legal name change to Los Angeles Pacific University

(LAPU). The WSCUC Commission granted candidacy in February 2013; commendations and recommendations are summarized in Section C of this report. In April 2014, the APU Board of Trustees elected to retain APOU as a division of APU and to pause the accreditation process. This decision was followed by a merger of APOU and the APU School of Adult and Professional Studies (APS) to create APU's LAPU / University College (UC). The APU Board elected to withdraw LAPU/UC from the initial accreditation process to allow time to build a sustainable institutional model. The institution then accelerated the process of creating the capacity to develop and offer affordable, accessible, and faith-based curriculum for a diverse community of career-oriented adults. In this report, reference will be made to the emerging institution by its legal designation, LAPU.

LAPU relocated from APU's main campus in Azusa to San Dimas, CA in 2015, and annually grew in enrollment and financial stability. LAPU's campus is a collection of leased offices, meeting rooms, and classrooms for a total of 182 FTEs of staff and faculty. APU's WSCUC accredited programs, approved from 2011 to 2017, are offered at LAPU in mostly online formats with the exception of three programs carried over from APU that are delivered in a face-to-face format. Programs include one certificate, two associate degree programs, 10 bachelors programs, and three master's-level degrees. Two additional bachelors programs and one master's-level program are in development. The online programs are offered via Moodle; the onsite programs are available at the San Dimas campus, and the APU branch campuses in Murrieta and San Diego. For the purposes of this report, the visit and interviews were conducted at the campus location in San Dimas; Moodle access was provided to online programs.

LAPU's total enrollment grew from 225 in FY 2012 to 3,150 in FY 2017, with 86% of students enrolled in undergraduate degrees. This enrollment growth and financial stability contributed to the APU's Board of Trustees decision to approve a systems-relationship between APU and LAPU effective May 2017. The system will link the two separate institutions in a relationship that will provide shared services informed by a mutually beneficial commitment to a faith-based mission and service to two distinctive groups of students. The APU system will provide mutual support and a greater capacity for both institutions to adapt to new expectations and opportunities. The logic behind this approach is creative and promising. LAPU will represent a distinctive observation post and innovative center for reading the unpredictable and changing environment in which institutions of higher education now operate. This approach provides support for students who are seeking advancement in their careers or who wish to prepare for a career change and /or who have not been well served by more traditional educational environments.

To advance LAPU as a unique institution, the APU Board reactivated the WSCUC accreditation process in 2017 and is currently seeking initial accreditation to be recognized as an institution that is independent of APU, yet part of the APU system.

B. The Institution's Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 Report

1. Alignment with the Letter of Intent

Los Angeles Pacific University's letter of intent (2017) thoroughly addressed two of seven recommendations noted in the site visit report following the granting of eligibility (September 2012); clear planning was noted in other areas as LAPU has progressed past the eligibility stage. Details of progress are provided in Section C.

2. Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

The team commends LAPU for preparing a well-organized and clearly written Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 (SAV 1) Report which was submitted in time for the team's review prior to the November 14 – 16, 2017 visit. The members of the visiting team were impressed by the quality of the evidence presented to document LAPU's progress. For each Standard, LAPU identified areas of strength and needed improvement. Additional material requested was promptly and thoroughly provided. The schedule for the site visit itself was well organized and offered the team an opportunity to follow issues from the executive level to the experiences of individual staff and faculty members.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Eligibility Review Committee Letter

Since 2011, this institution has engaged in WSCUC's eligibility and candidacy review process with a pause between April 2014 and May 2017 while LAPU addressed the issues raised in earlier WSCUC reviews. The Eligibility Review Committee letter granted APOU eligibility, noting several recommendations related to Criteria 4, 5, 10, 13, 14, and 20 (December 11, 2011). APOU addressed those recommendations as it prepared for a site visit to review APOU's application to be admitted to candidacy for accreditation. A site visit in September 2012 resulted in the Commission's granting of candidacy in February 2013. The Commission noted two commendations: the clearly stated mission and innovative business model. The Commission also identified three areas for attention; the institution was committed to addressing the recommendations as summarized in Table 1, with details in this report's Standard 2, 3, and 4 sections.

