

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM
SPECIAL VISIT**

To

Saybrook University

November 16 – 19, 2021

Team Roster

Patricia Easton, Team Chair for Conducting the Review
Executive Vice President and Provost, Claremont Graduate University

Katrina Rogers, Team Chair for Preparing for the Review
President, Fielding Graduate University

Laura Massa, Team Assistant Chair
Associate Vice President for Academic Programs, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
David Ely, Team Member
Associate Dean, Fowler College of Business Administration, San Diego State University

Alvin McLean, Team Member
Dean, JFK School of Psychology at National University & Regent of the Board, Samuel Merritt University

Barbara Gross Davis, Staff Liaison
Vice President, WASC Senior College and University Commission

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.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Accreditation History

Founded in 1970, Saybrook University is a private, not-for-profit institution whose mission is to “relentlessly pursue a socially just, sustainable world by educating humanistic leaders who transform their fields and communities.” The university offers graduate degrees and post-graduate professional development certificates in the fields of psychology, clinical psychology, counseling, organizational leadership, business, management, transformative social change, mind-body medicine, and integrative and functional nutrition. At the ~~Fall~~-fall 2021 census, Saybrook’s enrollment included a total of 915 new and continuing students. While physically located in Pasadena, California, all Saybrook’s programs are online, and nearly all degree programs follow a low-residency hybrid model, with face-to-face meetings held at a variety of locations.

Saybrook University was originally located in San Francisco. In 2014, the university moved to Oakland, and in 2019 moved to its current location in Pasadena. Also in 2014, the university entered into an affiliation with The Community Solution (TCS) Education System, a nonprofit system of five colleges and universities. TCS describes itself as bringing together like-minded institutions with the scale of resources and operational expertise necessary for each to successfully advance student success, while maintaining their independent voices.

Saybrook University was first accredited by WSCUC in 1984. In the last decade, the university has had Special Visits from WSCUC in 2012 and 2014, and a reaffirmation visit in 2018. WSCUC identified consistent concerns across each of the visits, including issues related to finances, enrollment management, educational effectiveness, leadership, and the role and engagement of faculty. Following the university’s 2018 visit, the Commission reaffirmed accreditation for eight years and scheduled a Special Visit for fall 2021 focused on five issues, including finances, student achievement, program review, faculty morale, and diversity.

For the issue of finances, the Commission required the university to demonstrate continued efforts to strengthen financial viability through further enrollment growth, diversification of revenue sources, and growth of advancement efforts. (CFR 3.4) In addition, the Commission noted that Saybrook should continue to examine program pricing strategies in light of the changing ecology of higher education. (CFR 4.7).

For the issue of student achievement, the Commission recommended the university continue to make progress in the collection and use of graduation and retention data, and to create a plan containing timelines, goals, and ongoing assessment to define and ensure student success. (CFR 2.10) Saybrook was also asked to adopt a consistent model for assessment of student learning, institutionalize the collection and dissemination of data, and use the results for improvement and allocation of resources. Finally, the Commission recommended diversifying data collection methods to include more direct assessment measures across the university. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6) Progress in procuring an assessment management system was also to be addressed.

For the issue of program review, Saybrook was asked to adopt a consistent model for program review, demonstrate that guidelines were understood and followed, and provide samples of program reviews that led to improvement and resource allocation. (CFR 2.7)

For the issue of faculty morale, the Commission asked the university to address the status of the implementation of the faculty workload and evaluation plan and clarify decision-making roles in a shared governance model. (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.7) The Commission also recommended that the university continue to make progress in reducing organizational silos by standardizing academic policies, best practices, and procedures. (CFR 3.7).

