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July 2, 2009

Ralph Wolff
Executive Director
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
985 Atlantic Ave., Suite 100
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Dr. Wolff:

As the 10th campus of the University of California and the first new UC campus established in the past 40 years, UC Merced is pleased to provide documentation in support of the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) Report associated with the determination of initial WASC accreditation. In the intervening decades since the establishment of the last three University of California campuses there is much that has changed.

Birthing UC Merced has been a difficult and prolonged process. The State's protracted financial difficulties and its consequences for the UC system have obvious implications for a start-up university, and especially one with a research mission such as ours. The CPR report we are submitting addresses this challenge for capacity, noting our successful stewardship of the campus thus far, and our careful planning for future development of the academic programs and infrastructure of the campus. Despite these difficult times, we are also establishing a strong record of success in providing a UC-quality education for our students, about half of whom are first-generation college students whose needs we address with care and increasing insight. That insight derives in large measure from our ongoing assessment of student learning in curricular and co-curricular programs throughout the university.

In our Application for Candidacy three years ago (2006), we focused on select case studies to represent the emergence of key trends for capacity and educational effectiveness at a new university. Those case studies have laid the foundation for our current assessment initiatives that engage the entire university, foremost are the efforts of faculty throughout the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. This comprehensive effort also has been supported by staff in co-curricular units that reinforce our campus mission as a student-centered research university. This collaborative engagement in course, program and institutional assessment has enabled us to plan carefully for the type of recursive evidence gathering and analysis of that evidence that informs meaningful curricular change. It also has established a culture of evidence that is entirely appropriate for a research university.

We are proud of this achievement as represented in our 2009 CPR summary report and its accompanying documentation for Initial Accreditation. UC Merced invites questions on this Capacity and Preparatory Review report from the Preparatory Review Team and all others participating in the review. The campus looks forward to the Team visit and discussions in fall 2009. Your contacts for requests for additional materials, arrangements for the team visit, and any additional questions you may have are noted below:

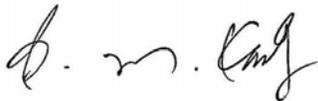
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We welcome the insights that the Capacity and Preparatory Review will bring and we look forward to the Educational Effectiveness Review that will follow.

Sincerely,



Sung Mo "Steve" Kang
Chancellor

Cc: EVC and Provost Keith Alley
Chair of the Academic Senate, Professor Martha Conklin