

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

California State University Channel Islands

May 1, 2007

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

Initial Accreditation

Team Roster

William Plater, Chair; Patricia Patterson, Assistant Chair; Jackie Donath, Sandra
Kamusikiri, Deborah Olsen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
SECTION I - OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT	
IA. Description of Institution and Visit	3
IB. Quality of the Educational Effectiveness Presentation and Alignment With the Proposal	4
IC. Preparatory Review Update	8
SECTION II - EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	
IIA. Evaluation of the Institution's Educational Effectiveness Inquiry: Essay 1	16
IIB. Evaluation of the Institution's Systems for Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness and Learning Results: Essay 2	23
IIC. Other Issues Arising from the Standards and CFRs	32
SECTION III - MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	33

SECTION I: OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

IA. Description of Institution and Visits

California State University-Channel Islands (CSUCI) is the newest campus in the 23-campus CSU system, which consists of 405,000 students and 44,000 faculty and staff. The campus has grown and evolved in all areas since its formal opening in August, 2002, when classes were offered to 1,320 full time transfer students. As of fall 2006 there were 2,868 undergraduates and 255 post baccalaureate students who study in one of 16 undergraduate majors. The first class of students who enrolled as freshmen at CSUCI will graduate in May, 2007. Currently there are 69 tenure track faculty and 178 full time and part time lecturers. The university expects to hire approximately 15 — 20 additional tenure track faculty for AY 2007-08.

The commitment to the mission of CSUCI, a truly "lived mission," greatly impressed teams from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. During the Capacity and Preparatory Review, a team visited CSUCI March 6 - 8, 2006. During the visit, team members met with faculty, administrators, students, and staff who discussed the self-study report and the campus' ability to fulfill its core commitments to capacity. A second visit took place March 14 — 16, 2007, for an Educational Effectiveness Review, which is the focus of this report. Team members met with faculty, staff, students, and administrators who discussed CSUCI's ability to meet institutional and programmatic objectives and how review processes, including data

The visiting team's general opinion is that CSUCI is home to a cadre of dedicated faculty, staff, administrators, and students who are doing exemplary work and are committed to student success and to serving the region's diverse population. There is ample evidence of widespread endorsement of the mission and its educational objectives. Educational experiences both inside and outside the classroom are student-centered and directed toward ensuring that CSUCI graduates possess the characteristics associated with the four pillars upon which the mission is centered (i.e., integrative learning, experiential and service learning, multicultural perspectives, and international perspectives); that students will have participated in experiential and service learning opportunities and are capable of using integrative approaches grounded in multicultural and international perspectives to solve an array of problems.

After two visits to CSUCI, the visiting team acknowledges the graciousness of faculty, staff, administrators, and students who gave so willingly of their time to respond to the team's questions and share their views about the progress the campus is making in meeting its educational objectives. The team is grateful to the CSUCI WASC Accreditation Committee and, in particular, its WASC liaison, who before, during, and after the visits assisted the team in numerous ways. Finally, the team thanks the President and members of the administration for their boundless enthusiasm and commitment to engaging in the process as an authentic strategy for improving educational effectiveness and student success.

I.B. Quality of the Educational Effectiveness Presentation and Alignment with the Proposal

CSU Channel Islands' 2006 *Educational Effectiveness Report* adopted the comprehensive

acted to address concerns raised at both the candidacy and the preparatory review stages. The consistency of format and overall institutional approach to accreditation ensured that all of WASC's Standards and Criteria for Review were addressed.

As with the *Capacity and Preparatory Review* report, the team found the *Educational Effectiveness Report* to be well organized, well written, and well documented, providing ample electronic linkages to evidence that supports the declarations and conclusions. *The team commends Channel Islands for its institution-wide commitment to and implementation of learning-centered practices that place it far ahead of many much older and better-established universities within CSU, the state and nation.* The team specifically applauds Channel Islands for the preparation of its effectiveness report and its overall use of evidence (including electronic formats) to provide the team with the information required to conduct the review. Additional information was made available on site to augment the electronic resources (e.g., a sample of student co-curricular portfolios, the 2006-07 *General Education Assessment Pilot on Integrative*

Islands is working worki6 i

maintenance of its core mission [CFRs 1.1-2, 1.4, and 1.6-8]. These are reflected in the very detailed *Seven-Year Plan for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes* with a complex but well-designed and ultimately very practical set of procedures, committees, and checks-and-balances to ensure delivery of effective assessment at the program and campus levels, in the still-emerging but equally clear expectations for faculty participation in assessment (as reflected, for example, in the Retention, Tenure and Promotion documents being developed for each program), and in the commitment of resources to support the mission and assessment of learning (e.g., compensated Program Assessment Officers for each academic program and the establishment of key administrative officers with dedicated responsibility for assessment at several critical points in the campus administration) [CFR3.5].

