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PRESIDENT
Ralph A. Wolff

July 10, 2013

M.R.C. Greenwood
President
University of Hawai'i System
Bachman 202
2444 Dole Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear President Greenwood:

At its meeting June 19-21, 2013, the commission considered the report of the team that conducted a Special Visit to the University of Hawaii, Office of the President, May 7-9, 2013. The visit was originally intended to be a follow-up to the Commission action taken at its February 2013 meeting, as requested in my letter to you dated March 11, 2013. In light of the implications of the transition reflected by your retirement from the presidency effective this September, the Commission approved the filing of a special visit report.

In its March 2013 letter, the Commission noted several areas of concern: external interference, policy gaps, system – campus lines of authority, and the role of the Board of Regents. The Commission stated that under the Standards these issues, if left unaddressed, could affect the accreditation of the entire university, especially on the senior campuses accredited by the Commission. The purpose of the follow-up visit was to communicate these Commission concerns and to determine whether progress was being made.

Following the team visit and its findings, the concerns of the Commission remain. The Commission intends to continue to monitor the situation, and has rescheduled the next review to allow time for a new president to be selected and assume leadership of the University. Throughout this period, it will be important for University leadership to address Commission concerns, since they remain consequential and affect the entire University.

The Commission acted to receive the Special Visit report and urges the UH system to act upon its recommendations. In addition, the commission highlighted the following areas for special attention.

External interference. While many legislative proposals that could have compromised University autonomy were not passed, several provisions accompanying the University's budget have the potential to undermine the

authority of the Board of Regents and University administration. Two were highlighted by the team: requiring Board action on compensation decisions that previously were delegated by the Board to University administration, and the required allocation of funds away from the Manoa campus. The Commission will monitor how the Attorney General rules on these provisos, as well as how they impact University functioning. (CFR 1.6)

Report of the Working Group. The Board commissioned studies on the roles and responsibilities of the Regents, areas for needed policy, and System-campus relations had not been issued at the time of the visit but was expected to be released soon after the special visit and to be highly consequential. These studies apparently are based on extensive research, interviews and comparisons with other university systems. The Commission will also monitor the findings, recommendations and follow up of the Regents to these studies. It requests a copy of the Working group’s reports along with the Board’s actions to address its findings and recommendations. (CFRs 1.3, 3.8, 3.9)

Follow up on the Wonder concert. Soon after the Wonder incident, the Regents commissioned a fact-finding committee to look into issues associated with the concert; the team learned that steps were taken to address the findings of the committee, but the team has not received a report from the University on how policy and procedural issues were changed as a result, though such a report had been requested in the March 2013 letter and at the time of the most recent visit. It is requested once again. (CFRs 1.3, 1.8, 3.8)

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the report of the special visit team;
2. Reschedule the next visit to the Office of the President from spring to fall 2014;
3. Request that the University provide the Commission a copy of the working group’s reports and a list of Board actions in response to its recommendations; and
4. Request a report of actions taken following the fact-finding committee’s report.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of the UH System’s Board of Regents in one week. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be appropriately disseminated to promote improvement, and to support the system’s response to the specific issues identified in them. The team report and the Commission’s action letter will also be posted on the WASC website. If the UH System wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WASC will post a link to that response.

The citations to Commission Standards and Criteria for Review in this letter refer to the 2008 *Handbook of Accreditation*. As the System works on the issues cited above, it should be mindful of the expectations that it will need to meet at the time of its next review, which will take place

under the revised Standards of Accreditation and institutional review process in the *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge your leadership of the University and the progress that was noted in the 2012 team report.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph A. Wolff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" at the end.

Ralph A. Wolff
President

RW/gc

cc: Harold Hewitt, Commission Chair
Linda Johnsrud, ALO
Eric Martinson, Board Chair
George Pernsteiner