



July 9, 2002

Steadman Upham  
President  
Claremont Graduate University  
150 East Tenth Street  
Claremont, CA 91711-6160

Dear President Upham:

At its meeting on June 19-21, 2002, the Commission considered the report of the evaluation team that visited the Claremont Graduate University (CGU) on March 5-8, 2002. The Commission also had access to the report prepared by the University for the visit. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to meet with Philip Dreyer, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Teresa Shaw, Associate Provost; and you. Your comments were very helpful.

With the visit scheduled during the transition between the *1988 Handbook of Accreditation* and the full implementation of the *2001 Handbook of Accreditation*, CGU elected to conduct its review under the 2001 Standards of Accreditation. The University developed an Institutional Proposal that defined a self review process intended to explore the institution's alignment with the four Standards, with special focus on developing institutional criteria for academic excellence and defining measures for determining progress and success. The Proposal articulated a useful and clear framework for addressing these issues and committed the institution to the development of a web-based portfolio for analysis and reflection. This appears to be a model effort to provide thorough and appropriate documentation and data to the review team.

The Commission congratulates the University for using the accreditation process to organize a substantive and well-conceived self review that resulted in meaningful analysis and tangible action. The evaluation team found the campus community to be seriously engaged and candid in the process, with evidence that the institution's leadership was committed to using the results of the review to improve institutional capacity and educational effectiveness. The self study was especially effective in its development of questions for institutional engagement around significant issues and demonstrated the institution's ability to generate and analyze indicators of performance according to its own definitions and measures of student and faculty success. The study is a valuable example of an

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institutional presentation for the region, in both its array and analysis of the data and in its reflective essays.

The University has set for itself the strategic vision to become a signature graduate institution centered on excellence. During the past four years, CGU has made significant progress in effecting a dramatic cultural change that enables the institution to pursue its excellence-centered mission with greater focus and clarity of purpose. The University has emerged, in the words of the team report:

. . . as a new and, in many different respects, a different institution. The university has a new name, a new independent status, a new relationship with the Claremont University Consortium, a new executive staff, and a new academic and administrative structure. It is now a multi-disciplinary, free-standing, graduate university. This distinctive institutional profile is the source of both new opportunities and new challenges...

The Commission commends the University for strengthening its resources and structures to monitor and balance budgets more effectively and to measure the quality of academic programs and student performance, as evidenced by the decennial program review.

The Commission endorses the findings and recommendations of the evaluation team and encourages the University to give them attention. There are several areas that the Commission wishes to highlight to further enhance institutional capacity and educational effectiveness:

**The Relationships among Teaching, Learning, and Research Excellence.** As noted in the institutional presentation, to be effective CGU's cultural change will require careful alignment with institutional purposes and intentional monitoring and follow up. The team found that the University had made a good start in articulating its values for the achievement of high standards in teaching and research and for a rigorous graduate learning environment. The self study occurred at an early stage of the institution's recent transformation. The team noted that there was not broad understanding about what the distinct meaning and definition of excellence in teaching, learning, and research was at CGU. The University has committed itself to actively defining benchmarks and indicators for the achievement of teaching, learning, and research excellence. The Commission underscores this activity as a critical next step to institutionalize this University goal.

The University's relationship with other Colleges within the Claremont Consortium enables it to develop and maintain a sharing of faculty between and among institutions. The Commission encourages CGU to codify these arrangements for its graduate programs to the extent possible.

**Coherence and Integration of Academic Planning in an Environment of Decentralization.** CGU's new decentralized administrative structure was established to

resolve historical issues related to school and departmental budget accountability. The evaluation team viewed the structure as an effective response by the leadership to create a climate of responsible, performance-based decision-making; however, it had concerns that individual unit priorities may not be consistent with broader institutional priorities over time. The Commission encourages the University to expand the principles identified in the 2001 Academic Plan into clear expectations and outcomes. Such expectations would provide a strategic framework within which decentralized accountability and decisions could take place. Moreover, a framework anchored to academic planning principles would encourage more integration and partnering across academic disciplines.

**Student Learning Outcomes and Transdisciplinary.** In order to prepare the institution for future review under the *2001 Handbook of Accreditation*, the Commission urges the University to give greater emphasis to the development of explicit and meaningful student learning outcomes that are aligned with its strategic goals. It will also be important for the University to give further definition to the meaning of *transdisciplinary* to guide institutional efforts within and across discipline areas and to articulate learning outcomes found to be integral in building a truly distinctive and distinguished graduate culture. The evaluation team described *transdisciplinary* as "...not only a description of CGU's strong inter-field approach to problem-solving through applied research, but also a conceptual framework for addressing problems that can arise out of the centrifugal forces of de-centralization." In addition, the University will need to be explicit in its policies and practices about how the concept of *transdisciplinary* will effect resource development and allocation, as well as the creation of new organizational processes and structures.

**Achievement of Diversity Goals.** The self study was clear in its commitment to implement a number of diversity goals, such as the completion of Irvine faculty hires, the development of a minority mentor and fellowship program, and the intent to assess progress in minority recruitment and retention. The institution used the review process to collect and examine data, and concluded candidly that more progress must be achieved. The Commission underscores the institutional and team finding that to realize its aspiration to create a "multiplicity of approaches in academic inquiry, intellectual and research interests, and curricular content," the University will need to develop specific strategies for change in this area and create institutional accountability in both the administration and faculty for fulfilling institutional diversity goals.

As a separate matter, the Commission acknowledges receipt of notification regarding the closing of the Master's in Engineering program, offered jointly with Harvey Mudd College, effective at the conclusion of the 2002-2003 academic year. Consequently, the University will not be offering the ME degree after May 2003. The Commission appreciates that the institution has addressed this previously raised concern.

The Commission acted to:

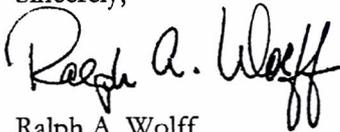
1. Reaffirm the Accreditation of Claremont Graduate University.

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2. Schedule the Proposal for the two-staged review to be due on October 15, 2009.  
Schedule the Preparatory Review in spring 2012 and the Educational Effectiveness Review in spring 2013.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Ralph A. Wolff  
Executive Director

cc: James Appleton  
Teresa Shaw  
Members of the team  
Stephanie Bangert

RW/brn