In summary, the overall institutional presentation, beginning with the *Educational Effectiveness Report* but including all of the presentations, discussions, and supplementary materials, accurately reflected the conditions the team observed during the site visit and were consistent with the evidence we found in print and electronic materials (e.g., course syllabi), in interviews with faculty, students, alumni, and staff, and in casual observations of the way members of the academic community interacted with each other as well as with the team. The report and other materials were consistent with the proposed model of a comprehensive review and fulfilled all expectations regarding the appropriate evidence and institutional integrity [CFRs 1.7 and 1.9].

The team was impressed by the extensive involvement of staff, faculty, students, and community members in the preparation of the report and other materials, including their active participation in meetings and discussions [CFRs 1.7 and 1.9]. The team was especially impressed with the students and alumni, all of whom demonstrated a very sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of the institutional objectives, the student learning outcomes,

and the complex but effective process for assessing performance. Indeed, there was ample evidence among all of the constituencies that the "culture of evidence and assessment" is woven into the very fabric of the institution—even to the point that students have incorporated these processes in their own student organizations, informal learning projects, and group interactions [CFRs 2.12 and 2.14]. Over 100 faculty, staff, students and community members, all of whom volunteered for the assignment, participated in the accreditation committee responsible for preparing the institution for the educational effectiveness review. Attendance of faculty, staff, and students at scheduled site visit meetings was a clear indication of extensive involvement—and interest—of all concerned parties [CFRs 4.7 and 4.8].

The team appreciates the way CSU Channel Islands has taken advantage of the WASC accreditation process in all of its stages as a mechanism for institutional improvement and commitment to mission. The reviews have been organized as rigorous exercises in self-improvement and the responsible administrators have exceeded the team's expectations for reflection, self-analysis, and improvement. In fact, the campus has gone beyond the WASC procedures to intentionally use external reviews and peer learning by seeking participation in projects like the CSU "Facilitating Graduation" initiative despite having

submitted to the CSUCI campus along with a July 7, 2006 letter from the

program chairs to ensure that there is meaningful assessment at the course level and to refine statements of learning objectives—especially with regard to also linking course objectives with the program, general education, and degree objectives. Programs in English, Business, Math, Biology, Computer

- Analyze issues and develop and convey to others solutions to problems using the methodologies, tools and techniques of an academic discipline.

The first outcome was assessed in fall 2006 through an instrument designed by the Center for Integrative Studies in an examination that crossed the unit and disciplinary boundaries of the university, in order to include co-curricular programs and the mission-based centers as well as the majors. The focus of this assessment — the integrative aspect of general education, as noted above — will serve as a model for subsequent comprehensive assessments of learning outcomes. Masters degree programs will become part of the university in 2007, and plans are already underway to assess program and degree-level learning.

The most impressive element of the university's response to this recommendation was the development of the *Seven Year Plan for Assessment*, which integrates assessment and reflection on student learning and creates the structures to collect data and to o

The document also sets out a plan to assess student learning in the General Education program. The first project, undertaken during AY 2006-07, was to assess "Integrate content, ideas, and approaches from various cultural and disciplinary perspectives." Examples of student writing were used to examine the extent of student learning associated with this outcome. *The visiting team is encouraged by the processes in place to discuss assessment results and ensure that the assessment loop is closed.* The initial assessment of "integration" provides a practical model for "closing the loop" in other assessments. Finally, the components of program review and the attendant assessment of program outcomes are detailed in this report and supported by an extensive "Guidelines for Program Review" document that was prepared in February, 2007. Program review will begin fall 2007 and the visiting team encourages the campus to ensure that indicators of achievement of student learning objectives are established that allow both the program and external reviewers to provide feedback and recommendations based on evidence-based discussions. Compliance in this regard will fully implement the values inherent in Criteria for Review 2.3, 2.4, and 2.7.

