

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To Graduate Theological Union (GTU)

October 19-22, 2015

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

Table of Contents

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT	3
A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process	3
B. Description of Team’s Review Process	4
C. Institution’s Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence	5
SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS	5
<u>Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions</u>	5
<u>Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators</u>	7
<u>Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees</u>	19
<u>Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation</u>	22
<u>Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation</u>	23
<u>Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence</u>	27
<u>Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment</u>	30
<u>Component 8: Reflection and plans for improvement</u>	31
SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	33
APPENDICES	35
1. CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM	35
2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM	36
3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM	37
4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM	38

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

The Graduate Theological Union (GTU), located in Berkeley, California, was founded in 1962 and has a collaborative relationship with the University of California, Berkeley. It is a theological consortia that operates in a unique context of religious and cultural pluralism. The consortium currently consists of:

- *Eight theological schools* representing Catholic, Protestant, and Unitarian Universalist traditions, four of which are accredited by WSCUC (indicated by an asterisk): American Baptist Seminary of the West; Church Divinity School of the Pacific; Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology; Jesuit School of Theology [part of Santa Clara University];* Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary [part of California Lutheran University];* Pacific School of Religion;* San Francisco Theological Seminary;* Starr King School for the Ministry
- *Two academic program units* (financial responsibility of GTU): Center for Islamic Studies; Center for Jewish Studies
- *Five affiliated organizations* (financially independent of GTU): Center for the Arts, Religion, and Education; Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (in process of becoming an academic program unit); Institute of Buddhist Studies; Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute; School of Applied Theology; New College Berkeley

GTU is the home of the Flora Lamson Hewlett Library, one of the largest theological libraries in the country. While the eight member schools of GTU individually prepare religious leaders in their respective faith traditions, they also contribute faculty and other resources in support of GTU's doctoral (PhD and ThD) and MA degree programs in theology and religious studies.

The mission of the Graduate Theological Union is to:

- *Educate women and men for vocations of ministry and scholarship;*
- *Equip leaders for a future of diverse religions and cultures;*
- *Teach patterns of faith that nurture justice and peace; and*
- *Serve as an educational and theological resource for local communities, the nation, and the world.*

Within the GTU consortium there are approximately 115 faculty (8 employed directly by GTU) serving about 1150 students. The Graduate Theological Union has been accredited by WASC since 1966 and by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) since 1969.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The team to review GTU for reaffirmation of accreditation was constituted in December 2014, received the GTU institutional report in March 2015 and had an organizational conference call in April 2015, making team member assignments in preparation for the Offsite Review (OSR) on May 18-19, 2015. The team came prepared for the OSR and presented and discussed preliminary observations from each of the assigned areas of the report. Over the course of the two days, the team honed in on the specific lines of inquiry that would be used during the Accreditation Visit (AV) to GTU. After a videoconference meeting with officials from GTU, the team drafted the Lines of Inquiry report and identified additional information to be requested prior to the onsite visit. A response to the Lines of Inquiry report, along with additional requested documentation was received in August 2015. The team reviewed this information in preparation for the pre-site visit conference call (September 2015). Final discussion regarding the Lines of Inquiry and logistics of the onsite visit took place during the pre-visit conference call. The team convened for the onsite visit on Monday evening, Oct 19th and conducted its work over the next three days according to the schedule that had been developed. Over the course of the visit, the team met with administrators, faculty, staff, and students from GTU and consortium institutions in individual and group meetings. In addition, the team reviewed comments submitted by GTU stakeholders to the confidential email account.

A list of commendations and recommendations was developed and shared with the GTU community at the team exit interview on October 22nd. A near-final draft of the team report was written prior to the team's departure from the visit, and edits were made via email leading to a final version.

C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

GTU's institutional report was carefully written, and the process leading to the report appeared to involve the appropriate consortium as well as GTU stakeholders, at least at the review level. The report addressed all areas required but focused in greater depth on those areas that had been identified in the last WSCUC Commission letter and subsequent follow up reviews as needing attention. The report included appropriate supporting evidence in most areas and the ALO was responsive to all team requests for additional information. The team found the institutional report to be honest and transparent; with a clear sense of mission alignment and ownership; and forthcoming about attempts to address the financial health and future of the institution. The team had concerns about the report in terms of how the issues of governance were addressed; how the assessment and review processes were managed to ensure educational effectiveness; and the limited responses to certain elements: Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degree (Component 3) and Standards of Performance (part of Component 4).

After the OSR, the team requested, received and reviewed additional information to help in preparation for the Accreditation Visit.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

The 2007 Educational Effectiveness Review team report and the Commission letter identified these issues for further attention and development:

1. Financial stability
2. Educational effectiveness (assessment, institutional research infrastructure)
3. Graduation rates and inclusive excellence

4. Professional preparation and “fitness for purpose”

The Interim Report Committee, in 2010, indicated that while progress had been made on all four of the areas identified in the 2007 Commission letter, the issue of financial stability and sustainability was complex and needed increased attention. Another Interim Report was scheduled for 2011. Because financial sustainability continued to be a concern of the Interim Report Committee, GTU was asked to submit Interim Reports in 2012 and 2013. During this time period, some member institutions sought to become part of other universities while retaining membership in GTU. One institution, Franciscan School of Theology, left GTU membership in 2014. Also, during this time period, GTU experienced a presidential transition and commissioned three different studies to address issues related to financial stability and the governance/structural complexities that have seemed to hinder significant progress. The institution ultimately concluded that these studies were failures due either to their inconclusive results or the inability of GTU to achieve consensus among the stakeholders on the report recommendations. The GTU institutional report indicated that there is a “widespread belief that the bimodal governance structure outlined in the Common Agreement and By-Laws may stand in the way of effective decision making.” In spite of extensive internal work of committees and task forces, GTU has not been able to make significant progress on the structural issues of governance that seem to be central to many of the institution’s recent struggles.

The governing body of GTU is its Board of Trustees, responsible for the academic graduate programs offered by GTU. The Board of Trustees includes representation from the community, presidents and representatives of GTU member schools, faculty, and students. While the Council of Presidents has primary responsibility for any consortial programs that have not been allocated to the GTU Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees provides support oversight of cooperative activities and services. The decisions of the Board of Trustees are implemented by the President of the GTU as its Chief Executive Officer. GTU’s institutional report acknowledges that

occasionally the bimodal governance “presents presidents and representatives of each member school serving on the GTU board with decisions where the good of the GTU must be weighed against the good of the member school” (CFRs 3.7, 3.9).

