



July 9, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Joseph Stiefel, President
National University of Health Sciences
200 E. Roosevelt Rd.
Lombard, IL 60148

Dear President Stiefel:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning National University of Health Sciences (“the institution”). This action is effective as of the date the Board acted, June 28, 2018. In taking this action, the Board considered materials from the recent Notice Evaluation, including, but not limited to: the Notice Report, the report from the Notice Evaluation team, the Staff Analysis of the Notice Report, and the institutional responses to these reports.

Summary of the Action: The Board determined that the institution is no longer at risk of noncompliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and removed the institution from Notice. The institution meets Core Components 4.A and 4.B with concerns. The institution is required to submit an Interim Report with its next Assurance Filing, as outlined in this letter.

Board Rationale

The Board based its action on the following findings made with regard to the institution:

The institution has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.A, “the institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs,” but with concerns for the following reasons:

- The institution has established a practice of regular program reviews for each of its programs;
- The institution began a curriculum mapping process called Streams that provides the University with a way of seeing how courses build upon each other to create a content-based curricular flow of instruction throughout a student’s program of study and to help the University identify any gaps that might exist in its curricula or academic resources;
- The institution’s plan for data collection and academic program review appears in keeping with standard best practices in higher education, and is commensurate with

the current personnel (especially in light of several new hires in key areas such as instructional design and the Dean of Students office) and information technology;

- However, the institution has not fully addressed areas previously requested by HLC including data gathering and analysis, use of data to address areas of concern, or assessment of outcomes to verify that any changes adopted have accomplished their intended purpose.

The institution has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.B, “the institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning,” but with concerns for the following reasons:

- The institution’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness is currently conducting Assessment Workshops for interested faculty and staff twice a month;
- The institution hired an Instructional Designer who actively promotes a new culture of ongoing assessment and routine program review and assists faculty with course design, the development of measurable learning activities, and data collection and analysis;
- The institution has developed and implemented a process for co-curricular review and assessment;
- Faculty are now relying on direct measures to assess student learning, such as the evaluation of student writing samples with course-specific rubrics and systematic observation of students’ clinical work;
- However, the institution has not yet developed student learning outcomes for all courses or programs and has not yet demonstrated that it uniformly assesses those outcomes or evaluates changes made as a result of its data analysis.

The institution has demonstrated that it now meets without concerns Criterion Five, Core Component 5.C, “the institution engages in systematic and integrated planning,” for the following reasons:

- The institution maintains institution-wide budgeting processes and follows standard best practices in financial oversight;
- The institution provided evidence of strategic planning, including a projected Budget Statement of Activities through fiscal year 2021, a project document, a Long-Range Plan, and various other supporting documentation; and
- While the institution has not yet fully completed the integration of a documented comprehensive assessment plan linking student learning outcomes (SLOs) to technology, facilities, enrollment, budget, and other aspects of institutional operations, the peer review team determined institutional efforts warrant further organizational attention rather than HLC follow-up.

Next Steps in the HLC Review Process

Interim Report: The Board required that the institution submit an Interim Report with its next Assurance Filing regarding Core Components 4.A and 4.B. Included in this report should be evidence of the following:

Core Component 4.A

- The institution maintains and undergoes a regular process of course and program reviews.

Core Component 4.B

- The institution has established student learning outcomes for all of its courses, with viable and appropriate benchmarks.
- The institution utilizes the results of its reviews to identify specific curricular improvements or changes.
- The institution has developed mechanisms for determining the efficacy of any improvements and/or changes made based on such reviews.

Comprehensive Evaluation: The institution has been maintained on the Standard Pathway with its next comprehensive evaluation (Year 4) in 2019-20.

HLC Disclosure Obligations

The Board action resulted in changes that will be reflected in the institution's Statement of Accreditation Status as well as the Institutional Status and Requirements Report. The Statement of Accreditation Status, including the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the HLC website.

Information about this action is provided to members of the public and to other constituents in several ways. In accordance with HLC policy,¹ this Action Letter and the enclosed Public Disclosure Notice will be posted to HLC's website not more than 24 hours after this letter is sent to the institution.

HLC policy² requires that a summary of Board actions be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations. It also will be published on HLC's website. The summary will include this HLC action regarding the institution.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your HLC Staff Liaison, Dr. Mary Vanis.

¹ INST.G.10.010, Management of Commission Information

² COMM.A.10.010, Commission Public Notices and Statements

President Stiefel, July 9, 2018 4

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Gellman-Danley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

Enc: Public Disclosure Notice

Cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, National University of Health Sciences
Randy Swenson, Vice President for Academic Services, National University of Health Sciences
Evaluation Team Chair
Stephanie Bernoteit, Interim Deputy Director for Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education
Mary Vanis, Vice President for Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning Commission
Anthea Sweeney, Vice President for Legal and Governmental Affairs, Higher Learning Commission