

March 6, 2024

Dr. Susan Rounds  
President  
Dharma Realm Buddhist University  
4951 Bodhi Way  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear President Rounds:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 16, 2024. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to DRBU October 4-6, 2023 using the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by DRBU prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's January 23, 2024 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Franklyn Wu, ALO; Stacy Chen, Associate Dean of Program Development; Jin Jr Shi, Associate Dean of Academics Affairs; Wayne Chen, Director of Development and Strategic Planning; Meghan Sweet, Director of University Relations; Lan Huang, Director of Institutional Research; and Shari Epstein, Professor. 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 spring 2031 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2031
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted March 1, 2025 to address:
  - a. Develop the strategic plan, delineating measurable outcomes of identified priorities and a regular assessment process including timelines, milestones, ownership of tasks, and key performance indicators. (CFRs 1.7, 4.1, 4.6)
  - b. Approach assessment and educational effectiveness with a more strategic lens, driven by the faculty's identification of institutional needs and key indicators of student success through the deliberate collection and analysis of evidence; develop processes for faculty to systematically work towards closing the loop. (CFRs 2.4, 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

### **Commendations**

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. The deep commitment of the board, faculty, staff, administration, and students to the mission of the university.
2. The highly qualified faculty and student services personnel, whose values-driven, student-centered focus informs curriculum, co-curriculum, and student support.
3. The transformational impact of the DRBU education on the students and alumni through the pedagogy of shared inquiry and personalized learning experiences such as contemplative practice, work study, and student conferences.
4. The ethic of care from the recruitment and admission process through post-graduation, including the investment in student support services such as mental health and the ongoing commitment to graduate students debt-free.

### **Areas for Development**

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

1. Develop the strategic plan with measurable outcomes of identified priorities and a regular assessment process including timelines, milestones, ownership of tasks, and key performance indicators. (CFRs 1.7, 4.1, 4.6)
2. Approach assessment and educational effectiveness with a more strategic lens, driven by the faculty's identification of key indicators of student success through the deliberate collection and analysis of evidence; develop processes for faculty to systematically work toward closing the loop. (CFRs 2.4, 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)
3. Continue to build out and implement data-driven enrollment management and research-based marketing plans, aligned with the institution's strategic growth planning and resourcing. (CFRs 3.4, 4.6)
4. Improve operational efficiency and consider streamlining staff responsibilities after performing an in-depth review of the organization's functional needs and employee capabilities. (CFRs 1.7, 2.1, 3.1, 3.7)
5. Continue to develop human resources policies and infrastructure to address regulatory compliance, compensation and benefits, performance review, and professional development. (CFRs 1.7, 3.2, 3.3)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that DRBU successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, DRBU 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 DRBU's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the DRBU 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 DRBU 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/lp

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair  
Shih Yu "Franklyn" Wu, ALO  
Ming-Lu Huang, Board Chair  
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team  
Linda Petersen, Vice President