July 1, 1991

Paul E. Sago  
President  
Woodbury University  
7500 Glenoaks Blvd.  
P.O. Box 7846  
Burbank, CA 91510-7846  

Dear President Sago:

At its June 19-21, 1991 meeting, the Commission considered the report of the most recent visiting team to the University and the report prepared by the University in preparation for the visit.

The University is commended for the significant steps taken in recent years in addressing the concerns of the 1986 visiting team, including the successful transition to a new campus. According to the visiting team,

[the curriculum has been refined and improved. Overall progress has been remarkably good. Morale is upbeat . . . . The campus community manifests confidence in the future . . . . this venerable institution now has an air of youthful vigor about it which is admirable to behold.

Of great importance, the University has won the dedication and support of its faculty, students and Board of Trustees.

Beyond these commendations, the Commission urges that serious consideration be given to all of the findings and recommendations of the team. In particular, the Commission wishes to stress three issues:

1. Planning. In some respects, the University's planning and financial capabilities have been strengthened. However, the Board and the administration should carefully reflect upon the team's finding that:
The absence of well-defined objectives to focus the University's continuing development efforts also contributes to the University's preoccupation with revenue generation, in terms of increasing student population rather than focusing attention on the quality and appropriateness of the academic programs.

This finding lends special urgency to the team's recommendation that faculty and staff have a greater voice early in the process of establishing budget priorities. In addition, the University needs to more clearly define the goals and priorities for its academic programs. Planning should be undertaken for additional capital facilities that must necessarily accompany enrollment growth.

2. Faculty. The Commission is seriously concerned about the small number of full-time faculty at the University given both the size of student enrollment and the number of part-time faculty. As additional academic planning is undertaken, it is critical that the University articulate how it meets the expectations of the Standards that full-time faculty teach, advise, participate in University governance, engage in scholarship and other forms of faculty development and also be primarily responsible for the selection, supervision and evaluation of part-time faculty. As new full-time faculty are hired, it should be possible for the University to remedy the virtual lack of minority faculty cited in the team's report.

3. The Board and Fund-raising. The financial challenge before the University is a significant one given the need to improve salaries, increase the number of full-time faculty, add new facilities and augment student financial aid. The Commission concurs with the team that the Board should take immediate steps to develop an overall fund-raising and giving program, citing specific dollar target amounts and a timetable within which funds are to be raised. Fund-raising priorities should also be established to identify the relative importance of building endowment, scholarships, capital expenditures and faculty support.

Consideration should be given to augmenting the Board both with an eye to more nearly reflect the diversity of the student body and to bring greater experience in institutions of higher education.

The Commission acted to reaffirm the accreditation of Woodbury University and to schedule a comprehensive visit in the Fall of 1995. A draft of the University's self study will be due by July 15, 1995. In addition, the Commission requests eight (8) copies of a progress report on the three major areas of concern listed in this letter by December 15, 1993.
In view of the importance of Board understanding of the accreditation process, the Commission requests that a copy of this letter be provided to all members of the Board.

Please call me if you have comments or questions.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Stephen S. Weiner
Executive Director

SSW: dma

cc: Raymond F. Bacchetti
Jacqueline Powers Doud
Members of the Team