

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM
SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 2**

To Wilson University

October 10-13, 2023

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. Once an institution achieves either candidacy or initial accreditation, the team report and Commission Action Letter associated with the review that resulted in the granting of either candidacy or initial accreditation and the team reports and Commission Action Letters of any subsequent reviews will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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Section I. Overview and Context

A. Description of the Institution and Visit

Wilson University (WU) is a small, private, faith-based, not-for-profit institution. WU has its roots in faith-based leadership training and biblical studies courses that commenced informally in 1985. In 1994, WU became a satellite of Patten University, and WU courses became part of Patten's accredited course offerings. To overcome geographic barriers and meet national demand, the school developed online delivery, however, online courses could not be offered through Patten University. Thus, in 2009, the school became the Apostolic School of Theology (AST), an institute within Hope International University (HIU), in Fullerton, California. In 2017, after eight productive years, AST and HIU separated in response to proposed changes to the relationship with HIU that were not acceptable to the stakeholders. AST began operating as Wilson University and, for about 18 months partnered with Patten University, which had by then developed a fully online program.

In the fall of 2018, Wilson University began offering certificate program courses independent of any other institution. In January 2019, the university started its bachelor's degree in Christian ministry and also partnered with Jessup University to offer an apostolic concentration in Jessup's Master of Arts in Leadership program.

Currently, Wilson University is approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to offer two degrees and multiple certificates. In July of 2022, the Associate of Arts in General Studies was launched. Presently, WU has approximately 200 students, of which roughly 13% are degree-seeking, and the remainder are enrolled in certificate programs. While the university is especially focused on growing the degree programs, the certificate programs remain an integral part of the university's mission. They provide a

pipeline of interested students for the degree programs and also serve as continuing education opportunities to the apostolic Pentecostal community - a missionally aligned contribution to the public good.

In February of 2021, WSCUC panel found that Wilson University meets the threshold qualifications for Eligibility, allowing the institution to proceed to Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 (SAV 1). Following SAV visit 1 in March 2022, in June 2022 the Commission received the team report and scheduled SAV 2 in Fall 2023. SAV 2 visit was conducted October 10-13, 2023.

B. The Institution's Seeking Accreditation Visit Report:

- **Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report**

Wilson University's report was well-organized, clearly written, and supported by many informative appendices. Overall, it appropriately and accurately reflected the work needed to be accomplished under the Standards not yet in compliance for Initial Accreditation, and the institutional steps taken toward academic and operational development and improvement. The report was developed with appropriate, broad involvement of the Wilson University community. Faculty participated in relevant committee discussions and received clear and transparent communications regarding the process and accreditation expectations. The institution engaged in careful self-examination and sought additional training and development in areas related to compliance with the Standards.

The institution identified areas of strengths, for example, a strong missional alignment, and needed improvement, such as using data and analysis in informing institutional operations. The evidence submitted for each Standard not yet in compliance from a prior visit and accompanying Criteria for Review (CFR) was largely thorough, appropriate, and conclusive. Additional documents requested by the team and on-campus interviews further clarified the remaining questions. Institutional use of evidence-based inquiry was one of the areas of improvement since the prior visit, as the rigor, self-exploration, and methodological approaches,

while still relatively new, have substantially developed. The data and evidence generally support the claims made by the institution in addressing compliance with the identified Standards and CFRs. Based on the report, additional required evidence, and interviews, the institution's self-review resulted in an improved understanding of its effectiveness, systems of quality improvement, and student learning. The institution also outlined plans for continuous improvement.

All students, staff, faculty, administrators, and trustees participating in interviews came across as sincere, thoughtful, and forthcoming in their interactions with the team. Staff and faculty appeared to be highly dedicated to WU's mission and success, and board members showed enthusiasm and commitment.

It appeared that WU used the self-study process to develop many policies, deepen the collective understanding and commitment to shared governance, finalize institution-level outcomes, develop personnel, pilot academic program review, and improve academic assessment.

C. Response to Issues Raised in Past Commission Letters

- Responses to Issues raised in the Eligibility Review Committee letter.

Criterion 7. Governance and Administration. (CFR 3.9)

WU was encouraged to even up members across its governing board's committees to create a better balance. WU responded to this recommendation by adding five new members to its governing board and increasing the membership in the Academic and Student Affairs (by three members), Finance (by two members) and Auditing (by one member) committees in order to provide more balance and expertise on those committees. The Governance Committee remained at five members.

Criterion 8. Financial Resources and Accountability. (CFR 1.1, 1.5, 3.4)

WU was asked to clarify and explain its relationship with Wilson College and its higher education positioning.

