

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
SPECIAL VISIT

To **Logos Evangelical Seminary**

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2023 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, Accreditation History, as relevant, and Visit

Logos Evangelical Seminary (LES) was founded by the Evangelical Formosan Church (EFC) in 1989 and gained its authority from the EFC General Assembly. The governance structure includes a Board of Directors, nominated internally, and approved by the EFC General Assembly's Executive Board. The seminary's main campus is in El Monte, California, with a branch campus in Bensenville, Illinois. The foundational ethos of Logos Evangelical Seminary was encapsulated in the phrase: "Attempt great things for God. Rescue millions of souls." In 2019, the mission statement was revised to reflect a renewed focus: "Forming missional servants for God's kingdom; Transforming global churches for Christ."

LES operates as a non-profit, faith-based graduate-level institution enrolling approximately 200 students and employing 13 full-time faculty members. The seminary offers several degree programs, including the PhD, DMin, ThM, MDiv, Master of Arts in Christian Studies (MACS), Master of Arts in Family Ministry (MAFM), and Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies (MAICS), all accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). Institutional accreditation was granted initially by WSCUC in 2012, following candidacy in 2010, and reaffirmed for eight years in 2018.

The Covid-19 pandemic prompted LES to shift to distance learning. Using the emergency waiver for substantive change approval from the Department of Education and WSCUC, the seminary began to offer synchronous and asynchronous online courses, along with online co-curricular activities. This expansion to online offerings under the emergency approval widened the reach of Logos, attracting distance learning students from various parts of the world. Therefore, LES aims to continue forming missional servants and transforming global churches through a variety of online education modalities.

From 2021 to 2024, LES made multiple applications for, but did not receive, distance education approval for its MACS program. Despite the lack of approval by WSCUC to offer a degree program via distance education, LES offered a full MACS program and two-thirds of the MDiv program online as well

as hosting other programs that were offered substantially online. The failure to comply with WSCUC Substantive Change requirements regarding distance education led to a Special Visit in April 2024. The Special Visit found that Logos remained out of compliance with WSCUC distance education regulations. WSCUC issued a Formal Notice of Concern that LES was in danger of being found out of compliance with Standard 1, CFRs 1.6 and 1.8. The Commission required another Special Visit in Spring 2025 to investigate progress on the topic of the Notice of Concern plus four additional areas for development as reflected in this report.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The Special Visit team initially convened remotely on 11 April 2025 and did an extensive review of prior Commission actions, prior team reports, and institutional reports regarding substantive issues. The team prepared by assigning specific roles and writing responsibilities to each team member prior to the Special Visit. On 29 April to 1 May 2025, the team conducted a remote visit with LES. During the three-day visit, interviews were held over Zoom with individuals such as the president, chief academic officer/accreditation liaison officer, and the director of administration and finance. The team also met with standing committees such as the President's Council and the program directors as well as special task forces such as the one addressing Accreditation Compliance and Educational Effectiveness, and the Online Education Committee. Members of the LES governing Board and faculty without administrative duties also took part in virtual interviews with the team. The team is grateful to everyone at LES for the seminary's preparations and hospitality, and effort led by the CAO and ALO. We are confident in the substance of our report based on the extensive nature of the visit and materials reviewed.

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

Logos Evangelical Seminary's February 2025 Special Visit report summarized the institution's major steps since the 2024 Special Visit and addressed the issues raised in the Commission Action Letter.

Considerable evidence was provided showing that meetings had been held, task forces created, and workshops held. Yet much of the evidence came in the form of meeting minutes or lengthy power point files, neither of which clearly indicated what decisions had been taken. Nor was there a clear presentation of the action steps triggered by program review, student surveys and other assessments. That is, there was room for more evidence demonstrating that a culture of data-driven analysis and action has been created.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

Issue 1. Non-Compliance Risk: Logos Evangelical Seminary is in danger of being found out of compliance with Standard 1, CFRs 1.6 and 1.8. The institution offered degree programs via remote instruction during the pandemic while temporary authorization from WSCUC and the US Department of Education for remote instruction was in place. Logos Evangelical Seminary must now ensure that programs offered 50% or more online have WSCUC substantive change distance education approval.

