REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I
OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

    A. Description of the Institution and Visit
    B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report
        ▪ Alignment with the Proposal
        ▪ Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report
    C. Response to Issues of Specific Concern

SECTION II
EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

SECTION III
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDICES

SECTION I

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and Visit

Background information. Now a large, comprehensive university, California State University, Fullerton originally was known as Orange County State College. CSUF was established by an act of the California Legislature in 1957, making it the 12th university of what is now the 23-university California State University system.

As part of the CSU system, CSUF is subject to the policies of the California Legislature, the CSU Board of Trustees, and executive orders from the office of the Chancellor of CSU. In contract negotiations with the CSU system, CSUF faculty are represented by the California Faculty Association and staff by the California State University Employees Union (and other specialized labor organizations).

Governance at CSUF is shared among the President and the President's administrative staff (including Vice Presidents and college Deans), the Academic Senate (comprised primarily of teaching faculty), Associated Students (a leadership group elected by students), and staff (presently without a formal organization to represent its interests). The President's Administrative Board and Alumni Association Board also advise the President. The President is vested with final decision-making authority.

In fiscal year 2009-2010, CSUF had a total annual operating budget of over $288 million and, at the end of that fiscal year, an endowment of over $24 million. In the 2009-2010 fiscal year, approximately 34% of the operating budget was derived from student tuition and fees.

The main campus of CSUF is situated on 236 acres in Fullerton, 30 miles southeast of Los Angeles. Instruction on this site began in 1960. Eight colleges offer academic programs, and courses are offered on the semester system.

Based on overall student enrollments, CSUF is among the largest universities in the CSU system. In Fall 2011, CSUF had a total headcount of 36,156 students (full-time equivalent of 28,919 students). Eight-five percent (30,782) of the total headcount were undergraduates (full-time equivalent of 25,303 students), while 5,374 were graduate students (full-time equivalent 3,616 students); approximately half of all students receive financial aid, and a large percentage of undergraduates are transfer students. In fact, CSUF enrolls more California community college transfer students than any other campus in the CSU system. A majority of CSUF students are commuters, and many are employed full time or part time.

In Fall 2011, the ratio of female to male students was approximately 60:40. In Fall 2011, the student body headcount was approximately 30% white, 32% Hispanic, 22% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% African-American, with the approximately 15% of remaining students of unidentified race/ethnicity, non-resident alien, declaring two or more (non-Hispanic) races, and American Indian/Alaska native.

In 2010-2011, CSUF awarded 6,875 bachelor's degrees (BA, BFA, and BS) in 54 fields, 1,562 master's degrees in 49 fields, and 11 Ed.D. degrees. In addition, students could complete eight credential programs and a wide variety of certificate programs.

In Fall 2011, CSUF employed 848 full-time faculty (including approximately 17 percent lecturers) and over one thousand part-time faculty, with the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty varying considerably from department to department. In the five academic year period ending in

2010-2011, CSUF also employed an average of 1,341 staff (approximately 80% employed full time).

Recent accreditation history. CSUF first received accreditation in 1961 from the Western College Association (the precursor of WASC). Recent accreditation visits occurred in 1981, 1986, 1990, and 2000. In 2007, WASC approved CSUF offering its own Ed.D. degree program. A CPR visit was held in 2009, preliminary to the EER visit this year.

EER team visit. In anticipation of the EER visit, the visiting EER team read the materials supplied by CSUF. Also, the Chair of the team participated in a conference call with the Chancellor of the CSU system.

The entire team visited the main campus of CSUF on March 7, 8, and 9 to review, develop, and evaluate evidence with regard to CSUF's themes for the EER review and CSUF's compliance with WASC standards. During that visit, the team had access to additional documents and to CSUF facilities; met with and interviewed CSUF leaders and groups; and heard from faculty, students, and staff at separate open meetings. The team also reviewed the dozens of confidential emails sent to the email address designated for general input into the process. In addition, the team specifically confirmed compliance with WASC CFRs that were revised in 2008.

Review of off-campus sites and distance education. CSUF has multiple off-campus locations, the largest of them in Irvine. Two members of the EER visiting team visited that satellite campus the day before the team visit to the Fullerton campus. CSUF also offers distance education programs and provided information concerning that program for review by the team. Evaluations of both off-campus education and distance education are included as appendices and referenced within the body of this report.

Additional aspects of the review. Because of their effects on CSU system funding, the EER visiting team was asked specifically to address the impacts of the economic downturn and California state budget reductions on CSUF; discussion of that topic is referenced in Section II of this report. Also, because of Federal legal requirements, the team was asked to complete a credit hour review. A report of that review is included as an appendix and referenced in the body of this report. In addition, because the state legislative analyst indicated a special interest in the CSU's Ed.D. program, the team was assigned a member with the designated responsibility to review that program. A report of that review is included as an appendix and referenced in the body of this report.

B. Educational Effectiveness Review Report

Alignment with proposal. The institutional proposal that CSUF wrote in Fall 2007 describes the growth of CSUF and emphasized the challenges of anticipated continued growth. However, by the time of the CPR report in October 2009, the state budget crisis had led to a change in emphasis from growth to an emphasis upon mandated reductions. As a result, the CPR report addresses the challenges of diminishing resources and system-wide requirements to curtail growth and even impose limits on access. The EER report aligns with the CPR report in this regard, because it also addresses the state budget reductions, most specifically in the discussion of fiscal context.

Beyond the topics of growth and reductions, the 2007 proposal, the CPR report, and the EER all are aligned in addressing three selected themes: campus-wide planning, student learning and its assessment, and promoting student engagement and success. The EER report is organized around these themes, with sections that also provide an initial overview and institutional context,

plus a concluding integrative essay. Appendices provide other information required for EER reports.

Overall quality and rigor of the review and the report. The EER report is well designed and clearly written. Its description of the work of the Steering Committee indicates appropriate involvement and collaboration of faculty and administration in developing the report.

The EER report text, its exhibits, and its appendices demonstrate rigorous inquiry supported by data and evidence. The visiting team found the report to accurately portray and analyze both the accomplishments of CSUF during the period of review and its agenda for continuous improvement. An index to the EER report details how the institution addressed all of the WASC CFRs in the report, demonstrating the institution's Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness. The integrative essay confirms that the institution's self-review was fruitful in developing its understanding and systems in service of student learning.

Based upon the EER report alone, the team particularly noted substantial institutional progress in planning, along with important accomplishments in response to budget imperatives. The team also noted the need for inquiry concerning development of outcomes based upon assessment activity and concerning how existing budgets could ensure that ongoing activities would be sustainable and plans for improvement realizable.

C. Response to Issues of Specific Concern

The EER report includes an appendix that provides a point-by-point summary of activities since the CPR report that address the recommendations of the CPR visiting team and demonstrates its readiness for the EER review. The EER report does not directly respond point-by-point to the "special consideration" issues in the July 2010 letter from WASC in response to

the institution's CPR report and the report of the visiting CPR team: "institutional planning and resource management" and "the assessment of student learning and success." However, the EER report does provide information that adequately speaks to those issues. While there was minimal discussion in the appendix, the institution did a good job of embedding its response within the text of the report.

In addition, an appendix to the EER report provides a point-by-point summary of activities since the CPR report that address the recommendations raised in the 2000 Commission action letter from WASC: "refining the definition and improving evidence of learning"; "continued strengthening of general education"; "improving the program performance review process"; and "supporting faculty learning and development."

Finally, in response to an independently raised special consideration of WASC, the EER report addresses directly the issue of budget reductions and how they affect institutional capacity.

All of the issues of specific concern addressed in this section are discussed in Section II below.

SECTION II

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Theme 1: Campus-wide Planning

In its institutional proposal, CSUF posed two questions for itself related to campus-wide

planning:

1. "In the face of enrollment pressures and system-wide expectations, how does each

   campus unit define and assess indicators of quality and their contributions to the

   academic mission of the University?"

2. "How do we integrate and prioritize these indicators of quality with campus-wide

   planning?"

To answer these questions CSUF had three strategies, all stemming from its institutional

proposal: to put together a "long-term integrated strategic plan," to develop a "concept map" of

all planning processes to show how they contribute to this plan, and to achieve "general

consensus" about (and by implication, endorsement of) the institutional plan and its attendant

priorities.

CSUF reports that as part of the preparation of its institutional proposal, all constituencies

had raised concerns about the adequacy of institutional planning, especially maintaining

academic quality with increased enrollment. The economic downturn, necessitating a reduction

in enrollment, created awareness of the need for a planning process that would assist decision-

making during periods of both growth and retrenchment. The EER report asserts a long tradition

of planning at CSUF, citing recent planning documents by individual colleges and divisions;

inventories of quality indicators at the unit level; program performance reviews every seven

years; new programs to enhance the attractiveness of on-campus student housing; and ad hoc plans to meet external mandates, such as a CSU system requirement to control admissions. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3)

As noted in the CPR review by the WASC visiting team, the culture at CSUF is highly participative and inclusive, and the planning process has been consistent with that cultural norm. Since the CPR review, a series of activities with University constituency groups, described in the EER as a "fairly messy, nonlinear set of processes" (p. 16), looked to identify and then refine a set of goals, priorities, and quality indicators. In the Spring of 2011, the President charged a Strategic Planning Steering Committee to synthesize ideas into a set of "strategic themes" and to set goals for accomplishment. A draft was submitted to CSUF constituencies for comment, and a slightly revised draft was endorsed by the Academic Senate and approved by the President in the Fall of 2011. Themes of the plan are academic excellence; student success; intellectual climate; human resources, technology, and facilities; and capacity building. (CFR 4.8)

What the EER report refers to as a "concept map" is a timetable of annual planning and reporting processes. Each fall, division heads prepare a budget document that includes "priority initiatives" linked to one or more of the strategic themes. Each initiative must include measurable outcomes, strategies, and needed resources. In the spring, divisions make presentations to the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee. Final planning and budget decisions are made by the President, based upon recommendations from the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee and from relevant CSUF constituencies. Annual division reports must reflect outcomes of initiatives and how these data have led to continuous improvement efforts. (CFRs 4.2, 4.7)

During its visit, the team reviewed a number of documents and other forms of evidence related to planning; the most important are summarized below.