WU has explained the relationship with Wilson College by stating that WU seeks to serve the less traditional constituents within its faith tradition by providing programs such as certificates for high school seniors and Spanish-speaking students residing in the US, non-credit professional development courses for international ministers, and non-credit short courses for the broader missionally aligned constituency interested in professional development and personal growth. However, due to limitations imposed by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE), WU is unable to offer these programs to these constituents. WU established Wilson College and secured the BPPE's approval for Wilson College to operate as a faith-based exempt institution. WU and Wilson College have the same board, staff, and faculty. WU seeks to incorporate and then close Wilson College once WU attains accreditation. However, if incorporation is not feasible, Wilson College will continue to operate as a faith-based exempt institution to offer its programs that meet the needs of the above-referenced constituents.

Criterion 9. Institutional Planning. (CFR 4.6)

WU was encouraged to develop a more detailed Strategic Plan with timelines, outcomes, and resources tied to projected budgetary needs.

To support planning, WU has purchased software called Strategic Planning Online (SPOL). The stated purpose of SPOL is to assist WU in implementing strategic initiatives by identifying annual strategies, assigning tasks with deadlines, aligning with budget allocations, and tracking key performance indicators. The institution received training on SPOL and piloted the software in the 2020–2021 year. WU recently launched its new three-year strategic plan covering 2021–2024, and SPOL is in the process of being implemented by the institution to integrate the plan with budgeting and assessment. However, WU did not yet demonstrate that they had utilized timelines, resources, budget information, or related outcomes in the strategic planning process.

Criterion 10. Degree Programs. (CFR 2.2, 2.2a, 2.2b)

WU was asked to provide the long-term plan concerning the relationship with William Jessup University and relevant program offerings while addressing Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of those offerings.

WU responded that it currently partners with William Jessup University to offer only one program, the Master of Arts in Leadership (MA) degree, and WU is confident about the quality and integrity of that degree. The content of the MA program aligns with the specified learning outcomes, and leadership that is an aspect of WU's mission.

WU indicates that it has no plans to expand the programs offered in the partnership. WU is limited to two degree programs pursuant to BPPE restrictions, and is focusing its efforts on undergraduate programs and utilizing the partnership for the graduate level. WU has indicated that it will reassess the partnership with William Jessup University once WU has attained accreditation. WU has indicated that once it receives accreditation that WU has plans to begin offering a Master of Arts in Ministry program. If there continues to be sufficient demand for the partnership program, Wilson University will continue to offer it through William Jessup University.

Criterion 13. Faculty. (CFR 3.10)

WU was encouraged to clarify the faculty's role and voice in institutional governance and how faculty governance interfaces with it.

WU has indicated that institutional governance consists of the board (board of trustees), administration (cabinet), faculty (academic assembly), and students (associated student body). Faculty members are able to participate in the development of policies and decision-making for the institution through the Academic Assembly. The Academic Assembly has the authority to pass resolutions and make recommendations to the administration and the governing board. Also, faculty have representation on the Board of Trustees. The

chair of the assembly is a non-voting ex-officio member of the board and is also a voting member of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the board, which provides an opportunity for the voices and opinions of the faculty to be heard and to inform the board's decisions.

WU needs to continue its progress on the development of the faculty governance within the institution, ensuring that faculty take ownership for their full responsibility for the curriculum, assessment, and institutional planning and budgeting.

Criterion 16. Information and Learning Resources. (CFR 3.5)

WU was asked to provide the long-term plan for information and learning resources including services provided by William Jessup University.

WU has indicated that it has a three-year library and technology master plan that will provide for incremental and steady expansion. The plan includes increasing the collections of primary and secondary materials through open source and paid subscriptions, increase the hours of professional staff to assist library users, increase instruction in the utilization of all services and resources to support the research efforts of students and faculty, support the learning outcomes of the curriculum through resourced-based learning and skills, and support collaboration among all members of the school community to become critical and creative thinkers as well as effective users of information.

Graduate students in the MA program at William Jessup University have access to online journals and articles, eBooks, and titles available by request through interlibrary loan. Virtual services including a writing center, study skills resources, database tutorials to help with research, and live chat with a librarian. In-person and online appointments with librarians are available. A media lab is accessible for students who live near the William Jessup University campus.

Overall, the team believes the institution made a sincere effort to address each recommendation. However, collection and analysis of data, sufficiency of full-time faculty and staff, strategic planning, and shared governance (Criteria 9 and 13) remain significant concerns. These concerns are addressed in more detail in this report below.

