

March 3, 2021

Dr. Susan Marquis  
Dean  
Pardee Rand Graduate School  
1776 Main Street, PO Box 2138  
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

Dear Dean Marquis:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Pardee Rand Graduate School (PRGS) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 19, 2021. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation (TPR) of Accreditation Visit to PRGS October 28 – 30, 2020. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by PRGS prior to the Accreditation Visit, and the institution's February 5, 2021 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Rachel Swanger, Associate Dean. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of ten years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2030 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2030
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by January 30, 2025 to address:
  - a. documenting and communicating the assessment infrastructure to all appropriate constituencies.
  - b. articulating and distributing learning outcomes for the Tech Stream Portfolio.
  - c. an update on program review(s) completed by the time of the Progress Report in 2025.

The Commission commends PRGS in particular for the following:

1. Engaging in a thoughtful and inclusive six-year planning process to reimagine the PRGS academic program with the desire to enhance the students' learning experience and promote their success while impacting the field of policy analysis.
2. Efforts to "design for emergence" by building in an ability to respond to future policy education and practice needs through feedback mechanisms at multiple organizational levels (i.e., board, leadership, faculty, students).

3. Implementing the redesign of the academic program and expanding the student cohort with tenacity and commitment during a major pandemic.
4. Retaining a well-established Ph.D. in Policy Analysis and recognizing the value of students' diverse policy work interests while creating three new streams of study and action, in particular the establishment of a Boot Camp for all entering students.
5. Incorporating a strong spirit of collaboration among faculty, staff, and students and a commitment to maintaining this collaboration as the institution grows in size and complexity.
6. Developing the Social Justice and Racial Equity cross-cutting thread and the expanded engagement with diverse community partners (i.e., Sitka, Alaska and City of Los Angeles).

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following issues:

1. Strengthen and articulate a broad assessment infrastructure in ways that institutionalize the process to ensure sustainability by
  - a. developing and documenting an institutionally understood and accepted assessment methodology and structure,
  - b. ensuring that program learning objectives and course structures are widely shared among students, faculty, and the broader community, and
  - c. aligning curricular and co-curricular components to meet learning objectives of the redesigned program. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.)
2. Clearly articulate desired learning outcomes for the Tech Stream Portfolio and ensure that those outcomes are distributed and known among the students, faculty, and the broader community. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, and 2.7)
3. Strengthen resources and opportunities for faculty development that are grounded in pedagogical best-practices, focused on program outcomes, and responsive to the academic and professional needs of a diverse and growing student body. (CFRs 2.8 and 3.3)
4. Strengthen a coordinated approach to student success and well-being that promotes equity and success for all students, with particular attention to the needs of underrepresented and international students. (CFRs 2.10 and 2.13)
5. As the reimagined program scales, embrace a sustainable approach to
  - a. articulating clear roles and responsibilities for staff and administrators in order to strengthen institutional communication and capacity as well as student success and
  - b. identifying specific points-of-contact among the staff such that students, faculty, community partners, and other stakeholders who have questions are better served. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that PRGS addressed the three Core Commitments and successfully completed the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, PRGS should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their

associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of PRGS's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the PRGS's website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that PRGS undertook in preparing for the accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jamiene S. Studley  
President

JSS/thh

Cc: Phillip Doolittle, Commission Chair  
Rachel Swanger, ALO  
Michael Leiter, Board Chair  
Members of the Accreditation Visit team  
Tamela Hawley, Vice President