

Charting Our Campus Future

California State University, Fullerton
Educational Effectiveness Review Report

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WASC



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON



Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Overview and Institutional Context.....	3
Chapter 2: Campus-Wide Planning	11
Long-term Integrated University Strategic Plan	11
The Integrated Strategic Plan.....	15
Concept Map of Planning Processes.....	15
General Consensus about and Understanding of the Campus Strategic Plan.....	16
Chapter 3: Student Learning and Its Assessment.....	18
Campus-wide Student Learning Goals	19
Accessible Evidence of Ongoing Process of Assessment and Improvement of Student Learning Outcomes	20
Student Writing.....	24
Campus-wide Student Learning Goals for Writing	25
Faculty and Student Resources and Programs for Writing.....	26
Student Writing Development	26
Chapter 4: Promoting Student Engagement and Success.....	29
Improved Advisement System.....	29
Assessment of Academic and Co-Curricular Student Engagement.....	34
Chapter 5: Integrative Essay.....	39
Overview.....	39
Summary of Educational Effectiveness Outcomes.....	40
Index of Criteria for Review.....	43
Supplemental Documentation	
Appendix A : WASC 2000 Letter	
Appendix B : Response to CPR Team Letter	
Appendix C : Irvine Campus Report, Distance Education Report, Ed.D. Report	
Appendix D : Index of Educational Effectiveness Indicators	
Appendix E : Inventory of Concurrent Accreditation and Key Performance Indicators	
Appendix F : Summary Data Form for Accredited Institutions	



Chapter 1: Overview and Institutional Context



In 2006-2007, California State University, Fullerton (CSUF, CSU Fullerton, or Cal State Fullerton) began the process of WASC accreditation re-affirmation. A series of research activities to identify—using an inclusive, transparent, empirical, and collaborative process—critical issues of concern to the campus was undertaken. Through the extensive process delineated in our October 2007 [Institutional Proposal](#) entitled “Charting Our Campus Future,” three themes emerged to guide our campus re-affirmation inquiry and institutional improvement process:

- Campus-Wide Planning (CWP)
- Student Learning and Its Assessment (SLA)
- Promoting Student Engagement and Success (SE)

The [WASC Steering Committee](#), a diverse and evolving group composed of faculty, administration, staff, and student members, coordinated the inquiry plan delineated in the Institutional Proposal. As documented in our [Capacity and Preparatory Review](#) report in Fall 2009, data collection and analyses were accomplished by task forces formed, whenever possible, by leveraging existing campus structures and resources. The diverse [membership](#) and the accomplishments of the task forces reported herein are evidence of our ongoing commitment to broad campus engagement throughout this re-affirmation process and are also strong indicators of our campus community’s commitment to future institutional improvement (Criteria for Review [CFR] 4.1, 4.6, 4.7).

In this document, we begin with an update of the institutional context (Chapter 1). The State of California experienced economic challenges that affected state budget allocations to the California State University (CSU) system during the course of this re-affirmation process. Nevertheless, as we document herein, CSUF continues to demonstrate its vibrancy and evolution as an institution committed to achieving its mission at the highest level. In Chapters 2, 3, and 4, we present the results of the extensive campus research program set forth in the Institutional Proposal. Chapter 2 details our accomplishments in Campus-Wide Planning, culminating with the update of our campus



strategic plan. That said, as will be evident throughout this report, we have already accomplished several other strategic initiatives since this process began. Chapter 3 demonstrates our accomplishments in the area of Student Learning and Its Assessment, and Chapter 4 addresses results of our inquiry into Promoting Student Engagement and Success. Finally, in Chapter 5 we provide a synthesis of all these findings as they relate to enhancing student and institutional learning now and into the next decade. In three appendices to the EER report, we provide an update on the WASC 2000 Action Letter ([Appendix A](#)), a response to recommendations contained in the CPR Team Report ([Appendix B](#)), and reports on three special topics ([Appendix C](#): Irvine Campus, Distance Education, Ed.D. Program).

CSUF is charting a course for the future with a clear educational mission and a strategic plan attuned to the opportunities and threats of California’s economic, political, and demographic environment. Our faculty and staff make use of multiple indicators of effectiveness to guide improvement through evidence-based decision-making with a strong commitment to shared collegial governance. In spite of the challenges presented over the past few years, CSUF continues to fulfill its mission and to chart its own destiny.

Institutional Context

Our mission statement (Table 1) articulates our purpose as a public comprehensive regional university committed to the traditions of teaching, scholarship, and service (CFR 1.1, 1.6, 2.9).

Enrollment Context. Cal State Fullerton is among the largest and most [ethnically diverse](#) campuses in the CSU. In Fall 2011, campus enrollment topped the system at 36,156 (28,919 full-time equivalent students, or FTES). The Fall 2011 census of the student body showed the following ethnic distribution: American Indian 0.4%, Asian/Pacific Islander 22%, Black 2.7%, Hispanic 32%, White 30%, Multiple Race Non-Hispanic 3%, Unknown 6%, and International Students 4%.

We serve our diverse student population well. As shown in Table 2, CSUF has awarded more than 26,000 undergraduate and 5,700 graduate degrees since beginning the WASC re-affirmation process in 2007. In a [recent analysis](#) published by the Education Trust, CSUF was recognized as a national leader in price, quality, and accessibility. Specifically, CSUF was one of only five institutions (from more than 1,200 four-year campuses examined nationwide) identified as serving low-income students effectively. Based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, [CSUF](#) is ninth in the nation in baccalaureate degrees awarded to minority

Table 1

Mission Statement

Learning is preeminent at California State University, Fullerton. We aspire to combine the best qualities of teaching and research universities where actively engaged students, faculty and staff work in close collaboration to expand knowledge.

Our affordable undergraduate and graduate programs provide students the best of current practice, theory and research and integrate professional studies with preparation in the arts and sciences. Through experiences in and out of the classroom, students develop the habit of intellectual inquiry, prepare for challenging professions, strengthen relationships to their communities and contribute productively to society.

We are a comprehensive, regional university with a global outlook, located in Orange County, a technologically rich and culturally vibrant area of metropolitan Los Angeles. Our expertise and diversity serve as a distinctive resource and catalyst for partnerships with public and private organizations. We strive to be a center of activity essential to the intellectual, cultural and economic development of our region.



students in 2011; CSUF is first in California and fifth in the nation in awarding bachelor’s degrees to Hispanics in 2011 (CFR 1.2, 1.5).

Organizational Context. As part of the CSU, Cal State Fullerton is subject to policies established by the California State Legislature and the CSU Board of Trustees (CFR 3.9). Campus governance is the responsibility of the President (CFR 3.10). The [Academic Senate](#) develops policy on curriculum, academic standards (including academic freedom), criteria and standards for faculty performance and other matters that, if approved by the President, become university policy. CSUF has a strong tradition of shared collegial governance, the so-called "Fullerton Way," which is generally characterized by extensive discussion, collaboration, and civility (CFR 1.4, 3.8, 3.11).

