

July 11, 2025

Ms. Karen Hofmann  
President  
Art Center College of Design  
1700 Lida Street  
Pasadena, CA 91103

Dear President Hofmann:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Art Center College of Design (ACCD) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27, 2025. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to Art Center College of Design March 12-14, 2025 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Art Center College of Design prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR, and the institution's May 14, 2025 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Anne Burdick, Provost; Leslie Johnson, Associate Provost, Academic Affairs and Educational Effectiveness; and Elsa Luna, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial and Administrative Officer. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2030 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2031
4. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2027 to address all requirements in this letter

### **Commendations**

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. A singular mission, borne out by a strong commitment from administration, faculty and staff to a curriculum that provides preparation for students for careers and social innovation.
2. Engagement in the professional community, as demonstrated in initiatives such as the Designmatters courses and the Mullin Transportation Design Center.

3. Investment in facilities and equipment at both the Hillside Campus and South Campus which reflect intentional design choices that support interactive classroom instruction, creative design, studio work, gallery exhibitions, and event spaces.
4. Resilience of its extended community in the face of challenges including the pandemic and the recent, devastating fires in the Pasadena and Altadena communities.

### **Areas for Development**

The Commission requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Develop and implement realistic strategies to address current and projected financial deficits and align revenue, expense, and enrollment targets. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
2. Complete the strategic planning process and implement the approved plan to achieve long-term financial and institutional sustainability. (CFRs 3.5, 4.8)
3. Enhance workflow efficiencies to optimize management of the collective bargaining agreement to support the long-term vitality of the institution's faculty, staff, and administration. (CFRs 1.7, 2.6, 3.2)
4. Conduct regular campus climate surveys among faculty, staff, and students to evaluate and address the impact of recent changes including academic realignment. (CFRs 1.7, 3.2, 3.11, 4.3, 4.5)
5. Reactivate the academic program review process and conduct a full cycle of program reviews. (CFRs 2.4, 4.1)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that Art Center College of Design successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, Art Center College of Design should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Art Center College of Design's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Art Center College of Design website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that Art Center College of Design undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Toyoda', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

A. Maria Toyoda  
President

AMP/so

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair  
Leslie Johnson, ALO  
Michael Warsaw, Board Chair  
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team  
Christopher Oberg, Executive Vice President  
Susan Opp, Vice President