



TMUS Board of Directors
Public Statement Regarding
2018 WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Review

Dear Friend of TMUS,

As you may know, The Master's University and Seminary has received its accreditation from the WASC Senior College & University Commission (WSCUC) since 1975. Through the years, WSCUC's feedback has strengthened the institution and helped us arrive at the high standard of academic excellence we enjoy today. The Board is not only grateful for this longstanding relationship but is strongly committed to keeping our accreditation in good standing. We are resolute in our desire to maintain a healthy relationship with WSCUC and its leadership. This relationship is not only important for the benefit of the institution and our various constituencies, but also to the maintenance of our personal and institutional integrity in a way that is consistent with our Christian faith.

The Board has received and reviewed the WSCUC report and the Commission's action letter that followed from WSCUC's peer review of TMUS. In those companion documents, WSCUC found that TMUS is out of compliance in several specific areas and as a result has placed TMUS on probationary status. Importantly, those concerns are not related to academic or scholastic quality, but rather corporate governance and operational matters. Nevertheless, the Board takes seriously all the concerns raised by WSCUC.

Understandably, members of the TMUS family have had questions and concerns about the WSCUC documents and findings. The Board has been actively working to address these issues, and we want to provide you with a brief update on our progress.

We began with a common commitment to research and resolve—in a fair and comprehensive way—all of the issues raised in the WSCUC reports. The reports identified significant issues that need to

be addressed, and we are committed to make the hard changes required. One of the most troubling findings concerned the working environment. The comments in that section of the report are not in keeping with our tradition as an institution or our commitment to honor Christ. We profoundly value our faculty and staff and are committed to honoring them and their service.

Regarding other issues in the report, we hope to respectfully present evidence that may mitigate some of the findings. For example, after researching the WSCUC standards for board independence and discussing several specific situations with WSCUC leadership, we believe that a majority of our Board members are independent, as the WSCUC standards require. We hope to raise this with WSCUC representatives to reassure them—and you—of our commitment to excellence and independent judgment, guided by Scripture and professionalism. However, in light of WSCUC’s concerns, we also have created a plan to strengthen the Board’s leadership and oversight role moving forward.

It is not our goal in sharing such an example to undermine the credibility of the Commission’s review in any way. Nor do we deny that there are a number of significant issues we must address. A great benefit of the accreditation process and our relationship with WSCUC is that it leads to implementing and improving best practices. Rather, our goal is simply to point out that we do not believe that every assertion in the Commission’s report will eventually prove to be correct at the level initially assessed. But even in those cases, we still believe we can benefit from WSCUC’s feedback and we want to make further changes to strengthen the institution. Moreover, we can assure you that we are committed to addressing all the concerns that have been raised.

Even before receiving the final report, the Executive Committee of the Board met on July 11, 2018, to create a plan for mobilizing the full Board to respond to the Commission’s anticipated findings and recommendations. Since receiving the Final Commission Letter on July 18, the Board has responded in several important ways. For example, we have hired an independent national firm specializing in educational institutions to help us assess the current state of faculty and staff satisfaction. We have also appointed a special task force of the Board to work with an independent firm and to make any recommendations deemed necessary for strengthening our work environment.

In addition, since receiving the report, the full Board has met on three separate occasions to discuss the findings and requirements in the Final Commission Letter and to develop a definitive action plan. As a result of many hours of discussion and planning, including the tireless work of smaller groups and committees, we have made significant progress. Working with the administration, faculty, and staff, we have created a comprehensive plan—a thorough set of specific action steps to address every concern WSCUC has raised. To ensure that these steps are implemented, we have assigned all of them to specific

staff or members of the Board. We have also laid out a clear timeline in order to demonstrate to the Commission that we are making real progress toward meeting or exceeding their recommendations. The Board will thoroughly assess our institutional progress in implementing this plan at our October meeting.

It is our hope that our resolute response will allay concerns among our University and Seminary family. We recognize the crucial importance of this issue to all our students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, and ministry support partners. Please join us in praying that God would grant the Board and our staff His wisdom, mercy, and grace as we seek to address these issues. We take seriously the obligation to provide an excellent education for our students and work environment for our employees, not only because it is expected by our accrediting agency but more importantly because it honors Christ our Lord.

In Christ,

The Board of Directors
Of The Master's University & Seminary