The Integrated Strategic Plan. The plan is quite brief, only a few pages. Each theme is presented and defined, followed by a list of goals, five for each theme. Neither "priorities" nor "quality indicators" are included. (CFR 4.1)

University Policy Statement. Because this document (UPS 100.201, Planning and Budgeting Process, dated August 24, 2010) preceded adoption of the Integrated Strategic Plan by more than a year, no mention is made of connection to an institutional strategic plan. A new preamble to this document, however, details the process as outlined in the concept map presented with the EER report.

University Convocation, September 2011. The long-term President at that time presented "key priorities," including improvements in graduation rates, faculty recruitment and support, better staff support, strengthening the University's "global outreach," and organizational restructuring. There is no linkage, expressed or implied, of the President's key priorities to the strategic themes or their goals. (CFR 4.1)

Strategic Planning at CSUF. This strategic plan document published on CSUF's website contains eight strategic goals ("not in priority order"), each with a list of strategies: "to ensure the preeminence of learning; to provide high quality programs that meet the evolving needs of our students, community, and region; to enhance scholarly and creative activity; to make collaboration integral to our activities; to create an environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed; to increase external support for university programs and priorities; to expand connections and partnerships with our region; to strengthen institutional effectiveness, collegial governance and our sense of community."

As with the President's key priorities, no expressed or implied linkage is evident with the strategic themes, even though the themes, President's priorities, and "strategic goals" all were made public in the early Fall of 2011. (CFR 4.1)

Planning documents. The team reviewed planning documents from the Colleges of Communications, Business and Economics, Natural Science and Mathematics, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Education and from the divisions of Administration and Finance and Student Affairs. All included mission and goals, but documents diverged beyond that. Only Humanities and Social Sciences contained the "top three" initiatives as instructed in the report template (Annual Report guidelines, 2011: memo from VPAA, April 26, 2011). The annual reports of the other units often have more than three goals or, when they have three goals, they also include multiple sub-goals under those goals, suggesting a less focused planning effort than desired. (CFR 4.1)

Program Performance Reviews. The Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness document on program performance reviews stipulates: "Program Performance Reviews are to be conducted at least once every seven years for all academic departments and programs within the division of Academic Affairs. The main purpose of these reviews is to serve both as reflective assessments and forward-looking evidence-based planning tools that can guide the unit's strategic actions and strengthen its capacity to effect program improvements." The team reviewed program performance reviews from American Studies, Kinesiology, Mathematics, and English, all completed within the past two years. All contain unit missions and goals, and measures or benchmarks of quality. Mathematics and English include ways in which results of the program performance review have informed educational practice. (CFRs 2.7, 4.7)

As the summary above reveals, campus-wide planning at CSUF, while highly participatory with authentic engagement of institutional constituencies at all levels, has produced planning documents to date that are inconsistent internally: the strategic themes match neither the eight strategic goals from the strategic planning website nor the institutional priorities enunciated during the President's convocation address. In addition, the Integrated Strategic Plan contains only themes and goals, and it lacks both statements of priority and metrics for assessing accomplishment. Even though the plan is intended to be used as a framework for assessing unit or college initiatives, criteria for this assessment are missing as well. Finally, there is no alignment between the plan and the CSUF budget. There is a lack of linkages, and these linkages should exist now, but they do not. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

It should be noted that the Integrated Strategic Plan is only a few months old, and CSUF units have been instructed to engage in an annual planning and reporting cycle that explicitly references the plan. This assertion in the EER report was confirmed in meetings of the team with the President's Administrative Board, the Provost, the Dean's Council, and the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee. Further, the plan is widely acknowledged by CSUF leaders to be incomplete. The incoming President, in her interview with the team, stated that the plan "needs focus," citing this as a top priority of her new administration, and adding that she expects the new CSUF Provost to "hold units accountable for student learning." (CFRs 4.1, 4.6)

Members of the President's Administrative Board confirmed that while leadership changes will "cause a delay in the execution of the strategic plan," greater specificity is both expected and welcomed. Members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, an ad hoc body appointed in April 2011 and composed of some of the 2010-2011 members of the Planning,

Resource, and Budget Committee, plus additional staff and student representatives, noted in their interview with the team that the group had been formed because planning efforts had stalled.

The team was told that the perception by some in the Academic Senate had been that the draft plan was too "top-down" and contained controversial specifics, and so, in an attempt at broader participation, consensus was achieved around a more general set of themes. Members of this committee, now disbanded, argued that these themes will make it easier to deliberate specific directions, contending that with CSUF's highly participatory culture "hard decisions," when made, are respected, with little "second-guessing." (CFR 4.1)

Current members of the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee, in their interview with the team, confirmed their obligation to refine the strategic plan, which they view as a "framework for setting direction." They view the current 2011-2012 academic year as transitional; they are working on ways of identifying priorities, criteria, and evidence as they deliberate proposed unit initiatives; and they were able to cite specific examples of how they are doing this. Members were less clear about how the recommendations of the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee relate to budget priorities, noting that the University must constantly "adjust to moving budget targets." They also acknowledged that the strategic plan "puts into words what faculty have been doing all along." (CFRs 4.2, 4.3)

Members of the Deans' Council expressed similar sentiments. While acknowledging that the plan "needs a hard look and specific targets with clear guidelines," they also expressed satisfaction that it has "created an environment, an ethos, a comfort level" that has energized planning at the unit level. The WASC team noted the high degree of agreement among the Deans on this point. Despite the difficult budget constraints, and perhaps because of the highly participatory and deliberative institutional culture, they see a widespread "willingness to do

many things that might fit" the plan, while also protecting "places at the heart" of CSUF. (CFR 4.1)

However, planning has been made more difficult by leadership changes. During Fall 2011, the long-term President of CSUF announced that he would retire when a new President was named. Toward the end of that year, unexpectedly, an interim President was named. Then, on January 26, 2012, the CSU system office announced the appointment of a permanent President who would assume office in June 2012. In addition, two key vice presidencies, VP of Academic Affairs (the Provost) and VP of Student Affairs, have been filled by interim appointments. All of the interim leaders have been effectively carrying out their responsibilities, but they typically have been making decisions about the near-term. Due to the change in leadership, the campus has had little basis for knowing whether the extensive planning efforts underway would be consistent with the long-term vision of the permanent leaders who ultimately would fill these three positions. While the planning effort proceeded, this turnover appears to have produced a plan that is more diffuse than desirable.

The incoming President is an experienced President of a nearby CSU campus. Thus, she knows the CSU system. She has spent significant time at CSUF since the announcement that she would assume the Presidency, and she is familiarizing herself with the planning efforts that are underway. While she will be able to provide direct guidance to the ongoing planning efforts when she takes office in June, the campus still will have interim leaders in the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs VP positions. Searches have begun for these key positions, and the President may be able to make appointments later in 2012. In addition, an academic Dean position and an Associate VP position in Academic Affairs currently are filled by interim leaders. Searches for

these positions will not get underway until the new Provost is named. Therefore, until the full complement of senior administrative positions is filled, completion of the planning effort, which has been affected by this high-level administrative turnover, will continue to be affected by the uncertainty that such turnover brings.

Two years ago, the WASC CPR report said the following about the University's planning efforts:

Although community-building cross-disciplinary collaborations have devoted considerable time and efforts to institutional planning activities, a great deal of time and effort is spent on developing data sets and collecting evidence that is not always used. CSUF should become more clear about what it wants its planning to accomplish and to prioritize actions and results, tying its goals to performance indicators and the budget-allocation process.

In its EER report, the University responded as follows:

With respect to planning, the campus has made substantial and sustainable progress. Our enhanced annual reporting, program performance reviews, revised University Policy Statement (UPS) 100.201 Planning and Budgeting Process, and recently adopted Integrated Strategic Plan together provide the necessary formal structure. This structure will allow the campus to "prioritize actions and results, tying its goals to performance indicators and the budget-allocation process."

If the statement above is taken literally—that the new structure will allow CSUF to set priorities and to tie goals to performance indicators and budget allocation—supporting documentation is sufficient. However, having a structure that will allow for progress is not itself evidence of progress. Midway through the first year of linking unit initiatives to the Integrated

Strategic Plan, the Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee has yet to promulgate criteria that would set priorities.

The team is also concerned about how seriously the plan is taken, as it is not clearly linked either to the President's "key priorities" or to the "strategic goals" listed on the strategic planning website. The team recognizes that strategic plans must be consistent with institutional cultures and that they must be organic and flexible. The team notes that far too many "strategic plans" have failed because institutional planners have not recognized the importance of these qualities. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

Thus, the Integrated Strategic Plan can be a useful framework for planning at CSUF, as long as CSUF leaders and other institutional constituents take the next, much harder, steps: Specifying clear strategic priorities that will guide decision making, and then using those priorities to make tough decisions about where scarce University resources should go, and where they should not.

These next steps could be particularly timely and even critical soon, because the negative effects of the economic downturn may not be past for CSUF. Based on conditions summarized below, the adaptive tactics that the institution has used in recent years to cope with budget reductions may not continue to be viable long-term, in which case careful prioritization and planning would be especially essential in order to drive wise decision-making.

Over the last several years, CSUF has experienced substantial reductions in its allocation from the State of California. In FY 2007-08 that allocation was $179.1 million, 60% of the CSUF budget; in FY 2011-12 the allocation has fallen to $116.1 million, 37% of the CSUF budget. System decisions to increase tuition have offset much of this massive cut in state allocations, with tuition income rising from $96.9 million in 2007-08 to $182.1 million in 2011-

12. CSUF's total operating revenues increased from $295.8 million in 2007-08 to $316.4 million in 2011-2012. However, this increased budget of roughly $20 million was more than absorbed by mandatory employer-paid benefit costs and financial aid increases in excess of $31 million. Modest inflation over the period further reduced the purchasing power of the remaining funds. Thus, CSUF had fewer resources to carry out its mission in 2011-12 than in 2007-08.

The institution addressed this worsening budget by re-budgeting to eliminate various deficits in its operating budget. According to CSUF administrators, the annual strategy since has been to use one-time funds to backfill for the loss of permanent budget in the fiscal year in which the budget loss occurred and to make permanent changes necessitated by the budget loss in the next fiscal year's budget. This strategy has enabled CSUF to smooth the transition to lower budgets and to transform what would have been unanticipated shocks to students, faculty, and staff in the current year's budget into more orderly and anticipated changes in the subsequent year's budget.