The university's instructional program is offered by eight colleges (Arts, Business and Economics, Communications, Education, Engineering and Computer Science, Health and Human Development, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics). Currently, 103 degree programs—including 54 undergraduate and 49 graduate programs—are offered. Since 2007 when our Institutional Proposal was submitted, six new degree programs were launched, including one bachelor’s degree, four master’s degrees, and the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. Additionally, a Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) program will begin in Fall 2012. Also exemplifying the vitality of the curriculum, as shown in Table 2, during that same timeframe nearly 250 new courses have been approved, including 101 and 146 new undergraduate and graduate courses, respectively (CFR 2.1, 2.2). This expansion in curriculum is a result of strategic leadership at the department, college, university, and system levels.

Policy Context. As an example of how governance functions, two ongoing projects at CSUF arose from CSU initiatives. In Fall 2009, the CSU began the [Graduation Initiative](#), a campaign to raise the freshman six-year graduation rate by eight percentage points and to halve the graduation rate gap between underrepresented minority and non-underrepresented students by 2015-2016. CSUF formed a joint Academic Affairs/Student Affairs Committee led by the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Programs to formulate and implement a campus plan.

Early results are encouraging. As shown in Figure 1, first-time full-time freshman six-year graduation rates exceed the CSU average and have improved from 48% in the Fall 1997 entering

Table 2

Campus Accomplishments during the WASC Review Process

Institutional Proposal
October 2007

Capacity and Preparatory Review
Team Visit March 2010

Educational Effectiveness Review
Report December 2011
Team Visit March 2012

Degrees Awarded

	Undergraduate	Graduate
2010-11	6,875	1,562
2009-10	6,481	1,394
2008-09	6,580	1,421
2007-08	6,344	1,328
<i>Total</i>	<i>26,280</i>	<i>5,705</i>

New Courses

Undergraduate	101
Graduate	146

Faculty Recruitment

	Gains	Losses
Fall 2011	+43	-35
Fall 2010	+19	-35
Fall 2009	+43	-32
Fall 2008	+57	-40
Fall 2007	+83	-43
<i>Total</i>	<i>+245</i>	<i>-185</i>
<i>Net Increase</i>	<i>+60</i>	

Campus Infrastructure

- Student Recreation Center - 2008
- Steven G. Mihaylo Hall - 2008
- University Police/Emergency Operations Center - 2009
- Eastside Parking Structure - 2010
- TriGeneration Plant - 2010
- Irvine Campus Relocation - 2011
- Children's Center - 2011
- Campus Residence Halls (Phase 3) and Dining Facility - 2011



cohort to 52% in the Fall 2003 entering cohort. Graduation rates of the major student [ethnic groups](#) (Black, Asian, Hispanic, White) across the same cohorts also show [upward trends](#), with increases particularly marked in Black and Asian students.

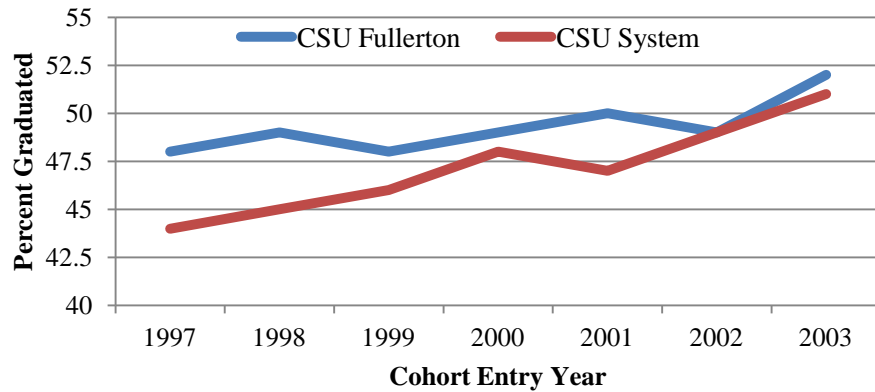


Figure 1. Overall six-year graduation rates for seven cohorts of first-time freshmen, 1997-2003.

In summer 2012, we will implement a system-wide initiative called the [Early Start Program](#) (ESP) to move students more quickly through math and English remediation. The ESP mandates that freshman students not demonstrating entry-level math or English proficiency begin remediation during the summer prior to their first year. CSU Fullerton already has a voluntary program similar to Early Start, and our [analysis](#) of retention and progress to degree outcomes among students beginning math remediation in summer versus fall shows the advantage of summer remediation. Members of the Graduation Initiative Committee presented [research findings](#) at a meeting of the Education Trust in Washington, D.C. in June 2010. [Early first-year retention](#) and academic status data collected at the end of spring semester of the second year (see Figure 2) for the Fall 2009 cohort suggest that early remediation will narrow the graduation rate gap and show overall gains in graduation rates in the coming years (CFR 1.2, 1.5, 1.7).

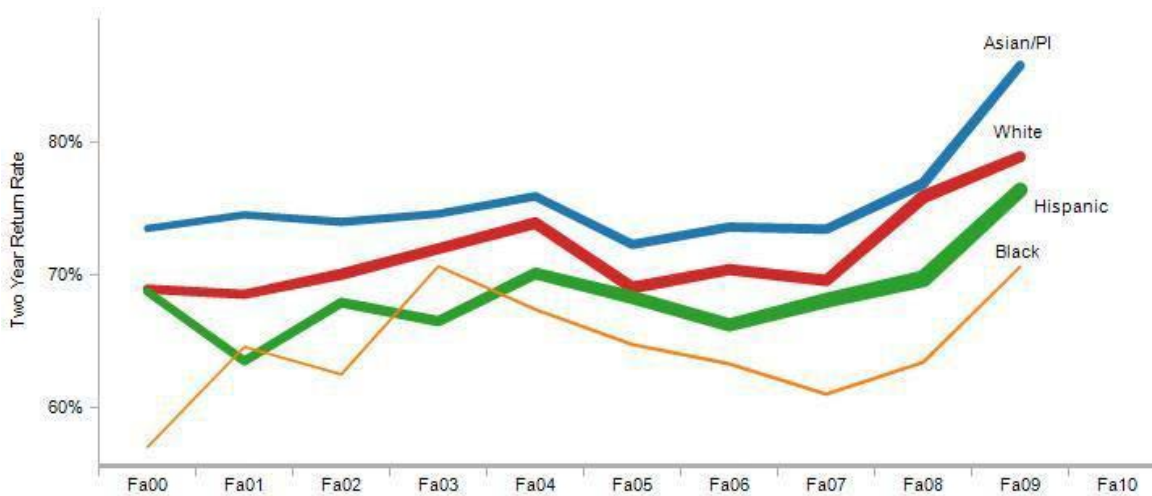


Figure 2. Trends in two-year return rates of first-time full-time freshmen by select ethnic group, Fall 2000-2010.



