

March 7, 2015

Paul F. Fitzgerald, S.J.  
President  
University of San Francisco  
2130 Fulton Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080

Dear President Fitzgerald:

At its meeting by conference call on March 4, 2015, a panel of the Interim Report Committee convened to consider the Interim Report submitted by the University of San Francisco (USF) on October 30, 2014. The panel reviewed your Interim Report and the March 3, 2010 Commission action letter reaffirming accreditation.

The panel appreciated the opportunity to discuss the report with you, Jennifer Turpin, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Shirley McGuire, Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Academic Effectiveness, and Gerardo Marin, Senior Vice President and ALO. The conversation was informative and helped the panelists better understand your institution's challenges and progress on meeting the areas cited in the Commission's letter.

The panel commends USF for the very well written report which addressed in a comprehensive and thorough way the two issues being focused upon. They were very impressed that in the aftermath of the nation's economic problems USF was so quickly able to increase the number of fulltime faculty with impressive increases in underrepresented professors. The progress made by USF in numerous areas outlined by the President during the call demonstrates an institution with a strongly focused mission and a strong sense of where they are headed in the future.

The Commission's March 2010 action letter requested a report on two areas:

- 1. Revision, completion, and documentation of USF's three-year comprehensive plan for the assessment of learning outcomes.** The Commission found that at the time of the Educational Effectiveness Review in October 2009, the institution was in the first year of a three-year assessment program for courses and programs. Recommendations were made for the usage of more direct evidence in assessment, program-level mapping, and usage of evidence-based assessment in co-curricular programs. The Commission hoped a culture of assessment would become part of campus culture.

USF discovered that the plan was not sustainable and developed a completely new plan that is decentralized and more inclusive with assessment coordination placed in each of the schools as part of the responsibility of associate deans. A web-based reporting system has been instituted. Data has now become a central part of the evidence used in informing major decisions at USF. The long established program review process has become an even more important part of the institution's assessment efforts. All of the concerns expressed in the Commission letter have been focused upon in the new plan with very promising initial results. The panel heard from USF's administrators that they regularly hear talk about assessment on campus which indicates progress toward a new culture being developed. The Interim Report presented by USF presented numerous areas of progress in academic and co-curricular program reviews, concurrent accreditation of professional programs and co-curricular programs, institutional learning outcomes, core curriculum assessment, normed indirect measures, mapping of NSSE, graduating student surveys, professional exams, capstone

project/portfolios, student evaluation of teaching, and a redefined mission of the Institutional Assessment Committee. Rather than being concerned about so many big changes in a short time, the panel was impressed that USF did not stay with a model that was not working but developed new approaches with the possibility of longer lasting and more effective results. At the time of USF's next review in 2018, the institutional report will need to contain an update on further implementation of the new model.

- 2. Increase in full-time faculty and faculty from underrepresented groups.** The Interim Report documented enormous progress with an increase in full-time faculty by 20.8% from 380 in fall 2008 to 459 in fall 2013 with impressive increases in full-time women, African American, Hispanic, and Asian faculty. Some of this growth has taken place with the major increase in enrollment experienced by USF but the report and representatives on the call documented the proactive steps taken to make these numbers possible including specific retention strategies. These numbers are even more impressive given the enormous cost of living and housing in the Bay Area. On the call, the institution outlined specific steps they have taken to enable professors to handle these costs with the result of enormous applicants for each open position and the ability to attract their first choices. The panel commends USF for such positive results to the Commission's recommendations.

After discussion of the progress that has been made by USF in addressing these areas, the panel acted to:

1. Receive the Interim Report.
2. Require that at the time of the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review scheduled in fall 2018 and Accreditation Visit in spring 2018, USF will provide an update on continued progress made in both areas.

The panel, again, reaffirms the hard work and important steps the University of San Francisco has taken to address these issues. I look forward to working with you and wish you every success as you proceed toward the next stages of accreditation review.

Sincerely,



Richard Osborn  
Vice President

Cc: Gerardo Marin, Senior Vice Provost and ALO  
Members of the Interim Report Committee