For the issue of diversity, the Commission asked the university to provide steps taken to institute inclusive hiring practices and continue efforts to diversify the faculty. In addition, the university was to address the demographic characteristics of the student body since 2017 and continue efforts to

recruit and admit a diverse student body. The university was also asked to provide an update on the work of the Diversity Task Force, and to develop a Diversity Master Plan. (CFR 1.4)

The progress of Saybrook University in addressing these issues is described in Section II.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

Saybrook University submitted its Special Visit Report and supporting documentation in September 2021. The original chair for this review led the team in preparing for the remote visit, including identifying key issues based on written materials submitted by Saybrook, holding two team only conference calls, confirming the visit schedule, and conferring with the Saybrook president in advance of the start of the review. Due to an emergency, the original chair was unable to participate in the remote review or draft the team report. A team member was asked to serve as chair for conducting the remote review and overseeing the team report.

The Special Visit Team evaluated evidence presented by Saybrook to address progress on each of the five issues noted in the Commission Action letter dated July 20, 2018. On November 16, 17 and 18, the team held discussions with administrative personnel, the board of trustees, faculty, staff, and students. In addition, the team reviewed all submissions to the confidential email [address-account](#) that Saybrook made available to all interested parties. The exit meeting occurred during the morning of November 19, 2021.

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

The Special Visit Report (SVR) submitted by Saybrook University was well-organized, addressing each of the issues raised in the Commission Action Letter of July 2018. Appendices were comprehensive and easily accessible, and evidence provided with the report and during the visit supported SVR claims.

The SVR was drafted by a Steering Committee and subcommittees. The Steering Committee consisted primarily of university administration and staff. The five subcommittees each took the lead on

drafting the response to one identified issue. Before finalizing the report, feedback was sought from the Board of Trustees and the Saybrook community.

Overall, the SVR characterized Saybrook as making incremental progress towards improvement in all the identified areas for this Special Visit. After campus interviews and the review of the institutional report and additional documentation provided during the visit, the team concluded that Saybrook has generally made good progress in addressing previous Commission recommendations though more work is needed in some areas.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. Finances

The Commission’s letter following the 2018 accreditation visit directed that the Special Visit address six areas in finance: (1) audited financial statements for FY 2018, 2019, 2020, and if available, FY2021, (2) fundraising goals and amounts received since spring 2018, (3) enrollment data for 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, (4) update on program pricing strategies, (5) update on efforts in grant making, and (6) the five-year financial plan. Information pertaining to these areas reviewed by the team provided insights into Saybrook’s progress toward the Commission’s recommendations to (1) continue to strengthen financial viability through further enrollment growth, diversification of revenue sources, and building on initial advancement efforts (CFR 3.4) and (2) continue to examine program pricing strategies in light of the changing ecology of higher education. (CFR 4.7)

Financial situation

At the time of the 2018 accreditation visit, university leadership believed that Saybrook was positioned to experience strengthening financial results. Saybrook had recently reported an operating surplus for FY 2017 after experiencing operating deficits in the two prior years. These projections have been realized. Saybrook achieved operating surpluses every fiscal year from 2018 to 2021. Net assets increased by 30% from FY 2017 to FY 2020 and by 38% from FY 2020 to FY 2021. The financial results for

FY 2021 exceeded budget projections for several reasons, including strong enrollment growth, the residential conferences being conducted virtually rather than in person, and a sharp drop in travel expenses. With recent increases in cash and cash equivalent assets and investment assets, Saybrook's liquid assets provide a substantial cushion to manage unanticipated developments. Liquidity is further enhanced by a line of credit through TCS. (CFR 3.4)

Leadership shared that the relocation from Oakland to Pasadena did not have a material impact on financial results. Moreover, rent payments are lower now relative to when Saybrook was based in Oakland. (CFR 3.4)

Fundraising goals; efforts in grant making

Saybrook's institutional advancement activities in gifts, sponsorships, and grants are guided by a **FY 2021-2025 Institutional Advancement Strategic Plan**. While outcomes in these areas have been very modest to date, Saybrook has the organizational structure and staffing in place to build on its early efforts. With **alumni engagement as a primary focus**, Saybrook established an Alumni Council, organized events for alumni, and created digital media tailored for alumni. The team heard from several meeting participants of their pride in Saybrook's first gala, which was conducted remotely. Professional development services for students and alumni are also being expanded to enhance engagement. Saybrook advancement staff have contributed to updating university branding and support the areas of admissions and marketing. (CFRs 3.1, 3.4)

Within the past two years, a director of university relations, a part-time grant writer, and several support staff were hired. Saybrook plans to hire a full-time grant writer in the future.

