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April 9, 2010

Dr. Richard C. Levin
President
Yale University
105 Wall Street, P.O. Box 208229
New Haven, CT 06520-8229

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PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Dear President Levin:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on March 5, 2010, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education took the following action with respect to Yale University:

- that Yale University be continued in accreditation;
- that the University submit a fifth-year interim report for consideration in Fall 2014;
- that, in addition to the information included in all interim reports, the University give emphasis to its success in:
 - 1) allocating financial resources, including resources from the endowment, to support its programs and services;
 - 2) implementing plans for the West Campus, including the development of interdisciplinary programs in the life sciences;
 - 3) improving the experience and reported satisfaction of graduate students, with regard to the physical facilities available to graduate students as well as opportunities to participate in campus life;
 - 4) achieving its goals for the diversity of faculty and administrators;
 - 5) using quantitative as well as qualitative measures of student learning and using the results for planning and decision making, including the allocation of resources;

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- 6) continuing to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Yale College Education (CYCE) report and to assess the impact of changes made;

that the next comprehensive evaluation be scheduled for Fall 2019.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its actions.

Yale University is continued in accreditation because the Commission finds the institution to be substantially in compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation*.

We concur with the visiting team that Yale University is one of the premier institutions of higher education in the world. It has a clear, focused mission and well-articulated goals to achieve that mission. As a University with an historic emphasis on undergraduate education, it is also achieving excellence with its graduate and professional schools. We take favorable note of the effective balance of effort and resources between the two levels of education, with growing interdisciplinary collaborations within and across the undergraduate and graduate programs.

We commend the University for its culture of planning and collaboration and for the mechanisms it has put in place to assess student learning and use the results for improvement. We are gratified to learn of the value of the self-study process to the campus community and of the resulting enhancement to the University's capacity to collect and analyze institutional data.

We congratulate the University on its commitment to the city of New Haven and its programs that have advanced the revitalization of the city and expanded home ownership opportunities for many residents. We are pleased to learn of the University's significant capital investments in its campus as well as the actions taken to mitigate the impact of the sharp decline in the institution's endowment. The University benefits from a well structured, inclusive governance system that is, as the team notes, "highly effective" and from committed leaders, a world-class faculty, and bright, capable students. Despite the challenges associated with the current economic crisis, Yale University is well positioned to maintain its position in the higher education community and to sustain its well-deserved reputation for excellence.

Commission policy requires a fifth-year interim report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution's current status in keeping with the policy on Periodic Review. In addition to the information included in all fifth-year reports the University is asked, in Fall 2014, to report on six matters related to our standards on *Financial Resources*, *Planning and Evaluation*, *Students*, *Faculty*, *Integrity*, and *The Academic Program*.

The Commission is pleased to learn of steps taken by the University to compensate for the sharp decline in its endowment. We understand that the institution has made and will continue to make "targeted reductions" that preserve the core academic functions and student financial aid while enabling the University to realize a balanced budget. The Fall 2014 report will provide an opportunity for the University to update the Commission on the status of its endowment and the success of its efforts to allocate available resources to support its programs and services. We remind you of our standard on *Financial Resources*:

The institution preserves and enhances available financial resources sufficient to support its academic and other activities. It manages its financial resources and allocates them in a way that reflects its mission and purposes. It demonstrates the ability to respond to financial emergencies and unforeseen circumstances (9.1).

The Commission appreciates the University's candid reassessment of its plans for the West Campus. We understand that the economic downturn has prompted revisions to the plans and timeline for the development of the campus. We are gratified to learn that the University has secured leadership for three of the five planned Institutes to be housed at the West Campus and that discussions are under way with a foundation for a substantial gift to support programming at the campus. We look forward to learning, in Fall 2014, of the University's success in achieving its plans for the West Campus, including its planned development of interdisciplinary programs in the life sciences, as evidence of the institution's "demonstrable record of success in implementing the results of its planning" (2.3).