In terms of financial stability, a longstanding challenge for GTU, the institution reported significant progress. GTU has “attained alignment and near universal agreement on a strategic direction” (as described in the *Precursor to Plan for Strategic Direction: 2015-2018*) that is designed to address the issue of financial stability. GTU is actively pursuing new partnerships to expand the portfolio of the Union. While recognizing the complexity of the financial challenges due to the consortium relationship between GTU and its eight member institutions, the GTU institutional report highlights the significant work that is ongoing at each of the member institutions to ensure financial stability as well as GTU’s new emphasis to seek out new strategic partners and philanthropy in support of its mission. In order to focus on the new strategic direction, the institutional report indicated that a task force of the Board of Trustees has recommended delaying further work on solving the issues stemming from the bimodal governance for two or three years in order to determine if the new strategic direction will pay off. The team had some reservations about this decision by GTU that are discussed in greater detail below.

Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The WSCUC team made use of the four Standards as an organizing principle for its evaluation of the GTU institutional report.

Standard I: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The institution defines its purposes and establishes educational objectives aligned with its purposes and character. It has a clear and conscious sense of its essential values and character, its distinctive elements, its place in the higher education community, and its relationship to the society at large. Through its purposes and educational objectives, the institution dedicates itself to higher learning, the search for truth, and the dissemination of knowledge. The institution functions with integrity and autonomy.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard I. The team was not only impressed with the clarity of GTU's mission, it was also impressed with the depth of commitment by all stakeholders to the institution's renewed understanding of that mission and how it is evolving (CFR 1.1). The mission defines the institution's core values, its purpose, and how it understands its service to students, the academy, its benefactors and partners, and the world. The Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, and students are expanding their understanding of the mission as GTU more self-consciously embraces a multi-faith, interreligious approach to its work. The team was impressed at how widely and deeply all members of the community were embracing this understanding of its mission and purpose. While this presents new challenges for the institution, which are discussed elsewhere in this report, there is no doubt that the mission is clear for GTU, endorsed by all stakeholders, and clearly understood and reflected in curricular offerings.

GTU has made a clear commitment to academic freedom, both in written form and in practice (CFR 1.3). Its commitment to diversity is evident in its student body; the board, administration, and faculty have publicly stated their commitment to expanding this diversity among their own ranks, a priority for the institution given its plans for interreligious expansion. GTU clearly understands its primary purpose as educational in nature, and it operates with appropriate autonomy, although this is often complicated given the bimodal governance structure that is a characteristic of its relationship to the member schools that comprise the Union. While this bimodal governance structure is discussed later in this report, the team concluded that GTU operates autonomously and its board is primarily motivated by the best interest of the institution (CFR 1.5).

Policies that govern student and academic life are clearly documented and readily available to stakeholders, and demonstrate appropriate timelines and offerings to ensure students can complete degrees in a timely manner (CFR 1.6). The team determined that GTU exhibits

appropriate transparency and integrity in its operations and has taken this review process with seriousness and candor. At every step of the process all documents, reports, committee minutes, audits, and other such documentation requested by the accreditation team were provided without hesitation and in a very timely manner (CFRs 1.7, 1.8).

Standard II: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

The institution achieves its institutional purposes and attains its educational objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. It demonstrates that these core functions are performed effectively and that they support one another in the institution's efforts to attain educational effectiveness.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard II. The degrees (PhD, ThD, and MA) have well-articulated learning outcomes that emanate from the Association of Theological Schools degree standards. GTU has clearly defined degrees offered through a consortium. The consortium provides sufficient numbers of qualified faculty. GTU shares faculty with the member schools and has its own core group of faculty (CFR 2.1). GTU has committed administrators, faculty, and staff that ensure that educational programs are appropriate in content, delivery, and integrity (CFR 2.1). GTU has admissions policies that support its mission and purpose (CFR 2.2). GTU is a graduate only institution and there are requirements for scholarship for the faculty defined in the faculty handbook. Learning and scholarship appear to be valued and central to the GTU mission (CFRs 2.8, 2.9).

Teaching and Learning:

The administrative responsibilities for assessment fall to the position of dean of the faculty/vice president for academic affairs. This position works with the faculty through committees measuring program outcomes. Data are produced in various offices, but the dean/vice president for academic affairs has oversight for educational effectiveness (CFR 2.10).

The master's degree program has outcomes, and GTU is currently conducting annual assessments of these outcomes using samples of student work, judged against a rubric for determining quality. The Council of Deans conducts the assessment and follows through with discussions of results. The team determined that the rubric was aligned with the learning outcomes through categories in the rubric. However, this rubric and the majority of the rubrics examined at GTU do not have criteria established for scoring the rubric or for identifying the expected level of success (CFRs 2.3, 2.4). While program outcomes are present, they seem to be general in nature and describe lower level learning requirements based on Bloom's Taxonomy (CFR 2.3). Examples include:

- *Demonstrated knowledge in area of specialization.*
- *Ability to understand key issues within area of concentration as related to other disciplines in theological and religious studies.*

The student learning outcomes for the doctoral programs are found in the doctoral student handbook. The outcomes themselves are comprehensive, but also very broad. The team learned that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) degree standards were used to guide the development of doctoral degree program outcomes. External organizations, such as the ATS, add validity to the outcomes, but national outcomes tend to be broad, so they can meet the needs of a large group of schools. National outcomes often need to be tailored to meet the needs of the individual institution. Here is an example of a GTU outcome:

To practice intellectually and methodologically rigorous scholarship, requiring both broad and deep grasp of a field, linguistic skills, sound research methods, and analytical capabilities.

This outcome has many content areas and the verb "practice" is hard to define and measure. Master's and doctoral level outcomes are present, but the team believes some outcomes need to be revised so that they are measurable and reflect more specifically the expectations of GTU.

Course syllabi include learning outcomes, but alignment of the course learning outcomes to the program learning outcomes did not appear to exist. Demonstration of alignment provides a

mechanism to ensure where content and program outcomes are addressed and the level of where they are mastered (CFR 2.3).

Upon review of the materials and meetings with students and faculty, the team confirmed that students are invited to participate in all areas of assessment and planning. Students report, “We can be as active as we want to be.” A representative from student government participated in student interviews (CFR 2.5).

Program Review:

GTU has established a process for program review. Program reviews are conducted every five years at the doctoral level and at the master’s level. In addition, the master’s program conducts annual assessments. GTU has moved from having each area conduct program reviews to conducting a more holistic program review of the degrees.