Since efforts in grant writing have begun only recently, modest amounts have been generated to date. Saybrook did receive a CARES Act grant, which was used to support students and faculty during the pandemic, including to purchase equipment to improve the effectiveness of teaching remotely. (CFRs 3.1, 3.4, 3.5)

Enrollment data for 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021; five-year financial plan

Enrollment, as measured by headcount, increased by 230 students between fall 2017 and fall 2021. In fall 2021, enrollments consisted of 228 newly admitted students and 687 continuing students. This level of overall enrollment is roughly consistent with projections at the time of the 2018 visit when leadership expected enrollments to reach 1,000 students in 2021 or 2022. Additional resources for marketing and recruiting students contributed toward enrollment growth. Additional training, greater involvement of faculty in recruiting, and the addition of the summer term as a third entry point also contributed toward increased enrollments. (CFR 3.4)

A long-range model is in place to project enrollment, revenue, and expenses through FY 2025. Based on this model, headcount will increase around 45% from fall 2021 to fall 2024. Recent growth in enrollments suggests that this goal is achievable. If projections are realized, revenue will increase by 89% from FY 2021 to FY 2025 and annual operating margins will be 3.4% or greater. (CFR 3.4)

Update on program pricing strategies

Saybrook was in the process of converting from a flat-rate to a per-credit-hour rate tuition model at the time of the reaffirmation visit to create greater parity across programs and reported that this resulted in an overall tuition reduction of four percent. Programmatic tuition adjustments will continue through the 2023-2024 academic year. Also, students now pay one standard university resources fee per semester after service fees were consolidated in fall 2020. Leadership believes that this change in pricing is more equitable for students taking a low unit load and simplifies financial planning for new students. (CFR 3.4)

Conclusion

The team commends Saybrook for achieving operating surpluses since the accreditation visit in 2018 and its clear focus on financial sustainability demonstrated by efforts to increase revenues

(increased enrollment, enhanced marketing, emphasis on fundraising, adjusted tuition model, and new program development) and to manage expenses. Saybrook has been responsive to the Commission's recommendations in the area of finances. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)

B. Student Achievement

For the issue of student achievement, the Commission recommended Saybrook continue to make progress in the collection and use of graduation and retention data, and to create a plan containing timelines, goals, and ongoing assessment to define and ensure student success. (CFR 2.10) Saybrook was also asked to adopt a consistent model for assessment of student learning, institutionalize the collection and dissemination of data, and use the results for improvement and allocation of resources. Finally, the Commission recommended diversifying data collection methods to include more direct assessment measures across the university. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6) Progress in procuring an assessment management system was also to be addressed.

Retention and graduation data

Saybrook provided retention and graduation rate data from 2015 through the present. Data were presented in pivot tables that allowed the viewer to "slice" the data to isolate a variety of key variables. The ability to slice data was essential for understanding graduation rates by program, as the default setting was to include all terms from ~~Fall-fall~~ 2015 through ~~Summer-summer~~ 2021. Overall graduation rates appeared to include data from new programs for which no student could possibly have graduated yet, suggesting an artificial depression of the overall graduation rates. While rates varied widely by program, the data showed the average graduation rate for master's programs to be about 61%, and about 14% for doctoral programs. The team learned that Saybrook is working to establish benchmarks to aid in better understanding ~~of~~ their retention and graduation rates. The SVR described patterns, including a higher retention rate for students who begin in the fall term, but did not offer an explanation for this finding or connect it clearly to efforts to improve retention rates. (CFR 2.10)

Retention and graduation rate data are available to faculty and staff via the campus intranet. Department chairs reported that they needed greater guidance on how to utilize the data. They also noted that there are other variables that would provide helpful context and would like included, such as age categories or other indicators of traditional and non-traditional students. Saybrook is encouraged to strengthen the presentation, organization and calculation of retention and graduation data that will aid in interpreting and utilizing the information for improvement. (CFR 2.10)

