

July 11, 2025

Dr. Grant Hagiya
Co-President
Dr. Jeffrey Kuan
Co-President
Claremont School of Theology
10497 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Dear Presidents Hagiya and Kuan:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Claremont School of Theology by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 27, 2025. At that meeting, the Commission acted to place Claremont School of Theology (CST) on Probation. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to CST April 9-11, 2025, using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by CST prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), and the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleague Maggie Froelich, Accreditation Liaison Officer. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

Procedural History

During the last decade, CST has undergone six separate reviews (visits) prior to this review (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020). From 2015-2019 the institution was on Warning and in 2020 had the warning reduced to Notice of Concern. Because of Covid, the string of annual visits was interrupted. All visits focused on financial sustainability, and multiple efforts to achieve fiscal stability were examined during these six years and this review. Those efforts included joining Claremont Lincoln University, merging with Willamette University, and selling its campus and finding an alternative site. To date, the institution has been unable to improve its financial standing.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Impose Probation
3. Schedule a Special Visit in spring 2026 to address:
 - a. Ability to balance annual operating expenses with unrestricted revenues to support long-term sustainability.
 - b. Establishment of effective financial leadership with the necessary expertise in sound financial planning and management to support strategic decision-making and drive long-term financial improvements.

- c. Status of the Yalong Investment Group agreement.
- d. Realistic assessment and optimization of faculty and staffing capacity to support institutional operations and strategic initiatives.
- e. Implementation of plans for long-term organizational stability and effective decision-making in light of planned senior leadership turnover.
4. Submit cash flow Progress Reports on November 1, 2025 and February 1, 2026
5. Upon receipt of this letter, submit previously prepared and updated Teachout plans.

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.

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. The Commission requires a Special Visit in one year. If inadequate progress has been made, the Commission reserves the right to take an even more serious action or initiate a withdrawal of accreditation. 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 Standard 3: Deficiencies to be Addressed

1. CFR 3.1 CST outsources many of its financial services such as accounting and billing to an external auditing firm, but the institution has no designated Chief Financial Officer, which is essential for strategic financial planning, oversight, and management required for an institution with the financial challenges of CST.
2. CFR 3.1 The current co-Presidents plan to leave their roles within two years. CST must present specific plans for stable and ongoing administrative leadership
3. CFR 3.4 An institution is required to have "realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue resources." While there is evidence of increasing enrollment, realistic budgeting and diversification of revenue resources are absent. At the time of the Special Visit, CST must present a balanced 3-year budget based on realistic enrollment projections.
4. CFR 3.5 An institution is required to be "financially stable" with "resources sufficient to ensure long-term sustainability". CST is currently operating with an unbalanced

budget, decreasing revenues, reduced advancement results, increased student discounts, reduced net assets, continuing debt, elimination of key administrative positions, and rapidly developing cash flow issues. Evidence of improvement will need to be submitted to the Special Visit team.

Areas for Development

In preparation for the Special Visit, the Commission also requires the institution to respond to the following areas for development:

1. Clarify mission and strategies. (CFRs 1.1, 4.8)
2. Systematize the use of evidence and comprehensive quality assurance processes across the institution to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan and improve operations. (CFR 4.1)
3. Continue implementing a sustained, systematic, and campus-wide academic and cocurricular assessment process. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 2.14, 4.1)
4. Implement a structured cycle of program review to ensure continuous improvement across all programs. (CFR 2.4)
5. Increase the capacity of institutional research to enhance the collection, analysis, and use of evidence to track and improve institutional quality and student success. (CFRs 4.2, 4.4, 4.5)
6. Engage stakeholders in decision-making through transparent communication, collaboration, and information flow across all levels of the institution. (CFR 1.7)
7. Become compliant with authorization requirements in all jurisdictions. (CFR 1.3)
8. Establish and implement consistent policies and procedures for performance management and accountability of staff, faculty, and administration. (CFRs 1.5, 3.2, 3.3)

Next Steps

The Commission requires a meeting between the WSCUC staff and representatives of CST, 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 CST'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 CST may use as it stands. If you wish to propose revisions to the sample, your proposed changes must be forwarded by email to Executive Vice President Christopher Oberg 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.”

Submit a Teach-Out Plan

An institution placed on Probation by the Commission must submit to WSCUC a teach-out plan that would be implemented if the institution were to close. A teach-out plan identifies opportunities for the students of a closing institution to complete their program at other institutions offering the same or similar degree programs, certificates, or curricula leading to professional licensure, regardless of students’ academic progress at the time of closure. The WSCUC Teach-Out Plans and Agreements Policy and associated Guide provide information on what to include in a teach-out plan. CST showed the visiting team well developed teach-out plans with two reputable accredited institutions, which must be updated as needed.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of CST’s governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the CST 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 within one business day of the date of this letter. 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 institution’s preparation and support for this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



A. Maria Toyoda
President

AMT/ro/cno

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair
Maggie Froelich, ALO
Patricia Farris, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Richard Osborn, Retired Vice President and Visit Liaison
Christopher Oberg, Executive Vice President

WASC Senior College and University Commission Statement on the Status of Claremont School of Theology

On June 27, 2025 the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) voted to impose Probation on Claremont School of Theology (CST).

Probation reflects the Commission's finding that an institution has significant issues of noncompliance with one or more of the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation. The Commission has determined that CST 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 CST continues during the Probation period and students' status within the college is not affected by this sanction.

The Commission's decision to impose Probation on CST is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Commission Action Letter dated June 27, 2025. This document is available on the WSCUC website. Anyone who has questions about CST's accreditation status should contact Maggie Froelich, Accreditation Liaison Officer at CST.