Human Resources Context. CSUF has also made significant [progress in faculty recruitment](#) (Slide 39) over the past few years. In the “Preliminary Self-Review under the Standards” conducted for the Institutional Proposal submitted in October 2007, the WASC Steering Committee identified three concerns related to staffing levels. At that time, rapid growth in student enrollment raised concerns about whether CSUF “employs personnel in sufficient number” (CFR 3.1); “employs a faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution sufficient in number” (CFR 3.2); and aligns “faculty and staff recruitment, workload, incentive, and evaluation practices with institutional purposes and educational objectives” (CFR 3.3). Faculty hiring recommendations are strategically determined by departments based on their current or future instructional program needs. Although the ongoing economic downturn negatively affected a strategic initiative to conduct 100 faculty searches per year from 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, the Faculty Hiring Initiative is [ongoing](#). Since the re-affirmation process began in 2007, it has resulted in the successful recruitment of 245 faculty members with a net increase of 60 new tenured/tenure-track faculty, as shown in Table 2. [Considerable support](#) (Slide 40) has been committed to probationary faculty to integrate them into the campus and to get their teaching and scholarly/creative work off to a good start.

[Faculty diversity](#) also continues to expand. Among tenured faculty in [Fall 2007](#), 24% were ethnic minorities and 37% were female; in [Fall 2010](#), comparable figures were 27% and 40%, respectively. This trend toward faculty diversity is projected to continue; among faculty in *tenure-track* positions in [Fall 2010](#), 37% were ethnic minorities and 48% were female.

Similarly, during this same timeframe, [diversity among management and staff](#) employees increased, with the number of ethnic minorities expanding by 2% from 49% in Fall 2007 to 51% in Fall 2010. Driven by the state budget crisis and efforts to focus on priority areas, overall management and staff positions declined by 3% from 2007 to 2010 (from 1,385 to 1,341). As identified in the WASC Visiting Team’s Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) report, despite declining staffing levels the university “has been laudably protective of existing permanent staff.” In addition, as recommended by the WASC Visiting Team, campus decisions regarding staffing reductions were made in a manner that protects core principles and values while monitoring and prioritizing continuity of services and support.

Since 1990, the campus has been led by Dr. Milton A. Gordon, only its fourth president since the university was founded in 1957 (CFR 3.11). At the University [Convocation](#) on September 13, 2011, President Gordon announced his retirement, and it is possible that the fifth CSUF president will be selected prior to the WASC visit in March. CSUF thrived under Dr. Gordon’s [tenure as President](#). The next campus president will assume leadership of a maturing campus built upon a strong foundation of shared collegial governance, coupled with strong financial planning and decision-making. These attributes provide the necessary stability for the campus to succeed within an unstable state fiscal context. Our house is strong, and the priorities set forth in President Gordon’s Convocation Address—which are aligned with evidence resulting from the research and planning efforts of the entire campus community—will keep the campus on course during this transition (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).



Fiscal Context. Development of the infrastructure of the 236-acre main campus has continued at a rapid pace. Additions to the infrastructure since the campus began the current re-affirmation of its accreditation in 2007 are listed in Table 2 and pictured at right. Many of these facilities are funded by user fees rather than through state funds, including the student recreation center, child care center, residence halls, and dining facility, or campus auxiliary financing, such as the police building.

This also has been a period marked by increased investment in sustainability, with all new buildings erected since 2006 meeting [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) certification standards or equivalent. The TriGeneration plant, constructed in 2010, generates roughly half of all power the campus uses. Other infrastructure and utility projects, such as solar panel installation and retrofitting campus lighting with energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures, significantly reduce campus energy costs, thus providing additional resources to support other university needs and priorities. CSUF is well known for its strong instructional technology infrastructure (CFR 3.6, 3.7), and this contributes to sustainability as well. For example, the recent roll-out of iPads to faculty has led to a reduction in printing costs.

CSUF relocated its Irvine Campus in Spring 2011, making a long-term commitment to the south county area; this is the largest official off-site center in the CSU. Additional information about the Irvine Campus is located in Appendix C.

The region has experienced a sustained increase in CSU-eligible high school graduates. However, the economic recession and state fiscal policies have clearly altered [CSUF's growth trajectory](#). In 2005-2006, CSUF emerged from a previous California budget reduction cycle and began a sustained period of enrollment growth that peaked at 37,765 in Spring 2009 (30,284 college year full-time equivalent students, 2008-2009). Baseline FTES funding was provided by the CSU Chancellor's Office to the campus in the year following each growth step between 2005-2006 and 2007-2008. The increase in baseline funding allowed the campus to meet the instructional demands of a growing student body and supported various campus initiatives, such as efforts to increase the number of tenured/tenure track faculty, to be sustained.

Because of state budget reductions, the CSU Chancellor's Office changed its practice and mandated that all campuses



Top to bottom: Student Recreation Center. Mihalyo College of Business and Economics. University Police Center. Eastside Parking Structure. Campus Residence Halls (Phase 3). Campus Dining Facility.



adhere to their budgeted FTES targets in 2009-2010. Despite having new student demand to justify much higher enrollments, CSUF stemmed its [growth trajectory](#) and maintained FTES equivalent to 2007-2008 funded levels. The budgeted campus FTES target has remained nearly constant since then. Growth in FTES and baseline funding early in the period between 2004-2005 and 2010-2011 allowed CSUF to maintain a strong student and faculty base in spite of turbulence caused by recent California state budget shortfalls.

CSUF operating fund revenue budgets between 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 increased from approximately \$296 million to \$316 million ([Slide 14](#)). However, funding sources for the revenue budget have changed dramatically, as shown in Figure 3. In 2007-2008, the university received \$1.85 in state operating fund revenue for every dollar in student tuition revenue.

In 2011-2012, it is estimated CSU Fullerton will receive \$0.64 in state operating fund revenue for every tuition dollar. Specifically, [tuition](#) charged to undergraduates increased by 56% from \$2,772 in 2007-2008 (exclusive of campus fees) to \$4,335 in 2010-2011. ([Tuition](#) is higher for graduate and doctoral students; commensurate graduate and doctoral tuition increases also occurred during this five-year period). In May and July 2011, the CSU Trustees again voted to increase undergraduate tuition by a total additional 23% for academic year 2011-2012; undergraduate fees rose to [\\$5,472](#), which is 97% higher than 2007-2008 undergraduate fees. Thus, students now bear a much larger burden of the cost of attending CSUF. In spite of this shift, student applications remain strong, and a [campus impaction plan](#) has been developed to manage enrollments when applications exceed new student enrollment capacity due to enrollment target restrictions and limitations in state budget allocation.