Saybrook has undertaken a great deal of work to improve retention and graduation rates. The Student Excellence Task Force, consisting of administrators, staff and students, reviews current student services and identifies ways to improve them in support of student retention. The Division of Student Affairs has launched several efforts in the past year to improve retention, including offering professional development workshops, adopting Handshake Career Services Platform, and improving website design to help students locate services, including a portal for self-service transactions (e.g., registering for classes). Many more initiatives are planned by the Division. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11)

The Registrar's Office is working to implement multiple initiatives to support and improve retention and graduation, including activities like strengthening proactive communication, enhancing new student orientation, offering a year-long schedule so that students may plan beyond a single term, and creating program plans for each student that will improve advising, scheduling and degree audits. Additionally, in an effort to better support students, academic advising has been moved out of the Registrar's Office and Student Affairs and delegated to academic department chairs. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11)

The many initiatives to improve student success reflect Saybrook's humanistic mission and are grounded in established best practices. Many of the initiatives are very recent, making it difficult to determine their impact at this time. Saybrook does utilize student satisfaction surveys on a regular basis and noted they would include questions about new initiatives. Beyond satisfaction, Saybrook does not have a defined plan to determine the effectiveness of their initiatives on student success. Evidence of

effectiveness will be vital for determining which efforts to continue, expand, or discontinue. As Saybrook looks to grow its student body, the combination of mission-driven and evidence-informed decision making will become increasingly important to Saybrook's continued success. (CFRs 2.10, 4.1, 4.3)

Assessment of student learning

For learning outcomes assessment, Saybrook adopted a standard assessment plan template that requires programs to align their outcomes to the institution's learning outcomes and establish timelines and specific methods for assessment of each program learning outcome. Direct measures of learning are encouraged throughout the plan template. In Fall-fall 2019, Saybrook adopted Taskstream as its assessment management system (AMS), and programs began entering information into the system. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6)

The team found that some programs and faculty are more engaged than others in using the AMS and in conducting assessment. Faculty reported that having both an assessment plan template and an AMS have brought a consistent model and language for assessment to the campus; and faculty are glad that the work aligns with program review. Faculty are having conversations about assessment topics (e.g., rubrics, assignment design) that they didn't have before. Faculty shared examples of how they have used assessment results to guide changes for improvement within their programs. Saybrook does not yet have a plan to determine the effectiveness of the AMS, or the effect of the new assessment template. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 4.3)

Conclusion

Overall, the team observed significant recent efforts to improve student retention, graduation and learning; however, plans to understand and improve the effectiveness of these efforts were lacking. The team recommends that Saybrook establish and support a student success evaluation plan, containing timelines, goals, evidence to be examined and assigned responsibilities for tasks, to understand and improve student retention, learning, and graduation. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 4.1, 4.3)

C. Program Review

In 2018 the Commission recommended that Saybrook adopt a consistent model for assessment of student learning and program review, institutionalize the collection and dissemination of data, and use the results for program improvement and allocation of resources. (CFR 2.7) For its Special Visit in 2021, the Commission specifically recommended that Saybrook: (1) establish program review guidelines and describe the steps the institution is taking to make sure they-the guidelines are understood and followed, and (2) provide examples of ~~demonstrate ample~~ program reviews and evidence that the results of program review are being used for improvement and resource allocation.

The evidence reviewed by the team prior to and during the visit, indicates that Saybrook has made good overall progress in program review. A Task Force on Program Review was formed in 2018 whose recommendations were largely adopted by the time of this visit. Saybrook has implemented an AMS and uses it to provide templates and rubrics for university-wide faculty-driven assessment. Saybrook's learning management system, Canvas, is used to collect assessment evidence. Ongoing faculty training on assessment and the assessment platform has also been launched. Use of student feedback into the assessment process has been gathered sporadically through survey data; the team encourages Saybrook to regularize the collection of student feedback. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3)