- Responses to Issues raised in the SAV 1 Commission Action Letter

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The Commission found that Wilson University demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 1 at a level sufficient for Candidacy. In order to demonstrate compliance at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation, the following CFRs require additional attention and development:

- CFR 1.2: Prominently display student achievement, retention, and graduation rates, utilizing standard higher education definitions, on the institution's website.
- CFR 1.7: Review the relationship of Wilson University with Wilson Properties LLC and its transactions for potential conflict of interest.
- CFR 1.8: Come into full compliance with Credit Hour and Student Complaint policies. (Federal forms for Credit Hour and Student Complaints)

Since SAV 1, Wilson University developed a fact book to display student achievement on its website. It divested itself of the two properties in question, dissolved Wilson Properties LLC, and conducted board training around conflict of interest. It updated its Credit Hour and Student Complaint policies. Further information is provided in Section II below.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

The Commission found that Wilson University demonstrated evidence of compliance with Standard 2 at a level sufficient for Candidacy. In order to demonstrate compliance at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation, the following CFRs require additional attention and development:

- CFR 2.4: In order to demonstrate shared governance and ensure long term educational quality, strengthen faculty ownership of the academic enterprise, including but not limited to curriculum and assessment.
- CFR 2.7: Fully implement a clear assessment plan for program review that includes review of curriculum and analysis of quantifiable data, utilizing standard higher education definitions that adequately evidences student achievement.
- CFR 2.10: Analyze student program data to better inform program reviews and student outcomes.

In response, Wilson University provided information about faculty training and engagement. The institution developed an extensive program review process and conducted a full program review, with examples of how program data is informing their work in different ways. These efforts are detailed and evaluated below in Section II of this report.

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

The Commission found that Wilson University did not demonstrate evidence of compliance with Standard 3 at a level sufficient for Candidacy. In order to demonstrate compliance at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation, the following CFRs require additional attention and development:

- CFR 3.1: Strengthen and implement plans to hire enough full-time faculty, staff, and administrators with specific higher education expertise to support existing and planned programs.

- CFR 3.4: In order to ensure financial sustainability, invest in enrollment planning and institutional advancement functions to generate sufficient revenue.
- CFR 3.7: Fully implement planned institutional quality assurance processes, including the program review cycle and alignment of assessment, planning, and budgeting.
- CFR 3.8: Demonstrate significant progress in addressing internal control issues noted in the institutional financial audit.
- CFR 3.10: Strengthen faculty ownership of the academic enterprise, including but not limited to curriculum, assessment, student services, technology, and institutional planning and budgeting.

WU responded to these recommendations with a multi-pronged action.

- A vice president for student affairs, who has a background in higher education, was hired and given responsibility for enrollment.
- A faculty hiring plan has been built.
- Faculty, staff, and administration have received professional development.
- The CFO developed an advancement plan in conjunction with the Finance Committee of the board.
- The program review process was designed and piloted.
- The budget process was fleshed out and aligned with the strategic and operational needs.
- The internal control issues in the audit for FY 2021 were fully resolved.
- Faculty are becoming aware and beginning to take ownership for institutional matters beyond curriculum and assessment.

Additional information and analysis is provided in Section II below.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

The Commission found that Wilson University did not demonstrate evidence of compliance with Standard 4 at a level sufficient for Candidacy. In order to demonstrate compliance at a level sufficient for Initial Accreditation, the following CFRs require additional attention and development:

- CFR 4.1: Strengthen institutional ability to understand, collect, analyze, and systematically utilize data at all levels to provide evidence of student outcomes.
- CFR 4.2, 4.7: Apply standard higher education definitions to improve student outcomes and better inform program review and institutional strategic planning.
- CFR 4.5: Demonstrate shared governance by involvement of faculty in institutional planning and budgeting.
- CFR 4.6, 4.7: Inform institutional decision making utilizing standard higher education data and methodology. Strengthen existing planning processes to include implementation timelines, metrics, and responsible parties.

Wilson University hired a higher education consultant who has helped build their understanding of institutional research and how data can inform their decision-making. The staff have developed a fact book and a growing list of key performance indicators (KPIs). They gave examples of closing the loop to use data to inform decision-making. Planning efforts were detailed with goals, timelines, and responsible parties, and the institution began to utilize the SPOL software to track and monitor efforts.

The SAV 2 team considered the shared governance recommendation listed here for CFR 4.5 in the context of CFR 3.10; the extended discussion of this issue is located in Standard 3 in Section II below.

As indicated above, Wilson University presented a self-study that directly addressed each issue raised in the Commission Action Letter from the SAV 1 visit in spring of 2022. Section II of this team report details the responses and the supporting evidence provided.

Section II. Evaluation Of Institutional Compliance with WSCUC Standards

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes And Ensuring Educational Objectives

Standard 1 is intended to ensure that an institution has a clear sense of its purposes and its contribution to the public good and operates with integrity and transparency and autonomy.