Full-time faculty positions were privileged during this period of budget reductions. From Fall 2007 through Fall 2011, the number of CSUF tenure-track faculty increased by sixty. Comments from Deans and department heads were positive about the quality of faculty members that were added during this period and their impact on student education. However, the priority given to full-time faculty meant that many part-time faculty positions, along with full-time staff and building service positions were not filled. While CSUF groups expressed support for placing priority on building the full-time faculty during the period of budget decline, significant concern was expressed from some about the deterioration in building and landscape maintenance during the period and about increases in class size. With regard to class size, institutional data shows

that average class sizes had not increased overall during this period; however, class sizes may have varied by department, program, and/or course type or level.

The budget situation for next year may deteriorate sharply: further budget reductions will occur during the current academic year, unless California voters support budget related propositions during the next state general election; lower enrollment targets have been established by the CSU system (with resulting reductions in tuition dollars), and some anticipate that tuition may be maintained at its current level. Should these three negative budget possibilities materialize, the impact on CSUF would be significant. CSUF has planned for cuts of such magnitude; cuts of greater magnitude than anticipated definitely could cause damage. Because serious concerns exist about the funding level for two years out (FY 2013-14), the strategy practiced by CSUF of using one-time funds to offset current year budget cuts may not continue to work. Given the present budget climate, CSUF will need to be more judicious in its use of one-time funds.

Therefore, it is imperative that CSUF administrators remain vigilant and nimble. If institutional priorities are to be preserved in this continuing fiscal crisis, strategic planning must be fully developed, with the plan tied to the budget allocation process.

SECTION II

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Theme 2: Student Learning and Its Assessment

Five outcomes for this theme were set forth in the institutional proposal. Questions that guided the institution's inquiry into student learning and assessment roughly paralleled those five outcomes. The first outcome is a preliminary set of student learning goals held in common institution-wide. The second is accessible evidence of ongoing processes of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes at the program and institutional levels. The last three have to do with writing. Writing outcomes include a set of institution-wide student learning goals for writing; a coordinated set of resources and programs for writing to learn, writing pedagogy, and writing assessment; and a public statement that articulates expected writing development for students as they progress to baccalaureate attainment (EER, p. 18).

This section discusses CSUF's evidence to support its inquiry into student learning and assessment according to its own designated outcomes. The review includes an assessment of the institution's analysis and conclusions regarding the theme. It draws from the CPR report, the EER report, supplementary materials submitted by the institution, WASC team reports, campus visits, and the WASC Commission's most recent action letter.

To achieve the first outcome—a preliminary set of student learning goals held in common institution-wide—CSUF sought learning goals held in common across baccalaureate programs. CSUF further investigated the ways that these goals are articulated and achieved through curricular and co-curricular experiences, a topic which is discussed below, with regard to the second learning outcome. Work related to the first outcome began with a task force that

combined top-down and bottom-up approaches to identify institution-wide student learning outcomes with related competencies. The combined approaches drew from the CSUF general mission, the general education program, the division of Student Affairs, and other outside sources in addition to exploring evidence available within departments and programs. In the next step of development, multiple institution-wide constituents provided feedback on each of six identified learning outcomes domains and competencies, leading finally to endorsement of the institution-wide learning outcomes by committees across CSUF. (CFR 2.4)

The comprehensive, collaborative, and iterative approach to developing institution-wide learning outcomes demonstrated appropriate use of evidence and methods to achieve the desired EER outcome. By articulating institution-wide learning outcomes, CSUF has improved its capacity to develop and evaluate student learning assessments and to make use of results for improved student outcomes. University-wide outcomes may consequently facilitate CSUF's overall and ongoing practices of quality assurance.

Unfortunately, linkage between the institutional learning goals and those of departments and schools is not enough in evidence, as it should be by now. Further effectiveness requires maintaining the consistency of learning outcomes across multiple levels institution-wide. This will necessitate periodic reviews of alignment across learning outcomes at varying levels. It is essential not only that the outcomes remain measurable, accessible, and publicized, but also that faculty and student awareness of outcomes is high.

Further efforts illustrate the potential or actual coordination across newly developed institution-wide student learning outcomes and learning outcomes that are specific to divisions and programs. Efforts include the development of learning goals and outcomes for individual undergraduate and graduate degree programs across CSUF, which are shared online, and the

development of the Student Affairs division's five division-wide learning domains and corresponding characteristics. Such efforts demonstrate co-curricular integration with academic outcomes. (CFR 2.4)

The issue of how different units' learning outcomes overlap or complement institutional learning outcomes received attention in the institution's EER and during the team visit. Even though department and program learning outcomes were referenced in the development of institution-wide learning outcomes, it does not appear that the resulting six institution-wide learning outcomes are, in turn, explicitly well aligned with specific outcomes in many individual programs and departments. (CFR 2.11)

Evidence from the site visit suggests obstacles to development of departmental learning goals and to ongoing assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes. The site visit team met with faculty leaders from Environmental Studies, Political Science, and Public Administration, as well as representatives from the departments of Mathematics, Kinesiology, English, and American Studies. Faculty shared that their biggest challenges to curriculum review and examination of student learning outcomes involved engaging other faculty members. For example, the Kinesiology department had assembled a set of seven learning goals but conveyed that faculty viewed as burdensome the effort of establishing and assessing the learning goals. Representatives from the Mathematics department reiterated that faculty buy-in was a key challenge to assessment efforts and development of consistent learning outcomes. Also, English department learning goals were in too nascent a stage of development to be measureable through assessment. American Studies was exceptional in indicating the direct and indirect impacts of departmental assessment efforts, although specific details were lacking.

Within CSUF's EER report written for the WASC visit, both departmental annual reports and program performance reviews were cited as evidence of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes. While assessment surveys inform these reports, the reports do not always include survey sample size, how adequately the target population is represented, and survey response rates. Such information, along with sample assessment instruments, routinely should be included as appendices in program performance reviews and other reports. (CFR 2.7)

Annual reports and program performance reviews could be an effective avenue for institution-wide linkage between analysis of data and review of assessment, on the one hand, and planning and budgeting processes, on the other. Further work is needed on linking planning and budgeting with assessment evidence in reports. More evidence is needed to demonstrate how these reports systematically result in revised and improved structures, processes, curricula, and pedagogy. (CFR 2.10)

While the annual and program performance review reports give evidence of ongoing assessment processes, the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness serves as a hub to widen access to those reports and other resources. On the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness website are postings or links to departmental learning goals and outcomes, assessment plans, annual reports, and information on program performance reviews. During the visit, the team learned that departments, programs, and faculty find the website helpful, indicating an appropriate level of accessibility. Some college websites also make available annual reports and program accreditations, and those that do not currently post such information are encouraged to do so. (CFRs 2.4, 2.5)

In addition to annual reports and program performance reviews, the institution cited specific assessments of student learning outcomes both across and within departments and

programs. Within-department assessments included faculty-student research projects, e-portfolios, capstone courses, senior theses, etc. Two examples of department-wide assessment and improvement of student learning were set forth: one involved general education and the other, the division of Student Affairs. For the general education program, a committee drafted and implemented a general education assessment plan and corresponding program. The plan and program benefitted from participation of faculty across six departments, who took part in an assessment workshop to design plans and rubrics. After the workshop, they implemented rubrics in courses and regrouped to share feedback. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.4, 4.6).

Faculty involvement in designing assessments encourages a higher level of faculty buy-in with respect to the assessment process and thereby increases effectiveness and sustainability. However, few examples of the use of assessment findings for improvement of instruction were given, suggesting that closing the assessment loop is not a regular CSUF practice. Sharing feedback exemplifies a collaborative effort to informally assess the assessment processes themselves. As noted by faculty and administrators during the site visit, more progress in this area is needed.

Assessment of general education is an ambitious project. The institution has acknowledged that this project requires a substantial commitment of faculty time and programmatic resources (EER, p. 24); existing financial and administrative supports may not be sufficient to meet assessment demands. To push the assessment plan forward and respond to evolving needs as they arise, there must be increased commitment of faculty and particular persistence and flexibility on the part of the general education committee. Encouraging greater, sustained faculty involvement, especially under the auspices of the general education committee, is imperative.

The Student Affairs division provided further evidence of assessments. It published an assessment briefing book to summarize ongoing assessment efforts. The book contains sample student learning projects, documents assessment results, and shows how data will lead to improved programs and services. In addition, a revised Student Affairs website will make assessment evidence more accessible. To ensure sustainability of efforts, the division is developing an assessment plan for 2012-2015. Progress in assessment efforts might be enhanced by the creation of a mechanism whereby academic units also share successful assessment efforts across other divisions of the institution. (CFRs 4.4, 4.6)

Assuring the sustainability and continued improvement of all assessment capacities is essential and an area of concern that was cited in the WASC Commission's most recent action letter. Evidence suggests that departments are receiving assistance so that they may improve their capacities to assess student learning and to use assessment results for program improvement. Through workshops and consultations with an outside assessment consultant, over 40 faculty members from 12 departments received assistance developing learning goals, establishing and reviewing assessment plans, and finding ways to achieve program improvement based on assessment findings. (CFRs 3.4, 4.6)

Such efforts should continue and should target a greater number of faculty members in order to ensure sustainability. In this area, the Faculty Development Center serves as a center for supporting faculty with the goal of expanding learning assessment. This center is particularly well run, as is frequently acknowledged by faculty. Annual Program Performance Review and Assessment Institutes further suggest ongoing support of institution-wide efforts at assessment. In the area of general education assessment, the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Programs has pledged continued financial support for professional development. (CFR 3.5)

Meeting challenges that face assessment sustainability is crucial to support the quality of longstanding programs and the improvement of student learning outcomes, as well as to monitor the quality and development of new programs and courses. Greater coordination of assessments institution-wide is needed to facilitate achievement of this task. (CFR 4.4)

While the first two outcomes set forth in the institutional proposal dealt with more general learning goals, assessment, and improvement of learning outcomes, the last three outcomes set forth in the institutional proposal are specifically related to writing. The first is a set of institution-wide student learning goals for writing. The second is a coordinated set of faculty and student resources and programs for writing to learn, writing pedagogy, and writing assessment. The third is a public statement that articulates how the institution expects student writing to develop throughout the course of the baccalaureate degree.

