



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

---

11255 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, CA 92037-1011  
(858) 642-8802 • (858) 642-8701 • www.nu.edu

March 11, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

At our University, there have been many milestones that have illuminated, in high relief, the distance and the difficulty of the path we have traveled for the past four decades. Such milestones have also brought the next stages of our continuous quality journey into the foreground and permitted us to embrace new beginnings. Yesterday, National University reached such a juncture.

In the University's recent Educational Effectiveness Report, the Visiting Team noted that National had "moved beyond accreditation compliance and well into a culture that is committed to assessment-driven improvement for the benefit of their learners." The Team's assessment that our institution is poised to develop a leadership role in the critically important domain of examining and refining what "best contributes to [student] learning outcomes in different instructional settings and delivery modes" was not lost on the WASC Senior Commission, and I am pleased to announce that the accreditation of National University has been reaffirmed for a period of ten years. Our next Capacity and Preparatory Review will be scheduled in fall 2019, followed by an Educational Effectiveness Review in spring 2021.

This visit represents the culmination of a process that was initiated by Dr. Lee, shortly after he joined the University as our second president. Some of you remember the "Zan Paper." For those of you who do not, it was a clarion call for an institutional commitment to academic rigor and quality, and Dr. Lee was relentless in keeping us focused on this path. There is no more fitting tribute to Chancellor Lee's 22 years of leadership than the University's ability to secure a maximum term of ten years of accreditation reaffirmation from WASC. Thank you, Dr. Lee, for your vision.

This achievement belongs to every member of our community. Thank you to our Board of Trustees for their continued support and for their understanding of their responsibilities. To the faculty who worked so hard on program annual reviews, on five-year reviews, on AMS, on school assessment committees, on the University Academic Assessment Committee, on the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils and on the myriad of work groups, task forces and committees required to move our culture from what it was to where it is, thank you! A special thanks to faculty members who have been at National for the past twenty years or longer. We stood on your shoulders, and absent your willingness to remain with us on this journey, the road would have been much, much harder. Congratulations as well to the Faculty Leadership – present and

past – to department chairs and program leads and to our school deans. All have been important contributors to this success.

The University is fortunate to have a staff that is committed to student support and student service. Among other descriptors, the Visiting Team described it thusly: “There is evidence that the student recruitment culture at NU is one of student service and student success. . . and [staff] at the NU campus sites . . . expressed deep commitment & enthusiasm for supporting students in all aspects of their experience.” Congratulations to every staff member, at every location and in every department. You make a critical contribution every day to our University.

Our Provost, Dr. Eileen Heveron, and Associate Provost Debra Bean, have provided outstanding leadership during our reaffirmation process and have created assessment approaches and practices that are recognized as models in higher education in our state. Dr. Jack Paduntin and the staff of OIRA have been invaluable in providing the data that drives the assessment process and assisting faculty over many hurdles. A special acknowledgment, as well, to all other University administrators and to our System Vice Chancellors. I understand how much you contribute to the University daily.

Now we begin anew. This Visiting Team has challenged us to serve as a “best practices” model for other institutions in at least five key areas: assessment, infrastructure, admission-to-graduation student support, training of adjunct faculty, and research on what best contributes to learning outcomes in different instructional settings and delivery modes. It is incumbent upon us to continue to move forward. We have come far. We have much further to go. The path forward is exhilarating, and it will require the same unrelenting commitment and dedication that brought us to this place. We are at the beginning. There is no end in sight, and I cannot imagine a more exciting way to begin our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year. Welcome to the next stage of our journey to excellence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia E. Potter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "E".

Patricia E. Potter

CC: Board Chair Connelly and Members  
Chancellor Lee