As noted, the visiting team appreciates the fact that as a new institution CSUCI is undertaking many of its substantive reviews for the first time and hence its assessment is based facts hencdd

province of the Center for Integrative Studies; experiential and service learning, which will be overseen by the Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning (this center was approved shortly before the visit and after the Educational Effectiveness Report had been submitted); multicultural perspectives, which are supported by the Center for Multicultural Learning and Engagement; and international perspectives, which are the responsibilities of the Center for International Affairs.

Thus, each of the four Centers supports mission elements of the University by some combination of:

- Support for, and facilitation of, mission-centered scholarship and research;
- Support for and facilitation of mission-centered teaching and learning;
- Development of relevant assessments in programs and the baccalaureate degree.

For example, The Center for International Affairs promotes "cross-cultural and global understanding in all fields of study, assists faculty in developing the international dimension of their teaching, scholarship, and service activities, diversifies the student body to include outstanding students who represent a broad range of geographic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, and coordinates activities that enhance campus global awareness and augment the international life of the campus and local community." (Appendix: 19). The Center for Integrative Studies developed a strategic plan for 2006-2007 which included collaboration with the General Education Assessment Committee to pilot assessment of integrative student learning and a plan to begin to assess the baccalaureate by developing learning outcomes and assessment tools in consultation with program chairs. Since the Capacity and Preparatory Report, the Center for Multicultural Learning and Engagement developed a plan for 2006-2007 which focused on organizing a cross-divisional committee to

help the Center define multiculturalism and diversity in meaningful, relevant and assessable ways. The newly approved Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning will focus on the ways it can foster the development of civic engagement, and enhance experiential and service learning throughout the University's curriculum and co-curricular activities and programming. *The visiting team urges the campus to move quickly to put the most recently approved Center for Civic Engagement and Service Teaming on a full and equal footing with the other three centers to ensure the even development of the four "pillars" of the campus mission.*

Review of Councils and Committees. The "Response to Recommendations" section of the Educational Effectiveness Report includes a letter dated August 9, 2006, from the President asking the University Planning and Coordinating Council

significant aspects CSUCI uses data to support its mission-based decision-making. The WASC Report asserts that CSUCI has an information system in place that addresses the immediate- to mid-range university data needs for decision-making [CFR 3.6 and 3.7]:

- by accommodating existing data (both institutional data and assessment data);
- by being scalable for use once large-scale institutional data and assessment data becomes more widely available;
- by participating in the CMS;
- by developing campus-based procedures to collect, and analyze data;
- and perhaps most important of all, by using existing data in our decision-making.

The "WASC Committee Report" believes that CSUCI is optimizing its resources and finds that CSUCI is poised for the next phase of growth in data acquisition, grow8316 oa o (bot

he presented an analysis of the University's need for special funding. As a result of that meeting, CSU staff prepared legislation that would relieve the University from an obligation inherited from the old State Hospital and recognize that the fixed costs for a new campus are significantly out of proportion with those of established campuses and thus in need of commensurate funding. While it is not clear whether legislative relief will take place during the coming session of the legislature, it is expected that a funding solution will be devised by the end of 2007. The Chancellor also acknowledged the capital needs of the campus and persuaded the Board of Trustees to provide an exception to their policy on capital projects for the benefit of California State University Channel Islands. As a result, the University will receive sixty-two million dollars from the passage of State Bond Proposition 1D in support of five projects this year and next. In addition, these actions reveal that the Chancellor's Office recognizes that in order to sustain the excellence of the programs at CSUCI, the University requires extraordinary funding.

