

February 27, 2026

Dr. Scott Mitchell  
President and CEO  
Institute of Buddhist Studies  
2140 Durant Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear President Mitchell:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting February 13, 2026. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to Institute of Buddhist Studies September 24-26, 2025 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by Institute of Buddhist Studies prior to the Offsite Review (OSR) and the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and your colleagues Courtney Bruntz, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, and Leroy Morishita, Board Chair. 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. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of six years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in spring 2031 and the Accreditation Visit in fall 2031
4. Schedule an Interim Report to be submitted by November 1, 2027 to address all requirements in this letter
5. Schedule a Progress Report to be submitted by September 1, 2026 to address:
  - a. Three-year financial and cash-flow projection.
  - b. Updates on student services policies, procedures, and plans.
  - c. Results from implementation of the program review plan and quarterly effectiveness reporting.
  - d. Update on IBS relationship with Graduate Theological Union (GTU).

### **Commendations**

The Commission commends the institution for:

1. A mission-aligned culture and atmosphere that fosters an enriching and positive experience for students, faculty, and staff.
2. Clear articulation and consistent enactment of its mission to integrate Buddhist scholarship, in its varied forms, with contemporary concerns, demonstrating a distinctive contribution to graduate Buddhist education.
3. A vibrant online student community that supports academic engagement and belonging.
4. Significant commitment to providing affordable education and institutional scholarships.

### **Areas for Development**

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

1. Expand, deepen, and complete evidence-based strategic planning that is adaptable and responsive and that results in actionable plans with timelines, measurable outcomes, and performance indicators. (CFR 4.8)
2. Develop and implement a clear plan for financial sustainability and institutional viability, including multi-year financial and cash projections that are clearly linked to the strategic plan. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
3. Ensure student services are consistent, accessible, legally compliant, and regularly evaluated for effectiveness. (CFRs 2.13, 2.14, 3.11, 4.1)
4. Continue to develop commitment, capacity, and culture to be a data-informed institution. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)
5. Implement and monitor the effectiveness of the assessment plan, instruments, and practices in alignment with the “IBS Program Review Plan and Timeline.” (CFRs 2.4, 2.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6)
6. Continue to examine and evaluate the relationship with the Graduate Theological Union. (CFRs 3.6, 4.8)

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirmed that Institute of Buddhist Studies successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. In keeping with WSCUC values, Institute of Buddhist Studies should strive for ongoing improvement with adherence to all Standards of Accreditation and their associated CFRs to foster a learning environment that continuously strives for educational excellence and operational effectiveness.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter is being sent to the chair of Institute of Buddhist Studies’ governing board. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the Institute of Buddhist Studies 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. 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 extensive work that Institute of Buddhist Studies undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation 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 handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Toyoda', written in a cursive style.

A. Maria Toyoda  
President

AMT/so

Cc: Tracy Poon Tambascia, Commission Chair  
Courtney Bruntz, ALO  
Leroy Morishita, Board Chair  
Members of the Accreditation Visit Team  
Susan Opp, Vice President