The team learned that campus-wide student learning outcomes for writing came about through collaboration of faculty and students on a writing task force committee that gathered sample rubrics from departments across CSUF. The committee then culled elements from the sample rubrics and used them to develop larger themes that would serve as broad writing outcomes. A survey of faculty and students indicated support for the writing outcomes and suggested areas for revisions, which were made prior to outcomes being posted on the website of the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness. An incidental advantage of such surveys is that they may promote buy-in among participating faculty, who have invested efforts in a democratic process and see themselves as effecting change. Having helped mold and approve of the writing outcomes, they may be more likely to employ those outcomes in their instruction and assessments. This translates into greater likelihood that outcomes will have a sustainable impact. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4)

Following establishment of student writing learning outcomes, a writing task force collected an array of writing resources for teaching, learning, and assessment to address the second institutional writing outcome. The resources were sifted and organized to facilitate use by both faculty and students. As with the student writing learning outcomes, the resources for writing were shared on the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness website. There are plans to provide links from student tutoring center websites to the writing resources, as well. It would be helpful to continue monitoring the usefulness of these resources, perhaps by assessing faculty and student awareness of and reliance on the resources, and by seeking faculty and student feedback on their usefulness. (CFR 2.5)

A third outcome outlined in the institutional proposal was to develop a public statement that articulates how student writing is expected to develop throughout the course of the baccalaureate degree. This goal was addressed through the work of the writing task force and by drawing from the newly established student writing learning outcomes. The end product was a rubric with descriptors of writing characteristics suited to four increasingly advanced levels of writing that were proposed to echo students' development through the course of baccalaureate attainment. Pilot testing in various levels of writing courses confirmed usefulness of the rubric and suggested areas for further attention. Such pilot testing is evidence of CSUF assessing its own assessment measures, an activity recommended in the WASC Commission's most recent action letter. However, when the team asked about plans to extend pilot testing to other writing courses, it appeared that no such plans were in place. (CFRs 2.3, 2.6)

Writing-related questions added to the NSSE survey provided a further avenue for the institution to assess writing outcomes and student writing development. Sustainability of effectiveness of ongoing assessments (another recommendation of the WASC Commission's

most recent action letter) was reported to be in the hands of the English department and other departments across CSUF. Faculty of those departments indicated to the team that they will continue to sample and assess student work. (CFRs 2.4, 4.5, 4.7)

It is essential that continued assessments and related instructional implementations are written into the duties of faculty and programs, so that sustainability is secured during unstable, unforeseen, or changing circumstances. The team learned that the task force on improving writing student learning outcomes would be disbanding, even though considerable work in this area remains, including assessment of upper-division course work that counts toward completion of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement that the CSU system mandates. Also, although faculty and administrators told the team that the search for a Writing Director remains a priority, firm plans to complete a search at the appropriate level have not been made. The team was told by concerned faculty that they were not optimistic about filling the Writing Director position soon. Although administrators delivered mixed messages to the team about this, and while there already have been previous unsuccessful attempts to fill the position, it is unclear whether the position description and recruitment approaches have been or will be adequate and appropriate. This is a concern, because comprehensive writing assessment is far from implementation: Despite ambitious initial efforts, assessment plans and pilot testing have not received due follow-up.

Beyond writing, further evidence also is needed of an ongoing process of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes at the program and institutional level. This is an area of weakness about which CSUF should focus continued efforts, especially for the general education program, where assessment needs to be strengthened. Existing general education assessments are limited, with numerous courses not being appropriately assessed at all. So,

although progress is slowly occurring in assessment, more evidence of productive activity and commitment to improving student learning outcomes is needed. Particular attention should be given to using assessment results to improve instruction and modify programs of study. Long-term goals should include the development of effective and rigorous assessment programs in every department, with the goal of improving educational practice. However, mechanisms are not in place to ensure faculty buy-in, which is inconsistent and in many cases is not present.

In addition, as described in the appendices concerned with off-campus programs and distance education below, disaggregated data is not available for assessing those educational channels. The team discovered during interviews with CSUF faculty and administrators that plans are underway to expand both off-campus and distance education. The team urges CSUF to gather more complete data as a part of its planning in these areas.

SECTION II

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Theme 3: Promoting Student Success and Engagement

CSUF's institutional proposal identified promoting student success and engagement as important to be addressed throughout the CPR and EER in order to answer the question: "How can we better promote student engagement and success through our teaching, mentoring and advising and make the best use of our resources to achieve this objective?"

According to the proposal, this theme was identified because "questions have been raised about whether we provide consistently adequate and accurate advising that would ensure that all students understand their requirements toward their major and toward graduation." (CFRs 2.3, 2.12)

The CPR and EER reports addressed CFRs pertaining to advisement: the organization and delivery of advisement; students' ability to easily understand the requirements of their academic programs to receive timely, useful and regular information about relevant academic requirements; support services designed to meet student needs; and the special issues facing transfer students. (CFRs 2.12, 2.3, 2.13, 2.14)

To prepare for the EER, the CPR report indicated that the Student Academic Life Committee would be charged to review research findings on student engagement, propose interventions, and monitor the extent to which those strategies promote engagement and success. The CPR report also indicated that two additional task forces would further enhance professional development opportunities and the support system for advisors.

The CPR report expressed concerns about the ability of CSUF to undertake these and other initiatives identified within this theme because of decreased funding caused by the ongoing state budget crisis. The WASC CPR team report recommended that "it would seem appropriate for the WASC Steering Committee to revisit this theme, clarify what has been achieved, prioritize goals and outcomes, and select for completion those that will have the greatest impact on student retention and graduation." The team found that CSUF acted upon these recommendations, made some progress during the last two years, and worked to implement and embed policies and practices that have the potential to be sustainable. However, the data on six-year graduation rates does not yet show much progress: For the entering freshman cohort of 2001, that rate was 49%; of 2003, 52%; of 2004, 51%; and of 2005, 50%. One factor that may contribute to raising these graduation rates in coming years is a recent increase in the student retention rate, which appears to result from targeted institutional interventions during the past few years. The retention rate now is approximately 10 percentage points above earlier levels.

Improving Advising

CSUF has used a multi-faceted approach to improving undergraduate advising, given the recognition in its institutional proposal that "the consistency of the quality of advisement across units" was uneven. CSUF has undertaken technical solutions (such as its degree audit system, discussed below), training programs for new advisors and professional development programs for continuing advisors. Simultaneously, the CSU system has implemented an initiative to increase graduation rates. Given limited resources, CSUF has attempted to create a synergy between the initiatives to improve advising and the institution's work to increase graduation rates.

A degree audit system was implemented in 2008. During the 2010 CPR visit, the team heard from faculty and staff users that problems with the degree audit system still remained, including the need for more training of faculty, for improved content and presentation of information, and for streamlining the exception process so that degree audits are accurate.

In the intervening two years, progress has been made. Newly admitted transfer students now receive an email when their transcript evaluation is complete, the new general education alignment has been folded into the degree audit system, and at the June 2011 Academic Technology Summit a discussion was held about how to improve the degree audit system. The team had the opportunity to ask faculty, staff, and students about the usefulness and reliability of the degree audit system and whether problems persist. All groups agreed that significant improvements have been made in the degree audit system, and the students especially found the new features valuable. The advisors indicated that the complexity of transfer articulation can still delay degree audit systems, but overall the system is functional and increasingly helpful for advisors and students.

By conducting an institutional survey of advising practices and comparing them to advising models at 19 other institutions, CSUF faculty and staff gained a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their advising system. The EER report (page 30) indicates that one highly successful component of CSUF's advising program is the incorporation of a presentation on advising within a first course taken in several majors. The team heard from Kinesiology faculty who now successfully incorporate in a required introductory course both an introduction to the Titan Degree Audit and a presentation from an academic advisor.

The Academic Advisement Center, which is responsible for GE advising and University and graduation requirements, has taken the lead in creating an integrated model of advising which has been adopted by two colleges at CSUF. (CFRs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14)

Significant progress has been made in training and professional development of advisors since the CPR. An all-day professional development conference was held in November 2010, with topics drawn from a pre-conference survey of advisors. A post-conference evaluation found that 100% of conference participants indicated that they would attend another conference related to academic advising, and 98% agreed or strongly agreed that the material covered was relevant to their role as an advisor. The team learned that this conference now is an annual event, based upon its initial success, and the conference is coordinated by the Academic Advisement Center.

Other initiatives undertaken to improve advising include: hosting information sessions on the new GE alignment and changes in the degree audit system, including for advisors at the Irvine campus; hosting events for advising teams prior to new student orientation on GE and advising issues; creating an Academic Advising Certificate in Excellence; and developing a standardized curriculum to train new advisors. The last is a four-week program with measurable learning objectives and methods of assessments.

CSUF has successfully assessed its efforts on behalf of advisors with pre-tests and post-tests and CSUF also linked those efforts with enhanced attention to graduation rates. NSSE surveys also report slightly raised ratings for the quality of academic advising over the past ten years: Both first year students' and seniors' ratings of advising quality (on a four-point scale) increased by approximately five percent, pushing mean ratings of "fair" into (or almost into) the "good" range (though not "excellent"). (CFR 2.14)

During its visit, the team had numerous opportunities to talk with students, faculty, department chairs, and staff about advising to ascertain whether CSUF's concern over "unevenness of advising" had been satisfactorily addressed. As mentioned above, a number of valuable initiatives have been undertaken in the last several years, but the consensus of the comments received by the team was that advising remains uneven and improvements still are needed. While some students obtain advising from their major departments or programs or from other offices across campus, the team was told that the very low ratio of advisors to students in Academic Advisement Center, which is the central location for general education advising, creates significant difficulties for many students who need more conveniently available advising. Also, colleges indicated that funding for advisors is uneven across the University, with some colleges investing in advising centers and others expecting already busy faculty to take on heavy student advising loads. In meetings with students and staff, they reported to the team that students often get lost in the hand-off between general advising and major advising; better linkage clearly is needed between the two processes.

Having addressed the issue of the quality of academic advising in its institutional proposal, CPR report, and EER report, CSUF understands the critical role good advising can play in student success, retention, and graduation for both undergraduate and graduate students. While progress has been made, more remains to be done. The initiatives that have been launched over the last few years need to be sustained and continually assessed. Simultaneously, the academic leadership needs to do more to ensure that there is parity in advising practices across the colleges, that continued improvements in the degree audit system are made, that closer connections between the colleges and the Academic Advisement Center are encouraged, and that

adequate staff and resources for advising are provided for graduate and undergraduate students. (CFR 2.12)

Improving Retention and Graduation Rates

Numerous strategies (online tutorials, small group advising, etc.) have been implemented to increase the retention rates of first-time freshmen. Table 8 (page 32) of the EER report demonstrates that progress has been made. First year retention should increase in future years, in part, because of increasing selectivity caused by budget and impaction.