Table 1
WSCUC Commission 2013 Recommendations with 2017 LAPU Status

<p>Recommendations from WSCUC Commission action to grant candidacy March 11, 2013</p>	<p>LAPU Status November 2017</p>
<p>1. Develop a separate APOU identity, as a distinct institution [unique mission, branding, strengths], supported by its own, staff [institutional research], administrative leadership, and resources.</p> <p>Expand the Board and its independence of APU.</p>	<p>LAPU has developed, published, and integrated a unique purpose, vision, values to support students with affordable and accessible programs. A prototype for branding has been prepared to be released pending WSCUC approval. (Standard One)</p> <p>LAPU is operating with its own resources, staff, administrative leadership, and Board. (Standard Three)</p>
<p>2. Demonstrate financial stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial independence from APU, • Own financial statements, and • Revenue to support small class sizes and life coaches. 	<p>Evidence of financial stability (Standard Three) accomplished with support for program development and personnel, including life coaches (student success coaches).</p>
<p>3. Documentation of program reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete sufficient number of program reviews noting what was learned and changed. • Document results of SLO assessment. • Evidence of faculty ownership of academic programs, including more fully engaged adjunct faculty. 	<p>LAPU has advanced (Standard 2, 4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed one Associate and one Bachelor / 15 program reviews. Plans chart completion of 13 remaining programs. • Reviews include documentation of what was learned and changed; external reviewers' evaluation included. • Assessment of SLOs reported annually • Adjunct faculty somewhat engaged; some are engaged in course development.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC’S STANDARDS

Standard 1. Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

Standard 1 reviews Los Angeles Pacific University’s purpose and values, and ways in which they are articulated throughout the institution.

Institutional Purposes.

Los Angeles Pacific University (LAPU) currently operates under **APU’s mission statement**

LAPU has identified its own vision, purpose, and

core values of “caring, learning, and exemplary,”

as published on the **Los Angeles Pacific**

University / UC website (prototype developing,

We create for people a new hope for the future by investing in lives through learning pathways that are Christ-centered, flexible, and accessible.
LAPU/UC Purpose

to be launched once WSCUC accreditation is achieved). A concerted effort is evident to align the LAPU purpose in every aspect of the institution, including the development of course syllabi and programs, and the alignment of institutional, program, and course learning outcomes. (CFR 1.1) To advance its purpose, the team found that LAPU has brought together an impressive group of faculty, staff, and senior administrators who share the purpose within a distinctive culture that is better lived than told. Individuals interviewed spoke with something inspiring to say and appeared to be guided by a shared worldview based on the tenets of Christianity.

As evidenced by developed academic policies and practices, illustrated by the first two program reviews now being completed, LAPU has institutional, program, and course learning outcomes integrated into course syllabi. The institution is developing new approaches to monitoring persistence, retention and graduation rates. This information constitutes an Early Alert system that helps both faculty members and student success coaches identify problems as they emerge and while intervention may still be possible.

(CFR 1.2)

Integrity and Transparency.

LAPU has developed clear policies that guide their approach to academic freedom within a faith-based context. The leadership team defined LAPU as an “open access institution” that welcomes all qualified students without a consideration of their faith tradition or absence thereof. These efforts are guided by the central value of creating hope for all students, many of whom have not been successful in their earlier postsecondary experiences at other institutions. (CFR 1.3)

The institution demonstrated commitment to diversity and equity as is evidenced in the composition of its student body and its staff. In support of its purpose, LAPU seeks to offer accessible and affordable degree options that are market driven and career-oriented within a faith-based experience. Students are offered the opportunity to explore their own values and to create a worldview that can shape their own lives. The LAPU culture is authentic, mindful, purposeful, and practiced naturally and consistently. Members of the LAPU community demonstrated their value system naturally and consistently throughout our visit. (CFR 1.4) At the time when LAPU is granted initial accreditation status, their relationship with APU will be carefully planned and further defined. The institution is continuing to expand the numbers and expertise of its Board members. (CFR 1.5) The new Board is planned to be smaller than the APU Board and composed of individuals who are innovative and entrepreneurial in experience and interest. Choosing members of the first full board will set a pattern of governance that is especially attuned to the character and purpose of LAPU.

LAPU provides a well-designed eLearning (online) model, with quality structure, supports, and the commitment of the staff to continuous improvement. The technical aspects of the eLearning platform are exemplary, providing both students and faculty with engaging and helpful resources that enhance the teaching and learning environment. Members of the LAPU community demonstrate to potential students the online model, its expectations, and supports available. (CFR 1.6)

LAPU has established sustainable business practices and its budget has grown as its enrollment has grown. Mechanisms are in place to review the achievements of the strategic plan annually in the form of an institutional “report card.” LAPU has a clear protocol for seeking resolution to any complaints. (CFR 1.7) As affirmed by WSCUC personnel, the institution is transparent and has communicated responsively. (CFR 1.8)

Overall, the team finds that LAPU, for Standard 1, to be in sufficient compliance for initial accreditation, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with this Standard.

Standard 2. Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

Teaching and Learning.