GTU has a written policy for doctoral program review (CFR 2.7). The most recent doctoral review was conducted in spring 2014. (The program review process is described in greater detail below under the section addressing Standard IV.) Although the policy did not identify a requirement for an external reviewer, the team’s examination of the GTU doctoral program review revealed that an external review committee evaluated the doctoral program and submitted a report. The most recent program review for the doctoral program resulted in a significant change in structure that shifts from nine areas to four departments that align much better with the new directions compatible with a multi-faith, interreligious approach.

GTU has a written policy for the master’s program review. The institutional report described and interviews with the Council of Deans confirmed that that the MA program review occurs annually and the MA subcommittee of the Council of Deans meets to conduct an assessment and evaluation of the program. Based on the program review, a report with recommendations is generated and reviewed by the GTU dean and MA Council of Deans.

The MA program review, as well as the doctoral program review, utilizes indirect assessment and student success data, but the reviews did not appear to include much direct

assessment of student learning data with the exception of sampling a small number of theses and dissertations. The absence of these data makes it difficult to systematically establish the level of learning or the quality and rigor of the degree. The faculty and Faculty Council reported they are currently measuring student learning through rubrics but they could not articulate or point to systematic criteria for evaluation or standards of performance for student achievement. Based on interviews during the visit, the staff, faculty, and students had not been aware of opportunities to view the annual reports or program reviews that had been conducted on master's and doctoral programs, highlighting a need for better communication.

Even though the team eventually identified most of the elements of an effective program review, it was evident that variability existed in the process across different program areas and it was not clear that any given area contained all of the essential elements necessary for an effective review process. Based on analysis of the program review process and conversations about it with various stakeholders, the team concluded that GTU would especially benefit by having more systematic and institutionalized program review and assessment processes (CFRs 2.2b, 2.3 and 2.7).

Student Support and Services:

Advisors come from the respective consortial schools. There is an MA coordinator at GTU who oversees the administrative functions for GTU. In the doctoral programs, students are assigned an academic advisor initially and then they later choose a doctoral committee chair. Findings both from surveys as well as student interviews conducted by the team identified some issues with the quality of advising (CFR 2.3). During the visit, the Council of Deans explained that faculty advisors come from the respective schools and that they need to know the participating school's requirements as well as the GTU requirements and that this can become confusing and difficult to "keep up with." Interviews with students indicated unevenness in the quality of advising among advisors across the different consortial schools. While it was unclear to the team what tools or training were available to faculty advisors, the Council of Deans has

recommended that GTU offer faculty workshops to help resolve this situation (CFRs 2.3, 2.11, 2.13). The team encourages GTU leadership to take appropriate measures to address this perceived issue by following up on the Council of Dean's recommendation for additional faculty training in advising.

During the visit, interviews with students and various faculty groups indicated frustration with the quality and level of IT support that they have access to in carrying out their academic work. The lack of integration of systems caused some mistakes in registration, billing or financial aid which prompted student complaints. Items that are submitted to and kept in one system were not making it to other systems that needed the same information, causing different offices to ask for the same information multiple times. The team recognized the challenge of working with multiple systems across the consortial schools, but the nature and level of complaints seemed to highlight some IT infrastructure and support deficiencies beyond the consortial challenges (CFRs 2.3, 3.5).

GTU has a dean of students who oversees all co-curricular areas for doctoral students only. MA students are expected to receive co-curricular support from their member school, center, or affiliated institution. GTU's institutional report acknowledged, and the team confirmed, that co-curricular opportunities vary in quality and quantity, and doctoral students who are not affiliated with a member school feel a lack of community. Student surveys and interviews with the students revealed that the degree of variation in the curricula and the expectation that students develop very specialized curricular paths prevent students from having much of a common academic experience. Students report their educational experience to be isolating and that when they take courses at the various consortial schools they are often the only doctoral students in these classes. The dean of students recognizes this issue and has plans to implement more opportunities to develop community among the students (CFR 2.13).

GTU collects data on student achievement and time to degree and the data are disaggregated for subpopulations (e.g., type of program, gender, race and ethnicity). In student

and faculty interviews, time to degree was an issue of concern, especially since continuation in the degree results in costly student fees and delays entry into the work force in their chosen discipline. GTU has recently developed a restructuring of the doctoral degree that should lead to a decrease in the time to degree (CFR 2. 10).

Standard III: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability

The institution sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its educational objectives through its investment in human, physical, fiscal, and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision-making structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high quality environment for learning.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard III. The team was impressed by the quality and dedication of the consortial faculty who take on leadership roles both at GTU and the member institutions. The benefits of the consortial agreements ensure that GTU programs have the diverse and qualified faculty teaching and leading the doctoral and master's programs (CFR 3.1). GTU leadership has acknowledged the challenges posed by the inter-dependencies between GTU and the consortial member institutions. There are 114 (101 FTE) faculty members across the entire consortium, of which 59 are the core doctoral faculty for GTU. Eight of the 114 regular faculty members are rostered faculty members employed directly by GTU. Because GTU relies on its member institutions to have adequate number of faculty and staff, withdrawal of the Franciscan School of Theology (FST) from the consortium in June 2014 not only had a significant financial impact but also led to staffing challenges (CFRs 3.1, 3.2,3.3).

In response to the financial challenges and declining enrollments across all member institutions, GTU has had to reduce staff positions, including seven positions in FY 2014 alone. Most of the staff reductions came from non-academic operations with the exception of two library positions (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). Despite financial challenges, GTU has not reduced the

number of its rostered faculty positions. GTU did reduce staff in the financial aid office. Because of its very small number of faculty rostered with the GTU, faculty evaluation and development is done either at the consortium level or at each individual member institution (CFR 3.3).

GTU's operating revenue structure reflects an operating arrangement under the consortium agreement. This revenue structure led to operating challenges in FY 15 when GTU experienced a drop in enrollment at the same time as several member institutions withdrew from some shared services and one member institution left the consortium (see Component 7 for more detail.) GTU has developed the overall strategic framework to improve its financial picture including eliminating operating deficit within next two fiscal years (CFR 3.4). GTU has a clear, widely understood five-year financial planning and resource allocations model that is linked to strategic priorities and program review (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.7).