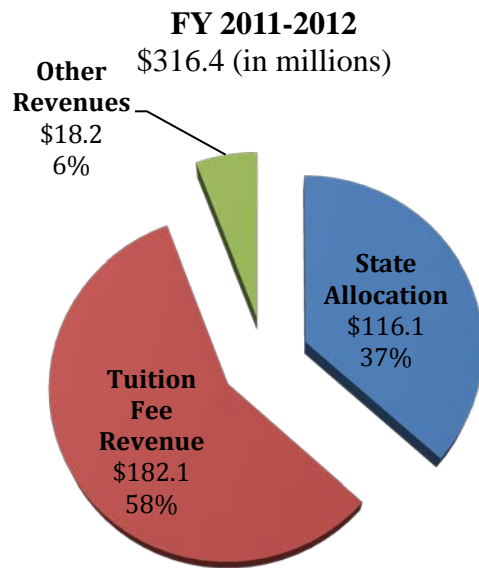
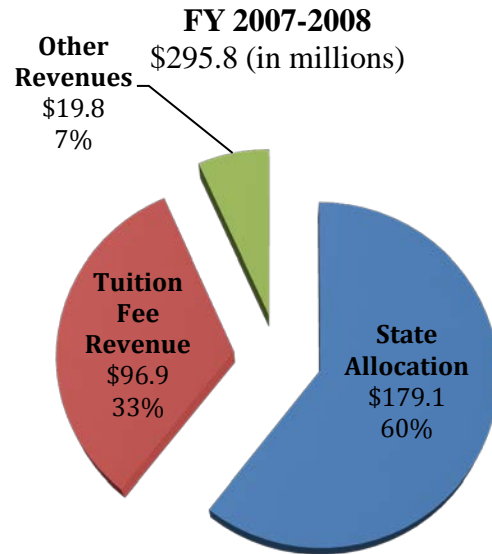


Figure 3. CSUF State Operating Fund: State Allocation and Revenues. Revenue sources shift from state allocation to student tuition fees, 2007-2012.



Despite total operating fund revenue increases of approximately \$20 million between 2007-2008 and 2011-2012, CSUF mandatory employer-paid benefit costs and state university grant (financial aid) increases totaling more than \$31 million (from \$79,248,151 to \$110,644,100) significantly reduced net operating fund revenue available to support and sustain academic programs, core student services, and other campus priorities. Prudent campus financial management and discipline in making baseline budget reductions rather than one-time reductions mitigated the impact of these significant increases in mandatory costs and enabled CSUF to continue to operate within annual revenue budgets. In 2010-2011, CSUF reduced its loan liability by \$2.9 million as planned and increased unrestricted reserves by \$26.6 million to \$82.5 million, strategically positioning the campus to mitigate anticipated 2011-2012 mid-year budget reductions, ongoing financial uncertainty, and potential additional 2012-2013 budget reductions while advancing strategic university priorities. CSUF will complete and submit 2010-2011 audited financial statements prior to CSU deadlines; complete audited financial statements will be available after Board of Trustee approval at the January 2012 meeting (CFR 1.8, 3.5).

In the following three chapters, procedures and outcomes of our task forces in addressing the research themes delineated in our Institutional Proposal are detailed in turn. Reflecting the collaborative process that engaged large numbers of the CSUF community, the chapters were written by multiple members of the WASC Steering Committee who participated in the task forces during the entire re-affirmation process.



Chapter 2: Campus-Wide Planning

The questions leading our campus-wide investigation on the Campus-Wide Planning (CWP) theme included the following:

- 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?
- How do we integrate and prioritize these indicators of quality with campus-wide planning?

In preparation for the EER, we sought to achieve three outcomes delineated in our Institutional Proposal:

- A long-term integrated university strategic plan.
- A concept map of all planning processes showing how they contribute to the strategic plan.
- General consensus about and understanding of the campus strategic plan and priorities.

Long-term Integrated University Strategic Plan

Concerns about the effectiveness of our campus-wide planning processes were raised during our WASC self-assessment when the campus was queried about strengths and problems of CSU Fullerton as well as in our institutional Self-Review under the Standards. The majority of each constituency surveyed at the time of our Institutional Proposal—students, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, administration, and staff—agreed that existing [campus planning and vision](#) were not adequate to the current needs of the university. Given that student enrollments had exploded in the years just prior to the survey, it is no surprise that our greatest identified concern was with “planning for enrollment” and establishing “planning [that] balances quality and enrollment.” In addition to identifying a need to establish a stronger connection between planning and growth, the survey revealed a campus-wide interest in better integrating planning processes across campus.

In the five years since completing our self-study, the economic downturn brought campus growth to an abrupt halt, at one point even necessitating a reduction in the number of students we could enroll. This downward change and the ensuing decisions we had to make regarding budget allocation, curriculum breadth and depth, student support services, and staffing sufficiency affirmed for us the importance of updating our campus plan and planning processes in a manner that would serve us in times of growth and times of reduction, through financial booms and financial busts.

CSU Fullerton has a long [history of strategic planning](#). As a result of several years of conversation, surveys, and focus groups, the campus established its [Mission, Goals, and Strategies](#) document in 1996. This planning document served for 15 years as a touchstone for all campus research proposals and internal reviews. In addition to the guidance provided by the *Mission, Goals, and Strategies*, the Academic Senate watches over the growth and review of the [University Policy Statements](#) (UPS) that outline academic and professional policies and processes by which our campus operates. The President’s Administrative Board, University Advancement, Academic Senate, and Academic Senate Executive Committee hold annual planning retreats. The following several examples of ongoing and recent activities demonstrate the campus commitment to planning (CFR 3.8, 3.11):

1. Through their own processes of faculty, staff, and administrative participation, Colleges and Divisions have created and made available mission statements and/or strategic plans, (e.g.,



[College of Communications](#), [College of Education](#), [College of Engineering and Computer Science](#), [College of Health and Human Development](#), [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#), [Mihaylo College of Business and Economics](#), [College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics](#), [Student Affairs](#), [Administration and Finance](#).) Division accomplishments are summarized on the website of the [Office of the President](#).

