

July 18, 2024

Dr. Jeffrey Herbst
President
American Jewish University
15600 Mulholland Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90077-1599

Dear President Herbst:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning American Jewish University (AJU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 28, 2024. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to AJU March 26-28, 2024 using the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by AJU prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's May 31, 2024 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Robbie Totten, Chief Academic Office and ALO. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of eight years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2031 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2032
4. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2028 to address:
 - a. Developing and strengthening the strategic planning process.
 - b. Building capacity in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
 - c. Improving the institution's distance education capacity.
 - d. Formalizing and institutionalizing continuous improvement processes.
 - e. Examining the distribution of student support services.
 - f. Resolving the structural budget deficit.
5. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by November 1, 2025 to provide an update on:
 - a. Developing and strengthening the strategic planning process.
 - b. Formalizing and institutionalizing continuous improvement processes.
 - c. Resolving the structural budget deficit.

Commendations

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. A senior leadership team lead by the president that has shepherded the institution through critical transition periods.
2. Academic deans, faculty, and staff who have reimagined academic programs to reduce barriers related to access, cost, and time to degree.
3. Institutional and program learning outcomes that are rooted in Judaic principles regarding intellect, service, social justice, and advocacy.
4. A robust advancement team, systems, and processes that effectively cultivate donor and philanthropic efforts.
5. A Board of Directors that is committed to and engaged with the mission and future direction of the institution.

Areas for Development

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Resolve the structural budget deficit to ensure long-term financial sustainability. (CFR 3.4)
2. Develop and strengthen the strategic planning process engaging all university constituents (e.g., faculty, staff, students). (CFR 4.6)
3. Formalize and institutionalize continuous improvement processes (e.g., assessment, program review) and provide best practices and professional development opportunities for faculty and academic staff. (CFRs 2.7, 4.4)
4. Build capacity in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to provide data integrity and analysis to support the institution's strategic decision-making processes. (CFR 4.2)
5. Improve the university's distance education capacity, aligned with best practices, to ensure the delivery of a high-quality educational experience, and expand its professional development opportunities for faculty. (CFRs 2.1, 3.5)
6. Examine the distribution of student support services (e.g., advising, disability accommodation, counseling) to better meet the needs of students. (CFR 2.13)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that AJU successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the

2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, AJU should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of AJU's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the AJU website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that AJU undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Jamiene S. Studley
President

JSS/thh

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Robbie Totten, ALO
Harold Masor, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Tamela Hawley, Vice President