Transfer student retention has been addressed, in part, by focusing on transfer students who are placed on probation. A video podcast tutorial has been created that students who are placed on academic probation are required to watch. Again, CSUF used pre and post-tests to evaluate the effectiveness of the podcast for students. After watching the podcast, 90% of the transfer students rated their knowledge of probation and disqualification as above average/excellent and identified one action to avoid academic disqualification. (CFR 2.14)

As part of CSUF's response to the CSU system-wide initiative to improve graduation rates, CSUF has developed a program called "Celebrating Our Seniors" that is working to alert students of graduation deficiencies prior to their last semester of college.

One area that was highlighted during the CPR phase by both CSUF itself and the review team was graduate advising. Reasonable recommendations are proposed to improve graduate advising (EER, page 33), but no evidence was presented that the recommendations are being implemented. (CFR 2.12)

During its visit, the team heard from students that CSUF's "Finish in Four" program is not well advertised, but it is valuable for those students who learn about it and take advantage of

it to complete their degrees in four years. Promoting this program further could lead to more positive outcomes. (CFR 2.12)

Assessment of Academic and Co-Curricular Student Engagement

CSUF decided to use the NSSE to identify "the characteristics of its students and assesses their needs experiences and levels of satisfaction." NSSE was administered in 2009 and 2011 and results were provided to the Student Academic Life Committee an Academic Senate committee that now has had its bylaws amended to be "responsible for reviewing campus student engagement results, recommending actions, and monitoring the impact of campus initiatives to promote student engagement." (CFR 2.10)

The results of the 2009 administration were widely distributed. At public presentations of the results, attendees were asked to rate 17 NSSE items on two dimensions: the importance of the item for students to have a high quality educational experience at CSUF and each attendee's ability to impact the students' experience of that item (page 35). The report indicates that there was a high level of engagement and interest in this process and attendees subsequently requested that the NSSE data be analyzed by ethnicity and college. The Student Academic Life Committee asked all colleges and Student Affairs to submit an action plan (3-5 items from the NSSE for intervention, timeline, assessment). Feedback to each unit was provided in spring 2011. (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8)

In a good example of linking assessment and student learning data to budget requests, the Student Academic Life Committee forwarded recommendations to the President's Administrative Board and the Planning, Resources, Budget and Planning Committee on initiatives coming from the college action plans. Requests were made to increase funding for

undergraduates to be able to conduct research with faculty and to fill vacant advising positions. In Fall 2011, 75 one-course releases for faculty scholarly and creative activities and a one million dollar program for faculty research support was funded. The Student Academic Life Committee will be able to track, using future NSSE administrations, whether faculty-student interactions increase because of these and other initiatives.

To ensure that the Student Academic Life Committee's efforts to improve student engagement are sustainable, each college will now have a member on the committee. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences has built a review of NSSE results into annual reports or program reviews. The team learned during its visit that, starting in 2012-13, all departments will report on their action plans in their annual reports.

Another committee, Promoting the Undergraduate Research Experience, has been created to focus on enhancing faculty-student scholarly collaboration. In addition, a report of a survey of faculty regarding undergraduate research was issued in June 2011, with 80% of the respondents reporting including undergraduates in their research during 2010-11.

The Student Affairs division also has been working to improve student engagement in a number of venues, but in particular through a major initiative, the Titan Student Involvement Center. The institution has linked this online center with its student data system, which will allow Student Affairs staff to track and analyze results across colleges, using NSSE results and other assessment tools.

While progress has been made in assessing academic and co-curricular student engagement, the new leadership of CSUF should encourage further efforts of the Student Academic Life Committee and others to promote student engagement. With regular data coming from a variety of sources, the institution now should monitor departmental/college initiatives,

assess them, seek out best practices, and deploy those to continue to positively affect student

success and graduation rates. (CFRs 2.11, 2.13, 2.14)

SECTION III

Findings and Recommendations

CSUF has an atmosphere that is supportive of student learning. Faculty, staff, and administration collaboratively work for the benefit of students. However, the team found that process is often valued more than substance. This was particularly evident in CSUF's pursuit of its first theme, concerned with institution-wide planning, where process has produced a plan that most appear to accept but the tenets of which are not articulated with budgets. With regard to the institution's second theme, concerned with student learning and its assessment, a focus in this area has produced many positive results. However, general education assessment remains weak, many programs do not have effective assessment plans, and, most importantly, evidence to demonstrate that assessment results are used for planning and improvement of student learning outcomes is spotty. The institution has had more success in moving forward its third theme, concerned with promoting student engagement and success, but while new, practical programs have been implemented, challenges remain in improving student advising, especially as graduation rates remain flat. While improved retention rates may lead to increased graduation rates in future, unless or until those graduation rates rise significantly, putting more effort into student success is warranted.

As detailed in Section II, CSUF faces a significant degree of senior personnel transitions, including the beginning term of a new President and the recruitment of two new senior VPs, a new academic dean and an Associate VP. Based on current transition planning, it is likely to take at least a full academic year to complete these leadership changes. This means that special

attention and effort will be needed to ensure that the planning, assessment, and advising efforts contemplated by CSUF's three themes can be completed in a timely manner.

Commendations

1. CSUF has fostered and benefitted from a faculty, staff, and administration characterized by optimism, a "can do" spirit, and effective teamwork dedicated to the institution and to the welfare of its students.

2. CSUF senior administration has managed budget and priorities effectively under the stress of economic pressures, changes in policies, and shifting directives. This accomplishment is widely recognized by faculty and staff.

3. CSUF has developed a collaborative culture in which willing and productive individuals and units partner effectively. Such partnerships exist, for example, between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs; with community colleges and others in the community; and with the Irvine Campus. These partnerships are both ad hoc and structural.

4. CSUF has devoted resources to developing and funding effective structures and support for faculty development, which nurtures a positive intellectual climate. These include an enhanced and well-led Faculty Development Center; an Online Academic Strategies and Instructional Support service; an assessment office that fosters helpful connections with individuals and units across CSUF; appropriate technology for individuals and classrooms; and other resources for research and scholarly activities. These activities include elevated tenure track hiring levels, appropriate designations of release time, sabbatical awards, and faculty-student research initiatives.

5. CSUF has demonstrated commitment to southern Orange County communities by making significant improvements to the Irvine Campus during a period of fiscal stringency by securing and outfitting a new building and expanding programs.

6. CSUF has effected a successful launch of the Ed.D. program, with attention to quality, to community relations, to building a research culture, and to developing a sophisticated assessment system.

Recommendations

1. CSUF should refine its strategic planning framework to develop criteria for determining priorities; to use the resulting criteria to identify institutional priorities; to establish clear linkages between those priorities and resources; and to establish and apply metrics for assessing progress in meeting strategic goals. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

2. CSUF should mature student learning assessment activities; decrease their variability across the institution; and assure depth, breadth, and sustainability of assessment efforts. As soon as possible, CSUF should establish effective and rigorous assessment programs in every department and in every level of general education. Most importantly, CSUF regularly should apply assessment findings in order to improve educational practices and outcomes. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5)

3. CSUF should, before expanding off-campus and distance learning courses and programs, obtain and analyze disaggregated data on educational effectiveness and use that data to inform program assessment and planning. (CFRs 2.3, 2.7, 2.10)

4. CSUF should address the problem of unevenness in advising by improving linkages between general education advising and major/college advising; by continuous training; by applying

best practices across the institution; and by providing adequate staff and resources. (CFRs
2.12, 2.13)

APPENDIX 1

REPORT ON OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

Institution: California State University, Fullerton
Kind of Visit: EER
Date: March 6, 2012

1. Site Name and Address

Irvine Campus of California State University, Fullerton
3 Banting Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618

2. Background Information

The Irvine campus has undergone a great transformation over the last two years as the campus moved from a small, barely adequate facility (39,000 square feet at the former El Toro air force base) to a much larger (69,000 square feet), more appropriate and easy-to-locate facility. In Spring 2011, 2,593 students were taking one or more classes at the Irvine campus. The new facility allows the campus to continue to offer mostly upper-division courses, graduate courses and credential programs. Classes are offered on site as well as online and through interactive video conferencing. One community college, Irvine Valley Community College, currently offers some lower-division courses at the Irvine campus, and the campus is in negotiations with another community college.

The new facility provides CSUF with a way to serve the growing population in southern Orange County. Currently, at Irvine, students can complete the upper-division major requirements for bachelor's degrees in Accounting, Child and Adolescent Studies, Management,

and Psychology and also complete graduate programs in Social Work, MS in Tax, Education, and Business Administration.

3. Nature of the Review

Two members of the WASC team visited the Irvine campus on March 6, 2012. They had visited the Irvine campus, at its former site, as part of the CPR visit.

Prior to the visit, the team members reviewed the materials prepared by the Irvine campus, the EER report, the report from the CPR visit, and data provided by CSUF. While at the Irvine Center, the team members met with the Dean, with faculty who teach in Irvine, with the Librarian, and with Student Services and IT staff. The team members also attended an open meeting for students, faculty, and staff.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1)	CSUF created the Irvine campus to serve the fast-growing population in the southern part of Orange County. Senior leadership across CSUF has supported the expansion of the Irvine campus, especially in the last two years when a new site was leased and services expanded.	
Connection to the Institution. How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)	The Irvine campus appears to be fully integrated with the main campus. The Irvine campus is a link off the CSUF homepage, and most services available on the main campus are available in Irvine. The school newspaper, logo apparel, and signage all remind students that they are part of CSUF.	
Quality of the Learning Site. How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5)	There is a well-appointed library on site, as well as numerous small rooms for students to study and socialize. Each faculty who teaches at Irvine is assigned an office to facilitate student-faculty contact. A full-time Dean provides oversight, and a search for a new position, an Associate Dean, is in progress. The plan is to	

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
	hire a CSUF faculty member who will be responsible for working with faculty and chairs on curricular issues and for expanding course and program offerings. The Irvine campus team has created a learning community environment.	
Student Support Services. CPR: What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? *EER:* What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)	With the relocation to the new facility, student services, especially the library, computing services, and advising, have been expanded. Disability Services and Counseling Services are now available.	Regarding effectiveness of services, utilization and satisfaction information is collected and used to improve services. This work needs to be expanded, shared, and linked to data collected on course satisfaction and impact.
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty are involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)	The faculty is CSUF faculty and instructors who are assigned or who volunteer to teach at Irvine. Oversight of the curriculum and course offerings is the responsibility of the department chairs and faculty on the main campus.	
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFRs 2.1-2.3, 4.6) [Also submit credit hour report.]	The programs are designed on the main campus, and course evaluations go the faculty's department on the main campus. Courses appear to be identical to what is offered on campus.	