2. Faculty members build department annual reports and program accreditations from data provided by our Office of Institutional Research and Analytical Studies. Using these data, they identify indicators of quality and analyze their performance to demonstrate success or to identify those areas in which goals have not yet been accomplished. These reports are available on some college websites (e.g., [College of Communications](#), [College of Education](#), [Mihaylo College of Business and Economics](#), [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#), [College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics](#)) (CFR 1.3, 2.8, 3.8).
3. As per [UPS 410.200](#), departments and programs conduct [program performance reviews](#) (PPRs) on seven-year cycles (accreditation report to regional or national professional organization may be substituted for PPRs). The PPRs follow campus guidelines that themselves undergo review and revision. The reporting process
 - involves faculty, staff, and students;
 - includes extensive data analysis related to student admissions and enrollment, student learning outcomes, and faculty workload and engagement;
 - provides an analysis of these data and a review of assessment since the prior PPR was completed and for next seven years in a manner tied to planning and budgeting processes;
 - includes feedback from a team of internal/external reviewers whose report is integrated into the final document that is reviewed in writing by the College Dean and, finally, by the Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness and the Vice President of Academic Affairs (CFR 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.4, 4.6).
4. The University's plans to increase the available space for students to live on campus and, so, modify the long-standing commuter campus culture of CSU Fullerton to include a more established residential climate, culminated in Fall 2011 with the grand opening of the new "[Living Learning Community](#)" (CFR 2.9, 2.11).
5. The campus must make decisions in response to mandates and instruction from the CSU Chancellor's Office. For example, this past year, in response to decreased budgets and growing demand in our region, the institution was required to create a plan to control admissions. In Spring 2011, an ad hoc committee of faculty and administrators created an [impaction plan](#) for the campus that was informed by our campus goals for enrollment and accessibility. Ultimately, the committee developed a set of principles that will allow for necessary annual adjustments but maintain consistent awareness of the interplay among financial/academic/enrollment concerns (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.14, 3.8).

In developing the course of action we would use to create and implement a revised strategic plan and planning process that would meet the needs of our campus now and into the future, the WASC Steering Committee kept in mind the existing campus-wide culture of decision-making as well as the CSU/CSUF models of administrative leadership under which the plan would be implemented.



With little irony, the campus culture is identified by faculty, staff, administrators, and students as the “Fullerton Way,” a collegial, participatory system of shared governance and decision-making. We demonstrate great respect for being inclusive and for being members of a culture in which all voices are not only invited to speak, but are woven into the fabric of our campus identity. The culture of planning that exists on campus is nurtured by the rich inclusivity of the “Fullerton Way” that reaches across divisions, through the colleges and departments, and is apparent in both the process by which we developed our plan and the plan itself.

Be that as it may, the distinctive campus culture of shared governance exists in the context of the contrasting leadership models of the California State University and CSU Fullerton. The terms “transactional” and “transformational” that emerged from the CPR Visiting Team describe this contrast. Transactional leadership works from the top of the hierarchical structure, focuses on present issues, and relies on a model of the carrot and the stick, of rewards as inducement and punishment through sanctions. Transformational leadership acts from a long-term vision and internal motivation that goes beyond self-interest. No institution runs on only one or the other of these models. Much of our campus planning can be characterized by its collegiality and has emerged from local (departmental, program, college, divisions) transformational leadership whose work emanates from a vision for the future and from a commitment to one’s profession and students. However, our campus is also part of a state university system. Visioning and proactive response is tempered by changing enrollment targets and the threat of financial restrictions and sanctions. Expectations are short circuited by system-wide, often unfunded, mandates that must receive priority attention. The tension between the transformational leadership style we may prefer and to which we aspire and the transactional leadership style driven by state legislative budgets and system-wide decisions creates the synergy that fuels all campus planning and decision-making.

In the course of their work on campus-wide planning, then, the WASC Steering Committee and the Acting Director of Planning, Dr. Michael Parker, were guided by two goals:

- Satisfy external expectations for an up-to-date strategic plan in a way that honestly invites input from constituencies across campus and allows opportunities for the discussion and debate characteristic of the “Fullerton Way”
- Create a revised Strategic Plan and planning process that is responsive to the oppositional demands of a transactional and a transformational leadership

Throughout several years, as he guided the campus through a series of activities that would lead to the creation of our Integrated Strategic Plan, Dr. Parker collected, sorted, and synthesized a wealth of data from constituency groups across campus. In addition, he gathered, created, and made available numerous [resources](#) that explain concepts related to strategic planning and the history of planning at CSU Fullerton. Table 3 outlines the chronology of activities that led us to the creation of the revised Strategic Plan and planning processes and identifies the various groups and constituencies who participated. Most recently, the President charged a [Strategic Planning Steering Committee](#) of faculty, students, staff, and administrators with reviewing all the work that had taken place, the documents that had been gathered, and the recommendations that had been offered in order to develop the final draft of the Integrated Strategic Plan.



Table 3
**WORKING TOWARD AN INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN:
 TWO YEARS OF CAMPUS-WIDE ENGAGEMENT**

Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011
<p style="text-align: center;">PAB*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in guided discussion on quality and performance assessment <p style="text-align: center;">PRBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in discussions about the history of planning at CSUF, gaps in current planning strategies, and ways of rethinking institutional assessment Assisted in planning a workshop to define CSUF core activities 	<p style="text-align: center;">Constituent Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in a workshop to define CSUF core activities Received overview on approaches to strategic planning <p style="text-align: center;">PAB, Constituent Groups, Campus-Wide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received and reviewed the WASC Visiting Team letter <p style="text-align: center;">Campus-Wide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received results of workshop to define core activities Invited to propose campus planning initiatives <p style="text-align: center;">PRBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed campus SWOT analysis used to inform initial request for planning initiatives 	<p style="text-align: center;">COD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to propose planning initiatives <p style="text-align: center;">Constituent Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in a series of organized opportunities to propose planning initiatives <p style="text-align: center;">PAB, Campus-Wide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to review, rank, and provide feedback on analysis of proposed planning initiatives Received summary of feedback provided 	<p style="text-align: center;">PAB, Constituent Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the ranked planning initiatives and identified emergent planning themes <p style="text-align: center;">Campus-Wide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and invited to provide feedback in response to proposed planning themes and the related planning initiatives Received a summary of responses to proposed themes and initiatives <p style="text-align: center;">President Gordon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charged the Strategic Planning Steering Committee <p style="text-align: center;">PAB, Academic Senate, COD, Constituent Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received progress reports from Strategic Planning Committee (Summer) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Campus-Wide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received drafted strategic plan and invitation to provide feedback Invited to attend open forum meetings to discuss the drafted strategic plan <p style="text-align: center;">Academic Senate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received revised strategic plan <p style="text-align: center;">President Gordon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received and adopted Integrated Strategic Plan and made formal announcement to campus <p style="text-align: center;">PRBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided campus through strategic plan implementation and identification of initiatives consistent with approved strategic plan

*Prior to the charging of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, all events were planned and led by the Acting Director of Planning, Dr. Michael Parker
 PAB: President’s Administrative Board
 PRBC: Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee
 COD: Council of Deans
 Constituent Groups: Representatives from faculty, staff, administration, and Associated Students



It is important to note that prior to our CPR visit, two task force groups had conducted thorough analyses of the [indicators](#) of quality related to the Mission and Goals document and of the staffing needs of the campus (CPR, p. 16). The reports of these groups were made available to the campus and, ultimately, are discernible in the attention that the Integrated Strategic Plan gives to human resources and in the parameters for outcomes assessment that are part of our revised planning processes.