Wilson University, as a faith-based institution, has a clear sense of its mission and character, which is widely understood and supported by its faculty, staff, students, and board. In its annual planning conference, to which all faculty, staff, administration, and board members are invited, changes to the institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) were adopted. The five ILOs (spiritual formation, Biblical knowledge, intellectual skills, intercultural competency, and leadership) give shape to their mission and character and are widely accepted. (CFR 1.1)

WU has made great strides in understanding WSCUC expectations regarding transparency, particularly with respect to its communication of student outcomes to the public. The SAV 1 team recommended that Wilson University more prominently display student achievement measures on its website. In addition to just increasing the amount of data published, Wilson University has worked to implement more standard definitions of measures, such as retention. Because their degree programs are still small, making inferences from standard measures is difficult; however, they are learning to disaggregate by such variables as age to begin to gain insight.

The Office of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research (PAIR) has developed a fact book, which it intends to update on an annual basis. The fact book, although still marked as draft, is clearly available two clicks in from the university homepage. The fact book includes a listing of future projects (e.g., a glossary and data on the certificate programs). Over the past year, administrators and members of the student success committee have also developed a list of key performance indicators (KPIs), including enrollment,

graduation rates, retention rates, and student-to-faculty ratios; they continue to discuss additional measures such as those on cost funding and transfer rates. (CFR 1.2)

The university acknowledged that with the death of the prior president, they lost institutional knowledge and leadership around diversity training. WU's leaders are still figuring out how to replace his expertise. (CFR 1.4)

While the primary programs of Wilson University are ministry-focused, the university's purpose is educational. During SAV 2 meetings, cabinet members were passionate in their articulation of the mission of the university as contributing to the transformation of the world; they want to help each individual in their faith tradition become more of the person they were created to be. (CFR 1.6)

As a faith-based institution, Wilson University prides itself on the integrity of its operations. In light of that perceived focus on integrity, the SAV 1 team was puzzled by a complicated set of relationships between Wilson University, Wilson University Foundation, and Wilson Properties LLC and questioned whether there might be a conflict of interest that resulted from the purchase of some properties by Wilson Properties LLC. As a result of this questioning, Wilson University received guidance from both legal and accounting professionals. They realized that the institution did not have a formalized gift policy and had a weak understanding of conflict of interest. Thus, the board has developed a gift policy, which was shared with the team; the LLC has divested itself of the two properties (SAV 2 team reviewed the closing statements); and the board indicated that Wilson Properties LLC was dissolved in the week prior to the visit. WU has also undertaken board training around conflict of interest in higher education. They now appear to understand that even the appearance of a conflict of interest can be a detriment to the reputation, even if an action is well-intentioned. The attention to board education appears to be intentional and effective. (CFR 1.7)

The SAV 1 team recommended that Wilson University come into full compliance with the federal Credit Hour and Student Complaint policy requirements. The vice president for academic affairs had oversight over a substantive review and clarification and update of the credit hour policy, and the new policy is publicly available on the Consumer Information page of the university website. Expectations for faculty appraisal and student engagement have been clarified. Amendments were also made by the Student Success Committee to the student complaint policy, which is publicly available on the Catalog, accessible on the Resources page of the website. As of the time of the visit, the policy has not been tested because no complaints have yet been filed.

The university seems to understand the importance of timely communication with the Commission in that the university did inform the liaison of the death of the previous president and the appointment of the current interim president. On the site visit, the president alerted the team to the expected departure of the CFO, so it would not potentially come as a surprise between the visit and the Commission meeting. Members of the president's cabinet were cognizant of the benefits that accreditation can bring to reputation, quality assurance, institutional learning, and student financial aid. (CFR 1.8)

Overall, Wilson University appears to have a strong commitment to institutional integrity and long-term improvement and growth. It has clearly published statements of mission and values and student graduation and retention rates and developed plans for how to update the factbook and the KPIs. Faculty, staff and administrators are beginning to develop a sense of value of continuous assessment. They are learning and applying more standard definitions of higher education measures such as retention. Ultimately, they are enthusiastic about infusing the value of higher education into a faith tradition that has previously lacked trust in it.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

Standard 2 addresses whether the institution achieves its purposes and attains its educational objectives at the institutional and program level through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. The SAV 1 team recommended that in order to demonstrate shared governance and ensure long term educational quality, WU strengthen faculty ownership of the academic enterprise, including but not limited to curriculum and assessment.