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)	Data on Irvine students are not disaggregated from other CSUF student data, and thus it is not possible at this time to track retention or graduation rates.	CSUF needs to begin to disaggregate and analyze the data on students who attend the Irvine campus. Now, before the student population grows, the campus should seek to understand more about the students who take classes there, their success, and their graduation rates.
Student Learning. CPR: How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? *EER*: What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)	Currently, student learning is only assessed through course evaluations.	CSUF needs to begin to disaggregate and analyze the data on students who attend the Irvine campus, especially students who finish their bachelors or masters degree and compare the results to students who complete similar degrees on the main campus.
Quality Assurance Processes: CPR: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? *EER:* What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)	No such evidence was provided.	The Irvine campus has the potential to provide important and much needed educational programs, but assessment and analysis needs to be done to ensure that the courses and programs offered are educationally effective.

APPENDIX 2

REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Institution: California State University, Fullerton

Kind of Visit: Educational Effectiveness Review

Date: March 7-9, 2012

1. **Programs and Courses Reviewed**

   Courses from the Master of Science in Information Technology

2. **Background Information**

   CSUF has offered online courses for several years, but its investment in this mode of delivery has ramped up considerably in the last few years. In its EER report, the institution identified that it had seven online graduate programs and 200 online courses (Appendix C). However, in meetings, the team was told that CSUF now offers about 300 online courses, has recently received WASC fast track approval for one additional online master's degree program and two online bachelor's degree programs, and also offers about 10 online certificates. The team was told that "the target was changing" for its participation in online education, because of the recent system-wide Cal State Online initiative, but that where that would lead is not yet clear.

   The team was told that all current online courses are delivered using a course management system, that many include digitally captured lectures and/or slide shows, and that some include live streaming of classroom-based lectures and activities. Some courses also use electronic portfolios for purposes of evaluating student work. To help students and faculty train themselves in relevant tools and technologies needed for online

courses, CSUF also subscribes to a service that offers web-based software training. To address issues of online security, an online proctoring service is being pilot testing.

However, CSUF does not yet have a generally agreed upon definition for what constitutes an online course. In meetings with the team, some faculty and students indicated that courses billed as online sometimes include a synchronous or even on-campus element, and that that such variations are not always clear in course descriptions. The Academic Senate is developing a revised online policy that should address some of these issues, along with other concerns, such as student evaluation of teaching forms (Student Opinion Questionnaires) developed for classroom-based courses not always being appropriately adapted for online courses.

3. Nature of the Review

The team reviewed data provided by CSUF and gathered information during interviews and meetings with students, faculty, and staff, including administrators. A team member also reviewed the distance education website and a video demonstration of an example online course. In addition, a team member conducted an interview with a CSUF student in an online cohort program; that student shared examples of online courses through the student's campus portal and course management system.

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 3.8, 4.1)	While distance learning is not explicitly stated in the institutional mission, the first goal does state that CSUF will "integrate advances in information technologies into learning environments." Although some online courses and programs are funded through the same institutional instructional budget, others are funded only through extended education. The team was given mixed messages about whether future expansion of online courses and/or programs will need to be self-supporting. Faculty propose distance learning offerings, using the traditional curricular review process for approval. A senior administrator told the team that it is left to the faculty/college to decide whether to offer an online course.	Clarify funding sources and expectations for online courses and plan the development of online programs and approvals accordingly.
Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)	Online courses often start with an in-person orientation for students at which instructors and students meet and get to know each other, however this step is at the option of the faculty member and/or department or college. Course syllabi are posted on a course management system, along with notes course objectives, learning goals, required text, assignments, due dates, and test taking information, as well as other information pertinent to the student and the course. There is no standard format for how this information is presented. Typical channels for course interaction between student and instructor include discussion boards and email for one-on-one or group exchanges. If a team project is involved, students may telephone conference call and/or email each other regarding the assignment. Students have access to information about campus activities on the CSUF website. Matriculated students also may use campus facilities and join student organizations.	Survey online students, especially those pursuing fully online degrees or certificates, about their relationship to the institution.

Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups? (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, 3.7)	The IT infrastructure for online courses meets existing needs, with adequate server capacities and appropriate tools available for course delivery. Equipment for streaming courses for hybrid delivery is available in a number of classrooms on campus. Some students told the team that online course technology is not always tested in advance of the class and that not all faculty who teach online courses are up to speed on its functions, so significant course time may be spent in configuring and troubleshooting technology, especially at the beginning of the term. Proctoring is done by faculty on campus and through off-site approved testing centers. However, some testing occurs online, with instructors using a mix of authentication protocols (or none at all, beyond the logins required for use of a course management system).	Continue to develop security protocols. Consider opportunities to standardize technologies and interfaces, in order to reduce transition times. If/as online course offerings and programs continue to expand, maintain infrastructure and support services at an adequate level.
Student Support Services. CPR: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? *EER:* What do data show about the effectiveness of the services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)	Student services are explained during the initial orientation; information also is posted on CSUF website. Students are not trained in the use of technology, but the help desk will respond, typically within 24 hours. An online technical tutorial service is provided through a contract with web-based service. Robust library services are available online, however students must take the initiative to learn how to use online library resources. Other services, such as financial aid and advising are available via phone or email.	Survey online students about their technology and support needs.
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the	Regular faculty teach most online courses. There is faculty technology support to assist faculty with the presentation of course content using various formats, but use of such services and training is not required of faculty who teach online. The team heard from several faculty who described online teaching assignments as being integrated into their regular teaching load.	Identify teachers for online teaching assignments who are particularly motivated and/or qualified for such teaching.

institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)	While courses are scheduled for assessment every seven years, CSUF is not consistently assessing course learning goals; even when a course is assessed, CSUF is not analyzing and using the information from the assessment to make improvements in the class.	
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (CFRs 2.1-2.3, 4.6) (Submit credit hour report.)	Faculty create course content, but may rely on staff at faculty technology support centers to train them and to help them to present their course content. As stated above, faculty follow the regular academic curricular review process to get their course/course content approved. There are differing opinions among CSUF faculty and students as to whether the quality of instruction online is equivalent to in-person instruction. While the mode of delivery varies from faculty to faculty, some students commented that the curriculum was similar to that of their in-person classes.	Encourage and/or standardize training and support for faculty.
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)	While some basic data was provided, it is clear that CSUF is not gathering and using online course and student demographic information to guide decision-making about online course offerings.	Obtain and analyze disaggregated data on educational effectiveness and use that data for program assessment and planning.
Student Learning. CPR: How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? *EER*:	CSUF faculty stated that curriculum and student learning outcomes are the same, whether courses are offered in the classroom or online. However, comparison data was not provided to document this claim. Faculty told the team that CSUF is striving for	Develop student learning outcomes assessment measures that are specifically adapted for online course delivery. Compare assessment

What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)	assessment of online course learning objectives, but has not yet developed adaptive approaches for doing so.	results for online courses with classroom-based courses.
Contracts with Vendors. Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on *Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations?*	IT has contracts with outside vendors and use open source software to provide online course support to faculty and students. Examples include online tutorials and course management systems.	Continue to deploy state-of-the-art technologies for support of online learning.
Quality Assurance Processes: CPR: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? *EER:* What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)	While faculty do their own informal assessments, assessment measures of student learning outcomes in online courses have not been developed for consistent application across the curriculum. Even student evaluations of teaching forms (Student Opinion Questionnaires) are not always adapted for online courses.	Once online assessment measures are developed and applied, the resulting data needs to be shared with faculty and used to improve courses and student learning outcomes.

APPENDIX 3

CREDIT HOUR REVIEW

Institution: California State University, Fullerton
Type of Visit: Educational Effectiveness Review
Date: March 4-7, 2012

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments	Verified Yes/No
Policy on credit hour	Does this policy adhere to WASC policy and federal regulations?	Yes
	Comments: The CSU system has a central policy that is institutionalized at CSUF.	
Process(es)/ periodic review	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)?	Yes
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes
	Comments: CSUF has developed various procedures for periodic review of its courses. For new courses, the review includes the faculty member's department; the corresponding college curriculum committee; the college Dean; the Office of Academic Programs; the University Curriculum Committee (for undergraduate, non-general education courses), the general education Committee, or the Graduate Education Committee; the Academic Senate; and the President. For changes to courses, the review is varied. • Courses not offered for four years must be reviewed if activated. • In-person courses proposed for online delivery must be reviewed. • The Program Performance Reviews are conducted on a seven-year rotational schedule of review. • general education courses are reviewed on an 8-year cycle. Between March 2009 and March 2012, 1107 courses were reviewed for changes. The review of 520 general education courses was suspended in 2009-2010 year while CSUF's GE categories were being brought into alignment with those at the other CSU campuses. CSUF has scheduled the resumption of the recertification process for the next academic year.	

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments	Verified Yes/No
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?	Yes
	Comments: A comparison of CSUF's class schedule verified that the courses meet the prescribed number of hours.	

Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?
	        Viewed 3 online courses and three in-person courses.
	How many syllabi were reviewed?
	        Viewed 6 syllabi.
	What degree level(s)?
	        Viewed lower-division, upper-division, and graduate levels.
	What discipline(s)?
	        Viewed Art, Nursing, Physics, Child and Adolescent Studies, Communications, and Sociology	

	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	Yes
	Comments: Requirements are explicit.	

Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)	What kinds of courses?
	        Viewed 3 Independent Studies, 3 Professional Experience, and 3 Performance courses.
	How many syllabi were reviewed?
	        Viewed 3 syllabi; it is more typical with these courses to have a student contract in lieu of a course syllabi.
	What degree level(s)?
	        Viewed lower-division, upper-division, graduate levels.
	What discipline(s)?
	        Viewed Chemistry, Computer Engineering, Geology, Communications, Finance, Communication Disorders, Kinesiology, and Music.	