SECTION II: EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

II.A. Evaluation of the Institution's Educational Effectiveness Inquiry: Essay 1

Mission/

Describing its mission as, "Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives, " cited on p.6 of the CSUCI Educational Effectiveness Report—2006 (EER—2006). Both explicitly, through the achievement of its mission, and implicitly, as a campus in the CSU system,

Multicultural Learning and Engagement. A fourth center, CCESL (Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning) was just recently approved and should be fully formed by

[REDACTED]

education [CFR 2.4]. *W*



of 2002 and the newly hired Faculty Development Director will begin in the fall of 2007. Other campus units, such as the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the university Library and Information Technology services also support faculty development. All newly appointed tenure-track faculty were provided with re-assigned time in the 2006-2007 academic year to facilitate course preparation and research and creative activities. A robust faculty mini-grant program, travel funds, retreats, sabbaticals and workshops all illustrate the university's support of the institution's fundamental commitment to ensuring a sustained and sustainable educational organization.

CSUCI has dedicated a great deal of its psychic and fiscal resources to support teaching and learning. For example, in fall 2006, the Dean of Faculty instituted a series of meetings that resulted in a "Making Teaching Public" initiative. Several program plans have been developed and were in the early stages of implementation in spring 2007 including an open classroom day; professional learning community structures known as "critical friends" groups; "teaching circles" which provide support for the exploration of themes arising from engagement with teaching and learning; and the Making Teaching Public electronic journal proposal, which will create a website repository devoted to teaching [CFR 2.8 and 2.9].

A final demonstration of the campus' commitment to achieving its goals and
devotion

members [CFR 4.8], and provide significant faculty engagement with the processes of teaching and learning and ensure that faculty members are accountable for necessary and continuous improvements in learning [CFR 4.7].

The CSUCI *Educational Effectiveness Report* (pp.32-38) also documents the university's efforts to ensure that the student learning assessment roles and responsibilities of all segments of the campus are specifically, clearly and functionally defined. During the team's visit, the pervasiveness of student learning assessment at the campus was evident in both policy and practice. For example, not only do students understand the importance of assessment and evidence-based decision making but they also use this approach in making refinements to student activities [CFR 2.12]. The campus has also engaged with the

the Directed Self Placement for English Assessment, course-level

learning goals) and to verify that courses continue

[CFR 2.10]. The team understands that at the direction of the Chancellor's Office, these and other measures, including CLA, are being implemented and that CSUCI has volunteered to use CLA with junior transfer students to assess their progress in a way that can be used to compare with native freshmen. *The visiting team encourages CSUCI to continue to identify appropriate peer institutions and to sustain the process of conducting benchmarking studies as a way to add external reviews to the process of student learning assessment.*

Assessment of the major. At the program level, the campus has successfully provided incentives to implement initial assessment activities with funds from the Smith Family Assessment Plan Preparation Program. Each program has chosen one objective, selected or designed a compatible measure, collected data, and reflected on the meaning of that data, its implications and any program changes that may be required.

Ensure Sustainability; and 4) Creating an Organization Committed to learning and Improvement. Each element has associated criteria for review and a list of potential documentation and reflection ideas. The campus is currently developing "dashboard indicators" of institutional effectiveness, which will be collected centrally and available in common formats from the Office of Institutional Research.

The program review process will include an external review, which will be followed by a review by the Program Assessment and Review Committee. Recommendations from these two review bodies will be forwarded to the program chair, Dean, Academic Senate chair, and Provost. A critical element of the review process is program improvement. Thus, after all parties have read the documents and suggested recommendations, program faculty, the Dean, and the Provost will meet to discuss the recommendation and create an action plan to which all parties agree. As described in Senate Policy, this agreement "will be embodied in a memorandum of understanding which will be in effect until the completion of the new review cycle." These processes embody best practices in assessment and ensure that continuous improvement is the foundation for review [CFRs 2.2, 2.7, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4].

An issue that remains murky is how the potential confluence of mission-based centers and program assessments will (or even can) be melded together in program review. While realizing that the relationships between the centers and programs is complex and evolving, *the Team none the less feels that it is important to clarify how these inter-related but independent entities will be able to express their unique identities and aspirations in a single campus report framework.* The Centers are intended to provide a superstructure for interdisciplinary activities and so it is hard to see how then" goals can be subsumed within specific program reviews. If different aspects of the Centers' missions are in different programs, which would solve some logistical

issues, this approach could unintentionally reinforce the traditional program/discipline paradigm that CSUCI is so conscientiously working to replace.

Assessment in other areas. Because assessment, review, and improvement have been built into the University's structure, processes and policies from its inception, CSUCI demonstrates both its awareness of WASC expectations and best practices across the institution [CFR 2.3 and 2.7]. In this regard, several areas of the university deserve specific mention.

