



May 27, 2021

Dr. David G. Horner
President
The American College of Greece
6 Gravias Street
Aghia Paraskevi Athens, GR153 42
Greece

Dear President Horner:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on April 22, 2021, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the interim (fifth-year) report submitted by The American College of Greece and voted to take the following action:

that the interim (fifth-year) report submitted by The American College of Greece be accepted;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Spring 2026 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all self-studies, the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring 2026 evaluation give emphasis to the institution's success in:

1. continuing to implement its strategic plan;
2. achieving its goal to increase its graduation rate.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The interim (fifth-year) report submitted by The American College of Greece was accepted because it responded to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of February 8, 2017 and addressed each of the nine standards, including a reflective essay for Standard 8: *Educational Effectiveness* on student learning and success.

The Commission commends The American College of Greece (ACG) for its many accomplishments since its comprehensive evaluation and for its success in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are pleased to learn that, during the last five years, enrollment has increased by 13% and 20% respectively at the undergraduate and graduate levels and that net assets have increased from \$242 million to \$272 million. The College's ability to achieve positive operating results and maintain "sustainable" endowment draws during a time of "economic crisis" in Greece is especially noteworthy. We also note with favor the successful integration of the Alba College of Business Administration (Alba) into the institution and understand that Alba now operates as a division of ACG, the Alba Graduate Business School (AGBS); we congratulate AGBS on achieving "eligibility" status with AACSB. The Commission is gratified to learn that, since 2016, the College has restructured its faculty committees

and adopted a revised faculty manual. The College has also added new undergraduate and master's degree programs and has seen a significant increase in professional education from 274 participants in nine courses in AY2017 to 567 participants in 25 courses in AY2020. We understand that the continued success of ACG's scholarship program for refugees, "Education Unites: From Camp to Campus," has brought increased diversity to the College's student body. We are pleased to learn that this change has been "welcomed by the institution" and that ACG's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion has been "formally established" through the development of new policies.

The Commission also commends The American College of Greece for its detailed and well-documented reflective essay. We note with favor that 91.3% of the graduates of the Class of 2019 are either employed, continuing their education, or serving in the military or a voluntary service program. Employers' evaluations report that ACG interns routinely "meet or exceed" expectations, and, as noted in the results of exit surveys, students consistently respond that their education "significantly enhanced" their skills in areas such as critical thinking, clear and effective writing and thinking, and teamwork. Student learning in undergraduate programs is assessed in the context of the College's validation by Open University that involves external examiners and academic reviewers as well as institutional monitoring reports. At the graduate level, 80% of the 2019 graduates of the School of Graduate and Professional Education report being employed as do 99% of graduates of AGBS. Program Level Assessment Rubrics for graduate students indicate that most students demonstrate competency at the "very good" or "excellent" level.

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Spring 2026 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years. The items the Commission asks to be given special emphasis within the self-study prepared for the comprehensive evaluation are matters related to our standards on *Planning and Evaluation, Students, and Educational Effectiveness*.

The Commission understands that ACG's strategic plan, updated in 2018, aims to "leverage education for Greek social and economic impact" and includes four major goals, each of which has several associated strategies. Implementation of the plan is supported by the work of the Institutional Senior Data Analyst who assures that all main ACG offices have "real-time information on their respective areas" and is monitored through a "dashboard of key metrics" that is accessible through the College's website. Through the Spring 2026 comprehensive evaluation, we welcome an update on the institution's continued success in implementing its strategic plan, in keeping with our standard on *Planning and Evaluation*:

The institution plans beyond a short-term horizon, including strategic planning that involves realistic analyses of internal and external opportunities and constraints. The results of strategic planning are implemented in all units of the institution through financial, academic, enrollment, and other supporting plans (2.3).

The institution has a demonstrable record of success in implementing the results of its planning (2.5).

As ACG reports in its reflective essay, while retention rates at The American College of Greece have remained "strong" at around 84%, there was a drop in the graduation rate from 60% in AY2017 to 55% in AY2020. We appreciate that this decrease is, in large measure, due to the Greek economic recession which resulted in students' taking fewer courses and thereby lengthening their time to completion. We understand the College has set a goal to achieve a 70% graduation rate by 2025, and we look forward to learning, through the Spring 2026 comprehensive evaluation, of ACG's success in achieving that goal. Our standards on *Students and Educational Effectiveness* provide this guidance:

The institution's goals for retention and graduation reflect institutional purposes, and the results are used to inform recruitment and the review of programs and services (5.6).

The institution defines measures of student success and levels of achievement appropriate to its mission, modalities and locations of instruction, and student body, including any specifically recruited populations. These measures include rates of progression, retention, transfer, and graduation; default and loan repayment rates; licensure passage rates; and employment. The institution ensures that information about student success is easily accessible on its website (8.6).

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by The American College of Greece and hopes its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation in the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Jim Logothetis. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Lawrence M. Schall, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



George W. Tetler

GWT/jm

cc: Mr. Jim Logothetis

Enclosure: Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions