

January 5, 2016

Dr. Rajesh Chandra
Vice Chancellor and President
University of the South Pacific
Laucala Campus
Suva, Fiji

Dear Vice Chancellor/President Chandra:

On November 24, 2015, the panel of the Eligibility Review Committee (ERC) of the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) conducted its evaluation of the application for Eligibility submitted by the University of the South Pacific (USP) for the purpose of obtaining WSCUC accreditation for the institution. The panel appreciated the opportunity to discuss the proposal with you and your colleagues: Richard Coll, Deputy Vice Chancellor Learning, Teaching and Student Services; Dilawar Grewal, Vice President for Administration; Kolinio Boila, Executive Director Finance; and Sereana Kubuabola, ALO.

On behalf of the panel, and as communicated with you during the call, the panel acted to grant Eligibility to the University of the South Pacific because all 16 Eligibility Criteria have been met at a sufficient level to receive this approval. Now that USP has been granted Eligibility, the institution has five years until November 24, 2020, to achieve Candidacy. Under a new WSCUC process, USP may be able to achieve Initial Accreditation after its first Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 (SAV1) without going through Candidacy; however, the usual expectation for most institutions is that at least two visits will be required with Candidacy the first step. If the institution is not found to be in substantial compliance with WSCUC's four Standards after the first visit, Candidacy may be granted for five years if the institution is in at least minimal compliance with the four Standards.

The panel commends USP for the sincerity exhibited in the Eligibility application in which the institution has looked at itself with transparency and openness with a focus on constantly improving. The panel also lauds USP for the clarity of its mission in serving so many nations with a special interest in tending to the needs of small islands with fewer resources. In this context, the sensitivity shown to the needs of students in different parts of the region represents a clear demonstration of USP's mission. The strategic plan was found to be thorough, dealing with the institution's strengths and prioritization of resources.

Even though the ERC panel arrived at this determination, further work is still be needed by the institution in areas specified in the Eligibility Criteria in order for USP to come into sufficient compliance with WSCUC's Standards for Candidacy and ultimately for Initial Accreditation. The panel provides the following recommendations that will require attention. It is important to note that Eligibility Criteria are not the same as the WSCUC Standards for Accreditation. Eligibility Criteria are intended to ensure only a sufficient foundation for an institution to move forward to a comprehensive self-review under the Standards. An attached guide, "Shifting the

Focus,” demonstrates the relationship of the Eligibility Criteria to the Criteria for Review that will be used in upcoming interactions with WSCUC.

In addition to the expectation of further development of the 16 Criteria as USP moves toward SAV1, the panel has chosen to focus attention on two Criteria

Criterion 9. Institutional Planning. While earlier in this letter commending USP for its strategic plan, the panel encourages a greater focus on student learning outcomes, retention, and completion. The Annual Plan which is a critical part of USP’s strategic planning process seemed to place greater emphasis on comprehensive facilities, finance, and infrastructure and could be strengthened by more attention to educational effectiveness outcomes.

Criterion 11. Educational Objectives and Assessment of Student Learning. USP has completed major work on developing, mapping, and assessing student learning outcomes but is now focused on bringing coherence and alignment to the learning design and outcomes. The appointment of a new staff member will be a great asset. The panel urges the completion of a full cycle of assessment so that the SAV1 team can actually witness more than a written process but the results of a well-designed educational effectiveness program.

The panel also encourages implementation of the recently approved program review process by the Faculty Senate which will need to be mapped to WSCUC best practices as found in the Program Review Resource Guide on the WSCUC website. The institution will want to work closely with your staff liaison to ensure that the process meets WSCUC expectations for the SAV1 team.

The following table summarizes the recommendations of the ERC panel and links them to the relevant Standards and Criteria for Review as revised in 2013.

Eligibility Criterion	Recommendation	Criteria for Review (CFR) 2013
9	Develop a greater emphasis in Annual Plan on educational effectiveness outcomes	2.3, 2.6, 4.6
11	Completion of plan to bring coherence and alignment of learning design and outcomes	2.4, 2.10, 4.1
11	Approval and implementation of program review process	2.7

In summary, the panel found USP to meet the threshold qualifications for Eligibility, allowing the institution to proceed to Seeking Accreditation Visit 1. This first visit will determine the extent to which the institution meets the Standards at a level sufficient for Candidacy and does not prefigure the number of visits required to achieve Candidacy or the number of visits necessary to achieve Initial Accreditation.

