



University of
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TO: The University of West Los Angeles Family
FROM: President Robert W. Brown
DATE: August 26, 2021

UWLA'S Town Hall Meeting on Accreditation Efforts

Dear UWLA family:

I hope that this letter continues to find you and your family doing as well as possible during these uncertain times. The pandemic that is currently engulfing our world has wreaked havoc both socially, financially and more importantly, medically on the fabric of our society. However out of turmoil, positive change is often born. I write to you today on a lighter note, regarding the fulfillment of promises made and promises kept by your UWLA family. There is positive news concerning our UWLA community and it is with great pleasure that I can communicate these updates to you.

As an institution we've been and are committed to providing each of you the options you need so that you may receive the educational empowerment that your individual equitable interests demand and that we at UWLA are keenly attuned to providing. To that end, through the leadership of Deans Brown and Frykberg for the past year, UWLA has embarked on an academic accreditation odyssey that encompassed the creation, presentation, and defense of seven self-studies. They amassed thousands of pages of narrative and documentation to present to both WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) and the California Committee of Bar Examiners (CBE) to gain their accreditation approval to enlarge the learning options for our professors and our students. The culmination of this herculean effort was completed last Friday with Dean Frykberg's appearance before the CBE. Before I explain the implications of these events let me pass onto you some paraphrased statements and quotes that we as a family received from our accreditors through this process:

WSCUC has given us the following commendations from this lengthy process that encompassed four separate (4) WSCUC hearings:

“Adoption of the new mission, vision, and values statement that is embraced by faculty, staff, and the Board of Managers.”

“The institution has demonstrated commitment to educational effectiveness training and quality implementation by enrolling two key leaders of the School of Law in the WSCUC Assessment Leadership Academy. Assessment protocols being used at the institution clearly reflect that commitment.”

“Development and integration of a comprehensive assessment process including learning outcomes and surveys, along with responsiveness to what is learned.”

The institution is commended for the work they are doing to improve inter-rater reliability among faculty and professional development for the virtual modality.

“The institution is commended for its strong emphasis on and policy-driven actions for accessibility to legal education by underserved populations”

“Enhancing student support that is responsive to students’ academic and personal needs, including creating new courses to improve California Bar pass rates.”

Additionally, at the hearing by the CBE the following compliments were outlined:

UWLA’s School of Law’s Performance Program and the opportunity mission it evidences.

That UWLA’s faculty and students represent the diversity of the community that we serve.

The value and benefit that our School of Law provides through its IEP (Individual Educational Program as part of its legal externship and Practical Training of Law Students program) to the community that we serve.

The involvement of UWLA’s School of Law’s Dean in volunteering and serving on site accreditation visit teams and serving on the CSBARS committee of the State bar of California which spent the last year redrafting accreditation rules for law schools in California.

This has culminated in the following official actions:

- 1) As of August 20, 2021, the California Committee of Bar Examiners voted to grant UWLA's School of Law not only an additional five-years of accreditation but also the authority to provide our JD program in an on -campus, online, and/or hybrid format.
- 2) As of August 18, 2021, the WSCUC Substantive Change Committee has voted to recommend our Juris Doctor degree to be permitted to be offered in a Distance Education format.
- 3) As of July 29, 2021, the WSCUC Substantive Change Committee has voted to recommend our Master of Science in Organizational Leadership and Business Innovation degree to be permitted to be offered in a Distance Education format.
- 4) As of June 30, 2021, the WSCUC Substantive Change Committee has voted to recommend our Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree to be permitted to be offered in a Distance Education format. This recommendation was ratified and approved by the WSCUC commission itself on July 29, 2021.
- 5) As of June 25, 2021, the WSCUC commission Receive the Special Visit Team Report that focused on: (1) budget planning; (2) student borrowing and retention; (3) business curricula; (4) program review; and (5) five-year assessment plan. And to continue with the previously scheduled reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in Fall 2023 and the Accreditation Visit in Spring 2024.

What does this mean to you and the rest of the UWLA family? Once our two remaining (MS and JD) programs receive their final ratification and approval from the WSCUC commission which is expected to occur next month, UWLA will be able to provide the following options to its stakeholders:

- You may pursue your JD education at UWLA on campus only (once we can safely and ethically return to campus),
- You may pursue your education at UWLA online only, or
- You may choose to attend some semesters or terms online and others on campus at your option.

The choice is yours.

Although this does not affect our current Fall semester or terms (as we are currently operating under distance education waivers from WSCUC and the CBE due to COVID-19) this will now give each of you a solid option that you are in control of for your remaining time at UWLA.

We realize that although we now have the option to be online, many of you learn best through personal instruction and face to face interaction. We are still committed to our two campuses and I am in the process of renewing our commitments at both of our facilities. My goal is to equip these facilities with the latest technology to further advance and enhance the learning capabilities

of our professors and students. We believe that now is the time for the educational campus of the future and we will make every effort to bring that vision into reality.

The health of our students and faculty is my number one concern. We will not allow our students, staff and professors on campus until such time as we have the assurances that their safety and well-being is safeguarded and protected as well as possible under these current conditions and circumstances. In all likelihood, soon, we will be mandating a vaccine protocol for all who want to go on campus for their educational pursuits.

There is strength in knowledge, but we are even stronger through tolerance, preparedness, faith and trust in one another, and the empowerment of each other in trusting each of you to choose your own educational pathways.

Please take a moment to read our institutional mission so you can be reminded of why we are doing this change in distance education for the purpose of educational empowerment due to the equitable interests of our students.

UWLA's Mission Statement:

University of West Los Angeles is a family.

Our culture of diversity creates a unique equitable educational empowerment environment. We provide opportunities for resilient learners to become servant leaders to their communities.

UWLA is a fifty-five year old institution and we continue to care for one another as a large extended family. Thank you for choosing to be part of our UWLA family. Please stay positive, safe and healthy and we will get through this together, I assure you. When you have a chance, please commend our faculty, staff and in particular, Deans Brown and

Frykberg; our lead professors, Professors Barrett, Bellamy, Bermudez, Martin, Zand, Zegarra, and all others who were at the forefront of this tremendous undertaking and endeavor with a special mention to Tiffany Clinton, Troy Brown and our CFO, Ryan Fullmer. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who were engaged in this overwhelming accomplishment.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Brown, Esq.
President
University of West Los Angeles