We take favorable note of the University's efforts to address the dissatisfaction graduate students have expressed with several aspects of their experience at the institution. We are pleased to learn of the services provided for graduate students at the MacDougal Center, including comprehensive career services, training in teaching, academic support, and social activities, and of the University's plans to build two new facilities to house graduate students. We anticipate being apprized, through the Fall 2014 report, of the University's success in enhancing the quality of graduate student life, in keeping with our standard on *Students*: "The institution offers an array of services appropriate to its mission and the needs and goals of its students" (6.8).

The self-study prepared by Yale University and the report of the visiting team both express concern about the extent to which the institution has been able to achieve its goals for the "recruitment and retention of women and members of underrepresented minorities" among its faculty and administration. We are gratified to learn of recent steps taken to advance these goals, including improvements to existing mentoring programs, and of recent appointments to residential college masterships that increase the representation of faculty of color in the ranks of academic leadership. The Fall 2014 report will provide an opportunity for the University to update the Commission on its success in addressing its "goals for the achievement of diversity of race, gender, and ethnicity" (5.4) and in fostering "an atmosphere within the institutional community that respects and supports people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds" (11.5).

The Commission concurs with the visiting team that, although the University makes many strong institutional claims for student achievement, the "validating information" developed to date has been more qualitative than quantitative. We take favorable note of the development of the "Yale by the Numbers" website and of efforts to gather information about student learning, including capstone projects, senior profiles, and a consortial senior survey. We look forward to learning, in Fall 2014, of the University's success in using "a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the experiences and learning outcomes of its students" (4.50). In addition, we look forward to receiving evidence that the results of the University's evaluation efforts, including assessment of student learning, "are used systematically for improvement and to inform institutional planning, especially as it relates to student achievement and resource allocation" (2.6).

Finally, the Commission commends Yale University for its comprehensive review of the undergraduate curriculum through the Committee on the Yale College Education (CYCE), and we share the visiting team's assessment that a number of "major improvements to the culture and curriculum" emerged from the report. We are pleased to learn that the University has developed plans to assess the impact of the new curriculum and also to determine the feasibility of implementing other recommendations from the report, such as addressing the proliferation of majors. The Fall 2014 report will provide an opportunity for the University to report on its continued success in implementing these initiatives, in keeping with our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *The Academic Program*:

The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the achievement of its mission and purposes, giving primary focus to the realization of its educational objectives. Its system of evaluation is designed to provide relevant and trustworthy information to support institutional improvement, with an emphasis on the academic program. The institution's evaluation efforts are effective for addressing its unique circumstances. These efforts use both quantitative and qualitative methods (2.4).

The institution undertakes academic planning and evaluation as part of its overall planning and evaluation to enhance the achievement of institutional mission and program objectives. These activities are realistic and take into account stated goals and available resources. The evaluation of existing programs includes an external perspective and assessment of their effectiveness. Additions and deletions of programs are consistent with institutional mission and capacity, faculty expertise, student needs, and the availability of sufficient resources required for the development and improvement of academic programs. The institution allocates resources on the basis of its academic planning, needs, and objectives (4.9).

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2019 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years.

You will note that the Commission has specified no length or term of accreditation. Accreditation is a continuing relationship that is reconsidered when necessary. Thus, while the Commission has indicated the timing of the next comprehensive evaluation, the schedule should not be unduly emphasized because it is subject to change.

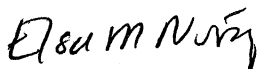
The Commission expressed appreciation for the self-study prepared by Yale University and for the report submitted by the visiting team. The Commission also welcomed the opportunity to meet with you, and Dr. Barry Scherr, team representative, during its deliberations.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Roland W. Betts. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with Commission policy.

The Commission hopes that the evaluation process has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, Director of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Elsa M. Nuñez

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Enclosure

cc: Mr. Roland W. Betts
Visiting Team