WASC Senior College and University Commission
985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100,
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California State University, Monterey Bay wishes to acknowledge and extend its appreciation to the accreditation visiting team for their work that culminated in the site visit of March 27-29, 2019 and the resulting report. In particular, the six commendations in the report highlight the recent accomplishments of which the campus is most proud.

The campus has also reviewed the five recommendations in the report and find them, for the most part, to be in alignment with what we believe are the necessary next steps in our growth. Specifically, CSUMB:

- Acknowledges the need to increase hiring and improve retention of a more diverse faculty and staff. Initial efforts in these areas are already underway and more work is planned for the coming year.
- Supports the idea of increasing early career faculty development including lecturers as contract requirements permit.
- Plans to tie the new strategic plan more closely to resource allocations. It is for this reason that the membership of the committee drafting the new plan overlaps very closely with the university Strategic Budget Committee.
- Will increase support for staff training and development along with increasing staff input to key decision processes. Efforts to increase staff development opportunities have already been implemented by University Personnel.
- Agrees that areas of academic advising need improvement, particularly though increasing the number of advisors.

There are two areas for which in our judgment the team report did not acknowledge information provided in the Institutional Report and various documents provided for the visit. CSUMB would like to clarify the following:

- As stated in the Institutional Report (p. 50), a survey conducted in 2009--prior to the last accreditation visit--identified advising to be an obstacle to student success. CSUMB responded by creating the current centralized advising office staffed with professional advisors. This model is considered to be one of the key factors responsible for the third highest increase in graduation rates in the nation since 2011, as reported by the Chronicle

of Higher Education. While the visiting team did hear negative comments about advising from a small number of students, the 2016 CSUMB Experience Survey showed strong satisfaction with advising (63% of respondents with 73% indicating accurate information on requirements from advisors). The most commonly identified negative issue is the availability of advisors. While constraints of budget and space have been difficult to overcome, CSUMB has now placed the highest priority on increasing the advising staff and, in fact, has hired three new advisors since March.

- The visiting team report notes the sudden increase in enrollments in fall 2014 which were unfunded by the system. The visit report states in one place that CSUMB has a "multi-pronged approach" to "address the lack of funding from the state to adequately serve these additional enrollments," and elsewhere in the report portrays CSUMB as being "without a clear plan on how to make changes in enrollment management." The first statement is correct: to compensate for the missing state funding, we took the following steps: we kept enrollment constant (as described below); we dedicated the small annual increases in enrollment funding to gradually backfill the unfunded enrollment portion; and we allocated unexpended one-time funding to cover the remaining gap during the transition. This nuanced strategy has allowed us to balance our books every year while bringing our unfunded enrollment down to 184 FTES for the coming year, a negligible portion of our total enrollment. The second statement is incorrect: following the fall 2014 enrollment increase, CSUMB acted immediately to institute the primary enrollment control available to it – that of impaction. This impaction, declared in 2014, allowed us to hold enrollment constant, but was approached thoughtfully with an aim toward serving local students first and foremost, as well as ensuring that transfer students entered with appropriate levels of preparation. Furthermore, CSUMB has requested increased enrollment targets at every opportunity and has used these increases to backfill budget shortfalls as described above. CSUMB has also increased marketing efforts to stimulate enrollment from both out of state and internationally, and focused new program development on self-support mode. All three of these alternative types of enrollment fully cover their costs and do not require additional state funding.

To reiterate, we very much appreciated the hard work of the visiting team throughout the entire review process and, with these two exceptions, consider the report to be a fair portrayal of our strengths, accomplishments and areas for improvement. CSUMB looks forward to the opportunity to answer any questions the Commission may have regarding our progress and plans for future growth and continuous improvement.