During the visit the team noted that the new model of program review is beginning to be applied, on a schedule, to existing programs. For example, a recent program review was conducted for the PhD in Clinical Psychology that followed the new program review model and utilized the AMS platform. Student success measurements for retention and graduation were gathered and analyzed, and benchmarks were set. Assessment of learning involved faculty instituting a double-blind process for examining qualifying exams with a specially-designed rubric. Student survey data revealed that students wanted more post-course work structure and felt anxiety regarding public presentations, which led to

changes in the curriculum. The report and follow-up discussions with the staff, the faculty, and students confirmed promising early evidence of the effectiveness of the format and process. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3)

Conclusion

Saybrook has shown strides in collecting and disseminating data and using the results for program improvement and allocation of resources. The team found that ~~while~~ much progress had been made on the adoption of a university-wide model for program assessment and review. The team notes that the ~~adoption-implementation~~ of a data informed process by all programs and faculty across the university is critical to ensure that all Saybrook programs ~~offered by the institution~~ are subject to systematic program review and continuous improvement. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3)

D. Faculty Morale

The Commission's letter directed ~~that~~ the Special Visit team to address-examine two areas concerning faculty morale: (1) status of the implementation of the faculty workload and evaluation plan and (2) description of decision-making roles in shared governance. Information reviewed by the team pertaining to these areas provided insights into Saybrook's progress toward the Commission's recommendations to (1) address faculty morale through the adoption of a faculty workload and evaluation plan and clarify decision-making roles in a shared governance model (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.7) and (2) continue to make progress in reducing organizational silos by standardizing academic policies, best practices, and procedures. (CFR 3.7)

Shared governance

A Task Force on Shared Governance was formed to bring clarity to institutional decision making. Their activities led to extensive internal dialog on shared governance. One notable outcome was the development of a shared governance matrix that shows the levels of participation for various stakeholders across types of decisions. This document was reviewed and refined by various university committees and will soon be presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval. As a result of this

process, several changes to governance have been implemented. The Academic Affairs Leadership Council (AALC) was expanded to include additional faculty serving on the faculty senate and additional staff. Also, the faculty senate co-chairs now serve on the president's cabinet. (CFR 3.7)

Institutional decision making and faculty morale continue to be intensively discussed among faculty and administrators. Faculty and staff take great pride in their devotion to their students, especially in their responses during the pandemic. During meetings with administrators and faculty, the team was provided with examples of how shared governance has improved. The cabinet and AALC have been expanded to bring in additional voices and to establish additional channels of communication. The overall sense is that Saybrook is making progress. However, there is general agreement among administrators and faculty that there is still more work to be done. (CFR 3.7)

Faculty morale

The team for the reaffirmation visit in 2018 learned that significant segments of the faculty believed that workload practices provided insufficient time for faculty research. A Faculty Research Task Force was formed to explore ways to enhance the research activities of faculty and students. Saybrook plans to create a sub-committee in spring 2022 to implement initiatives identified by the task force. An Annual Faculty and Staff Engagement Survey was created and administered in 2020 and 2021. The most recent survey results show some evidence that Saybrook is moving in the right direction in improving morale, but more work is needed. (CFRs 2.8, 3.7)

In response to the Commission's recommendation to adopt a faculty workload and evaluation plan, a committee was formed and tasked with revising the annual evaluation form and process. The metrics, feedback process, and timeline have been adjusted. Faculty evaluations are now used in the process to award multi-year contracts. Three-year contracts are awarded to faculty determined to exceed university standards. A plan to create faculty ranks has been developed and will be considered by the Board of Trustees in 2022. Under the plan, faculty could voluntarily apply. Based on feedback

received during meetings with faculty, it appears that multi-year contracts and faculty ranks will have a mixed impact on morale. (CFRs 2.8, 2.9)

A primary concern of faculty is that the current workload is unsustainable and is leading to burnout. This goes beyond the pressures associated with coping with the pandemic when quick adjustments exacerbated stress and added to the workload. The concerns expressed to the team involve the hiring of additional faculty not keeping pace with growing student enrollments, insufficient clarity on the trigger for additional faculty hires, lack of adequate number of faculty available to support students at the dissertation stage, student-to-faculty ratio guidelines that do not appropriately account for variations in workloads across disciplines, and the impact on department chairs and other faculty members' workload arising from their involvement with student advising and recruitment. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7)