As mentioned previously, the team felt sufficiently confident that the GTU board operates autonomously and is primarily motivated by the best interest of the institution even though it has faced some challenges associated with its structure where the governing board is comprised of the members at large, the presidents of the member institutions, and the representatives of the member institutions. Due to the progress being made in GTU's new strategic direction along with progress clarifying functional governance roles (*Reserve Powers Matrix* approved 5-11-15), a task force of the Board of Trustees recommended a two-three year hiatus on addressing the structural governance issues to allow time to see if the new strategic direction proves to be successful. The team spent significant time investigating this issue by going through board minutes, examining strategic documents and through lines of questioning during several onsite interviews. The team discovered that while the recommendation from the institutional report implied a hiatus, the issue of bimodal governance continues to be addressed within the board itself, but the process is being managed at a pace that does not take attention off of the new strategic direction or potentially hinder the process by making structural changes in advance of knowing what the collection of GTU's new partners and/or member institutions will

look like. The team believed that GTU leadership and its Board of Trustees understood the issues and challenges and were trying to strike a healthy balance while making progress both on a model for financial sustainability and a governance structure that would support it (CFRs 3.4, 3.6, and 3.9). The team does recommend, however, that great care be given so that the significant issues of governance do not continue to be delayed or prolonged unnecessarily.

Standard IV: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

The institution conducts sustained, evidence-based, and participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving its educational objectives. These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities at different levels of the institution and to revise institutional purposes, structures, and approaches to teaching, learning, and scholarly work.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard IV. The institutional report and visit demonstrated GTU's thoughtful and deliberate, if still emerging, approach to quality assurance (CFR 4.1). As codified in the Core Doctoral Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Council oversees academic planning for the doctoral program, reviews area protocol changes, develops and decides faculty policies in consultation with the areas and the core doctoral faculty, and oversees area reviews with particular attention to policy and "consistent quality" of the doctoral program.

Program review requirements appear in the doctoral and master's handbooks and have been recently revised (CFR 4.1). At the doctoral level, program review entails a faculty review proposal, dean and Faculty Council approval, analysis of descriptive and student data, external review, and reports to the Council of Deans and Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees. At the master's level, program review entails compilation and analysis of descriptive data, peer data (provided by the Association of Theological Schools), student surveys, a random sample of master's theses, analysis by a subcommittee of the Council of Deans, a report to the Council of Deans, and assignment of program improvement actions to responsible parties.

Doctoral and master's program reviews involve institutional leaders at all levels plus institutional stakeholders, including faculty, students, alumni, administrators, and trustees (CFRs 4.3, 4.5). The reviews make systematic use of descriptive data (enrollment, time to degree, and completion, for example), indirect data (graduate surveys and benchmarking information, for example), and some direct data, the latter focused on artifacts of student work (CFRs 4.1, 4.3).

GTU's institutional research capacity is distributed among its executive team members rather than residing in a dedicated office or full-time institutional researcher (CFR 4.2). The dean of faculty, dean of students, and others take responsibility for analyzing and interpreting data.

Institutional leadership at all levels demonstrates a commitment to improvement based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation, and the institution's policies and practices, as well as recent changes in the doctoral program, provide evidence of this commitment (CFRs 4.3, 4.4). The dean and Faculty Council oversee quality in the doctoral program, the Council of Deans oversees quality in the master's program, and faculty, administrative, and trustee leaders share complementary responsibilities in program review.

The institution's report and the team's visit affirmed how faculty are engaged in ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning (CFR 4.4). They have defined student learning outcomes and embedded them in most course syllabi, and they have developed dissertation assessment rubrics, with varying degrees of specification. They calibrate the rubrics through ongoing faculty committee conversation focused around individual student work products. The core doctoral faculty also assume responsibility for consistent quality of the doctoral program, and they have used area and program reviews to make program improvements in the doctoral program (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4). As a result of program review, the faculty also proposed a thorough re-envisioning of doctoral education at GTU, consistent with the institution's new strategic framework.

Both the institutional report and visit demonstrated the institution's practice of reflection and planning based on data and evidence, with the institution's new strategic framework and re-envisioned doctoral program as prime examples (CFR 4.6).

Beyond coursework, assessment of learning outcomes comprising the "direct data" occurs primarily through the analysis of student work associated with traditional graduate milestones: master's theses and doctoral comprehensive exams, dissertation proposals and dissertations. The institution's current practices in this regard represent advances in its assessment of student learning and its assurance of program quality, and they define the institution's culture of evidence and improvement (CFR 4.3). At the same time, neither the institution's report nor the visit revealed evidence of the systematic assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level, nor linking course, program, and institutional objectives (CFRs 2.6, 4.3, 4.4). Further development and institutionalization of an assessment framework and capacity that is consistent with current expectations and best practices would expand the student learning data available for program improvement and quality assurance. Developments along these lines also would be consistent with the institution's clear commitment to evidence-based decision making and program improvement, just as it would further enhance the conditions and practices that ensure that the institution's standards of performance are met (CFR 4.4).

The institution demonstrated clear attention to changes occurring within GTU itself and within the higher education environment in which GTU operates (CFR 4.7). The primary challenges in this regard include enrollment decline in theological schools generally and GTU in particular, withdrawal of one member institution, and withdrawal from shared services of another member institution, resulting in decreased operating revenues. GTU addressed these realities in its planning, program development, and resource allocation processes, resulting immediately in staffing reductions which, importantly, occurred mostly in non-student-facing positions, thus maintaining support for academic programming. In response, also, the institution developed a new strategic framework that encompasses new religious traditions, new philanthropy, and a new

master's degree concentration in interreligious studies. To the extent these changes succeed, they will expand the institution's reach, reinforce its mission, and increase its financial support.

Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees

At the time of this review, the Graduate Theological Union offered three degrees: Master of Arts (MA), Doctor of Theology (ThD), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The meaning of a degree from the Graduate Theological Union is grounded in the institution's mission. It is meant to prepare women and men for vocations of ministry and scholarship, to equip these women and men for future leadership in a pluralistic, multi-religious world in ways that promote justice and peace, and to ensure that they can be educational and theological resources for their communities, the nation, and the world. This meaning is clearly articulated in the GTU mission statement (CFRs 1.1, 1.2).

The meaning of the degrees is further articulated by the vocational goals that GTU has established for the graduates of its programs (CFRs 1.2, 2.2-4, 4.3):

- *As thinkers who can identify central issues, interpret them in historical perspective, and understand their practical implications.*
- *As scholars and writers who study religious traditions and the lives of religious communities.*
- *As teachers in seminaries, colleges, universities and other contexts who are conversant with the disciplines of religious and theological studies and are prepared to bring religious and theological issues to life with and for their students.*
- *As constructive critics and faithful reformers of living religious traditions and of society who can provide fresh voices and insightful perspectives to revitalize a sacred heritage and recover neglected opportunities with their traditions.*
- *As leaders of genuine dialogue among communities of faith, shaping religious language for the emerging world.*
- *As specialists on justice issues and organizers prepared to propose fresh approaches to social and moral problems.*

Each of the degrees are research-based graduate degrees, and are distinguished in this way from the professional degrees offered by the member schools of GTU. The quality of these degrees is measured by the learning outcomes identified in the GTU academic catalog (CFRs

2.2-4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3):

- *To practice intellectually and methodologically rigorous scholarship, requiring both broad and deep grasp of a field, linguistic skills, sound research methods, and analytical capabilities.*
- *To formulate a project in terms of the standards of a discipline, but sufficiently clear and well expressed to be comprehensible to scholars in other theological fields.*
- *To open one's work to the critical challenges and assumptions of a denominational and scholarly tradition beyond one's own so that it is not unduly restricted by narrow and unexamined assumptions.*
- *To engage critically with at least one discipline, theory, or methodology of the research university outside theological and religious studies, both to benefit from those methodologies and also to be prepared to contribute to broadening the assumptions of the university disciplines.*

The integrity of the doctoral degrees is ensured through a research readiness review of two research papers, foreign language exams, a comprehensive exam proposal, comprehensive exams, a dissertation proposal, and a dissertation. For the MA program integrity is ensured through a foreign language exam, a thesis proposal, and a thesis. The final determination of whether the quality and integrity of the doctoral degrees have been met includes reviews by a student's academic advisor, area faculty, foreign language examiners, the dissertation committee and the doctoral council. For the MA the reviews include foreign language examiners and the thesis committee. Additionally, the quality and integrity of the degrees are ensured by periodic area reviews by faculty members of random samplings of dissertations and theses. Using rubrics that have been developed to score these random samplings, the faculty use the scores to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, recommending modifications of the protocol requirements or processes (CFRs 2.2-4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3).

The team observed that GTU is making progress in clearly articulating the connections between program objectives and outcomes. Yet, the team found in interviews with students, faculty, and administrators that how these connections are made varies widely and inconsistently. How the rubrics were developed, what the scoring criteria were, what standards of performance

were set and how this scoring is later used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program were not at all clear. The team strongly encourages GTU's continued development in this area by making these connections clearer, demonstrating how the rubrics connect to actual scholarly or vocational outcomes, and developing clear connections between the evaluations of program effectiveness to actual changes or adjustments in program objectives and outcomes.

Finally, the team was unclear about the differences between the ThD and the PhD degrees. The requirements of the degrees are almost identical, and the distinction between "university research disciplines" and "theological focus" was not strong enough to be compellingly distinctive. The team encourages the faculty to consider whether these distinctions can be more clearly delineated, or whether the time has come to consider folding the two programs into one.

Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

The standards for GTU's MA, PhD, and ThD degrees are aligned to the specialized accreditation standards of the Association of Theological Schools by which GTU is also accredited. Specific learning outcomes for each degree are found in the appropriate handbook (doctoral or master's) but are often labeled as either "goals" or "objectives" rather than "learning outcomes." However, most of these goals or objectives do take the form of learning outcomes as written in the handbook and include verbs related to Bloom's taxonomy. However, some of the outcomes need to be revised to ensure they are measureable and reflect GTU expectations. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.3).

While the institutional report indicates that standards of performance for each degree requirement are set forth in the appropriate student handbook, there is nothing in the handbooks clearly labeled as standards of performance (CFR 2.2). The team noted that there are categories of expectations identified for various requirements (e.g. doctoral dissertation), but no real

articulation of what success looks like for each of these categories. For example, the handbook might articulate an expectation for the dissertation like “*demonstrates intellectually and methodologically rigorous scholarship*” but there is no indication in the handbook of what constitutes meeting the standard of success. The team was not able to find articulations for standards of performance in any of the documents that were examined and only encountered a vague understanding from faculty and administrators who were interviewed when asked if they had clear standards of performance or criteria for success (CFR 2.4).

There are several points in the student’s journey where proficiency at various competencies is measured (e.g. foreign language proficiency, research readiness proficiency, comprehensive exam, etc.). Other than the capstone experiences with theses and dissertations, it is not clear that GTU uses any of these milestones to assess the program vs. the individual student (which it clearly does using faculty teams at each step). GTU does conduct annual reviews of the doctoral and master’s programs by evaluating a sample of theses and dissertations using faculty-developed rubrics that assess the goals, objectives and expectations for each program (CFRs 2.2b, 2.6). The results of these annual assessments are analyzed and used to make recommended changes in the curriculum or processes that support student progress towards the successful completion of their degree. These recommendations are considered by the appropriate faculty governance bodies for possible adoption and implementation (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6). Without clear identification of standards of success for each program, it is difficult for GTU to know whether program outcomes are being met. Through the interview process during the visit, the team had a sense that various individuals or groups had standards of performance and criteria for success in their minds that were applied during evaluations, but there was not a systematic or institutionalized approach to ensure that over time and among areas there was consistency in application and agreement on what these standards or criteria were (CFR 2.2b).

Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation

The GTU faculty, staff, and administration demonstrated a deep commitment to the mission of the institution and to students' success in both the MA and doctoral degrees. Although GTU does not have a central office for institutional research, the institution presented a well-organized complete data portfolio of student enrollment, retention, and time to degree for both their doctoral and master's degree programs. Data reports are produced in the registrar's office, student affairs, and in the dean of faculty's office. Data are regularly reviewed by the executive staff, dean of students and student affairs staff (CFR 2.10).

Data were disaggregated for multiple subpopulations including, gender, diversity, major, and degree concentrations. Enrollment for these groups are small, so slight changes in the size of the cohort will have an effect on the percentages that are commonly used in reports. Therefore, both the number and percentage were examined (CFR 2.10). GTU also receives comparison data from the Association of Theological Schools and GTU reported that there has been a drop in the applicant pool consistent with national trends.

Doctoral Programs:

Currently in the doctoral program there are four ThD students and 219 PhD students. Approximately 50% of the doctoral program students have identified as white/Caucasian and 25% of the population are international students. No one minority group (nonwhite) was over 10%.

PhD graduation rates were disaggregated for gender, race, and academic concentration. As stated, the population is small, making the percentages provided in the data poor indicators for decision-making. GTU reported a seven-year graduation rate of 40%, averaged over three years in an attempt to decrease the impact of the small sample size. Although this appears to be a low graduation rate, it is generally comparable to the 50% national average for doctoral students in the humanities (Cassuto, Chronicle of Higher Education, July, 01, 2013) (CFRs 2.3, 2.10-2.14).