Logos Evangelical Seminary's February 2025 Special Visit Report provided an update on the institution's progress in regaining compliance with Standard 1, CFRs 1.3 and 1.8. As of December 2024, six programs (MACS - June 2024, MDiv and DMin - Nov 2024, MAICS and ThM - Nov 2024, MAFM - Dec 2024) received WSCUC approval for distance education. Before approval, LES communicated the situation to their students and manually cancelled enrollments for students who had taken over 50% of their courses online. The communication took place via email and a Q&A session. The registrar reached out to any students at or approaching the 50% threshold and gave them multiple options to select from, consisting of 1) decreasing their workload, 2) changing to the MACS program, 3) coming to campus to attend in person, or 4) pausing their program for a semester. 66 students (23.5% of the student population) were impacted by this disenrollment situation. Of those students, 15 students took in-person classes, 8 students changed to the MACS program, 3 students decreased their workload or audited classes, and 13 students unenrolled.

Issue 2. Expand institutional expertise in a) accreditation standards and program development protocols, and b) WSCUC substantive change requirements for distance education. (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, and 4.1)

LES has been actively working on accreditation and compliance, including expanding expertise in WSCUC standards by way of a dedicated task force, the Accreditation Compliance Task Force/Educational Effectiveness Task Force. Members consist of representatives from different departments and committees, such as the President's Council, academic departments and faculty, and department staff, serving as liaisons for reporting information. Task force members stated that their role was to provide accountability for the accreditation process (for WSCUC, ATS, and ATA), review reports, monitor assigned accreditation tasks, and talk about institutional dashboard reports.

Over the past year, this task force oversaw the substantive change process for the six programs seeking approval for distance education instruction. Their involvement consisted of making sure the right people were involved, hiring a consultant, reviewing the process and any newly created documents, and reviewing the final report that was created by the external consultant and program directors.

The task force also created the program review template and process, as well as the data management policy, and is currently in the process of researching the best data visualization tool for the institution's data needs. The task force indicated they received input from various departments and faculty depending on the topic, and any decisions made were shared at faculty meetings and the President's Council meetings. This group also hired an external consultant to provide training for faculty around distance education. The training focused on understanding distance education, facilitating regular and substantive interaction, and course design for academic engagement.

Over the course of the visit, the team noted some discrepancies between the procedures as listed in the substantive change submissions and actual procedures. And in some cases, there was indication that the processes as listed were not actually occurring. In the substantive change submission for MACS, a Distance Education Expectations and Procedures guide was submitted. Questions about online course development were asked by the Special Visit review team in multiple meetings, and while some elements included in the guide (such as substantive interaction methods) were used, this guide was not mentioned

and seemingly unknown by faculty developing online courses. The guide also referenced an instructional designer's involvement, yet the instructional designer was not included or referred to in any of the team's meetings during the visit. The guide also stated that all instructors must complete the DL101 Online Teaching and Training course or demonstrate proficiency through an assessment or evaluation process, but faculty the team met with were unable to recall taking this training and did not indicate that they had demonstrated proficiency. The guide had multiple references to the approval and monitoring role of the Online Education Committee (OEC) in online course creation and instruction. While the OEC appeared to support some areas of distance education, particularly in terms of faculty and student feedback related to improvement in the quality of online delivery, there was no mention of syllabus reviews, course proposal submissions, or adherence to a review schedule, all of which were said to have EOC involvement in the guide. Additionally, though there was reference to instructional designer (ID) roles and OEC membership within the Distance Education Expectations and Procedures guide, the team did not speak with an instructional designer during the visit and an ID was not included on the list of committee members the team received.

Some compliance issues were discovered during the review, underscoring the need for a deeper comprehensive grasp of accreditation standards and processes. Notably, the Diploma of Christian Studies (DipCS) certificate program had not secured WSCUC substantive change approval to be offered. The team also noted that the Commission Action Letter (CAL) and prior team report were not posted and readily accessible on the LES website. In the July 18, 2024, letter from the Commission, the expectation was stated that the "the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Logos Evangelical Seminary's 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."

