

July 9, 2026

Dr. Christon Arthur
President
La Sierra University
4500 Riverwalk Parkway
Riverside, CA 92505

Dear President Arthur:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning La Sierra University (LSU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 26, 2026. At that meeting, the Commission acted to place La Sierra University on Warning. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to La Sierra University April 22-24, 2026 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by La Sierra University prior to the Accreditation Visit and the institution's June 8, 2026 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Leslie R. Martin, Provost; Steve Hemenway, CFO; and Sam McBride, Associate Provost and ALO. 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.

Actions

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit Team Report
2. Issue a Warning
3. Schedule a Special Visit in Fall 2027 to address all requirements in this letter
4. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by November 1, 2026 to address:
 - a. Failure to keep records of complaints as required by Federal Compliance forms.
 - b. Budgeted and actual fall 2026 new and continuing student enrollment with explanation of enrollment trends.
 - c. Consolidated year-end FY2026 budgeted and actual fiscal performance.
 - d. Consolidated year-to-date FY2027 budgeted and actual fiscal performance.
5. Submit a Teach-Out Plan by November 1, 2026.

Warning

Warning reflects the Commission's finding that an institution fails to meet one or more of the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation. While on Warning, 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 Warning 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. 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 Standards 2 and 3. It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine whether the institution has made the necessary corrections and has come into compliance with Standards 2 and 3.

Non-Compliance with Standards: Deficiencies to be Addressed

1. Standard 2, CFR 2.3. La Sierra University did not provide evidence of the assessment of student learning outcomes. La Sierra must develop student learning outcomes for each program with assessment measures that are collected and analyzed to improve student learning.
2. Standard 2, CFR 2.4. La Sierra University had a schedule of required program reviews, however the required program reviews had not been completed. La Sierra University must complete a minimum of five program reviews to submit with the institutional report before the Special Visit.
3. Standard 3, CFR 3.4. La Sierra University has struggled with realistic budgeting and enrollment management. La Sierra must show progress in following its five-year budget plan by increasing enrollment and using reserves and resources.
4. Standard 3, CFR 3.5. La Sierra has a significant budget deficit. La Sierra must monitor the budget in order to show annual progress in reducing the budget deficit.

Areas for Development

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

1. Effectively and consistently implement student learning outcome assessment in academic and co-curricular programs. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.14, 4.6)
2. Implement academic program review according to the established schedule and systematize the use of results for improvement. (CFRs 2.4, 4.1)
3. Analyze programs, course offerings, personnel, reporting structures, and space usage to realistically adjust institutional operations to support long-term sustainability. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.11)
4. Monitor the budget plan and adjust annually to ensure a balanced budget by FY2029-30. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
5. Provide high quality facilities and technology to support operational and educational effectiveness. (CFR 3.6)

Maximum Timeframe

The deficiencies identified in this letter must be corrected within the maximum timeframe which extends until June 30, 2028, unless extended by the Commission for good cause. The Commission may take further action if warranted before the end of that timeframe.

Next Steps

The Commission requires a meeting between the WSCUC staff and representatives of La Sierra University, 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 discuss 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 La Sierra University'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 La Sierra University 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 Warning.”

Submit a Teach-Out Plan

An institution placed on Warning 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.¹

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of La Sierra University’s governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the La Sierra University 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 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. Maria Toyoda
President

AMT/so

¹ 34 Code of Federal Regulations § 668.43(a) (19) states: “Information that the institution must make readily available to enrolled and prospective students under this subpart includes. . .[i]f the institution is required to maintain a teach-out plan by its accrediting agency, notice that the institution is required to maintain such teach-out plan and the reason that the accrediting agency required such plan under § 602.24(c)(1). . .”

Cc: Mary Marcy, Commission Chair
Sam McBride, ALO
Bradford Newton, Board Chair
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team
Susan Opp, Vice President
Mark Goor, Vice President, retired

WASC Senior College and University Commission Statement on the Status of La Sierra University

On June 26, 2026, the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) voted to issue a Warning for La Sierra University (LSU).

Warning 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 La Sierra University is not in compliance with WSCUC Standard 2. 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 La Sierra University continues during the Warning period and students' status within the college is not affected by this sanction.

The Commission's decision to impose Warning on La Sierra University is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Commission Action Letter dated July 9, 2026. This document is available on the WSCUC website. Anyone who has questions about La Sierra University's accreditation status should contact Sam McBride, Accreditation Liaison Officer at La Sierra University.