GTU has a 10-year graduation rate for doctoral students of 57%. Though the numbers are small for underrepresented students (less than five students), the rates are 67% for both African American and Hispanic students and 43% for Asian American students, the rate for international students (n=19) is 68% and for white students (n=33) it is 52%.

GTU administrators believe both time to degree is too high and graduation rates are too low. Administrators, faculty, and students believe lack of financial support for students is the primary reason. Without financial support, students need to be employed while in school, leading to students' slower progress. The external review report for the doctoral program addressed this issue directly. The combination of requiring a master's degree for entrance into the doctoral degree, a long time to completion, lack of funding of fellowships, and high cost of living are all factors that result in high debt load for students who will be entering into a tight and low paying job market. Administration as well as the Board of Trustees are well aware of this issue and have made it a priority to resolve in the near future.

As stated in the institutional report, the minority population in the PhD program is small especially for the region. It was reported by students and administration that limitations in funding and the requirements for a master's degree are contributing to low enrollments of underrepresented students. Diversity was identified as a concern in the doctoral program by the institution, and it appears GTU has been taking action to remedy this. During the visit, the administration reported an increase in underrepresented minority graduation rates as a result of initiatives such as membership in the Hispanic Theological Initiative Consortium and that Consortium's sponsorship of one student a year (CFRs 2.6, 2.10, 2.13).

GTU presented placement data in 2011 through 2013 on graduates that were one to two years out. In 2010-11, 40% of the alumni were in full-time teaching positions. In 2011-12 and 2012-13, the percentage decreased to less than 25% (CFR 2.10). This is another area of concern regarding sustainability that needs attention given the narrow market sector that GTU's programs address.

Master's Programs:

GTU collected data on graduates over a three year period from 2010 to 2013. GTU reported that 23% of graduates (27 students of the 117 alumni) were engaged in further graduate study, 23% were employed in the ministry, 13% in full time teaching. The majority of the graduates were employed in a related field or seeking further graduate study.

The four-year graduation rate of MA students at GTU has shown steady improvement over the past 4 cycles with the 2008-9 cohort at 60% and the 2011-12 cohort at 86%. Data over this same time period show that the average time to degree is approximately three years, which is a reasonable time frame considering that many of the students are working while in school. In looking at the diversity of students in the MA program, there were 90 students in the program from 2010-2013 and fourteen percent (14%) were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% Black, 4% Hispanic, 47% white, 20% unknown, and 7% nonresident foreign (CFR 2.10). The graduation data are disaggregated for gender, program, and ethnicity. The graduation rates for men and women show little difference in gender though there are significant differences in graduation rates based on ethnicity. The four-year graduation rates for the three largest population of students were Caucasian/white (73%, n=45), International (65%, n=17) and Asian/Pacific Islander (25%, n=8). Graduation rates for other groups were reported and had a wide range but this is likely due to the low numbers of students in each category.

The institutional report described how the MA program review informed curricular decisions. Examples included a new MA course on research methods and a language course in the summer as a direct result of the program review that identified weaknesses in these areas. Interviews confirmed this finding (CFRs 2.6, 2.10, 2.13).

Indirect data through student surveys are collected through the dean of student's office. Data from 2013 and 2015 were reviewed by the team. The administrative staff was aware of the survey findings and appeared to be using the information in decision making. The Council of

Deans reported that the deans, dean of students, student affairs staff, executive staff, Faculty Council, and Student Advisory Committee all review data.

GTU is currently in negotiations to expand the partners and members of the Union to include a more interfaith and interreligious emphasis. If successful, this should improve funding for students as well as diversify the student population and faculty population. The GTU core doctoral faculty and administration are currently making changes to the doctoral degree to decrease time to completion. The administration informed the team that similar changes will be put in place for the MA students.

Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

Program Review:

The institution makes broad use of program review to make quality improvements (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1-4.7). The program review process at the doctoral and master's level is outlined in the doctoral and master's handbooks. At the doctoral level, program review encompasses compilation of descriptive data, a faculty review proposal, dean and Faculty Council approval, analysis of student data, and reports to the Council of Deans and Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees. The recently revised doctoral program review also included external reviewers. At the master's level, program review encompasses compilation of descriptive data, peer data (provided by the Association of Theological Schools), student surveys, a random sample of master's theses, analysis by a subcommittee of the Council of Deans, a report to the Council of Deans, and assignment of program improvement actions to responsible parties.

The program review process at the doctoral and master's levels is broadly participatory, including, variously, the executive team, core doctoral faculty, Council of Deans, a subcommittee of the Council of Deans, Council of Presidents, Faculty Council, student advisory

committee, alumni, external reviewers, and Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees; and the process is iterative: every five years at the doctoral level and annually at the master's level.

Use of Data and Evidence:

The institution's program review process is evidence-based, requiring use of descriptive data (admissions, enrollment, cross-registration, degree completion, time to degree, demographics, job placement, faculty advising loads, student progress by area of study, and benchmarking via reports from the ATS), indirect data (graduate surveys and current student focus groups), and direct evidence (student work, including, at the doctoral level, comprehensive exams, dissertation proposals, and dissertations; at the master's level, theses).

The institution uses program reviews to inform decision making and improve academic programming (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4). At the doctoral level, examples include clarifying use of comprehensive exams, improving dissertation proposals, accommodating a variety of vocational goals, adjusting student admissions to faculty capacity, integrating foreign language materials into research requirements, and revising syllabi to enhance diversity. At the master's level, examples include improving student advising, clarifying program requirements and outcomes, improving the course scheduling form, and adding non-English language sources to thesis proposals.

As a result of assessing its doctoral program review process, the institution moved from area reviews to whole-program reviews and expanded the review to incorporate external reviewers. The most recent doctoral program review included external reviewers.

The institution's program review process also has identified areas that require deeper reflection and improvement (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6), including, for example, high student debt loads, uneven faculty advising, limited course offerings in some areas, lack of selectivity in admissions, diminished (selected) faculty research productivity, and the influence of governance on key academic issues such as faculty hiring and program and curricular development. Deep reflection also prompted Faculty Council recommendations regarding a re-envisioning of the

doctoral program, replacing area-specific protocols with program-wide standards, establishing protocols for advising, and reconfiguring areas of study to be broader and more interdisciplinary.