Should USP elect to give notice of its Eligibility status in its publications or website, WSCUC policy requires that it be expressed as follows:

The University of the South Pacific has applied for Eligibility from the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). WSCUC has reviewed the application and determined that the University is eligible to proceed with an application for Candidacy and Initial Accreditation. A determination of Eligibility is not a formal status with the WASC Senior College and University Commission, nor does it ensure eventual accreditation. It is a preliminary finding that the institution is potentially accreditable and can proceed within five years of its Eligibility determination to be reviewed for Candidacy or Initial Accreditation status with the Commission. Questions about Eligibility may be directed to the institution or to WSCUC at wascsr@wascsenior.org or (510) 748-9001.

On July 1, 2013, a new Institutional Review Process for institutions already accredited by WSCUC went into effect. As an Eligible institution, USP will not be using this new process but will be using the revised 2013 WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review. The Commission in June 2014 voted a new process for institutions in Eligibility to achieve Candidacy or Initial Accreditation based on an institution demonstrating sufficient compliance with the four Standards found in the 2013 *Handbook of Accreditation*. The new process is described in the *How to Become Accredited* manual found on the WSCUC website.

To initiate the process to begin your first visit, please submit the attached Application for Accreditation at your earliest convenience, along with a fee of \$15,000. At an appropriate time, you will arrange with your staff liaison, Maureen Maloney, the timing for the Seeking Accreditation Visit 1, which will evaluate the institution's compliance with WSCUC Standards and policies.

Now that you have achieved Eligibility, you will also be required to submit an Annual Report every spring. This report is required from all accredited institutions by the United States Department of Education including information about enrollment, degree delivery locations, degrees being offered, and finance. Although you are not located within the United States and you are not accredited, the baseline information that will be provided over upcoming years is important for WSCUC.

Please note that the institution was reviewed for Eligibility within the context of the academic program, instructional locations, and delivery modalities in operation or explicitly planned at the time of the review and as listed in the application materials. The programs included in the approval of Eligibility are attached as Appendix A as provided by USP. Any changes in programs, locations, or modalities that would normally require a Substantive Change review that the institution anticipates prior to the Commission meeting that will consider Candidacy or Initial Accreditation will need first to be reviewed and approved by a panel of the Eligibility Review Committee. A fee as listed on the WSCUC website will be assessed.

The ERC urges the institution to participate in upcoming WSCUC events, as appropriate, such as the Assessment Leadership Academy, educational workshops and programs, and the annual Academic Resource Conference (ARC). Information on these events is available on the WSCUC website at <http://www.wascsenior.org>.

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Please let me know if you have any questions about the panel action or this letter. We look forward to working with you as the University of the South Pacific pursues WSCUC accreditation.

Sincerely,



Richard Osborn
Vice President

cc: Sereana Kubuabola, ALO
Members of the Eligibility Review Committee
Maureen Maloney, Vice President and Staff Liaison

Attached: Application for Accreditation
Shifting the Focus

Appendix A

PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN APPROVAL OF ELIGIBILITY

1.0 FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND EDUCATION (FALE)

1.1 FALE - BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN MAJOR DISCIPLINES

1.1A. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

1.1A1 Bachelor of Arts

- Education,
- Technical and Vocational Education

1.1A2 Bachelor of Education - In Service

- Early Childhood Education
- Primary Education
- Special and Inclusive Education
- Secondary Education

1.1A3 Bachelor of Arts with Graduate Certificate in Education

1.1A4 Bachelor of Science with Graduate Certificate in Education

1.1A5 Bachelor of Commerce with Graduate Certificate in Education

1.1A6 Graduate Certificate in Education

1.1B. SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE, ARTS AND MEDIA

1.1B1 Bachelor of Arts

- Journalism
- Linguistics
- Literature and Language
- Literature
- Pacific Language Studies
- Pacific Literature
- Pacific Vernacular Language

1.1C. SCHOOL OF LAW

1.1C1 Bachelor of Arts

- Law

1.1C2 Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

- Bachelor of Laws
- Bachelor of Arts & Bachelor of Laws
- Bachelor of Commerce & Bachelor of Laws

1.1D. SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

1.1D1 Bachelor of Arts

- History
- Pacific policing
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Sociology.

