

February 27, 2025

Dr. Stuart Sigman  
Executive Director  
Reiss-Davis Graduate School  
3200 Motor Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90034

Dear Executive Director Sigman:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Reiss-Davis Graduate School (RDGS) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 14, 2024. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Special Visit to Reiss-Davis Graduate School September 19-20, 2024 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Reiss-Davis Graduate School prior to the Special Visit and the institution's December 5, 2024 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you, and your colleagues Lourdes Brown, Chief Operating Officer and ALO, Lena Wilson, CEO and President, Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services, and Cecile Falk, Board Chair. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's status with WSCUC.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Special Visit team report that focused on: (1) Hiring senior leadership; (2) Clarifying, revising, and aligning Vista Del Mar and RDGS board bylaws; (3) Aggressively focusing on financial sustainability of RDGS; (4) Creating and implementing an action plan to diversify revenues; and (5) Developing and implementing effective recruitment and retention strategies.
2. Impose Probation
3. Schedule a Special Visit in fall 2025 to address all areas of non-compliance and development in this letter
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted on March 10, 2025 to address the status of negotiations to assure the continuity of the academic program

### **Probation**

Probation reflects the Commission's finding that an institution has serious issues of noncompliance with WSCUC Standards of Accreditation. While on Probation, any new site or degree program initiated by the institution is regarded as a substantive change (see the Substantive Change Manual for details). The accredited status of the institution continues during the Probation period. The Commission action to impose Probation is subject to Commission Review, described below.

When the Commission finds that an institution fails to meet one or more of the Standards of Accreditation, it is required to notify the institution of the deficiencies and establish a time period

within which the deficiencies must be corrected. Under the Commission's policies the timeframe may not exceed two years. If an institution has not remedied the deficiencies at the conclusion of this sanction period, the Commission is required to withdraw the institution's accreditation or extend the timeframe for good cause shown. The initial extension may not exceed two years.

An institution under sanction must address the areas cited by the Commission expeditiously, with seriousness and the full attention of the institution's leadership. It is the responsibility of the institution to demonstrate to the Commission that it has understood the issues raised in this letter, responded to them satisfactorily, and has made the necessary changes to come into compliance with Standard 3. It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine whether the institution has made the necessary corrections and has come into compliance with Standard 3.

### **Non-Compliance with Standards: Deficiencies to be Addressed**

Reiss-Davis Graduate School is out of compliance with Standard 3, CFRs 3.4 and 3.5. Enrollment at the institution has declined steadily over a number of years, new student enrollment targets have not been met, and operating expenses exceed revenues. Resource planning, including budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources, has not been realistic, and the sustainability of the institution is in jeopardy.

### **Areas for Development**

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

1. Urgently and immediately implement plans for a sustainable financial future. (CFR 3.4)
2. Continue to prioritize securing sustainable donations to close financial gaps. (CFR 3.4)
3. Prioritize efforts to develop paths toward graduation for continuing students in the doctoral dissertation phase to improve completion rates. (CFR 2.10)
4. Develop and implement a timely, clear communication plan to articulate future plans for the campus community. (CFR 1.7)
5. Carefully reconsider recruitment and enrollment plans given challenging financial and organizational status. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
6. Collaborate with Vista Del Mar to determine expedient paths forward. (CFR 3.5)
7. Continue progress with academic quality improvements to support program learning outcomes and student learning assessment. (CFRs 2.3, 2.9)

### **Next Steps**

The Commission requires a meeting between the WSCUC staff and representatives of Reiss-Davis Graduate School, including the Chief Executive Officer, representatives of the governing board, and senior faculty leadership, within 90 days from the date of this letter. The purposes of the meeting are to further clarify the reasons for the Commission's findings and bases for decision, to review the actions taken as of the date of the meeting, and to discuss the institution's plans for responding to this Commission action. WSCUC will contact Reiss-Davis Graduate School's ALO to make arrangements for this meeting.

Commission policy requires that in the case of a sanction, a public statement will be prepared in consultation with the institution acknowledging the institution's status. The Commission reserves the right to make the final determination of the nature and content of the public statement. The institution

must post the statement within seven business days, along with a copy of the Commission letter, in a readily accessible location on the institution's website and accompanying every reference to WSCUC accreditation. The institution must also provide evidence to WSCUC that the public statement has been posted.

Enclosed is a copy of a sample public statement, which Reiss-Davis Graduate School may use as it stands. If you wish to propose revisions to the sample, your proposed changes must be forwarded by email to Vice President Susan Opp within 24 hours of receipt of this letter. In addition, any reference to WSCUC accreditation on the website and in public statements must be accompanied by the words "Currently on Probation."

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Reiss-Davis Graduate School's governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Reiss-Davis Graduate School's 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 Reiss-Davis Graduate School undertook in preparing for and supporting this Special Visit 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 that reads "C N Oberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Christopher N. Oberg, PhD  
Interim President

CNO/so

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair  
Lourdes Brown, ALO  
Cecile Falk, Board Chair  
Members of the Special Visit Team  
Susan Opp, Vice President

WASC Senior College and University Commission Statement on the Status of  
Reiss-Davis Graduate School

On February 14, 2025, the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) voted to impose Probation on Reiss-Davis Graduate School (RDGS).

Probation reflects the Commission's finding that an institution fails to meet one or more of the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation. The Commission has determined that Reiss-Davis Graduate School is not in compliance with WSCUC Standard 3. When the Commission finds that an institution fails to meet one or more of the Standards of Accreditation, it is required to notify the institution of these findings and give the institution a period of time to correct the deficiencies. Under the Commission's policies the timeframe may not exceed two years. It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine, at the end of the sanction period, whether the institution has made the necessary corrections and has come into compliance with Commission Standards.

The accredited status of Reiss-Davis Graduate School continues during the Probation period and students' status within the college is not affected by this sanction.

The Commission's decision to impose Probation is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Commission Action Letter dated February 27, 2025. This document is available on the WSCUC website. Anyone who has questions about Reiss-Davis Graduate School's accreditation status should contact Lourdes Brown, Accreditation Liaison Officer at Reiss-Davis Graduate School.