Standard 2 addresses the LAPU’s ability to achieve its purposes and educational outcomes at both the institutional and program level through core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. Los Angeles Pacific University’s educational programs, including their content, number of units, and academic quality, appear to conform to recognized standards and are subject to internal and peer review. (CFR 2.1, 2.7) LAPU clearly defines its standards for admission,

and the level of achievement expected at the course, general education, and program levels and has a rigorous process in place to ensure meaning, quality, and integrity of the degrees. (CFR's 2.2, 2.2a, 2.2b) A sufficient number of faculty have advanced degrees as well as the industry experiences needed for LAPU's educational purpose of providing adult education leading towards new or enhanced career opportunities for its students. The institution has a well-defined general educational program that is integrated throughout the curriculum, including at the upper division, as well as significant in-depth study of a major field. Additionally, master's-level work includes adequate rigor and oversight. While not all master's-level courses are taught by full-time faculty, the expertise of the part-time/adjunct faculty, as well as the excellent course design team, make for an engaging and rigorous curriculum.

The institution provided evidence of developed and interrelated institutional, program, and course learning outcomes, as well as an "early and often" assessment system including annual reviews and the six-year program review cycle. Methodical and thorough planning and study have informed the design of the process being used by the institution for annual program reviews. LAPU has a number of robust data collection and administrative processes that contribute to supporting student learning and improving the planning, revising, and delivery of curriculum. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6) In reviewing the Institutional Plan for The Assessment of Learning Outcomes and meeting with the design team, full-time and part-time faculty, assistant deans, and Executive Leadership, the team determined that LAPU collects data and evidence using a number of methods, which contribute to changes at the course, program, and institutional levels. LAPU uses indirect, direct, formative, and summative assessments. Rubric development has occurred at the undergraduate and

graduate levels and these expectations are published in syllabi. Students are surveyed after each course; faculty also complete an end-of-course survey with notes for recommended changes. Key or signature assignments, that represent the end points of the learning outcomes, are sampled and assessed using an agreed upon rubric. This assessment rubric is different from the rubric used to grade the assignment. The assessment process incorporates many best practices: Triangulation of data, direct measures supported by indirect measures; data sources are examined and integrated into supporting academic decisions.

Program reviews and the Annual Educational Effectiveness Evaluation (AE3) are timed so that they can be incorporated into strategic planning, Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee deliberations and budget decisions made by the Executive Leadership. These academic activities are aligned with the institution's commitment to innovation, nimbleness, and continuous improvement. In team meetings with staff, academic leadership, and faculty, it appeared that this work was neither too onerous nor a process of "checking the boxes." The work appeared to be completed with meaning, integrity, and intent. Each data source has a unit, committee, or process responsible for using that information to make meaningful change. LAPU is also finding ways to identify and modify or eliminate processes that do not add value to the institution, such as ending the mid-term survey of students. As the institution grows and there are more programs and courses, LAPU has developed the capacity to be mindful of data collection and processes that no longer add value. For this small institution, LAPU has a large apparatus devoted to learning assessment and continuous improvement.

Key to the assessment process is the development of the curriculum, as LAPU stated, “Starting the curriculum design process with learning outcomes ensures that the learning process remains learner-centered rather than content-centered” (Institutional Plan for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes, p. 7). Of importance is also the role played by the e-Learning team and their partners in curricular development, deployment, and revision. Faculty, assistant deans, and the e-Learning team create Moodle courses that align with the course, program, general education, and institutional learning outcomes. Their approach is to “look at the whole learner; their heads, their hearts, their hands” (member eLearning team, personal communication, November 15, 2017). The platform and design define each learning task with a specific purpose.

Of note in the assessment process is the program review. (CFR 2.07) The process is developed and in the initial stages of implementation, as two self-studies are underway with completed external reviews, demonstrating a useful, integrated process with meaning, integrity, and intent. A schedule for the remaining program reviews has been developed. Assessment of student learning is a foundational intent upon which the program review process is based. Program reviews are now timed such that results will be available to inform annual curricular and fiscal year budgetary processes.

The team observed the beginning efforts of the newly formed Faith Integration Task Force. LAPU’s purpose and pedagogy are inextricably linked to the integration of a Christian worldview. The team noted robust on-site evidence of such integration in many forms such as student success coaches praying with students and course assignments that require reflecting on scripture in the context of course content.

Scholarship and Creative Activity.

The team found evidence that scholarship, creative work, and curriculum innovation are supported for student, staff and faculty. (CFR 2.8) With 90% of faculty being part-time adjunct faculty, the periodic faculty newsletter as well as the developing Moodle communities of learners are positive steps. (CFR 2.11) Boyer's Model of Scholarship is used as the scholarship framework; LAPU is working to document what that scholarship means and how it contributes to faculty evaluation, teaching, and service. (CFR 2.9) Professional development funds are available, as noted in Standard 3.

Student Learning and Success.