1.2 FALE -POSTGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

1.2A. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

1.2A1 Postgraduate Certificate

- Tertiary Teaching

1.2A2 Postgraduate Diploma

- Education
- Tertiary Teaching

Masters

1.2A3 Master of Arts

- Education

1.2A4 Master of Education

1.2A4 PhD

1.2B SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE, ARTS AND MEDIA

1.2B1 Postgraduate Diploma in Arts,

- Linguistics
- Literature

1.2B2 Master of Arts

- Linguistics
- Literature
- Journalism

1.2B3 PhD

1.2C SCHOOL OF LAW

1.2C1 Professional Diploma

- Legal Practice
- Legislative Drafting

1.2C2 Postgraduate Diploma

- Law

1.2C3 Master of Environmental Law

1.2C4 Master of Laws

1.2C5 PhD

1.2D SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

1.2D1 Postgraduate Certificate

- Gender Studies.

1.2D2 Postgraduate Diploma in Arts.

- History
- Psychology
- Social Policy and Administration
- Sociology

1.2D3 Master of Arts

- History
- Psychology
- Social Policy
- Sociology

1.2D4 PhD

1.2C OCEANIA CENTRE FOR ARTS, CULTURE AND PACIFIC STUDIES

1.2C1 Postgraduate Diploma in Arts

- Pacific Studies

1.2C2 Master of Arts

- Pacific Studies

1.2D INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

1.2D1 Graduate Certificate in School Leadership

1.2D2 Professional Certificate in Education Policy and Planning

2.0 FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS(FBE)

2.1 FBE- BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN MAJOR DISCIPLINES

2.1A SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

2.1A1 Bachelor of Commerce:

- Accounting
- Banking
- Finance
- Professional Accounting

2.1B SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

2.1B1 Bachelor of Commerce:

- Economics
- Official Statistics
- Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness
- Population Studies and Demography

2.1C SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TECHNOLOGY (ALAFUA CAMPUS, SAMOA)

2.1C1 Bachelor of Agriculture:

- Agribusiness
- Applied Sciences

2.1C SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2.1C2 Bachelor of Commerce:

- Human Resource Management and Employment Relations
- International Business and Marketing
- Management and Public Administration

2.1D SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

2.1D1 Bachelor of Arts:

- Politics

2.1E SCHOOL OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

2.1D2 Bachelor of Commerce:

- Hotel Management
- Tourism Management
- Tourism and Hospitality Management

2.1F SCHOOL OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1F1 Bachelor of Commerce

- Land Management

2.2 FBE POSTGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

2.2A SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

2.2A1 Postgraduate Diploma in Commerce

- Accounting
- Professional Accounting
- Banking and Finance

2.2A2 Master of Commerce

- Accounting (by thesis)
- Professional Accounting
- Banking and Finance (by thesis or Supervised Research Project(SRP))

2.2A3 PhD in

- Accounting
- Banking and Finance

2.2B SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TECHNOLOGY (ALAFUA CAMPUS, SAMOA)

2.2B1 Postgraduate Diploma in Agriculture

- Agricultural Economics
- Animal Science
- Crop Science

2.2B2 Master of Agriculture (by thesis or SRP)

2.2B3 PhD in Agriculture

2.2C SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

2.2C1 Postgraduate Diploma in Commerce

- Economics
- Population Studies and Demography

2.2C2 Master of Commerce

- Economics (by coursework and by thesis or SRP)
- Official Statistics (by thesis or SRP)
- Population Studies and Demography (by thesis)

2.2C3 PhD

- Economics
- Population Studies and Demography

2.2D SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2.2D1 Graduate Certificate in Public Administration

2.2D2 Postgraduate Diploma in Commerce-

- Management and Public Administration

2.2D3 Master of Commerce

- Management and Public Administration (by thesis or SRP and by coursework)

2.2D4 PhD in Management and Public Administration

2.2E SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

2.2E1 Postgraduate Certificate

- Diplomacy and International Affairs

2.2E2 Postgraduate Diploma

- Diplomacy and International Affairs
- Development Studies
- Governance

2.2E3 Master of Arts

- Diplomacy and International Affairs (by thesis and coursework)
- Development Studies (by thesis or SRP)
- Governance (by coursework and by thesis or SRP)
- Politics and International Affairs (by thesis or SRP)
- Gender Studies (by thesis only)

