UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

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Dear members of the WASC Senior College and University Commission:

The University of San Francisco leadership team is grateful for the Commission's continuing support for the peer review process in the reaffirmation of accreditation. For more than two years, the USF community critically examined every aspect of the university during our self-study as we explored the alignment of our programs, policies, and initiatives according to our Jesuit mission and Catholic identity. Faculty, staff, administrators, students and board members participated in numerous committees, sub-committees, focus groups, surveys, retreats and targeted interviews to discuss our commitment to student learning and to developing every aspect of a person's humanity. We committed to candor and transparency with the review team and, more importantly, with ourselves. As a result of the self-study we identified areas of strength and progress as well as area of challenge. We also confirmed our deep respect for the significance of this review process, and we thank all involved.

Throughout the process we have been guided by our WSCUC liaison Dr. Richard Osborn. Always supportive and responsive, he was instrumental in preparing us for a successful accreditation visit. Our review team, led by Dr. William Covino, was well-prepared, engaged and collegial. I was very edified by the commendations, which are strong, clear, and cover the heart of our operation. I was deeply appreciative of the recommendations, which will be tremendously helpful as we lead efforts for continuous program improvements across campus and provide further credibility and weight to the initiatives that we have already launched. It is a pleasure to work with you all to guarantee, through peer review, the value of a degree from a WSCUC accredited institution.

We are already in the process of addressing the team's six recommendations. A member of my cabinet is taking the lead as the point person on each of the recommendations. In some cases, a working group has already been formed to work alongside the cabinet member. An action plan, or at least the first steps, is in place for each. It is posted and publicly available here, and the status of each action plan will be updated for the campus community and the public regularly. Below are a few more details about next steps on each recommendation.

Strategy & Objectives: Thanks to constructive conversations with the university's Leadership Team and the university's Board of Trustees, along with the foundational guidance that USF 2028 gives us, we have begun to articulate a framework for the future that we can build together. It involves the following four transformative directions: 1. That we stand committed to transforming students into leaders, lifelong learners, and "persons for and with others" in an increasingly uncertain, diverse, and interconnected world.

2. Offering educational opportunities grounded in creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation.
3. We need to further leverage our extraordinary location by engaging with -- and working to transform -- San Francisco and the Bay Area.
4. Creating One University of San Francisco - a community grounded in diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence.

A roadmap for communicating this strategic framework to the community is an important next step. My cabinet is discussing the ways we will engage members of the community to sharpen this vision in the months ahead.

Faculty Governance: Provost Donald Heller is taking the lead on this recommendation and has already met with the USF faculty association (USFFA) leadership at the end of fall semester about the review team report. The USFFA has recognized the need to expand faculty governance, and their president has indicated the original by-laws of the USFFA out'ine a structure that is more similar to a faculty senate than a bargaining unit. In addition, the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the USFFA and administration includes many examples of faculty participation in shared governance, including joint curriculum committees, tenure and promotion peer review committees, and faculty development fund committees. Still, the USFFA Policy Board agreed with Provost Heller that a series of discussions between the provost and all three faculty union groups (i.e., USFFA, law, and part-time faculty) is needed. All parties concerned agree that increased participatory decision-making is important and would strengthen our compliance with CFR 3.10. Provost Heller will be setting up a series of open meetings with faculty during the next semester to solicit input and to engage faculty as a whole in discussions about the value of an independent faculty body in shared governance. We have an excellent foundation to build on, as evidenced by the team's commendations related to our commitment to student success and the mission alignment of our rigorous academic curricula.

School of Law Issues: Provost Heller and the School of Law Interim Dean Freiwald are aware of the issues outlined in the review team's recommendation. They created an action plan with the School of Law leadership team that includes a permanent dean in place by fall 2020, new leadership in and a revamping of the Academic and Bar Exam Support Program, the reduction of expenses through efficiencies and strategic cuts, an increase in revenue through fund raising and improved net tuition, and a new team in the Office of Career Services implementing a more individualized approach to improve graduate placement.

Program Review & Assessment: The Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the University Assessment Committee are working to address this recommendation and have set out a process that will build expertise in program review and assessment and provide professional development for the assessment of learning outcomes in curricular and co-curricular programs. Together they have developed and moved forward with concrete items for the initial phase, including a needs assessment and work with the

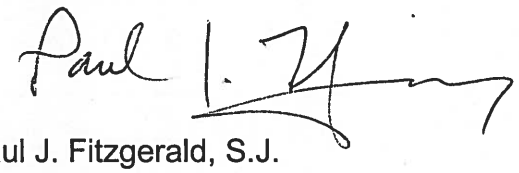
instructional design team to build an online "courselet" for faculty and staff to build assessment capacity.

Communication: Issues around communication came up in every aspect of our self-study and other campus-wide listening initiatives. The Vice President of Marketing Communications is taking the lead on this initiative and is working with the Communications Strategy Working Group, a group comprised of faculty, staff and administrators from the five schools and departments across the university. They have established the first steps of an action plan and are currently reviewing data from campus-wide reports to identify communication deficits, gaps and shortcomings. The results of this first stage will inform how the group proceeds to address this important area.

Alumni Data: The Vice President of Development and the Senior Associate Vice President of Development are leading on the action plan for this recommendation. They have very recently hired an Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations who will take over the lead on this plan, which will go beyond more systematically surveying alumni to gathering, storing and organizing alumni data to create a fuller picture of the impact of a USF education.

Thank you again for facilitating this opportunity for reflection and discernment through the reaffirmation of accreditation process.

Sincerely,



Paul J. Fitzgerald, S.J.
President