	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	Yes
	Comments: Requirements are explicit.	

APPENDIX 4

Ed.D. REVIEW REPORT

Prepared by Randy Hitz

Dean, Graduate School of Education, Portland State University

March 2012

I. Overview and Context

a. **Description of California State University, Fullerton**

CSUF is a comprehensive, regional university located in Orange County, California. The campus includes approximately 1,800 full-time and part-time faculty members and offers 55 undergraduate and 50 graduate degrees, including the Ed.D. Enrollment at CSUF exceeds 36,000.

CSUF is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and an Asian-American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution. In 2011, 33% of the students who began the Ed.D. program identified themselves as "white." Other students in the two cohorts (Community College Leadership and P-12 Leadership) include African American (4), Asian American (9), Hispanics (6), and three individuals who indicated "other" or "decline to state." (Appendix C: Special Reports, p. 12)

b. **Purpose of the Visit**

The purpose of the visit is to "evaluate the status of the program under the Standards for Accreditation, in particular through a thorough review of the resources and support for the program and the results of initial assessment of educational effectiveness." (First Doctoral

Degree Fifth-year Special Visit Guidelines and Report Format)

WASC granted CSUF permission to offer the Ed.D. in the fall of 2007 with a cohort in the P-12 Leadership concentration. The next year, WASC granted permission to begin cohorts in the Community College Leadership concentration. The University submitted a progress report in November 2008, addressing issues identified by the substantive change committee and was found by WASC to have responded "commendably" to the recommendations. (letter from Barbara Wright, 1/26/09)

The March 2010 WASC visiting team met with the leadership of the Ed.D. program and reviewed documents. The current visit coincides with the comprehensive EER visit for CSUF.

c. **Institutional Context and History**

Instruction at the baccalaureate level began at CSUF in 1959. The University now offers 50 master's degrees with numerous concentrations and emphases. The College of Education offers master's degrees in eight different areas, with multiple options in one area, Elementary and Bilingual Education.

WASC approved a Joint Ed.D. program between CSUF and the University of California, Irvine that admitted students in 2003, 2004, and 2005. This program was terminated when the state legislature granted approval for the CSU system campuses to independently offer Ed.D. programs. All of the students admitted to the joint program have left the program (3) or completed their degrees (10). CSUF has recently been approved to offer the Doctor of Nurse Practitioner degree and will admit students to that program in the fall of 2012.

d. **Response to Previous Commission Issues**

The 2010 WASC CPR visiting team report reads as follows;

The visiting team concluded that the Ed.D. program at CSUF is sustainable. CSUF received support from CSU to launch this program as one among the few in the first wave of Ed.D. offerings the system approved, and CSU continues to support CSUF offering this degree. In addition, the specialized areas of study that CSUF has chosen are well designed to address market niche opportunities, so, as a result, student demand and enrollment are robust. CSUF demonstrated nimbleness in scaling up the new program quickly and in obtaining financing to help it to become self-sustaining over time. The program leadership is engaged, its faculty well qualified, and its students screened to be prepared for the demands of doctoral-level work and for success after earning the degree. The support of the administration of CSUF for this program seems both enthusiastic and justified, and that should help to ensure its long-term viability. (P.23)

These findings were confirmed in the current review, as demonstrated below.

II. Capacity and Educational Effectiveness

a. Faculty

i. Qualifications and Status

The Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education has primary responsibility for the Ed.D. It lists 14 faculty members associated with the Ed.D. program. Six of these faculty members are in P-12 Leadership and, of these six, three hold professor rank and tenure and three are assistant professors.

Eight faculty members are listed as part of the Community College Leadership group. Four of these faculty members are lecturers, two are assistant professors, and two

are full professors. Only one holds tenure. The complete Ed.D. faculty group also includes individuals from other departments in the College of Education. Thirteen such faculty are listed, nine of whom hold full professor rank and eleven of whom hold tenure. Also listed in the Ed.D. faculty group are ten full-time faculty. All faculty members in the Ed.D. faculty group have earned doctorates from accredited universities. (CFR 2.1)

ii. Teaching Load

The CSU system defines a faculty load as 15 units per semester for fall and spring. Summer sessions are considered "extra work for extra pay." Three of the 15 units are assigned for service activities. Thus, the teaching load is four three-credit courses per semester. New faculty are granted a one-course release in each of their first four semesters to help them to establish a research agenda. Faculty who teach three-unit courses in the Ed.D. program are granted four "weighted teaching units" of workload. The extra unit is provided to support research. Ed.D. faculty who chair dissertation committees are credited with two units each term in a student's last year in the program. In addition, the Ed.D. has supported requests for graduate assistants for faculty across the College of Education. In the Fall of 2011, 18 3-unit course releases were given, and five hours per week of graduate assistant time was dedicated to the Ed.D. program. Faculty interviewed were quite satisfied with the support they are getting for doctoral advising and for scholarship. (CFRs 2.8, 2.9)

b. **Other Resources**

i. Financial Support

The funding for the Ed.D. comes from Ed.D. student fees (set by the CSU system) and "marginal cost income," which is provided to the campus by the system. The Ed.D. fee for 2011-2012 is $5,250 per term, up from $4338 just two years ago. Ten percent of the Fall and Spring fees is set aside for student aid. The marginal cost income is $7,285 per student per calendar year. In 2011-2012, the total income per student is $21,985, two-thirds of which comes from student fees. The CSU system and CSUF dedicate the funds generated by the program to the College of Education to support the program and related efforts to create a "doctoral culture." Faculty noted that the increased resources available for scholarship which come from the Ed.D. program are transforming the College of Education and, to some extent, the entire campus. The current level of funding plays a major role in fostering a high quality doctorate and a research culture on campus and in the community. This level of support for the program is necessary to build and maintain a high quality program. (CFR 3.5)

Annual budget attachment C

ii. Physical Resources

Every full-time faculty member has an office in the department suite. The department offices include two staff offices for a coordinator and an administrative support assistant. A large seminar room, College Park (CP) 550, provides space for the Ed.D. courses. The room is equipped with a computer, DVD player, projector, and sound system. In addition, Ed.D. faculty can reserve conference room space in CP 500, CP 560, and CP 570 for meetings and defenses. Faculty interviewed were satisfied with the resources provided them.

iii. Library

a. Library Resources

In its 2007 report, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Board of Examiners said, "Library resources are extensive" and this review confirms that. (BOE Report, p. 34)

The Pollak Library contains over 2,250,000 items in a variety of formats: approximately1,220,000 books and e-books, government documents, and audiovisual materials; over 20,000 periodical subscriptions available electronically or in print; 1,150,000 microforms; and 200 electronic databases. The library also utilizes linking software to provide direct links from citations found in databases to full-text articles and journals purchased by the library. Faculty, students, and staff can access articles or other items not owned by the library through an interlibrary loan program. (Appendix C p. 22) (CFR 3.6)

In the last three years, the Educational Leadership department has invested $90,000 to improve library resources, including $20,000 to purchase monographs to improve the library's resources in educational philosophy, research methods, and issues related to community college and higher education. The department transfers $20,000 annually to support access to key indexes and full-text databases, as well as to support interlibrary loan requests by students pursuing the Ed.D.

In the same period, the library has spent approximately $88,000 to add 1,900 print and electronic monographs to the collection that focus on PreK-12 administration and management community college and higher education leadership. The library currently

owns 19,158 monographs within the related call number ranges. Databases and interlibrary loans services appear to be heavily used by students.

The library analyzes interlibrary loan requests on an annual basis, communicating with departmental faculty to learn more about student and faculty research interests. This communication has resulted in at least one database, which cost $10,500, being added to the library's Collection Development Wish List; this communication also has saved other resources from cancellation.

b. Reference and Instruction

One full-time librarian serves as a liaison to the College of Education and collaborates with Ed.D. faculty to develop a series of required workshops for Ed.D. students. Faculty members bring their classes back to the library for additional specialized instruction sessions as needed.

In addition to in-person reference help, the following services are provided:

· Telephone Reference: Telephone service during Library hours

· Chat Reference: Online assistance available 24/7

· Ask Ref: Questions answered through email

· Online research guides for PreK-12 and Higher Education Leadership, which include links to instructional videos.

Ed.D. students and faculty can also request a one-hour research consultation. In these sessions, researchers meet with librarian subject specialists, either at the Library or online using web conferencing service.

iv. Technology Resources and Support

Every full-time faculty member is provided a desktop computer and monitor, laptop, and tablet. Faculty, staff, and students have technology support available via phone and web 24/7. Students who do not have their own laptop computers may check one out on a long-term basis. A three-person IT support staff in the College of Education also is available to assist with database systems, web design, hardware, and other technology issues. CSUF uses an open source-based course management system for web support courses. Faculty are transitioning courses from one course management system to another, and the campus is also transitioning from one bibliography management program to another. (CFR 3.7)

v. Student Services (CFR 2.13)

A well-written and comprehensive student handbook provides information about program design, admissions, financial aid, doctoral culture, technology policy, qualifying examinations, dissertation expectations, and student support. The program also provides two orientation sessions for students, focusing on how they can access student support services on campus.

In addition to program advisement by program coordinators in each concentration, every student is part of a research support seminar (EDD 670 A-F) that provides support for their progress toward the dissertation during the first two years, as they develop their research proposals. Faculty and students are overwhelming positive about the EDD 670 seminars, but faculty and students recognize a need for more stable staffing in the community college cohort that would allow one faculty member to stay

with the cohort throughout the sequence.

The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in the College of Education provides assistance with personal needs, linking the students to support services on campus. Individuals from the field who possess doctorates are enlisted as professional mentors for Ed.D. students and to assist with the myriad of issues mid-career people might have related to pursuing a terminal degree. Mentors may eventually become the third member of the dissertation committee.

CSUF was awarded a $2.8 million Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans grant from the U.S. Department of Education, with the goal of increasing the number of Hispanic students who earn advanced degrees. Services under this grant are available to Ed.D. students, including funding for research and conference travel, writing tutors, the graduate student study center, counseling services, and workshops.