There is clear evidence that LAPU supports the needs of students, tracks their achievement, satisfaction, and progress towards degree completion. (CFR 2.10) The Moodle platform allows close monitoring of student effort and engagement during coursework. Two online learning communities have been developed to support student learning through informal interaction with other students and faculty. Faculty have relatively low course enrollments, capped at 25. Of note is the Early Alert system, currently at 50 per cent usage, where faculty can identify at risk students and student success coaches follow up.

Of particular note is the co-curricular support of students provided by the student success coaches model which addresses the educational, spiritual, and emotional needs of students. (CFR 2.10) Students noted how central success coaches are in their engagement and success. (CFR 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13) Evidence indicates that this innovative model appears to be working and that it has contributed to strong first-year retention rates. The model is financially supported by the transparent budget model; as a certain number of

students are added, new success coaches are hired. LAPU is encouraged to continue the assessment and organizational support of this model in support of student success. LAPU is also committed to students transferring from other institutions, and transfer policies enabling this process are published in the catalogs. (CFR 2.14)

Overall, the team finds that LAPU, for Standard 2, to be in sufficient compliance for initial accreditation, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with this Standard.

Standard 3. Developing and applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

Standard 3 addresses how Los Angeles Pacific University (LAPU) sustains with quality its operations and supports the achievement of its educational outcomes through resource allocation and organizational structures. These resources and structures should be sufficient in number and allocated according to appropriate strategies such that LAPU attainments its purpose.

Faculty and Staff.

Los Angeles Pacific University faculty come from a wide range of disciplines and appear to hold appropriate degrees and credentials necessary for teaching in their disciplines. (CFR 3.1) All undergraduate faculty have at least a master's-level preparation and many have obtained doctoral degrees. Similarly, faculty who teach in the master's-level programs appear to have adequate educational preparation with 63 per cent of those having achieved doctoral degrees. Faculty demographics (documents supplied by LAPU) indicate a preponderance of white (Caucasian) faculty members although data indicate an increase in

the hiring of African American and Hispanic faculty members to better represent the student population.

Position descriptions are available for all levels of faculty (adjunct lecturer, lecturer and senior lecturer) and administrative staff (assistant dean). LAPU also indicates that faculty are active participants in curriculum development and revision, program reviews, and program learning outcomes (PLO) assessment. Through interviews with full-time and part-time/adjunct faculty, it was determined that many of those in attendance were actively involved with both curriculum development and assessment activities. Several spoke quite highly of their involvement and noted that it allows them to be more engaged in the long-term learning activities of their disciplines and the institution.

LAPU has been actively involved in recruiting and hiring faculty and staff utilizing a wide variety of services, some which emphasize their unique evangelical Christian university position. These include social media, Christian university websites, and traditional methods of recruiting academic professionals. A thorough process includes application and interviews with a variety of individuals within the LAPU system. A complete orientation and training process is available that includes an “onboarding process” involving supplemental material to the Faculty Handbook. The information delivered is robust intending to provide faculty with clarity regarding institutional purposes and educational outcomes, along with additional details regarding disability accommodations, plagiarism, best practices, etc. (CFR 3.2, 3.3) An effort is underway to incorporate Christian values into the daily work life of LAPU, beginning with programming for managerial staff.

A unique aspect of the LAPU faculty development program is the provision for incentives. A financial bonus is available to those “employees and faculty as a special and immediate recognition and reward for exceptional performance, significant contributions, and substantial accomplishments well beyond normal or regular work responsibilities” (LAPU Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 report, p. 63; verified on site). This is in addition to the traditional faculty appraisal system also in place, although it was indicated that this system is currently being revised based upon several years of experience. An Instructor Success Committee has also been established that incorporates peer review and promotes teaching and learning excellence while providing assistance through system-wide learning design professionals.

In 2016-2017, LAPU has employed 151 faculty, 137 of whom are part-time (91%). Of the 14 full-time faculty, nine are lecturers or senior lecturers and five are academic administrators who also teach. LAPU indicates that a key component to “ensuring that faculty members are adequately supported in limiting class size per level and content” (LAPU Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 report, p. 65). Data indicate that class sizes are currently well below industry standards in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Several faculty interviewed indicated that when the maximum limit of 25 students/class is reached, on-line teaching begins to be challenging.

Faculty and staff development play an active role in the life of LAPU. For the past three years, LAPU has designated annual professional development funds to support faculty/staff development; data are not currently available to determine utilization of funds. Those

receiving funding have attended/participated in a variety of conferences, workshops, and activities aimed at increasing the capability and skill level of those participating.

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources.