In the WASC Capacity' and Preparatory Review, the Team highlighted the special collaborative relationship between Academic Affairs

Academic Affairs has also taken significant steps to improve the educational effectiveness of two of its non-classroom-based units, the Library and Academic Advising. The completion of the John Spoor Broome Library in January 2008 will enlarge the Library's already significant support for faculty and classes, student activities and the external community. Discussions between the Team and library faculty indicate that vital assessments, in addition to faculty and student surveys, have been taking place to ensure that the Library's resources and facilities support the University's educational mission [CFRs 2.3, 2.13, and 4.6].

Similarly, Academic Advising has focused its attention on the central/institutional-

The team has identified six concerns, none of which is serious and all of which have been recognized by the institution. The one concern about institutional data must be understood within the context of CSU Channel Island's relative youth. The team has no reservations about the institution's having met all threshold standards for the collection, analysis and use of data. However, as the institution matures the need for and relevance of increasingly specific and sophisticated data analyses will become apparent as the campus community increases its efforts to improve. There is already such an ingrained use of data in decision making and planning that the demand for information will drive increased capacity for institutional research. Already CSU Channel Islands has gone far beyond most mature universities in its use of data for accountability, improvement, and planning. The team's concern is that the faculty, staff, and administrators—indeed, even many of the student leaders—have already reached a point in their use of analyzed data that exceeds resources while Channel Islands is still in the early stages of developing its personnel, routines, and systems. But the team reiterates its conclusion that Channel Islands meets all standards for the collection and use of data.

SECTION III: MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After completing two visits, the visiting team has a deep appreciation for the sense of shared responsibility and purpose that is evident within the entire community. Traditional hierarchical relationships have been eliminated in many areas of university life in favor of collegiality and a sense of humanity that makes all members of the community equal citizens in service to student learning. The university's faculty, staff, administrators, and students have embraced the WASC process fully as is evident by the dramatic changes that have taken place in policies, procedures, and practices throughout the review process. Clearly, this is a community committed to educational effectiveness and united by its student-centered

mission. In addition, CSUCI is to be commended for its emerging relations with the region it serves and its dedication to civic engagement, including its work with community colleges, area school districts, local businesses, and governmental entities that makes the university an exemplary "steward of place." The team has come

serve as the custodians or guardians of the university's mission (pages 16-17). To ensure the distinctive status of the centers, we recommend that consideration be given to defining the structural role of the centers (pages 17, 29)—perhaps by a designation other than "center" (even though the designation of "mission-related center" is a good movement in this direction) and to further identifying the role of the provost as the university official mostly singularly responsible for the effectiveness and authority of the mission-critical centers. We also urge that the recently approved fourth center, which will oversee civic engagement, service learning and experiential learning, be moved quickly to full and equal footing with the other three centers so as to ensure the even development of the four "pillars" of the campus mission (pages 12-13).

3. **Faculty and staff energy levels:** While the level of energy and commitment of the faculty and staff

President, Provost, and Vice President for Student Affairs), and at the faculty level (especially the founding faculty) (page 19). Clearly the unique hiring process has ensured a campus-wide commitment to the mission and a full understanding of the mission of CSUCI. We agree completely that no one will accept an appointment at CSUCI unless they share the commitment to a unique and defined mission. The current constancy of commitment to a shared vision and values is reassuring to those outside the campus community, but there needs to be constant attention to the sustainability of mission across leadership changes, resource fluctuations, and external challenges. We commend President Rush for his commitment to become personally involved in the hiring of

only the first step toward the CSUCI mission-driven commitment to student learning. As a part of making teaching public and giving it co-equal status with research through peer review, we recommend that all course syllabi be made public, that learning objectives be further articulated beyond the course level (page 25) to the program level, the expectations for general education, and to the campus-wide goals for baccalaureate graduates with regard to integrated learning, experiential learning, international perspectives, and multicultural understanding. As discussed on page 10 of this report, we also recommend including graduate programs in the Seven Year Plan for A347c(an) Tj0 Tc(d) Tj1.793 Tw0.566 Tj0 Tc(i) Tj1.516 Tw0.578 Tc(0.566 Trntegrated