Finally, compensation paid to adjunct faculty was raised multiple times in meetings with faculty. This is recognized by senior leadership as an issue that needs to be addressed. (CFR 3.1)

Conclusion

Saybrook continues to face issues of faculty morale and concerns about shared governance. To make further progress in these areas, the team recommends that Saybrook take the following actions:

- codify a transparent working model of shared governance into the Faculty Handbook; (CFR 3.7)
- set student-to-faculty ratios in a manner that accounts for discipline-specific administrative and service duties of faculty as well as their teaching responsibilities; (CFRs 3.1, 3.2)
- clarify policies and procedures for faculty appointments to multi-year contracts; (CFR 3.2)
- align adjunct faculty compensation model to workload; (CFR 3.2) and
- monitor morale, including by continuing to administer an engagement survey or other appropriate instruments. (CFRs 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.7, 3.10)

E. Diversity

In the area of diversity issues, the Commission made the following recommendations:

- Continue efforts to diversify the faculty (CFR 1.4)-
- Continue efforts to recruit and admit a diverse student body (CFR 1.4)-
- Develop a Diversity Master Plan (CFR 1.4)-

The evidence reviewed by the team prior to and during the visit indicates that Saybrook has made good overall progress in the area of diversity. Social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion, along with a strong humanistic philosophical approach are core values of Saybrook. This was clearly evident in the materials reviewed by the team, as well as in the interviews with administration, faculty, staff and students.

Diversification of the faculty

As part of Saybrook's efforts to continue to diversify the faculty, Human Resources (HR) has conducted searches at the executive, staff and faculty level in which diversity was highlighted as one of the key criteria in developing the candidate pool. In addition, the university has used key faculty who are involved in professional organizations of color as an opportunity to recruit adjunct and core faculty for open positions. For example, the past President of the Association of Black Psychologists has used her contacts to recruit black psychologists for adjunct and full-time faculty positions. HR is also reviewing the possibility of masked resumes during the initial screening process to mitigate the likelihood of bias, in an effort to increase greater diversity. Finally, Saybrook strives to create a university with a welcoming culture that embraces diversity; hence, making Saybrook more inviting to diverse faculty candidates.

The WSCUC Key Indicator Report shows that Saybrook's full-time instructional faculty are 57% white, 14% Black, 0% Latinx, 0% Asian Pacific Islander, and 29% other. While steps have been taken to diversify the search pool in faculty searches, these efforts have not yet resulted in diversification of the faculty. Moreover, Saybrook has not identified any specific goals or metrics for assessing the achievement of goals. The team observes that establishing specific goals, processes, and measures of achievement will help Saybrook monitor its progress in diversifying its faculty. (CFR 1.4)

Diversification of the student body

Saybrook's student population is becoming increasingly more diverse based on the 2016-2020 data submitted for this review. The latest demographic data over this period indicated a 4% increase in Latinx students, 7.7% increase in African American students, and a 1.1% in Asian and Pacific Islander students, and a 7% increase in female students (from 73% to 80%). These increases are likely the result

of several different factors including expanded marketing and outreach efforts in various social media platforms associated with underserved communities; new and expanded program development efforts such as the doctorate in Integrative Social Work; and word of mouth from satisfied diverse students who are alumni or currently attending Saybrook. The overall student body has remained consistently around 50% white, and predominantly female with a slight decrease in international students (5% to 1.3%). The team notes that Saybrook has stated the intent to increase their international student body, and to continue to diversify their student body, but has not identified specific goals or metrics, or set an assessment plan to measure progress. The team encourages Saybrook to establish specific goals, processes, and measures of achievement that can help the university monitor its progress in diversifying the student body. (CFR 1.4)

Development of a Diversity Master Plan

Saybrook does not have a formal diversity plan; however, since the 2018 visit, the institution has engaged in a significant number of activities consistent with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice. Following the deaths of George Floyd, ~~Ahmed~~ Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, like many universities, Saybrook's president established a Diversity Task Force, which evolved to a council committed to social Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI Council). (CFR 1.4)

