June 24, 2008

Kenneth Nielsen
President
Woodbury University
7500 Glenoaks Boulevard
Burbank, CA 91510-7846

Dear President Nielsen:

At its meeting on June 18-20, 2008, the Commission considered the report of the team that conducted the Capacity and Preparatory (CPR) visit to Woodbury University on February 27-29, 2008. The Commission also had access to the Capacity and Preparatory Report prepared by Woodbury prior to the visit, and the institution’s response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with Senior Vice President David Rosen, Vice President of IT and Planning Steve Dyer, Director of Institutional Research Nathan Garrett, and you. The information and observations provided by you and your colleagues were very helpful.

The Commission was pleased by the engagement of the Woodbury community in the Capacity and Preparatory Review process. It noted the statement by the team:

“The brainstorming, analysis and planning associated with the CPR activities ... generated a commendable amount of positive energy and action on the Woodbury campus ... The community was broadly and deeply engaged, with faculty, staff, the Board of Trustees, and even students and alumni involved in evaluating institutional performance and advising on actions for improvement. Woodbury’s ability to implement large scale projects in an apparently “bottom up” and collegial manner—for example, the redefinition of the mission, and the articulation of program learning outcomes for each major—indicates the University’s capacity and commitment to engage in serious self-review and improvement.”

The Commission endorsed the findings, commendations, and recommendations of the evaluation team. The team cited a number of areas for continued attention and improvement, and the Commission will expect to see
the progress that the University has made with respect to them at the time of the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). These include:

- addressing faculty workload to ensure that faculty continue to have the opportunity and ability to engage in professional enrichment and renewal in support of quality academic programs
- continuing to build the University’s financial capacity in order to both decrease the dependence on tuition and continue to assist students with financial support
- integrating planning efforts, including specific attention to enrollment management
- improving the use of institutional research in support of planning and documentation of student learning
- focusing on student learning outcomes and assessment throughout the curriculum and across programs, and
- evaluating the effectiveness of the program review process as a means to reinforce achievement of outcomes for student learning.

In light of the progress made by the University to date, and the issues it will need to address for the EER, in keeping with its Proposal and the recommendations of the CPR team, the Commission acted to extend the date of the EER site visit. In so doing, the Commission wants to build upon—and allow time for—Woodbury’s enthusiasm and progress to date to yield concrete evidence that student learning assessment results are being used to improve educational effectiveness systematically and meaningfully throughout the institution.

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Capacity and Preparatory Review Report and continue the accreditation of Woodbury University.

2. Reschedule the Educational Effectiveness Review visit to spring 2010. The Institutional Report is due 12 weeks prior to the scheduled visit.

3. Request that the institution incorporate its response to the issues raised in this action letter and the major recommendations of the CPR team report in its Educational Effectiveness report. This may be done by referencing where these responses are in the Table of Contents or in an addendum to the Report.

In addition, you are expected to prepare a brief analysis of how Woodbury University meets the expectations established in recent changes to the Standards and Criteria for Review, which are effective July 1, 2008. These changes can be found on the WASC website at www.wascsenior.org. You may include this analysis in an appendix to your EER report or incorporate it into the report.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the Chair of the institution’s governing board in one week. It is the Commission’s expectation that the team report and this action letter will be widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote
further engagement and improvement, and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in them.

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

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Ralph A. Wolff
President and Executive Director

RW/mb/aa

cc: Sherwood Lingenfelter, Commission Chair
    Board Chair
    David Rosen, AL
    Members of the Team
    Michelle Behr