



Reiss-Davis
Graduate School

RDGS Town Hall

Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 6pm

Thursday, March 6, 2025, 8am

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7012978304?pwd=c2tSaWlpN1ZCNGdZUGdCOQ2V0dEwzUT09&omn=84405112349>

Remarks from the Executive Director, Reiss-Davis Graduate School:

Thank you all for making time in your busy calendars to join us today. We are joined by the President/Chief Executive Officer, Lena Wilson, of Vista Del Mar, under which the graduate school operates and which owns the school, and members of the Reiss-Davis Board of Directors and Reiss-Davis leadership team.

I've asked for this meeting to share with you an important institutional update. Our accreditation body, the WASC Senior College and University Commission, recently concluded its special review process and transmitted its action letter to us on February 27.

The result of that action letter is that Reiss-Davis Graduate School has been placed on probation by the Commission. This decision results from the Commission's determination that Reiss-Davis does not comply with Standard 3 of the WSCUC standards. Standard 3 concerns financial sustainability (that is, sufficient revenue to maintain operations) of an institution. We are disappointed with the Commission's decision, but we can assure you that, even with probationary status, Reiss-Davis maintains its accreditation.

What are our next steps? As per WSCUC requirements, Reiss-Davis will submit a progress report next Monday on our efforts to secure a financially viable institutional home for the graduate school. In addition, representatives of both Vista Del Mar and Reiss-Davis are expected to participate in a meeting with WSCUC staff within the next 90 days to discuss plans for the future. And, finally, a special visit will be scheduled for some time in the fall of this year.

During this time, as we navigate these steps forward, we want to assure you, as students, that you continue to be enrolled in an accredited institution and that student and academic life will remain as usual.

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FAQ – March 6, 2025

Q: What does “probation” mean for the future of the school and what does the school need to do for the designation to be removed?

A: Probation means that an institution maintains its accreditation and “has serious issues with one or more of the Standards of Accreditation.” The institution is given a specified timeframe to correct those issues, which is approximately two years.

Q: What do you mean by Standard 3?

A: Reiss-Davis Graduate School is out of compliance with Standard 3, CFRs 3.4 and 3.5. According to the WSCUC Commission, “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.”

Q: What happens if Reiss-Davis does not get off probation from WSCUC?

A: The WSCUC Commission 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.

Q: What do you mean by securing “a financially viable institutional home”?

A: Reiss-Davis is in discussions with two universities to serve as a new home for our students and curriculum. We are unable to disclose the names of these schools as negotiations are ongoing and WSCUC approval is required. We can, however, assure students that all currently enrolled students will be able to complete their degrees. The two institutions we are meeting with are both WSCUC-accredited, located in southern California, and in good financial standing. We expect that each of the two institutions will adhere to the existing PsyD curriculum – nothing more, nothing less. As part of the negotiations, we are working to ensure comparable tuition structures to the current fees.

Q: What are the timeframes for securing a new institutional home?

A: Students will be able to complete the 2024-25 academic year at Reiss-Davis through Summer 2025. Enrollment with a partnering institution will occur in Fall 2025. Students will be kept informed of the timeline and developments continuously on our website and in subsequent town hall meetings. All students will receive academic advisement and financial aid support on an individual basis to ensure a smooth transition.

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Q: What happens with all of the credits I have earned during my enrollment at Reiss-Davis?

A: In our discussions with potential new institutional homes, Reiss-Davis is negotiating terms so that all of students' earned credits will be honored by the receiving institution. In addition, we are working to ensure that any requirements for the degree remain similar to the current RDGS curriculum. Academic advisement will be put in place to guide students through the transition.

For example, if a student has successfully completed years 1 and 2 by the end of Summer 2025, then the credits earned will be recognized and the student will progress to year 3 without new academic requirements in the fall. Academic progress for each student will be contained in an official transcript issued by the Office of the Registrar to the new institution as well as the student. In addition, an academic plan listing remaining degree requirements will be shared with the new institution and a copy provided to the student. The academic plans will list the coursework and other program requirements (such as the comprehensive exam, IRB approval, dissertation defense) that need to be completed and the credits to be earned during completion.

Q: As a dissertation student, how will this affect my progress?

A: As with coursework students, Reiss-Davis will negotiate for students in dissertation phase to have their milestones honored. The academic plans for dissertation students will indicate whether they have reached their IRB stage and will include the names of the committee members. We will negotiate for committee member chairs and readers to travel with students. Academic advisement will be put in place to guide students through the transition.

Q: Will dissertation students who defend this year be able to graduate with a Reiss-Davis degree?

A: If students hold their defense by the dates outlined by the Dissertation Office, are approved to participate in graduation, and complete their final edit of the dissertation by the specified summer date (TBD), then they will graduate with a Reiss-Davis degree.

Q: What does an institutional transfer mean for my degree?

A: The awarding institution, as a WSCUC accredited institution, will be the one named on the diploma and transcript for students who complete the PsyD curriculum after the transfer. Reiss-Davis is discussing ways in which the Reiss-Davis Graduate School name may appear on transcripts and diplomas issued by the new institution.

Q: Will the Reiss-Davis faculty be transferring over to the new institution?

A: Reiss-Davis expects to share the CVs/resumes for all of the faculty who give authorization to do so. It is our understanding that faculty may be requested to teach at the new institutional home for the degree.

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Q: Will the new institution offer the academic program in a blended format?

A: Reiss-Davis is working to ensure that the new institution selected offers the current blended mode of delivery, which is a combination of onsite residential coursework and online instruction. Since schools are unique, the new institution may offer possible modifications, for example, changing the number of residential sessions. However, there would still be face-to-face onsite instruction during the weekend residentials and an online component.

Q: What about my transcripts and records?

A: Reiss-Davis will provide official transcripts to students from the Registrar's Office if requested. However, when Reiss-Davis secures a new institutional home for the program, all student records will be migrated through our own operations. Students will not be required to transfer their own records.

Q: What happens to my financial aid loans?

A: Reiss-Davis will assist you by providing the new school code for your federal loans on the FAFSA website at the appropriate time.

Q: Is it the position that the Vista Del Mar Board has decided to discontinue RDGS altogether or is RDGS taking the two years given during probation to restructure and meet the WSCUC recommendations?

A: The Vista Del Mar Board of Directors expects Reiss-Davis to transition the program to a new institution. A final determination will be made in Spring 2025, at which time the Vista Del Mar Board of Directors will decide on which of the institutions Reiss-Davis will affiliate with and when to begin the transition.

Q: If I have more questions, whom do I reach out to at Reiss-Davis?

A: We have established an email address GraduateSchool@reissdavis.edu so that students, faculty and community members can send questions to the institution. You may also look at our webpage [Reiss-Davis Accreditation](#) for the most recent updates and additional resources. We will also hold additional town hall meetings every 2-3 weeks throughout the spring and summer terms, or as needed based on questions received via the Graduate School email. The Zoom link information will remain the same for all town hall meetings. Individual student meetings with financial aid, the registrar, faculty, and academic support services will be regular and ongoing.

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