During the past three years, LAPU has successfully accomplished their goal to be financially stable, indicating the potential for long-term viability. Current resource planning and development have focused upon the institution as a whole; departmental and program financial development are projected for the near future. There has been a remarkable growth trend beginning in 2015-2016 with net revenues exceeding expenses by 19.1 per cent. Additional growth has been realized at a rate that exceeds 22 per cent annually. This outcome is critical for the financial stability of LAPU while also providing a significant revenue stream for APU. The bottom line gain amounted to \$3 million after a \$3 million payment to APU as part of the agreement to seek independent accreditation. All indicators are positive for continued future growth and stability as the LAPU brand becomes more prominent and programs become increasingly viable and known. (CFR 3.4)

From documents provided in the institutional report and discovered during the site visit, resources appear to be aligned with educational purposes and outcomes. Financial data are available throughout the institution monthly. It may be important to move rapidly towards financial appraisal per academic program as a monitor of the viability of each program. This could also be beneficial for new program start-ups to achieve best practices that could assist the overall institutional financial stability.

The institution has developed a budgeting process that includes input from all aspects of the university, i.e., faculty, staff and administrators. Budgeting processes are directed

through the lens of a three-year strategic plan and financial success/stability are monitored monthly and reported to the Executive Leadership Team and forwarded to the Board of Directors.

Los Angeles Pacific University provides access to information and technology through a variety of providers based upon the type of service needed. Administrative activities, such as accounts payable, business office, admissions, advising, are provided through Jenzabar. The learning management system uses Moodle, as well as several third-party supported platforms such as Turnitin.com and Tutor.com. In addition, LAPU students have direct access to all library resources available through the APU library system. (CFR 3.5)

Technology training for faculty and students and many avenues for knowledge acquisition and teaching within the technical environment are available. Some resources for the instructors are immediately and continuously available through the course portal. These include FAQs, common rubrics, grading assistance, and plagiarism tools. Learning assistance is available directly from the course developers. The Information Technology Director and Information Technology (IT) staff provide oversight for IT needs. Specific technical support is provided on a 24/7 basis through Embanet services, an externally sourced provider of assistance for staff, faculty and students.

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes.

The institution's leadership team is filled with highly skilled individuals many of whom have multiple years of experience in higher education. Curricula vitae for the Chancellor/Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance indicate leaders with appropriate level of education and experience to guide and direct the operations of the

institution. The organizational chart is fairly typical and hierarchical with vice presidents and directors functioning within their respective areas of expertise and responsibility. (CFR 3.6, 3.8) There is some question regarding the Executive Leadership's team ability to function at its highest capability without a chief financial officer (CFO). Interviews indicated that the current system appears to work well due to the Chancellor/Chief Executive Officer's expertise in finance. The institution has grown considerably in size and complexity and will soon establish a larger and more diverse Board of Trustees. LAPU is strongly advised to move quickly to appoint a CFO and to add that individual to the senior leadership team.

The academic organizational structures meet the creative demands of the programs. There are clearly stated roles and responsibilities for each committee with tasks closely linked to strategies and goals established by the Chancellor's Cabinet and Executive Leadership Team. The three-year strategies and goals planned for 2018-2020 are robust and focus on creation of new programs and methods to achieve institutional and educational goals. The program design and development processes are geared towards creating new programs in a swift and timely manner. The timelines for program development are quite involved and appear to "push the market products" into the mainstream teaching and learning modes swiftly. (CFR 3.7) Memberships within each committee and development process indicate broad representation from both academic and enrollment areas. If the goals that have been established are fulfilled, i.e., to develop six new market relevant degrees, then the processes must be initiated and completed within accelerated time lines. When full-time and part-time/adjunct faculty were asked, they all spoke highly of the accelerated process noting that much of the initial research is often completed well before the official design process is

initiated. They also reflected on the “team approach” that exemplifies course/program development at LAPU indicating that the subject matter experts (often faculty) genuinely appreciate the efforts provided by rubric specialists, media specialists, and e-Learning experts who positively add to the more laborious process often found at traditional institutions where much of the effort is placed solely upon the faculty.

The LAPU Board of Directors consists of three members: a Chair (community member), the LAPU Chancellor, and the APU President. Board members recognize that this small board does not fully comply with the WSCUC guidelines for an independent governing board as stipulated in CFR 3.9. However, the paperwork is in place for the establishment of an independent board following WSCUC accreditation. As two of the three current members of the Board of Directors are employees of APU, an unusual situation for governance and leadership is created. New appointments have been recruited to create a fully independent board of directors. The LAPU Board cannot function independently until the institution is granted initial accreditation. The Board is still too small to develop a committee structure and advisory roles as determined by the documents provided. Appropriate statements regarding conflict of interest have been developed; it is difficult to determine exactly how the Board can function with regards to executive appraisal and even adequate direction for future planning with only three members, one of whom is directly linked to the success of LAPU’s financial return on investment. Further interviews with the Board of Trustees indicated that efforts are underway to expand the Board with additional members whose profile matches the unique creative environment of LAPU. Interviews with potential Board members are beginning in December 2017.