2.2E5 PhD

- Development Studies
- Governance
- Politics and International Affairs
- Gender Studies

2.2F SCHOOL OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

2.2F1 Postgraduate Diploma in Commerce

- Tourism and Hospitality Management

2.2F2 Master of Commerce

- Tourism and Hospitality Management (Thesis or SRP)

2.2F3 PhD

- Tourism

2.2G SCHOOL OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

2.2G1 Postgraduate Diploma

- Land Management

2.2G2 Master of Commerce

- Land Management (by thesis or SRP)

2.2H GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

2.2H1 Postgraduate Certificate

- Financial Administration
- Human Resource Management

2.2H2 Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration

- General Managers
- Advanced Analytical Skills

2.2H3 Master of Business Administration

3.0 FACULTY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (FSTE)

3.1 FSTE BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN MAJOR DISCIPLINES

3.1A SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL SCIENCES

3.1A1 Bachelor of Science

- Biology
- Chemistry

3.1B SCHOOL OF COMPUTING, INFORMATION & MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

3.1B1 Bachelor of Arts

- Computing Science
- Information Systems
- Mathematics

3.1B2 Bachelor of Commerce

- Information System

3.1B3 Bachelor of Science

- Computing Science
- Mathematics
- Information Systems

Professional Programmes in ICT

3.1B4 Bachelor of Net-Centric Computing

3.1B5 Bachelor of Software Engineering

3.1C SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND PHYSICS

3.1C1 Bachelor of Science

- Physics

3.1C2 Bachelor of Engineering

- Electrical and Electronics
- Mechanical

3.1D SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, EARTH SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

3.1D1 Bachelor of Arts

- Geography

3.1D2 Bachelor of Arts

- Environmental Management

3.1D3 Bachelor of Science

- Geography
- Geospatial Science

3.1D4 Bachelor of Science

- Environmental Science

3.1D5 Bachelor of Geospatial Science

- Geospatial Analyst
- Geospatial Developer

3.1E SCHOOL OF MARINE STUDIES

3.1E1 Bachelor of Arts

- Marine Management

3.1E2 Bachelor of Science

- Marine Science
- Environmental Science

3.2 FSTE POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

3.2A SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL SCIENCES

3.2A1 Postgraduate Diploma in Science

- Biology
- Chemistry

3.2A2 Master of Science

- Biology
- Chemistry

3.2A3 PhD

- Biology
- Chemistry

3.2B SCHOOL OF COMPUTING, INFORMATION & MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

3.2B2 Postgraduate Diploma in Science

- Mathematics

3.2B3 Postgraduate Diploma in Information Technology

- Computing Science
- Information Systems

3.2B4 Master of Computing and Information Systems

3.2B5 Master of Information Systems

3.2B6 Master of Science

- Computing Science
- Information Systems
- Mathematics

3.2B7 Master of Arts in Mathematics

3.2B8 PhD

- Computing Science
- Information Systems
- Mathematics

3.2C SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND PHYSICS

3.2C1 Postgraduate Diploma in Science

- Physics

3.2C2 Master of Science

- Engineering
- Physics

3.2C3 PhD

- Engineering
- Physics

3.2D SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, EARTH SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

3.2D1 Postgraduate Diploma in Arts

- Environmental Management
- Geography

3.2D2 Postgraduate Diploma in Science

- Environmental Geoscience

3.2D3 Masters of Arts

- Environmental Management
- Geography

3.2D4 Master of Science

- Environmental Science
- Earth Science

3.2D5 PhD

- Environmental Science
- Environmental Management
- Geography
- Earth Science

3.2E SCHOOL OF MARINE STUDIES

3.2E1 Postgraduate Diploma in Arts

- Marine Management

3.2E2 Postgraduate Diploma in Science

- Marine Science

3.2E3 Master of Arts

- Marine Management

3.2E4 Master of Science

- Marine Science

3.2E5 PhD

- Marine Management
- Marine Science

4.0 PACIFIC CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Postgraduate Diploma

- **Climate Change**

4.2 Master of Science

- **Climate Change**
- **Sustainable Development in Small Island States**