Wilson University has deeply increased its efforts to ensure that student learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and (where appropriate) external stakeholders. The institution's faculty take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the achievement of these standards. The institution demonstrated improvement via evidence such as transparently and explicitly including the CLOs, PLOs, and ILOs in the course syllabus planning document and thus all syllabi. Faculty carefully and thoughtfully developed and assured the quality of all outcomes. One critical example is the creation of ILOs. Discussions included a number of stakeholders and committees, and the team carefully considered alignment with the mission, WSCUC Core Competencies, and the PLOs. (CFR 2.4)

Additionally, faculty and staff collaborated on the full course development cycle, from planning to evaluations to assessment and continuous improvement. Templates were created to ensure all aspects of course curricula and learning outcomes were aligned. Assessment of alignment and student achievement have been enhanced, and a plan is in place for faculty to use data for continuous curriculum improvement. The institution provided evidence in the form of the sample course plan template, sample course evaluations, outcomes assessment reports, and a sample of the educational effectiveness committee agendas. During interviews, it was clear that faculty have been taking on more responsibility in various committees,

including the Educational Effectiveness Committee that focuses on student learning outcomes. The team recommends that the university continue to align learning outcomes with specific student assignments (e.g., signature assignments in relevant courses). Additionally, it also recommends that WU collect, analyze, and disaggregate additional student achievement data with a focus on performance. Through the evidence and the narrative, the institution provided many examples of how the faculty have strengthened and broadened their ownership of curriculum and assessment. (CFR 2.4)

The institution has coordinated efforts between institutional research, faculty, various committees and governance. The communication and well-aligned efforts appear valuable. Additional updates include but are not limited to syllabus updates, policies, and the catalog. The institution has reflected on its work thus far and opportunities to improve. They shared plans to continue to improve the organization of committees and the analysis of data to further engage faculty and provide them with leadership opportunities in the area of outcomes assessment. One of the challenges is that faculty and administrators overlap, and, with multiple Educational Effectiveness Committees, membership may be similar across committees. The staff shared their desire to expand data and assure that faculty are involved in how and when the data will be expanded to support the planning processes. (CFR 2.4)

The SAV 1 team recommended that the university fully implement a clear assessment plan for program review that includes review of curriculum and analysis of quantifiable data, utilizing standard higher education definitions that adequately evidence student achievement. Wilson University has made a concerted effort to assure that all programs offered by the institution are subject to systematic program review. They created a program review process and implemented a pilot program review. The program review process includes analyses of student achievement of the program's learning outcomes, retention and graduation rates, and evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional organizations. Recommendations were to fully implement a clear assessment plan for program review that

includes review of curriculum and analysis of quantifiable data, utilizing standard higher education definitions that adequately evidences student achievement. Evidence reviewed includes the program review excerpt from the PAIR handbook, the program review self study, external prompts for the program review, the action plan for the program review, and the assessment and program review schedule. The institution demonstrated admirable progress on the program review. A full program review was implemented with actionable recommendations. The institution carefully reflected on and acknowledged limitations such as the limited data, due to a small student population, the timing of courses offered during the assessment window, and potential changes in a learning outcome for which the rubric is not developed. The program review was a pilot, and it is clear that the university will need to expand the pilot and work on continuous improvement. The institution appears committed to putting processes in place as evidenced by documentation of guidelines and program review templates. Plans are outlined for many improvements, and it will be critical to develop timelines for those plans and ensure implementation. Some of the planned improvements include encouraging more feedback from faculty and students via focus groups and interviews. WU would also like to disaggregate data by socio-economic status. In addition, the SAV 2 team recommends that external evaluators supporting program review be truly independent. (CFR 2.7)

The SAV 1 team recommended that the institution analyze student program data to better inform program reviews and student outcomes. The institution demonstrated its commitment to supporting students in making timely progress toward the completion of their degrees and to assure that an acceptable proportion of students complete their degrees in a timely fashion, given the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs it offers. The institution collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and the extent to which the campus climate supports student success. The institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students; assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences; and uses data to improve

student achievement. With the support of a consultant, the institution has implemented processes to analyze student program data to better inform program reviews and student outcomes. The institution provided extensive evidence of their improvement including a comprehensive fact book, a peer benchmark comparison, the student withdrawal exit interview form, and the AFC (Apostolic Foundations Certificate) retention report. The institution acknowledged the challenges of identifying true peers for benchmarking due to their unique mission, and they are continuing to pursue the most appropriate methods of benchmarking. (CFR 2.10)

Based on the evidence and the narrative in the report, it is clear that the institution is successfully building systems and seeking and interpreting patterns in data. WU is benchmarking retention and graduation rates, and the structure is in place to report disaggregated retention and graduation rates by key student characteristics. The institution also uses an early alert system, a best practice. To mitigate retention and completion challenges, every student is assigned a success coach from matriculation to graduation. The university invested in a robust CRM to collect real-time data of prospective and current students, which will improve data analysis and data-driven student support. The university seems to clearly understand the value of expanding data and applying the analysis to improve student success. They also have a good understanding of their population and what may be needed to improve retention and graduation rates. (CFR 2.10)

The institution has clearly made substantial progress over time. Faculty, staff and administrators have reflected on their challenges and self-identified the need to expand data and apply it to continuous improvement, and they understand that low enrollment makes it difficult to see actionable patterns. Nevertheless, they instituted solid processes and protocols in preparation for the planned enrollment increases in the future.