Issue 3. Create consistent and comprehensive systems for regular program review and learning outcomes assessment processes that include gathering and utilizing student learning outcomes data and producing clearly documented written reports. (CFRs 2.6 and 2.7)

LES established an Educational Effectiveness Task Force in June 2024, and one of the group's mandates was improving educational effectiveness systems such as program review and learning outcome assessment. LES worked with two consultants whose scope of work included helping LES in the area of educational effectiveness. The task force developed a template for writing the program review report in August 2024 and stated it was used for writing the program review report for its ThM and PhD programs. Along with this template, LES submitted a policy and schedule document for its program review process that it developed in 2020. The Program Review Policy and Schedule document showed a workflow of program review, including the time of year when each step would take place. It also presented a timeline showing when each program was scheduled to undergo review through 2026. The team was able to piece together several important components of an outcome assessment system (for example, curriculum maps in LES's substantive change applications for the online modality for its degree programs), but LES did not include documents that described its outcomes assessment system with its institutional report. (CFR 2.3)

While LES's documents on its program review process represented some positive steps towards a quality-assurance system, a notable omission was the lack of any "closing the loop" measure—this is true for LES's outcomes assessment system also. Even if impactful actions were taken by decision makers, LES's program review system does not show steps for monitoring and measuring the effects of those actions. Further, the program review system is in need of explanations and procedures so all those involved—academic administrators, faculty, institutional research (IR) staff—can be clear about their roles and know how to contribute. (CFRs 2.4 and 4.6) This issue manifests in multiple ways. The team observed through interviews with non-administrator faculty that those who teach in programs that went through program review within the last year only vaguely recalled their involvement in the process. The lack of

faculty involvement and familiarity with the review indicates that little was learned and thus there was unlikely to be change or improvement based on the results of the review process. To contextualize this observation, LES only has twelve permanent faculty members for its seven degree programs—all faculty should be well-apprised of the result of the program reviews, especially the ones they teach in.

The team also discovered other uncommon practices for the program review that LES undertook since it developed the Program Review Template in 2024. First, LES conducted one program review for two programs combined: the ThM and PhD in Theological Studies. Further, while IR staff undoubtedly play an important role in any program review process, LES's IR staff served as the main drafter of the program review report as well as the "external reviewer" for this program review. The role that one person played in the review process seems especially outsized given the lack of involvement from the program faculty who are expected to be the people to ensure the quality of academic programs. (CFRs 2.6, 4.6) During the interviews, the interim program director offered a reasonable explanation for why the two programs were reviewed together: these two programs are in the same area (theology), and past graduates of the ThM have moved on to the PhD program. The explanations for the uncommon roles that the IR staff served in contrast to the lack of participation from the program faculty were less satisfactory.

In addition, even though LES developed a template for drafting program review reports, the report for the ThM/PhD program review lacked narratives to contextualize current conditions (which would have been helpful for understanding why two programs were reviewed together), connect the dots to offer insights, findings, and action items, and show how evidence supported synthesis and findings. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.6) The version of the review report read like a checklist (it doesn't help that it was presented in a slideshow format) and came across as disconnected. During the meeting, a narrative report for this program review that was apparently written by IR staff who also conducted the 'external review' was provided to the team. While this narrative was more robust than the slides provided as evidence with the institution's self-study report, it was not clear to the team if the written narrative was

created in response to the team's questions or was indeed demonstration of program review process improvement. This distinction is important: the program review process is a quality-assurance process for institution's improvement. (CFR 2.4) Submitting a written program review narrative at a review team's request may achieve compliance, but it does not serve the intended purpose of the review. Additionally, the program review template lacked clear guidance and instructions, and as a result, there was little to guide program directors, faculty, and others in doing the self-study. (CFRs 2.4 and 4.6) Finally, since faculty members did not seem to recall the process, it was not clear that specific measurable recommendations had emerged from the process or that those had been included in the strategic planning process. (CFRs 4.2, 4.3 and 4.6)

Another omission that complicated the team's evaluation of learning outcomes assessment processes was that LES did not include curricular maps in its submission for this Special Visit even though they submitted curricular maps in their substantive change applications for adding online modality to its programs. The team learned that faculty were involved in assessing learning outcomes at the course level, and then the IR office collected those assessment data. The team also learned that the faculty had revised outcome rubrics in several programs. However, the team was not provided with a timeline for LES's assessment cycle or a clear plan for revising or improving the different programs' program learning outcomes and their respective rubrics. Developing, documenting, and communicating a system to coordinate and keep track of all the assessment activities would help to improve student learning outcomes while avoiding duplication or confusion. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, and 2.7)