In the end, this rich and extensive progression of collecting, sorting, and synthesizing and the subsequent analysis and secondary synthesis resulted in an Integrated Strategic Plan and a planning process that will serve the short and long-term needs of our University.

The Integrated Strategic Plan

Our goal has been to reconsider the strategic planning that has guided our campus for many years and to create and implement a re-visioned strategic plan for the entire campus that reflects the changed realities of the 21st century. Such a plan acknowledges the link between performance and reward but also, perhaps more importantly, inspires individuals within the context of a collective vision to which we can aspire in times of both growth and retrenchment, when budgets are strong and when they are not. We sought to create a plan that reaches the appropriate balance between generality and specificity, forward-looking aspirations and present looking mandates.

As we have indicated, the [Integrated Strategic Plan](#) is consistent with the University's *Mission, Goals, and Strategies* document that was developed through collaborative campus processes and approved in 1996. As shown in Table 4, the strategic plan includes five major themes that provide an outline of priorities for action over the next five years: Academic Excellence; Student Success; Intellectual Climate; Human Resources, Technology, and Facilities; and Capacity Building. The themes articulated here were developed through a process that involved cross-campus participation and consultation.

Concept Map of Planning Processes

As described in the concept map (Table 5), the planning process to implement the Integrated Strategic Plan expands the process that had been used for many years. The process will be informed by ideas generated from current and earlier planning activities and involve ongoing consultation. Furthermore, all proposed initiatives related to the themes must identify

- the actions needed to accomplish the initiative,
- anticipated resources that will be required,
- position(s) or unit(s) that will be responsible for undertaking the actions and providing resources,

Table 4

Strategic Plan Themes

- Academic Excellence
- Student Success
- Intellectual Climate
- Human Resources, Technology, and Facilities
- Capacity Building



- anticipated and measurable outcomes and timeframes for completion of individual actions and the entire initiative.

[UPS 100.201](#), *Planning and Budgeting Process*, outlines a schedule for ongoing campus review of planning and budgeting priorities. This policy, written in 1985 and revised in 2010 to accommodate the growing complexity of our campus processes and structures, had already guided the campus through more than 25 years of decision-making. In fact, planning decisions made through the course of the past several informed and remained distinctly apparent in the Integrated Strategic Plan. As described in the concept map (Table 5), what distinguishes the updated process of strategic planning, reporting, and reviewing will be the manner in which the strategic plan and its themes are integrated into the annual planning processes of departments, colleges, and divisions as well as the University.

General Consensus about and Understanding of the Campus Strategic Plan

In order for the campus to reach consensus about and understanding of the recently approved and announced strategic plan, the entire campus was included in its development (Table 3). Throughout the past several years various cross-constituency committees—the President’s Administrative Board; the Planning, Resources, and Budget Committee; subsets of these groups; and the entire campus population—were all and each included in generating priorities, analyzing goals, developing indicators of quality, and reflecting on the process of planning itself. On the one hand, this commitment to being inclusive resulted in a fairly messy, non-linear set of processes. The direction in which the Plan developed was set slowly and incrementally each time input was invited. On the other hand, because of this recurring invitation for input, by Spring 2011, Dr. Parker’s work had resulted in a collection of more than 100 suggested projects for the campus. These projects and the documents and data that preceded them were provided to the ad hoc committee on planning for final distillation.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, charged by the President in the Spring of 2011 to synthesize these data and reflections into a strategic plan, conducted its work while continuing to engage the campus community. After determining the strategic themes emerging from the collected data, the Committee drafted descriptions for each theme and numerous goals to instantiate each. This draft of the Plan was presented

Table 5

Concept Map of Planning and Reporting Processes as Outlined in UPS 100.201

Fall semester: Divisional heads make budget reports to the President and Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee (PRBC) that include priority initiatives, initiative outcomes, and continuous improvement efforts.

Spring semester: Divisional presentations are made to PRBC that include proposals for priority initiatives aligned with Strategic Plan themes, related actions, responsible persons, anticipated outcomes, resources required, and timeframe for completion for the upcoming academic year.

Final planning and budgeting decisions will be made by the President in consultation with the Chancellor, President’s Administrative Board (PAB), CFO, Academic Senate, and Associated Students and consider PRBC recommendations.

Annual Reports submitted by all divisions, colleges, departments, and programs will identify goals for the upcoming academic year including initiatives aligned with Strategic Plan themes, related actions, responsible persons, anticipated outcomes, resources required, and timeframe for completion. Reports will also include goals from the past academic year, outcomes of strategic planning initiatives, and continuous improvement efforts based on strategic planning outcomes.



for feedback to various campus constituencies including the Academic Senate, Council of Deans, President's Administrative Board, and Associated Students, Inc. Informed by these meetings, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee disseminated a Strategic Plan draft to the campus community. All members were invited to submit feedback via a link provided within the online draft. In addition, the committee facilitated three Open Forums to provide further opportunity for review, discussion, and feedback. Strategic Planning Steering Committee members carefully reviewed and analyzed these results.

Respondents to the draft indicated strong agreement (95%) to the question: Are the Preamble and Strategic Themes integrated in the Strategic Plan draft aligned with the mission and direction of California State University, Fullerton? The steering committee made some final changes to the draft in response to feedback requesting advocacy language specific to an accessible, affordable public university and enhanced reference to the campus value of collegial governance across strategic themes. A [revised draft](#) of the Plan received unanimous approval by the Academic Senate on September 22nd, and a final version was submitted to the President on September 27th by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The President approved and announced the Integrated Strategic Plan to the campus community on October 11, 2011.

There is significance to the archeology of the process by which revision of our Integrated Strategic Plan was accomplished. The Plan was not created whole cloth from the heads of a few faculty or administrators. Rather, it emerged organically, informed by more than 25 years of strategic planning and shaped most recently by several years of campus-wide conversations about assessment and planning, core values and activities, a campus SWOT analysis, and open debates about our priorities and their feasibility. In the course of this organic process and the inevitable push and pull between and among those across campus who participated, consensus (though not necessarily complete agreement) and an understanding of the means by which the plan can be implemented were reached (CFR 4.2, 4.3).



Chapter 3: Student Learning and Its Assessment

The primary questions that guide our inquiry for the second theme, Student Learning and Its Assessment are:

- What are the student learning goals that we hold in common across baccalaureate degree programs?
- How are these learning goals articulated and achieved through curricular and co-curricular experiences?
- How can we improve the use of quality review processes such as the program performance reviews, annual reports, and discipline-based accreditation so as to assist departments in assessing student learning and using the results to improve their programs?
- How can student and faculty conceptions about what constitutes “effective writing skills” be aligned, and what existing and potential means of support would assist in developing such skills?