LAPU appears to have taken great pains to ensure that faculty are actively involved in institutional educational purposes through a series of six committees. These include: Academic Status Review Committee, Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee, Educational Effectiveness Committee, Institutional Review Board, Instructor Success Committee, and the Academic Council. Each Committee has established roles and responsibilities including their decision-making or recommendation status. Minutes are provided for recent meetings indicating attendance and functionality. During interviews with part-time/adjunct faculty it was noted by the visiting team that none were actively engaged in any of these committees. Full-time faculty regularly staff these committees, as evidenced in the minutes provided by each committee.

Overall, the team finds that LAPU, for Standard 3, to be in sufficient compliance for initial accreditation, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with this Standard.

Standard 4. Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning and Improvement

Standard 4 addresses LAPU's engagement in sustained, evidence-based self-reflection about how effectively it is attaining its mission /purpose and achieving its educational outcomes.

Quality Assurance Processes.

As evidenced in the Strategic Planning Handbook as well as the Institutional Plan for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes, LAPU appears to have systematic, transparent, data guided, and robust systems in place for quality assurance. (CFR 4.1 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 4.6) In addition to the documentation, the team found consistency among those interviewed

regarding the operational and strategic activities. There are clear processes for data collection and use of results for curricular, policy, and budgetary planning. LAPU is aware that with constant learning, there will be constant change. LAPU appears to have a culture where change is not simply managed, it is embraced. As described in Standard 3, the three-year rolling strategic plan informs all aspects of the organization and each unit and committee has a contribution to that plan as well as clarity of scope.

The institutional research (IR) functionality can best be described as developing (CFR 4.2) and functioning to support LAPU at this point in the institution's development. IR is providing decision support and will need institutional support to develop as the institution's needs change. . The continued development of the data mart will support key initiatives. Data governance, documentation, security, and access will be future concerns, as well as self-serve data interface for routine reports. As the IR function develops, investing in analytical activities will provide additional support. The team saw a few predictive analytic projects and encourages the continued development of these projects and their integration into decision-making. As the function develops, connecting the various analytic efforts on campus, such as marketing and admissions, will assist analysts to interact and coordinate data. Finally, another important contribution IR could potentially make to LAPU is to track alumni. This can be done via wage data, searching social media sites, matching to the National Student Clearing House, or employer surveys/interviews. These data could be useful for LAPU to determine the ultimate impact the institution has in the professional lives of alumni which, as adult learners, are central to LAPU's purpose.

Institutional Learning and Improvement.

There is evidence that LAPU has a commitment to continuous improvement based on data, systematic assessment and learning, as well as the utilization of results. (CFR 4.3) Faculty, staff, and administrators regularly and systematically collaborate in an ongoing inquiry of the teaching and learning function. Processes are in place to improve the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. (CFR 4.4) These processes involve appropriate stakeholders to assess effectiveness of the institution (CFR 4.5). LAPU uses micro-analysis (assignments, faculty/student surveys after each course) as well as macro analysis (program review, sampling of capstone course work final assignments assess by inter-rater reliable rubrics) to assess overall effectiveness of the institution as well as the effectiveness of the assessment plans.

LAPU involves the appropriate stakeholders in the assessment of institutional effectiveness. (CFR 4.5) The team observed that decisions are approached by considering the impact of the options upon the interests and wellbeing of students and the capacity of the institution to deliver the highest quality of educational experiences. Strategic planning is collegial and consensual and is supported by a clearly articulated budget model. (CFR 4.6)

LAPU shows evidence of alignment of purpose, strategic planning, setting priorities, and future direction. The ability to anticipate future direction during uncertain times is a hallmark. For example, the planning to reduce tuition dependency is innovative. As stated by a senior leader, LAPU is thinking about how it will “execute against the high expectations of students? How do we continually change to meet needs of what is coming

down the pike? How do we anticipate the future while delivering on the here and now?" (personal communication, November 15, 2017).

Overall, the team finds that LAPU, for Standard 4, to be in sufficient compliance for initial accreditation, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with this Standard.

SECTION III. PREPARATION FOR ACCREDITATION UNDER THE 2013 HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION

LAPU has established clear processes to support sustainable actions for future development, including degree programs. It is notable that the institution and its leaders have embraced the Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) to ensure that academic quality is sustained. Using key rubrics for educational attainment, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, LAPU has created a process to ensure that long-term outcomes are associated with highly recognized methods for quality programming with integrity.

In addition, LAPU has established clearly identified core competencies through their General Education programs while also establishing standards for graduation for each degree program (noted in catalogs and additional institutional documents).