Assessment and Institutional Research Capacity:

The institution's assessment of student learning continues to emerge. Assessment has moved from input to outcome measures, and program review standards call for direct evidence of student learning. The institution has developed student learning outcomes aligned with ATS degree standards. Student learning outcomes appear in most course syllabi (CFR 2.4).

Assessment of this work is accomplished via faculty committees (including at least three members) who consider student performance on comprehensive exams, dissertation proposals, and dissertations.

The faculty has developed dissertation assessment rubrics, with varying degrees of specification. During the site visit, the core doctoral faculty described how calibration of these rubrics occurs through faculty discussion surrounding each dissertation. Neither the institution's report nor conversations during the site visit revealed evidence of the systematic assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level, nor linking course, program, and institutional objectives (CFRs 2.6, 4.3, 4.4). Systematic calibration would promote the institution's ability to assess student outcomes consistently over time and to align course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Further development of assessment policies and practices at course, program, and institutional level would enhance the institution's ability to evaluate learning outcomes in the newly envisioned doctoral program (which encompasses a common doctoral protocol, improved advising, area functions, locus of control over dissertations, cluster concentrations, and doctoral course organization but not student learning assessment) and to warrant the meaning, quality, and integrity of the institution's degrees (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 4.4).

Given the institution's small scale, it does not have a dedicated institutional research office or capacity (CFRs 4.2-4.7). Members of the executive team take responsibility for analyzing and interpreting data, and assisting committees in making informed decisions about

academic programs. While this structure has facilitated improvements in the institution's quality assurance and program characteristics, its location among other administrative responsibilities means necessarily that it competes for attention. As the institution continues to further develop and institutionalize its framework and capacity for assessment, dedicating sufficient attention to institutional research will remain a challenge.

Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

GTU is a consortium created by a covenant of the member institutions with the purpose of providing common graduate programs in PhD, ThD, and MA; maintaining a common library; and offering other consortial services. From a balance sheet perspective, GTU enjoys a strong financial position with total assets above \$48.7 million and the total liabilities slightly over \$1.5 million (FY15). A total endowment of about \$33 million and Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) of about \$12 million are the most significant components of GTU net assets. Over the last four years, GTU has significantly lowered its debt and plans to be debt free in FY18. The GTU Board of Trustees and administration have worked effectively to protect and preserve the institution's financial resources in the midst of financial challenges and to eliminate its institutional debt.

GTU's operating revenue structure reflects an operating arrangement under the consortium agreement. A significant portion of operating revenues (about 48% in FY15) comes from shared services that GTU provides to member institutions, net tuition and fees comprise the second largest revenue category (about 23% in FY15), annual contribution from endowment the third largest source of annual revenues (about 16% in FY15). As a result, GTU's operating revenues are subject to an annual decision by each member institution to continue its participation in shared services (two-year notice to withdraw from the consortium), GTU's and each individual member institution enrollment volatility, and endowment performance.

This revenue structure led to operating challenges in FY 15 when GTU experienced a drop in enrollment at the same time as several member institutions withdrew from some shared services and one member institution left the consortium (FST withdrew from the consortium at the end of FY14). GTU leadership has acknowledged the challenges posed by these inter-dependencies and developed a new strategic framework focusing on expanding MA concentrations in interreligious education, bringing in new partners, and increasing fundraising efforts for endowed positions, student financial aid, and other expenses. The GTU president has outlined 11 strategic areas for 2015-2018 necessary to implement the new strategic framework. There appears to be a lot of enthusiasm about the new strategic framework at GTU as well as within GTU's governing board. Member institutions are also supportive of the plan. While some initial developments, i.e., \$1.3 million gift to the Center for Theology and Natural Sciences (CTNS), indicate the new direction can be successful in several years by providing GTU with increased enrollment in MA program and contributions to endowment, at the time of review the team had little evidence to assess the plan's success with any degree of certainty. Fall 2015 enrollments across the MA program (with specializations in Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, and Hindu Studies) fell below the targets (CFR 3.4). More importantly, it remains unclear how the new strategic framework will support the structure and funding of common PhD and ThD programs that comprise GTU's core academic offerings. While the team commends GTU for developing a new strategic framework, the team recommends that GTU create a financial plan that connects the resources that this new framework might yield to the support and funding of the GTU doctoral program (CFR 3.4).

Component 8: Reflection and plans for improvement

The GTU institutional report does a good job of summarizing the challenges the institution faces and the strategic framework that has been identified to address these challenges over the next few years. GTU's focus has been on moving towards a financially sustainable business model by bringing in new partnerships to GTU and on understanding the challenges and

potential solutions of a bimodal governance structure. The team was impressed by how deep the commitment to the new strategic framework runs within all of the stakeholders of the organization. The institutional report described the “near universal agreement on the strategic direction” that had been reached in spite of governance challenges, and the team affirms this conclusion based on the interviews during the visit. The team is also convinced that the steps taken to ensure this “near universal agreement” has helped to educate the board about the governance challenges in ways that could prompt new thinking about this issue going forward. At the very least, the team had a strong sense that the GTU executive leadership and Board of Trustees are on the same page and working together for the common good of GTU in ways that may not have been present in the past. Early results on the new strategic direction have been promising with the receipt of some grants and new partner interest, but it is too early to tell if the success will continue and the plan will lead to the long-term sustainability that is forecast.

The other area that had been previously identified as needing attention and improvement is the area of educational effectiveness. The team was able to affirm, as described in the institutional report, that a significant amount of work has been accomplished in this area since the past WSCUC reviews. That being said, it was clear that there is still room for improvement for the development of a systematically institutionalized approach for assessment and program review. The team was able to determine that most of the aspects of a good educational effectiveness system were present at GTU (e.g., learning outcomes, calibrated assessment tools, student and faculty input and faculty oversight, etc.). But these aspects were present in pockets across the institution and not connected in a systematic way to ensure consistency in application among areas and over time. The one notable aspect that was missing related to standards of performance. It appears that consistent criteria for success or benchmarking of achievement levels are not written into any of the assessment or program review documents. Without standards of performance, it is difficult to know if students or programs are meeting GTU’s own

expectations, and without benchmarking it is difficult to know how GTU compares to peer or aspirational institutions.

Overall, the team concluded that the GTU institutional report and the team's interactions with key stakeholders demonstrated a transparent and thoughtful reflection on the issues identified in past WSCUC reviews. The recommendations and plans that GTU identified demonstrated a realistic and balanced approach, weighing the realities of the challenges the institution faces against the opportunities to potentially address those challenges.

SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings:

The team concluded that GTU had made significant progress on past issues identified in the 2007 Commission letter and in previous Interim Report Committee letters. While there is room for improvement, and new challenges have arisen, it is clear that GTU has made a thoughtful, genuine, and concerted effort to be responsive to WSCUC and has developed a clear and reasonable strategy to move forward and address the challenges it faces.

Commendations:

1. GTU stakeholders have clarity of and are committed to the institution's mission and its expansion through the new strategic framework.
2. The team observed great appreciation for and strong confidence in the president, dean, and executive leadership team.
3. The new doctoral curriculum demonstrates a strong and positive effort by the faculty to more clearly integrate the institution's interreligious mission into its educational program structure. Furthermore, the streamlined academic department structure more clearly and coherently expresses the GTU faculty's commitment to interdisciplinary graduate theological research and student learning.
4. GTU's effort to create a prototype of interreligious cooperation and learning has the potential to be an innovative, creative model that, if successful, could be replicated throughout theological education.
5. GTU's leadership team has been transparent and straightforward in communicating to WSCUC areas within the institution that need attention, namely, finances, governance,

institutional research, information technology infrastructure, and administrative and faculty diversity.

6. The team was encouraged by GTU's movement from input analysis to outcome analysis in the assessment of student learning, and it commends GTU for using multiple modes of data collection and multiple constituencies in its assessments. A good example of this transition is how the doctoral program, based on the area review, was realigned towards more interdisciplinary studies.
7. The GTU Board of Trustees and administration have created a thoughtful multi-year financial plan to generate new operating funds and endowment by bringing in new academic programs and philanthropic partners.
8. The GTU Board of Trustees and administration have worked effectively to protect and preserve the institution's financial resources in the midst of financial challenges and to eliminate its institutional debt.

Recommendations:

The team recommends that GTU:

1. Further develop and institutionalize a framework and capacity for assessment, consistent with current expectations and best practices, that guides the collection, analysis, interpretation, and use of student learning data necessary for program improvement, quality assurance, and evidence-based decision making. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6,4.1, 4.4)
2. Strengthen program reviews to (a) align courses to program learning outcomes, (b) establish standards of performance for student achievement, and (c) include a comprehensive analysis of student learning that results from annual assessments of student learning outcomes. These steps are especially important for GTU since there is great variability in the courses that can be taken to fulfill degree requirements. (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 2.7)
3. While acknowledging the effective working relationships of GTU's current trustees and member school presidents, and in keeping with the institution's expectations regarding the addition of new partners, develop a structural solution to the institution's bimodal governance challenge on a schedule that is compatible with the institution's new strategic framework. (CFR 3.9)
4. Create an operational plan that connects anticipated resource gains associated with the new strategic framework with the affordability of the doctoral programs for new and continuing students. (CFRs 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)
5. Develop an information technology infrastructure that supports academic offerings, advising, research, scholarship, and assessment, and that prioritizes student services consistent with the institution's educational objectives and student learning outcomes. (CFR 3.5)
6. Develop a strategy to diversify the executive leadership team and faculty commensurate with the institution's development of a diverse student body, faith traditions, and commitment to interreligious and multicultural education. (CFR 1.4)

APPENDICES

1. CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? The policy is located on the GTU Registrar Website
	Comments: http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/users/registrar/Credit_Units_Policy.pdf
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Dean and Registrar monitor continuously.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Schedules can be accessed through Registrar website and meeting dates and times are listed so credit hour compliance can be derived.
	http://wiz.gtu.edu:7350/cgi-bin/wwiz.exe/wwiz.asp?wwizmstr=WEB_COURSE_SCH
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? NA
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	GTU has no online or hybrid courses that are offered through GTU. There are Online courses offered at member institutions but those fall under the member institution's oversight.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 10
	What kinds of courses? Variety
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Biblical Studies, History, Art and Religion
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: All syllabi seem to demonstrate an appropriate work load for based on the credit hours listed for each course. Special Reading courses are like Independent Study but workload requirements seem to fit. http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/docs/gtu-old/GTU%20DR%20Cert%20Sp%20CJS%20SRC%20Form%202007.08.pdf http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/docs/gtu-old/GTU%20MA%20SRC%20Form%20web%20version%202007.08.pdf
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 2
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? graduate
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Biblical Studies, History
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Programs had appropriate units and were on the higher end of unit requirements rather than lower. Doctoral and MA program descriptions are in 2014-15 Catalog, pages 9-50: http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/users/admissions/GTUcatalog_2014.pdf

Review Completed By: Kerry Fulcher

Date: 10-21-15

2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	<p>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: http://gtu.edu/admissions</p>
Degree completion and cost	<p>Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: This information is clearly provided on website FAQs for each program Time to degree: http://gtu.edu/academics/accreditation-educational-effectiveness</p> <p>Cost: http://gtu.edu/admissions/tuition-financial-aid http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/users/finaid/GTU%20Non-Tuition%20Student%20Budget%2014-15.pdf</p>
Careers and employment	<p>Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
	<p>Comments: This information is generally provided on website FAQs for each program. It does not have detailed information but discusses categories and trends. http://gtu.edu/academics/accreditation-educational-effectiveness</p>

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Kerry Fulcher
 Date: 10-21-15

3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	<p>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Is so, where? Yes... http://gtu.edu/gtu-compliance-policies</p> <p>Comments: The policy is found in the appropriate student handbook which is accessible from several locations on the website. Different levels of complaints such as Title IX are highlighted on the website as well. Academic Grievance Policy is on p. 56 of Doctoral Student Handbook: http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/users/studentaffairs/2014%20DoctoralProgramHandbook%20August%2012%202014%20KK%20Final.pdf Consortial Policy on Student Complaints:http://gtu.edu/student-life/student-complaints</p>
Process(es)/ procedure	<p>Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>If so, please describe briefly: Students are encouraged to address complaint directly to faculty or person involved, then go to dean if not resolved. Due to the complexity of the consortium, the student follows protocol of their host institution and if unresolved goes to GTU dean.</p> <p>If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments:</p>
Records	<p>Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where?</p> <p>Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: See the URL for ethicspoint</p> <p>Comments: Records are kept in offices of dean and dean of students See also Ethicspoint site: https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/33916/index.html</p>

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Kerry Fulcher

Date: 10-21-15

4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publically available? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? For MA transfer policies see pages 24-25 of handbook: http://gtu.edu/sites/default/files/users/gtudean/MA-Program-Handbook-2013-2014.pdf
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: There are no transfers accepted for Doctoral programs.

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

- (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
- (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Kerry Fulcher
Date: 10-21-15