Standard 3: Developing And Applying Resources And Organizational Structures To Ensure Quality And Sustainability

Standard 3 addresses whether the institution has sufficient resources to ensure quality education and sustainability.

WU has made commendable efforts in bolstering its personnel by recruiting administrators and staff with higher education backgrounds. Concurrently, the institution has prioritized enhancing the skills of its current personnel through education and training initiatives. Hiring a vice president of student affairs, who brought a wealth of expertise and experience, has proven to be a valuable asset, offering much-needed support to other team members.

Furthermore, WU has engaged the services of a higher education consultant to provide guidance and training, yielding positive results in terms of staff members' knowledge and competence in planning, assessment, institutional research, and even succession planning. Both administrators and staff have actively pursued professional development, including gaining membership in relevant professional organizations and attending industry conferences and events. Staff demonstrated an understanding of the value of assessment and a culture of evidence.

Regarding the faculty, the institution shared its Developed Human Resources Staffing and Training Plan, which addresses the staffing requirements, particularly with the growing student population. This plan is both suitable and realistic in the context of the institution's goals.

From the documented evidence and the narrative provided, it is evident that WU is committed to developing staff proficient in higher education, and the substantial progress made thus far is evident.

Unfortunately, the new president that had been hired at Wilson University passed away earlier this year; the former president returned in an interim capacity while the board searches for a new president. The board has

formed a search committee and shared a document in which they set forth the process by which they will proceed. Additionally, the team learned that the CFO will be transitioning out of his role. He is deeply committed to Wilson University but has personal commitments which require more of his time in the near future. Therefore, he informed the president that a process to replace him in his current role needs to be activated. He served in the past as a board member and would like to continue to assist the institution in a volunteer capacity, first to support the new CFO in the transition and then later to help flesh out a more complete advancement program. (CFR 3.1)

One limitation of the human resources plan mentioned above might be the lack of clarity on the integration of these planning efforts into institutional budget. The team recommends that the university develop long-term financial plans that anticipate future growth needs.

Enrollment management is assigned to the vice president for student affairs, who has begun the process of enhancing the enrollment function. The institution invested in the CRM software, Element 451, which the vice president was familiar with from her former institution. Enrollment projections are now based on data trends, although currently only two years of enrollment data exist. The projections are then given to the finance team for inclusion in the annual budget. It appears that those projections are then adjusted by the finance department to ensure sufficient revenue. The team recommends that the university develop a robust strategic enrollment plan, which utilizes market /funnel analysis in creating enrollment projections, which are incorporated directly into the institutional budget.

The enrollment team has close relations with prospective students, helping ensure that the necessary documentation is provided to complete the admission process. The success coaches also then monitor progress to degree and mitigate issues related to retention. The enrollment team meets every two weeks to share issues and find solutions.

The vice president for student affairs also meets every two weeks with the vice president for operations, who oversees marketing. They work to ensure that the marketing dollars are utilized to build necessary enrollments. They are ready to incorporate the information they can glean from the data from Element 451 regarding the efficacy of various efforts.

With respect to advancement, Wilson University is blessed to have a number of faithful donors, including trustees and interested churches, who help to ensure that the institution has sufficient funding. Some of those donors have moved to monthly contributions, in order to smooth the cash flow for the institution. The CFO has developed a Financial Development Plan, which in essence contains the beginnings of establishing a development function. The CFO and the board are acutely aware of the need to build endowment, without letting annual funding lag. It is clear that Wilson University has done much-needed friend-raising and could only benefit from more direct fundraising. The team recommends that the Financial Development Plan be further enhanced with quantified outcomes and responsibilities assigned to particular individuals. (CFR 3.4)

WU has made significant progress in the implementation of planned institutional quality assurance processes, including the program review cycle and the alignment of assessment, planning, and budgeting.

The oversight of outcomes assessment has been well planned and designed. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) now coordinates closely with the president's cabinet and the Finance Committee of the board of trustees in the budget development process. This is a departure from the previous practice where the budget process was limited to the President and CFO.

Key achievements include the development of a three-year strategic plan, annual planning conferences, and the creation of master and annual action plans by VPs and staff. Administrative and Educational Support (AES) unit assessments have been introduced, and the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software is

effectively used to track the progress of these action plans. The staff has demonstrated proficiency in using this system.