Issue 4. Establish sustained evidence-based and participatory quality assurance processes and decision-making processes for the President's Council, academic activities, student services, and collaborative activities related to strategic planning and teaching and learning activities. (CFRs 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.8)

In its report and during the visit, LES emphasized its commitment to collaborative data-driven decision-making in setting strategies for institutional improvements and to the use of measurable outcomes in determining their success. In the past year, such work has begun and yet progress has been

slow. In addition, the initial efforts have not been fully integrated into the work of the campus. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.5)

LES conducted strategic planning workshops in August 2024 and December 2024 aimed at building cross-departmental collaboration between faculty and administration/staff. The team learned that much information was shared and input gathered, so this inclusive approach was a positive step. It was not as clear, however, that the workshops built a foundation for on-going participatory work.

The strategic plan outlined many goals, with most having completion dates later in 2025 or beyond. The team learned that institutional data, which they called dashboards, were shared at the December 2024 workshop; these data addressed areas ranging from enrollment to student placement to finances. While the team was told that some dashboard data had been updated since December and shared via email and shared folders, it was unclear to the team which campus constituencies were seeing those updates, as well as the frequency of the reporting. Thus, it was not clear that the campus was acting collaboratively on the data. A system of tracking key performance indicators has not been adopted, though the team was told some initiatives (such as a balanced resource allocation system) were scheduled for launch later in 2025. In addition, there appeared to be no way for all constituencies, including the board, to see easily the institution's priorities and progress being made. The team learned that many of the groups involved in planning and review meet fairly infrequently (every other month, in many cases). For example, the Accreditation Compliance/Educational Effectiveness Task Force has responsibility for monitoring progress toward institutional goals yet has met only a few times since the August and December workshops, despite the institution's report stating that they met monthly. In addition, that task force had not yet developed a summary dashboard to help them (and others) monitor progress. (CFRs 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.8) Program reviews and their findings did not appear to be connected to strategic planning.

The institutional research office appears stretched in meeting the demands for information and, in many cases, academic department heads are producing their own reports. As noted elsewhere in the report, IR has been tasked with other duties such as serving as the “outside” reviewer on academic program reviews. So, while much evidence had been gathered, it was difficult to see how it was being used in a systematic way. (CFR 4.4). For example, as noted in Issue 5 in this report, consistent student enrollment data was difficult to get. In fact, there was no shared understanding of the institution’s enrollment. While multiple people reiterated that LES had record high enrollment, most could not explain what that meant or how that number was determined. For example, was the enrollment based on headcount or FTE, and was it analyzed by term or annualized? In addition, while graduation rates are low and appear to be declining steadily in most programs, only some campus constituents seemed to be aware of this. There was little evidence that strategies were in place, or even being considered, for addressing graduation rates which for some programs were less than 25% in 2023. (CFR 2.10) There was also little consensus about the impact on students of disenrolling them to comply with WSCUC regulations concerning approval to offer programs via distance learning. Finally, student data did not appear to have been disaggregated as required by WSCUC and as requested during the last Special Visit. (CFRs 4.2 and 4.3)

Issue 5. Develop and implement an approach to data collection, analysis, assessment, and use through integrated and consistent systems of data input, access, and reporting across the campus community. (CFR 4.2)

Some, albeit limited, progress has been made in data management, with the development of a data management policy and some structured data collection methods in fall 2024. The Special Visit report mentioned “data reports are generated regularly, updating dashboards, reports, and surveys for strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and continuous improvement.” However, when the team asked about the developed dashboards during the meeting with IR, it was shared that this endeavor has yet to be started, and per the Accreditation Compliance Task Force/Educational Effectiveness Task Force,

the committee is still seeking a data visualization tool that will work well for their needs. At the time of the Special Visit, the extent of the implementation of the data management policy seemed to be limited to supporting the development of student surveys and plans to work with finance and administration departments to talk about their data needs and use. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4)