Students interviewed stated that they felt very well informed about the policies and expectations of the program. They noted the website, handbook, orientation sessions, and research seminars as being particularly helpful. They also said that faculty are caring and accessible. (CFR 2.2b, 2.5)

iv. Scholarships, Assistance and Other Financial Resources

Most Ed.D. students are eligible for federal student loan programs, Ed.D. grants, and College of Education scholarships. The Ed.D. program also provides support for a writing coach, transcription services, and the first $1,500 toward dissertation editing costs. Students interviewed expressed interest in having more fellowships or

assistantships available.

v. Other

CSUF created the Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership (C-REAL) as an extension of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program. It serves CSUF and outside agencies in evaluation and consultation work as CSUF enhances the doctoral program and the development of a "doctoral culture." At the time of the visit, the center had over 25 active grants and contracts, the vast majority of which are funded by local schools and agencies. The center engages faculty, graduate students, and community partners in research that investigates local educational problems. The center also sponsors research symposia highlighting faculty and student research. Faculty, students, and community representatives spoke to the importance of the center in creating a research culture for the College of Education, the campus, and the community. (CFRs 2.9, 4.8)

c. Program Assessment and Summative Data (Standard 2)

i. Main Degree Milestones

The program has three designated milestones, one at the end of each of the three years of the program. These milestones are:

- Qualifying exam: taken after students have successfully completed nine courses, in order to determine the extent to which the student is meeting learning objectives after year one. Qualifying exams consist of two to four questions scored by faculty, using rubrics and a blind-review process. Nearly all students pass on their first attempt. Each student who attempted the exam a second time

passed.

- Dissertation Proposal Exam: an oral defense of the dissertation proposal, consisting of a slide show presentation and of chapters one and three, plus references.

- Defense of dissertation: takes place at the end of the third year, when the committee agrees the dissertation is ready. The dissertation consists of five chapters and involves research that integrates theory and research in the study of educational practice. Most are studies undertaken in the local context. (Appendix C p. 22)

ii. Graduation Rates and Time-to-Completion Data

The California Legislature mandated that CSU Ed.D. programs be designed so that students can complete them in three years. Since the beginning of the P-12 concentration in 2007, five cohorts have been admitted and two have had the opportunity to complete the three-year program. Of the 41students who began in the first two cohorts, 24 graduated by the end of the third year, yielding a 58% three-year graduation rate. As of summer 2011, 74% of the first cohort students completed the program and 21% withdrew or were removed. The second cohort had a three-year completion rate of 45%.

The Community College concentration launched in 2008 has enrolled four cohorts. For the first cohort, 29% of the students who began the program had completed the degree within three years, and an additional 48% were continuing work toward degree completion, while 24% had withdrawn or been removed from the program.

Faculty interviewed discussed what they are learning about retaining and

graduating students within three or four years. They are providing more writing support for students who need it, making use of GRE scores to identify those students. They acknowledge that some very good students simply need a bit more time. Nevertheless, the goal to graduate students within three or four years remains, and faculty are seeking to get the rate to 75% with the next cohort. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.4, 2.5)

iii. Direct Assessment of Student Learning (CFRs 2.3-2.7)

The Ed.D. program has clear guidelines and rubrics for qualifying exams and dissertations. (attachments D and G) The program also has clearly articulated student learning outcomes under seven major objectives: leadership, informed practice, reflective practitioners, critical thinkers, change agents, ethical professionals, and valuing diversity. (Attachment E)

Every course syllabus addresses the program objectives and relevant student learning outcomes for each assignment. All syllabi follow the same outline:

· Catalog description

· Course goals and student learning outcomes

· Required texts

· Supplemental reading

· Course requirements and assignments

· Grading policy for the course

· Examination and extra credit options if any

· Semester schedule of meetings and assignments

· Rubrics

Generally, rubrics are used to assess major assignments in courses. Students receive grades on assignments and a summative grade at the end of the term. Grades of B or better are acceptable on the study plan for the Ed.D. Grades of B- may be counted if the student has an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher.

At the program level, staff members enter grades in a cohort spreadsheet that is used by the program coordinators to identify students who may need assistance to maintain adequate progress. Examples of student work collected each term become one data element used in the program review process. In addition, students complete a student opinion questionnaire at the end of each course. The items address the role of the instructor in the course and the extent to which students believe the course enhanced their learning.

The program faculty conduct surveys of students at the mid-point and end of the program, and faculty survey employers of graduates as they complete the program. The surveys assess student learning with questions about the andragogy use in the courses. The results of six administrations of the survey to date show that students rate the courses highly.

Faculty interviewed discussed at length the data system and how they use data on a regular basis to improve instruction for individual students and to improve programs.

CSU is a participant in the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate and a team of other CPED participants will conduct an external review of the program in 2014 when the College of Education undergoes its NCATE review. This review will be completed in accordance to specific guidelines documented in the External Review Policy.

iv. Review of Student Work

Dissertations are carefully reviewed by the committee chair and two other committee members, an outside reviewer/editor, the program director, and the graduate office before being published by an electronic publication and archiving service. The program worked with other CPED participants to have external reviews of dissertations from each concentration. These reviews were completed in January 2012, and they revealed that the CSUF dissertations conform to the expectations of quality and rigor for research in education, focus on solving significant problems in practice, provide data and analysis that can be used to change practice, and conform to the institution's rubrics. Nearly all dissertations would, in the opinion of the reviewers, receive an A or B grade at their institutions.

Though dissertations focus on solving significant problems in practice, the dissertation topics are determined primarily by individual student interest. There is potential for CSUF to be more proactive with local partners in identifying research needs and matching those needs to doctoral student interests and dissertation topics.

d. Other Evidence of Program Effectiveness

i. Publication of Student Work

All dissertations are published by an electronic publication and archiving service. To date twenty-five dissertations have been published. (Attachment G) In addition, graduates report their plans for publishing in journals. To date, one article has been accepted for publication, and five others are under review.

ii. Impact of Students on the Field of Study

Six graduates made presentations at the 2011 California Educational Research Association conference. Others have been asked to make local presentations in school districts, and one graduate said that he has been asked to assist on several grant writing projects. At least one graduate has presented at a national conference, and another has been active in state and national policy discussions. Several graduates have been involved in starting charter schools or new programs in their districts or community colleges. As the program matures and more people graduate, it will be important for CSUF to stay in touch with alumni to keep them engaged and to track their impact on the field.

iii. Placement Data

CSUF helps graduates to prepare professional portfolios, and CSUF is in the process of helping all graduates to develop websites that the institution will use to "market" the graduates. Sixteen graduates have reported being promoted or accepting higher ranking positions. (CFR 2.13)

iv. Survey Results

Students are asked to complete surveys at the mid-point of their program and again at the end. Employers are surveyed when students complete the program. To date five mid-point surveys and four graduate and employer surveys have been completed. The survey results are discussed with the faculty and the Executive Board. (CFR 4.7)

The vast majority of student respondents report that the program requires them to

work at the "upper limit of their ability." Employers tend to agree that the students are challenged in this way. In open-ended responses on the surveys, students in the program report that they have used their new research skills in a variety of ways, including to "drive change in curriculum" and to "analyze California Standards Test data to plan for improved instructional practices," On-campus interviews with students and employers confirmed these survey results. (CFR 4.8)

III. Findings and Conclusions

a. **Commendations**

The administrators, faculty and students interviewed expressed great enthusiasm and pride in the Ed.D. program. From the incoming President to new students in the program, people were excited about the impact the program is having on the culture of the College of Education and the institution as a whole; on the lives of students and alumni; and on the potential for improving community colleges and PreK12 schools in Southern California. Though the students served in the program are very diverse in race, ethnicity, professional experience, and career goals, they are united in their desire to improve their own practice and to have a positive impact on the education services that their schools and agencies provide.

The strong verbal support expressed by administrators is matched by their financial support, as they allow the tuition and system revenue generated by the program to be invested in the program. This has made it possible for the institution, and most particularly the College of Education, to create a culture of research to serve as the foundation for the program. This culture of research manifests itself in the form of, among other things, increased library support,

teaching release time for faculty to advise doctoral students and to strengthen their own research agenda, graduate student support for faculty members, research seminars, and support for C-REAL. Members of the community spoke enthusiastically about the culture of research and reflective practice that their schools and agencies are experiencing from participation in the CSUF Ed.D. program. (CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

Students interviewed were overwhelmingly positive about the Ed.D. program. They talked about clear expectations articulated in the handbook, on the web, and in course syllabi, which are reinforced through advising and through the research seminars. The student learning outcomes and expectations for student attainment are clearly stated at the course, program, and institutional levels. These outcomes and expectations are reflected in policies, curriculum, advisement, library and information resources, and the wider learning environment. The cohort model is especially popular among students, because it provides opportunities for students to interact with a diverse group of energetic and like-minded peers and to gain support from them. Students appreciate having access to a rigorous, local doctoral program that focuses on professional practice and addressing local needs. Finally, students described faculty members as competent, accessible, and caring. (CFR 2.3)

Faculty, students and community partners agree that the Ed.D. is consistent with the purpose and character of CSUF and in keeping with the expectations of the College of Education. The curricula are structured to foster ongoing student engagement in research and high-level professional practice. Expectations for learning and student attainment are developed and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and external stakeholders. Ed.D faculty members and community partners take collective responsibility for establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating the attainment of these expectations. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.4)

The Ed.D. program collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, student satisfaction, and employer satisfaction to support student success. The program regularly identifies the characteristics of its students and assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences. Faculty members and community partners interviewed were able to describe elements of the assessment system, how data are discussed, and how it is used to improve programs. CSUF became a member of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate in the fall of 2011. CSUF already has begun to take advantage of that opportunity by asking other members to evaluate the quality of CSUF dissertations. (CFR 2.10)

b. Recommendations

1. Participation in the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate will provide a good opportunity for CSUF to learn from other programs around the country, and it will also place CSUF in a position of national leadership in defining the nature of the Ed.D. CSUF is advised to see itself as a leader in this effort. (CFRs 1.1-1.3)

2. Continue to financially support the Ed.D. and the "research culture" that it is developing for the College of Education, the institution as a whole, and the local community. (CFRs 3.1, 3.5-3.6, 3.8)

3. Stay in touch with alumni to keep them engaged and to assess their impact on the field. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.8)

4. Continue to improve the three- and four-year graduation rates to a level of at least 75%. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.6-2.7)