Further, LAPU appears to be highly sensitive to changes and alterations in the higher education landscape by developing and supporting program design and development processes that are robust and engaging with the marketplace. These processes have been

established such that programs can be created with quality and precision while doing so in a swiftly moving environment. This is also true for establishing and monitoring best practices for teaching and learning, allowing LAPU to remain committed to its purpose and vision, especially their commitment to Christian values. Also of significance is their robust and cutting-edge use of technology both for eLearning processes and infrastructure support for institutional planning. The quality of the staff and the future-focused approach to technology is laudable and can be considered as an exceptional standard for other online programs.

SECTION IV. INVENTORY OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS

The Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators is thorough, with specific details and information that can be used as a planning document for the collection of assessment data for review in support of determining LAPU's educational effectiveness.

SECTION V. FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is clearly a shared sense of purpose and direction at LAPU. During interviews, the team noted that a similar language, distinctive to LAPU's interpretation, was used consistently to express ideas that have built a caring and collaborative community where *hope* flourishes (part of LAPU's purpose). Terms such as nimbleness, worldview, and hope were used freely and expressively. Similarly, components of the strategic plan noted on a laminated card were accessed and referenced during conversations. The term continuous improvement is evident throughout the organizational structure and defined consistently as a collaborative interaction whereby weaknesses are identified in processes and programs or unintended problems that emerge after a pilot effort is launched. They also

work together to identify areas of opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the institution through the continued learning and development of all members of the LAPU faculty and staff. These efforts currently include new approaches to leadership development and to welcoming (aka “onboarding”) new faculty members.

Overall, the team finds that LAPU, for all Standards, to be in sufficient compliance for initial accreditation, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with Standards.

Commendations

Overall comments.

The team observed that the case made for initial accreditation in the SAV 1 Report was reinforced in conversations with members of the LAPU community and by the evidence examined. The report reflects a shared commitment to the goal of providing an exemplary education for students who otherwise might not be able to pursue their educational goals in other more traditional settings.

The LAPU culture has several key qualities illustrating the living out of values in natural and creative ways. This authenticity and clarity was impressive and indicative of a culture where individual both learn from and teach others.

As LAPU has grown, efforts have continued to explore how to integrate faith into an online curriculum and into the workplace in ways that mirror and support the aspirations of the students served by LAPU. As students explore their own values and the worldview that is shaped by them and begin to use that experience to guide how they learn, how they

interact with other people and how they approach their professional roles, the faculty and staff of LAPU are doing the same thing.

Specific Commendations.

1. Los Angeles Pacific University, currently operating as Azusa Pacific University / University College, has a clear statement of purpose and reflects its values of “caring, learning, and exemplary” in every aspect of the institution. LAPU demonstrates a culture of collaboration and mutual learning throughout the community, drawing and learning from each other’s expertise.
2. LAPU exhibits in its daily practices a shared commitment to providing an education designed to meet the needs of adult students, the majority of whom are either seeking to advance in their chosen field or preparing to switch fields. In support of its educational purpose, LAPU seeks to offer convenient, affordable, and flexible degree options that are market driven and career-oriented. The courses and degrees are reviewed regularly and revised as needed to address areas that need strengthening as well as changing expectations of professional practice.
3. The institution has made significant progress in developing ways to measure both persistence and retention and progress toward a degree. These measures draw upon traditional approaches to measuring retention and graduation rates but are adapted to the distinctive curricular model of eight-week segments that allow for closer monitoring of student progress both by faculty and by student success coaches and provide earlier warning and interventions when a student appears to be falling behind or becoming disengaged.

4. LAPU is a Christian institution that provides a rich faith-based experience. Students have an opportunity to explore their own values and to create a worldview that can shape their own lives.
5. LAPU is commended for providing financial stability for the institutional community.

Recommendations

- 1. Provide adequate faculty and staff capacity as enrollments grow.** Programs offered by LAPU are largely delivered by adjunct faculty. There are very few full-time faculty members. Early efforts to provide a voice for adjuncts in the design and evaluation of academic programs offer a promising approach that contributes to faculty engagement and professional development. It will be important that adjunct faculty have a meaningful role in developing and evaluating new programs, that they have a seat on curricular committees, and that development opportunities are provided for both adjunct and full-time faculty. It will also be important to add additional full-time faculty and support staff as enrollment and the number of academic programs continue to grow to provide additional support for program development, delivery and assessment. (CFR 2.1, 3.10)
- 2. Create a meaningful data infrastructure and reporting capabilities.** To support the enactment of the strategic plan, the goals of which are reviewed annually, it will be important to develop a data infrastructure and reporting capabilities to guide the tracking of progress toward achieving institutional goals. At this stage of its development, LAPU is in the process of creating new tools and strategies for supporting organizational sustainability and monitoring progress towards goals, including the development of institutional research approaches that support their educational model.