During the visit, it was observed that while more dialogue was occurring than previously around data use, much less clear were: the extent to which data were being reviewed and analyzed; what specific indicators were being used to determine the effectiveness or progress of initiatives; and what benchmarks were being used to determine success, improvements, or areas needing attention. (CFR 4.5)

The review team received multiple spreadsheets and documents with no explanation for varying enrollment figures by term, program, and year. When pressed for clarification, the institution indicated that the DMin program operates on a summer, fall, and winter term structure, unlike the master's programs (MACS, MDiv, MAICS., MAFM, and ThM) that follow a traditional fall and spring semester calendar. It was explained that the difference in terms was the reason for the varying enrollment numbers and said to be a reason why the enrollment data was consolidated into an annual figure rather than the standard fall headcount data as requested by WSCUC each fall. The team was able to discern that the annual figure was actually an annual unduplicated headcount which did not track clearly with either term or annual FTE. The confusion was not limited to the review team as members of the board also seemed unclear and could not explain seemingly conflicting enrollment data. This underscores the need for the institution to more clearly explain policies and processes for gathering, management, analysis, and reporting of data, particularly when preparing reports for decision making and for external reviews such as WSCUC or program review. (CFR 4.4)

When asked about data trends seen in the program review, particularly enrollment, retention, and graduation data, there was positivity expressed around increased enrollment, but little awareness or recognition of the variable retention and very low graduation rates, or any concrete plans surrounding

action items for those particular areas. It was mentioned that program directors usually share this data during the annual faculty retreat during program review conversations, but no evidence was provided to indicate that actions had been taken based on discussions of graduation rates. (CFR 2.10)

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS

The team also found reference to discussions around ATA accreditation for undergraduate programs (B.A. degrees in Theology, ministry, Master of Divinity, Christian Studies, and Pastoral ministry) in the Accreditation Compliance Task Force/Educational Effectiveness Task Force meeting minutes. In the past, LES had submitted an undergraduate program proposal to WSCUC, but it was not approved. However, the team discovered that LES has a partnership with Logos Evangelical Seminary Taiwan (LEST) which does offer undergraduate degrees. While LEST uses some LES faculty, it appeared that no other resources were shared. The affiliations between these two institutions bearing the same name needs further clarification. (CFR 1.8)

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

While Logos Evangelical Seminary obtained approval through the substantive change process for its online programs, the other four areas of concern outlined in the spring 2024 Commission Action Letter have not been fully addressed. Though some progress has been made, more needs to be done. In particular, WSCUC policies and procedures must be followed more fully than they have been. (CFR 1.8) Low graduation rates must be addressed. (CFR 2.10) Faculty should be more fully involved in academic program standards and review (CFRs 2.6, 2.7) and more actively engaged in the work of institutional improvement. (CFR 4.6) In addition, to gain a more accurate understanding of student learning and educational quality, quality assurance processes must increasingly focus on student outcomes through the systematic collection and analysis of relevant data (CFRs 4.2, 4.3), and institutional research capacity needs to be enhanced. (CFR 4.4)

Recommendations

The team recommends that Logos Evangelical Seminary:

1. Significantly improve the practices of data management and utilization including collection, analysis, and assessment of data through integrated and consistent systems of data definitions, input, access, and reporting across the campus community. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5)
2. Implement sustained evidence-based and participatory quality assurance and decision-making processes including all campus constituents and the board. (CFRs 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8)
3. Implement consistent and comprehensive systems for regular program review and learning outcomes assessment processes involving all faculty including a) establishing consistency of program learning outcomes across each program's modalities, b) gathering and utilizing student learning outcomes, c) producing written narrative reports, and d) demonstrating actions taken and made visible in the institution's strategic plan. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 4.1, 4.6)
4. Develop and implement a student success plan that addresses: a) the decline of graduation rates, b) benchmarking data from similar institutions, and c) support for all students' development in alignment with the institution's mission and vision. (CFRs 2.10 2.13)
5. Ensure compliance with all WSCUC requirements and action items including: a) securing substantive change approvals for all academic programs including certificate and diploma programs, b) clarifying the seminary's relationships with other institutions, and c) implementing all distance education substantive change submissions and recommendations. (CFRs 1.3, 1.7, 1.8)