An Institutional Research consultant has played a pivotal role in helping evaluate and enhance the strategic and master plans, as well as the assessment process. Annual outcomes assessments are consistently conducted for both degree programs and two certificate programs. Plans have been refined with the assistance of a consultant. The CFO has worked directly with individual vice presidents to align budgetary needs with the goals associated with the plans. While the budget is not currently integrated into SPOL, it is nevertheless closely monitored and reviewed to ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan and Master Plan.

The dedication and growth of the staff in their pursuit of these improvements have been significant. They have shown a strong commitment to these processes and have acquired substantial knowledge along the way. Next steps include full implementation of the SPOL budget module. (CFR 3.7)

As another example of institutional learning, the CFO worked with an external accounting professional and the internal business manager to create and implement clearly defined procedures and policies addressing and correcting internal control issues and four concerns noted in the institutional financial audit. There are no further concerns. (CFR 3.8)

WU has made significant strides in enhancing faculty ownership of various aspects of the academic enterprise, including curriculum development, assessment, student services, technology integration, and institutional planning and budgeting. Nevertheless, additional time and experience will likely further build upon this progress.

Specifically, WU has made noteworthy advancements in expanding faculty involvement beyond the classroom, particularly in the curriculum design. Faculty members are actively engaged as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in the curriculum development process, collaborating to define course and unit learning

outcomes and make improvements. Moreover, a more comprehensive program approval process now includes the Academic Assembly, a faculty-led committee that plays a pivotal role in academic decision-making, marking a significant increase in faculty participation in these decisions.

Furthermore, faculty members have taken on a more substantial role in policy formulation, leading to developing or revising several policies, including the credit hour policy. To visually depict the principles of shared governance, a matrix has been introduced, alongside an expansion of faculty committees and membership, further underscoring faculty involvement.

WU is commended for developing an institutional understanding of shared governance and building structures to support engagement, particularly of faculty, in institutional direction. Nevertheless, faculty involvement is mostly just beginning. As an example, the faculty created a Faculty Planning and Budgeting Committee, though it is not yet active as they continue to seek additional members. The faculty acknowledged that being actively engaged in budget conversations has been a relatively new concept, but they are enthusiastic about engaging.

Despite these positive developments, the dual administrative role of some faculty members raises questions about the true ownership of the academic enterprise. Therefore, it is imperative to place greater emphasis on the involvement of full time faculty members without traditional administrative roles and adjunct faculty members. Some adjunct faculty members have voiced concerns about their knowledge of higher education practices and have only recently become aware of their participation or involvement in faculty assembly and other committees. Addressing these knowledge gaps and fostering a sense of inclusion and awareness among all faculty members will be instrumental in further advancing the progress achieved in faculty ownership at WU. The faculty requires additional time and experience to continue building upon their progress. (CFR 3.10)

Standard 4: Creating An Organization Committed To Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, And Improvement

Standard 4 is intended to ensure that the institution consistently evaluates how well it is doing on accomplishing stated goals and educational objectives. This process should utilize evidence collected from various sources as well as self-reflection to ultimately establish priorities, plan, and make improvements.

The CFRs not yet in compliance after the SAV 1 were: CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7.

The SAV 1 Team recommended that Wilson University strengthen its ability to understand, collect, analyze, and systematically utilize data at all levels to provide evidence of student outcomes. Overall, Wilson University has made significant progress in its understanding of data and general approach to data collection. This has primarily been achieved through the hiring of an external consultant who possesses institutional research expertise. That individual has helped the institution identify and prioritize data that is meaningful to their ongoing strategic conversations.

Wilson University has expanded its data collection capabilities as a result of implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, which allows to more easily collect and view enrollment data. One potential challenge Wilson University may face is that its data is “decentralized” across the main divisions of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Operations. It is suggested that Wilson University continue training divisional leads on data collection, analysis, and reporting skills to ensure consistency and integration. (CFR 4.1)

Wilson University has created a master list of annual reports that allows various committees to see the data being collected and their respective timelines. The Executive Vice President shared that Wilson University will be adding an additional column to the report that identifies how data from each source in the list will be

used in various decision-making processes. When pressed for an example, the Executive Vice President shared how the Educational Effectiveness Committee used data identified in reports to inform discussions on PLO development. (CFR 4.1)

The Student Success Committee discussed data collected from sources such as the 2023 Climate, Engagement, and Student Satisfaction Survey (CESS) and overall retention and graduation rates. This shows signs that the institution is moving towards a systemic use of data for decision-making, but there are opportunities to make this more structured or embedded in their processes. For academic programs, multiple sources of data are being used for annual outcomes assessment and program review, such as final projects, final exams, and course evaluations. (CFR 4.1)

While the external consultant has helped Wilson University start to develop its data literacy, continued training and skills development is suggested, specifically as it relates to data analysis. It is recommended that Wilson University continue building institutional capacity to collect, analyze, and interpret data to ensure consistency, integration, and evidence-based excellence in all organizational operations, in support of strategic planning and continuous improvement. (CFR 4.1)