In our Institutional Proposal, five outcomes were established for the EER:

- A preliminary set of student learning goals that are held in common campus-wide.
- Accessible evidence of ongoing process of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes at the program and campus level.
- A set of campus-wide student learning goals for writing.
- A coordinated set of faculty and student resources and programs for writing to learn, writing pedagogy, and writing assessment.
- A public statement that articulates how we expect student writing to develop throughout the course of the baccalaureate degree.

The [Student Learning and Its Assessment Task Force](#) (SLA), as described in the CPR, continued its work through Spring 2011. Dividing into two subcommittees during 2009-2010, the task force reviewed learning outcomes from various campus resources. During 2010-2011, members identified and presented campus-wide curricular and co-curricular student learning outcomes.

Significant accomplishments are evident in CSUF’s process of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes. For academic programs and departments, annual reports and PPRs now focus explicitly on student learning outcomes. Student Affairs is continuing the implementation of a comprehensive assessment plan designed to improve student learning through co-curricular opportunities and experiences.

Writing Task Forces 1 and 2 focused their attentions on aligning campus perceptions about writing skills development (Writing Task Force 1) and providing the resources to inform students and faculty and the assessment tools necessary for articulating to the campus our expectations for student writing and writing development (Writing Task Force 2).



Campus-wide Student Learning Goals

To address the mission of creating a preliminary set of student learning goals that are held in common campus-wide, the SLA task force dedicated most of 2009-2010 to work in two subcommittees—a “top down” and a “bottom up”—to review documents for the purpose of identifying intended learning outcomes from curricular and co-curricular programs at CSUF. The “top down” subcommittee reviewed the following documents: [CSUF Mission, Goals and Strategies](#); [General Education: Goals for Student Learning](#); [AAC&U LEAP Goals](#); [Student Affairs Mission Statement/Services to Students and the Campus Community](#) and the [Student Affairs Student Learning Domains and Characteristics](#). The “bottom up” subcommittee examined academic program reviews in the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness and academic college websites to identify college, department, and program learning outcomes and create a [draft document](#) of where competencies were found.

The following year, 2010-2011, the reports from each subcommittee were compared to identify the themes common to the curricular and co-curricular learning objectives. The full Task Force reviewed both documents, and over a series of meetings identified six learning domains shown in Table 6 that represented curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes at CSUF. To explain and capture what is included, the SLA Task Force drafted several competencies for each domain. The competencies were reviewed numerous times to ensure breadth and relevancy within each domain while reducing redundancy.

During the Spring 2011 term, the Task Force presented the [draft learning domains and competencies](#) to several campus leadership groups including the WASC Steering Committee, Council of Deans, Academic Senate, Department Chairs, and the Student Affairs Executive Committee. Feedback from all groups was overwhelmingly positive. Suggestions provided by members of these groups were used to continue the work of the Task Force in finalizing the learning domains (Table 6) and clarifying the competencies within each domain. The Task Force completed a preliminary set of [University Learning Outcomes](#) (ULOs) held in common campus-wide at the end of Spring 2011 and created the Learning Synthesis Model displayed in Figure 4, which maps the process by which students who complete their education at CSUF achieve the desired outcomes.

In early Fall 2011, the Academic Senate Executive Committee unanimously endorsed the ULOs and forwarded them to the three university-wide curriculum committees (University Curriculum Committee, Graduate Education Committee, and General Education Committee) for review (CFR 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.11). By November, these committees as well as the Academic Senate also endorsed the ULOs.

Table 6

University Learning Outcomes Domains

1. Intellectual Literacy (knowledge acquisition)
2. Information Integration, Application & Synthesis (knowledge application)
3. Communication Skills (knowledge demonstration)
4. Leadership
5. Diversity
6. Global Perspective

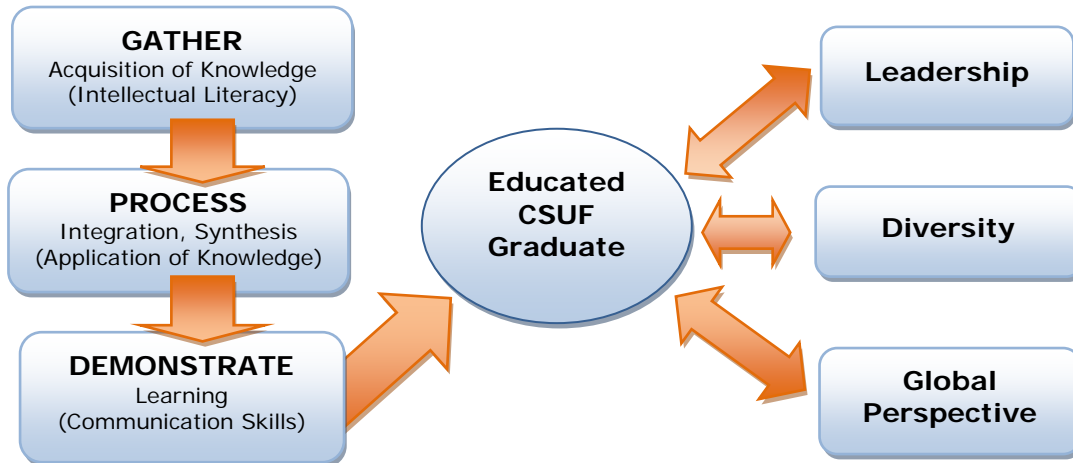


Figure 4. Learning Synthesis Model depicting the process by which students who complete their education at CSUF achieve desired learning outcomes.

Accessible Evidence of Ongoing Process of Assessment and Improvement of Student Learning Outcomes

The second outcome identified in our Institutional Proposal for Student Learning and Its Assessment is to have accessible evidence of the ongoing process of assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes at the program and campus level. In addition to establishing the [University Learning Outcomes](#), departments and programs, in both academic programs and Student Affairs programs, have completed extensive work and analysis followed by the incorporation of findings into the ongoing improvement of programs.

Academic Departments and Programs

Academic departments and programs actively have pursued an agenda of establishing the means for assessing and improving student learning outcomes. Undergraduate and graduate degree granting programs have developed learning goals and outcomes that are posted on the University [website](#). Departmental [annual reports](#) require a systematic review of assessment activities and educational effectiveness, and those same issues are addressed in the [program performance review process](#) (CFR 2.7). Assessment findings appear in the college annual reports posted on the University website (e.g., [Humanities & Social Sciences Annual Report](#)).