The JEDI Council has representatives across the entire Saybrook community, including administration, faculty, staff, and students. The JEDI Council's vision is to facilitate Saybrook's development of "social justice-oriented curricula, policies, and procedures that reflect the institution's community and the populations its programs serve. The JEDI Council strives for a culture at Saybrook University that celebrates and engages multiple voices from historically marginalized communities to attract a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff that aligns with the national demographics of the United States." The JEDI Council has developed five circles of compassionate action that represent the core components of the JEDI Council's work. These five circles include (1) the annual Diversity Luncheon; (2) the Anti-Racism Collaboration (ARC), a monthly speaker series focused on issues of anti-racism and social justice, with 17 of these presentations having occurred by the time of the visit; (3) student-led interest groups (e.g., BAIACA-Black Activism in Action Community Association); (4) JEDI

Mindful (brief mindfulness meditation process that starts each of their meetings; and (5) the development of a long-term relationship with an external consultant with expertise in diversity who can facilitate and enhance the development of their JEDI vision mission, and operational processes. (CFR 1.4)

~~The observation from this Special Visit is~~ The team concluded that the Saybrook community strongly embraces and supports the work of the JEDI Council, ~~and they see this work~~ which is seen as core to ~~their~~ the mission ~~as a~~ of the university. Good progress has been made in the identification and development of some of the salient components of a Diversity Plan with a commitment to specific action; however, as is the case with the other two components of Saybrook's diversity focus, no specific outcome goals have been identified, no coordinated set of processes has been established to accomplish the goals, nor are there measures to demonstrate that the goals have been achieved. (CFR 1.4)

Conclusion

Saybrook has provided evidence of meaningful advances in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion that are widely embraced by the university community. The team recommends that Saybrook create and support a comprehensive JEDI Plan delineating specific goals to be achieved, particularly with respect to the diversification of the faculty, define specific processes to achieve the goals, and establish an evaluation process to assess the efficacy of the Plan. (CFR 1.4, Equity and Inclusion Policy)

SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the team observed that Saybrook has made meaningful progress on each of the areas identified in the July 2018 Commission Action Letter.

The team commends Saybrook University for:

1. Its operating surpluses since the accreditation visit in 2018 and its clear focus on financial sustainability demonstrated by efforts to increase revenues (increased enrollment, marketing, fundraising, pricing strategies, and program development) and to manage expenses.

2. The university-wide, deep commitment to the pursuit of its humanistic mission, vision, and values, which permeates the work and ethos of its students, faculty, staff, board, and alumni.
3. Its strong commitment to social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as evidenced by the ongoing work of the JEDI Council and its five circles, which is enthusiastically embraced by the entire Saybrook community.
4. Significant progress on program development and review by creating a consistent model of program assessment, adopting and implementing a university-wide platform for program assessment (Watermark AMS), and using these tools for both new program development and continuous improvement.
5. A faculty that is seen by Saybrook students as being exceptional for their commitment, support, and willingness to do whatever it takes to help students succeed.

The team recommends that Saybrook University:

1. Create and support a comprehensive JEDI Plan delineating specific goals to be achieved, processes to achieve the goals, as well as an evaluation process to assess the efficacy of the Plan. (CFR 1.4, Equity and Inclusion Policy)
2. Establish and support a student success evaluation plan, containing timelines, goals, evidence to be examined and assigned responsibilities for tasks, to understand and improve student retention, learning, and graduation. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 4.1, 4.3)
3. Address faculty morale through (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.7, 3.10):
 - a) codifying a transparent working model of shared governance into the Faculty Handbook;
 - b) setting student-to-faculty ratios in a manner that accounts for discipline-specific administrative and service duties of faculty as well as their teaching responsibilities;
 - c) clarifying policies and procedures for faculty appointments to multi-year contracts;
 - d) aligning adjunct faculty compensation model to workload; and

- e) monitoring morale, including by continuing to administer an engagement survey or other appropriate instruments.