As the institution evolves, so might the data processes to support learning assessment and program reviews need to evolve, including the collection of alumni employment data and input from industry constituents. LAPU is encouraged to expand the use of the Early Alert system as well as further harnessing the knowledge of the student success coaches to identify early trends enabling institutional or programmatic solutions to issues. Continue to refine, expand, and develop the metrics by which progress of students, programs, and the institution are measured. Specifically, data and institutional research should seek to address the challenge of persistence, retention and graduation in an online environment. (CFR 4.2)

- 3. Develop a shared understanding of the role of faith as the institution continues to grow.** The meaning and measurement of the integration of faith into the LAPU curriculum are beginning to be explored, including how instructors and student success coaches model their own faith. Efforts are now underway to assess the extent to which students develop a principled worldview during their studies at LAPU and how they use their worldview to guide decision-making and to inform their professional practice. A shared understanding of the role of faith in the culture of LAPU and in the design and delivery of educational programs will be essential as the institution continues to grow, adds additional degree programs and other educational options, and serves a broader range of students, many of whom will embrace other faith traditions or have no faith tradition of their own. (CFR 2.2, 2.2a, 2.2b)
- 4. Develop clear marketing and recruitment to portray the LAPU experience.** For several years, the entity that will become LAPU has slowly been differentiating itself from APU while benefiting from APU's "brand" and reputation. LAPU will share a

common educational philosophy with APU that calls for the integration of faith into the curriculum and the student experience. The expression of that philosophy, however, will be increasingly distinctive and different from the APU experience as LAPU continues to develop programs to serve different student populations. The task of explaining this growing differentiation between the two institutions and their shared philosophy and purpose will place significant demands upon the approach to marketing and recruitment. (CFR 2.2)

- 5. Define the APU and LAPU relationship.** Currently, there is some confusion about the relationship of the programs offered by LAPU and those offered by APU and what it will mean to move the current UC into independent status as LAPU. This will be resolved when LAPU is accredited. Defining the relationship may require a transition from a verbal agreement that LAPU will not offer degrees that carry the same title as those currently offered by APU. Similarly, different financial arrangements as agreed upon by both governing boards may need to be revisited. (CFR 3.4)
- 6. Integrate the program review findings into strategic planning and budgeting.** It will be important to move towards creating a financial budgeting system per program that is informed by the program review process. As a component of enhancing the approach to the budget, consideration should be given to moving forward with a full-time CFO position as part of the leadership team. (CFR 3.4, 3.8)
- 7. Creating the LAPU Board of Trustees.** Review the newly revised WSCUC Governing Board Policy so that the formation of the LAPU Board of Trustees is in compliance with the requirements of that policy. (CFR 3.9)

APPENDICES

Federal Compliance Forms

1. Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? Summarized in catalogs; full policy available from Academic Affairs (SAV 1 Report Attachment 8-24 Credit Hour Policy)
	Comments:
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Review occurs as part of the course development process.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Online programs only reviewed.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? Several
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Online
	What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Health Sciences, Leadership, Psychology
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? Several
	What kinds of courses? Psychology
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Psychology
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? One (only two programs completed program review to date)
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? B.A. Management
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Business
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

Review Completed By: Amber Machamer

Date: November 16, 2017

2. Marketing and Recruitment Review Form

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Reviewed sample degree page at https://www.apu.edu/university-college/bachelors/liberal-studies . NOTE: Content will be re-branded as LAPU subsequent to receiving initial accreditation.
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Employment of future graduates, as per sample degree page at https://www.apu.edu/university-college/bachelors/liberal-studies/careers . NOTE: Content will be re-branded as LAPU subsequent to receiving initial accreditation.

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Halyna Kornuta

Date: November 15, 2017

3. Student Complaints Review Form

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? If so, where?

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
	Student complaints are part of the student Grievance Policy. The policy (published in academic catalogs and UC website) describes in detail the process for students who believe they have justifiable cause for a grievance. Comments:
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: The learner uses informal protocol (with professor and assistant dean). If unsuccessful, the learner files a grievance in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs. A Grievance Committee proceeds to resolve the issue. The decision is made and communicated within one week.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Grievances have been documented with outcomes as resolved.
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Office of Academic Affairs.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: The process described is managed by the Office of Academic Affairs.
	Comments:

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Halyna Kornuta

Date: November 11, 2017

4. Transfer Credit Policy Review Form

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publicly available? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Office of VP, Academic Dean Summary and procedure in Catalog.
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

(1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and

(2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Gary Miller

Date: November 15, 2017