

March 6, 2024

Ms. Chiao-Ling Hsu
President
NewSchool of Architecture and Design
1249 F Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear President Hsu:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning NewSchool of Architecture and Design (NewSchool) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 16, 2024. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to NewSchool November 28 – December 1, 2023, using the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by NewSchool prior to the Special Visit and the institution’s January 21, 2024, response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues Dutchie Reid, Chief Academic Officer and Accreditation Liaison Officer, Gregory O’Brien, Chair of the Board, Erene Hilentzaris, Marketing Manager, and Jin Huang, Shareholder Representative. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission’s deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution’s status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) finances; (2) marketing, enrollment, and retention; (3) institutional leadership; (4) governing board); and (5) staffing structure to support student needs.
2. Remove the Warning
3. Issue a Formal Notice of Concern
4. Reschedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2026 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2026
5. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by June 30, 2025, to address:
 - a. Finances: provide audited financial statements for 2023-2024 and
 - b. Enrollments: provide an enrollment report detailing both projected and actual student numbers from summer 2024 through spring 2025, alongside prospective enrollment data for fall 2025

Commendations

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. Establishing strong institutional leadership through appointing a president, known for an open-door policy, excellent listening skills, and an emphasis on operational efficiencies, and for creating a Vice President of Academic Affairs position to enhance focus and support for the academic enterprise, with both appointments significantly boosting confidence among all stakeholders.
2. Expanding the board to eight members representing a diverse set of backgrounds and expertise, with a structured committee system, enabling active collaboration with and guidance of the president.
3. Recruiting staff with appropriate professional expertise for new initiatives in enrollment, marketing, and student success.
4. Transitioning from a shared services model to an onsite student services model, more effectively meeting student needs.
5. Maintaining the faculty's unwavering dedication to academic excellence and student success.

Notice of Concern

A Formal Notice of Concern provides notice to the institution that, while it currently meets WSCUC Standards, it is in danger of being found in noncompliance with one or more Standards if current trends or findings continue. Institutions issued a Formal Notice of Concern are scheduled for a Special Visit. If the issues are not addressed, a sanction could be imposed as described in the 2013 Handbook of Accreditation. A Formal Notice of Concern is public information and will be posted on the WSCUC website.

Standard at Risk of Non-Compliance and Requiring a Response

Although NewSchool is currently in compliance with Standard 3, if current trends continue, NewSchool may be at risk of non-compliance with CFR 3.4. As a result, the Commission requires the institution to:

1. Demonstrate financial stability by achieving positive net income through increased enrollment, continuous prudent expense management, and contingency planning for scenarios where outcomes don't meet expectations. (CFR 3.4)
2. Grow enrollments by implementing recruitment and retention strategies outlined in the 2023 enrollment and marketing plan, focusing on resource allocation to the most effective tactics identified by thorough data analysis. (CFR 3.4)

Areas for Development

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following area for development:

1. Allocate sufficient resources to strengthen information technology and infrastructure thereby enhancing the student experience through reliable access to essential educational resources such as information, materials, software, equipment, and space. (CFR 3.5)

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of NewSchool's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the NewSchool 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 NewSchool of Architecture and Design undertook in preparing for and supporting this 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,



Jamienne S. Studley
President

JSS/bgd

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Dutchie Reid, ALO
Gregory O'Brien, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President