The SAV 1 Team recommended that Wilson University apply standard higher education definitions to improve student outcomes and better inform program review and institutional strategic planning. The external consultant that Wilson University hired helped develop a Fact Book that is scheduled to be updated on an annual basis. Standard higher education definitions are being used for retention and graduation rates. Wilson University's definition for cohort is by the academic year in which a student is enrolled. This is used due to the fact that terms are only six weeks long and students can enroll at eight different points during the year. It is suggested that Wilson University come to a consensus around who their peer institutions are for comparisons and benchmarking. This could help standardize data comparisons across all areas of the institution and support strategic planning efforts. (CFR 4.2)

Wilson University acknowledges the importance of being connected to the larger higher education community. Team members have participated in various professional organizations, either through one-off trainings (e.g., data analytics through the Association on Institutional Research), attending conferences, or utilizing resources (e.g., shared governance training for faculty through the Distance Education Accrediting Commission [DEAC]). Wilson University has expanded its capacity for planning processes, specifically through the implementation of the SPOL software system. The institution has purchased the budgeting module for SPOL and plans on utilizing those functions in the near future. Wilson University has created a strategic planning process that includes timelines. (CFR 4.6 and 4.7)

Section III. Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations–The team commends Wilson University for:

- Investing in board education regarding conflict of interest and financial oversight
- Reconsidering and updating the institutional learning outcomes in light of the mission
- Streamlining processes in light of institutional size
- Hiring staff experienced in higher education and beginning to invest in professional development for faculty, staff, and administration
- Garnering insights from institutional consultants and effectively utilizing and integrating such knowledge to institutional advantage
- Continuing to develop and diversify fiscal resources and sustainability for the institution with effective leadership from the board
- Developing an institutional understanding of shared governance and building structures to support engagement, particularly of faculty, in institutional direction

Recommendations–The team recommends that Wilson University:

- Develop a robust strategic enrollment plan, which utilizes market /funnel analysis in creating enrollment projections, which are incorporated directly into the institutional budget (CFR 3.4)
- Develop long-term financial plans that anticipate future growth needs (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)

- Continue building institutional capacity to collect, analyze, and interpret data to ensure consistency, integration, and evidence-based excellence in all organizational operations, in support of strategic planning and continuous improvement (CFR 4.1, 4.2)
- Enhance the Financial Development Plan with quantified outcomes and responsibilities assigned to particular individuals (CFR 3.4)
- Continue to align learning outcomes with specific student assignments (e.g., signature assignments in relevant courses). Collect, analyze, and disaggregate additional student achievement data with a focus on performance (CFR 3.10)
- Continue to refine the program review process, including independent external reviewers and additional student achievement data (CFR 2.4)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form

| Material Reviewed | Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.) |
|--|---|
| Policy on credit hour | Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | If so, where is the policy located? On the website, 2 clicks in (consumer information) and posted in each classroom |
| | Comments: |
| Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour | Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | Comments: via the program review and the course development process. Also, they have a 3 year cycle to review all policies. |
| Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet | Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| | Comments: |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i> | How many syllabi were reviewed? 3 |
| | What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? online |
| | What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral |
| | What discipline(s)? MA, Developing a Culture of Missions; Bachelor of Science, General Education, Life of Christ; AA, General Education, History and Literature |
| | Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | Comments: |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i> | How many syllabi were reviewed? NA |
| | What kinds of courses? NA |
| | What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral |
| | What discipline(s)? NA |
| | Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO N/A |
| | Comments: N/A |
| Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials) | How many programs were reviewed? 3 |
| | What kinds of programs were reviewed? Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Science in Christian Ministry, Master of Arts in Leadership |
| | What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral |

| | |
|--|--|
| | What discipline(s)? AA General Education, Christian Ministry, Leadership |
| | Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | Comments: |

Review Completed By: Ellen Baker Derwin
Date: October 11, 2023

Appendix 2: Student Complaints Review Form

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

| Material Reviewed | Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.) |
|------------------------------|---|
| Policy on student complaints | Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? Policy and procedures are located in the Student Handbook (updated 10/5/23) and in the University Catalog. The Catalog is accessible online through the public website and students are able to access the Handbook through their portal site. Students stated that they were told about the Handbook and procedures during orientation. |
| | Comments: |
| Process(es)/ procedure | Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| | If so, please describe briefly: If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO N/A |
| | Comments: The institution does have a procedure for addressing student complaints, however no formal complaints have been received since the implementation of this policy. |
| Records | Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? N/A |
| | Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: |
| | Comments: The institution does have a process for recording student complaints, however no formal complaints have been received since the implementation of this policy. |

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Tim Novara

Date: October 12, 2023