Undergraduate and graduate academic departments and programs also have established a broad array of methods to assess student success in terms of learning goals and outcomes. Some strategies, such as faculty-student research projects, portfolios, e-portfolios, practica, course-embedded assessments and/or juried performances, are suitable for varying stages of undergraduate and graduate student careers. Others, such as capstone courses, senior projects, senior theses, comprehensive examinations, and/or licensure examinations, reflect the student's overall success in his or her academic program. The Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness collects evidence from departments and programs demonstrating their use of assessment results to "[close the loop](#)" and improve student learning (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6).



To assist departments in refining their student learning goals and in establishing assessment plans, a two-day workshop led by Dr. Mary Allen, a nationally recognized leader in assessment, was held in January 2011. More than 40 faculty from 12 departments participated. In some instances, departments revised their learning goals and developed assessment rubrics. Additionally, Dr. Allen met with several individual departments and the Division of Student Affairs to review their assessment plans and suggest further refinement.

Because the January workshops were so successful, Academic Affairs and the Faculty Development Center invited Dr. Allen to return to campus and consult with faculty from several departments over two days in November 2011. The result of the consultations included mentoring on program improvement based on assessment findings, refining assessment plans, and affirmation of overall systematic approaches to assessment.

A learning matrix integrated with an e-portfolio can assist departments and programs with a web-based means of collecting and analyzing data. The [Epsilon e-Portfolio Pilot Project](#) is a collaborative effort involving 10 departments or programs, the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness, Office of Distance Education, and Faculty Development Center. It is funded by a \$45,000 University Mission and Goals Initiative grant. The goals are to (1) align student learning goals from a course level assignment through to the university level; (2) use curriculum maps to implement data collection and assessment; (3) create a balance between individual discipline needs and interdisciplinary insights and expertise; and (4) incorporate external stakeholders in the process. By January 2012, the 10 participating teams will have their learning matrices and e-portfolio plans in place for assessment during spring semester 2012 (CFR 2.4, 2.5, 2.7).

This year's annual Program Performance Review and Assessment Institute, held in October, had as its theme "Preparing for the Program Performance Review: Using Assessment Findings to Improve Student Learning and Program Effectiveness." One highlight was honoring the History Department with the 2011 Advancement in Assessment Award. The award panel was especially impressed with "how the culture of the department has been transformed to embrace rather than disregard assessment. Also noteworthy is the department's implementation of a capstone/culmination experience for students in the 490T courses where the department's learning outcomes for majors are assessed." Previous award winners include the Departments of Biology and Anthropology, and the Business Communication Program in the Department of Marketing. In addition to recognition, departments receive \$2,000 for this award.

Co-Curricular Programs

The Division of Student Affairs at Cal State Fullerton oversees a wide variety of student programs and services including Intercollegiate Athletics and the Associated Students Inc. auxiliary. Student Affairs operates from a dual paradigm perspective – student services and student learning/development. Student services such as financial aid, housing, and student health are primarily designed to provide support to students that allows them to stay enrolled and progress towards their degree objective. Student learning/development programs such as leadership workshops, counseling, and student clubs are primarily designed to provide a student development focused experience, a co-curricular learning environment for all students. Many programs, services, and interventions in Student Affairs fall into both categories. Certainly, evaluation and assessment are important tools in all Student Affairs operations.



Starting in 2005-2006, the Division of Student Affairs established assessment of student learning in the co-curriculum as a priority. By Fall 2007, a division-wide assessment committee was created and charged with the development and implementation of assessment strategies. After conducting a comprehensive review of pertinent CSUF documents, learning outcome models from professional associations, and learning outcomes and best practices from other higher education institutions, the committee developed five division-level learning domains. The five learning domains were then defined more comprehensively by corresponding characteristics statements. Finalized in Spring 2009, the [Learning Domains and Characteristics](#) were introduced for assessment efforts across the division (CFR 1.5, 2.3, 2.11, 2.13).

Published and distributed in July 2011, the [Student Affairs Assessment Briefing Book](#) for 2009-2010 provides a summary of ongoing assessment efforts. The ambitious and far-reaching assessment plan of student co-curricular learning is completing a full cycle as evidenced in the *Briefing Book*. This publication represents a sample of the student learning assessment projects (9 of 15) completed in 2009-2010. It documents assessment results and how the outcome data will be used to improve programs and services in Student Affairs. Two of the projects, New Student Programs and the Student Leadership Institute, are highlighted as examples.

[New Student Programs](#) provides numerous engagement opportunities for current CSUF students to interact with potential students, incoming freshmen and transfer students, and to participate in other welcoming activities. As part of the training, the program uses a rubric to rate the public speaking skills of orientation leaders. During the previous three summers, 56 leaders participated in the three-stage process. Assessed in 10 different areas, leaders receive written feedback following the rubrics and oral comments through discussions with a Senior Coordinator. With rubric ratings from novice to expert, the combined ratings of the orientation leaders during the first stage indicated 58 expert rankings. By the third stage, leaders received a total of 240 expert rankings. As a result of the analysis, New Student Programs will identify public speaking areas that need to be improved and will work toward increasing inter-rater reliability through more in-depth training for evaluators ([pp. 24-25](#) of the *Briefing Book*).

As part of the Leadership and Multicultural Development Programs, the [Student Leadership Institute](#) (SLI) provides skill-building workshops, leadership positions, and experiential and reflective opportunities while participating in a two-semester certificate program. To ascertain the effect of the SLI on learning, a survey of 927 CSUF Institute alumni who participated in the program between 1991 and 2008 was administered. The findings indicate that the SLI is effective in developing leadership skills that remain current and relevant over time. Using the data from the survey, the Institute anticipates strengthening its relationships with alumni, analyzing and revising the current curriculum to reflect a developmental process of building leadership concepts and skills, and developing more advanced opportunities for those students who enter the program with leadership experience ([pp. 12-14](#) of the *Briefing Book*) (CFR 4.8).

Building on the success of the 2009-2010 assessment projects, all the departments in Student Affairs have completed assessments of student learning and identified methods to use the results to enhance programs and activities to increase future student learning. The 2010-2011 assessment publication that includes all departments in Student Affairs is underway with an anticipated completion date of



January 2012. A revised and updated Student Affairs [assessment website](#) that includes all departments is available and will be updated when the 2010-2011 Student Affairs Annual Report and the 2010-2011 *Student Affairs Assessment Briefing Book* are published (CFR 4.3, 4.6).

Having focused on learning outcomes assessment for the last three years, Student Affairs is now pursuing a broader [assessment plan for 2012-2015](#) that will include an inventory and analysis of the assessment methods being used in the Division and establish an improvement agenda based on the results. Inventory efforts have already begun with a listing of [Student Affairs Assessment Activity 2009-2011](#). Additional topics include consideration of how to use and disseminate findings more broadly and how to best sustain the assessment efforts.

General Education

The General Education (GE) Committee continues to focus on implementing and updating an assessment plan for the program. A plan developed during the furlough year by the 2009-2010 GE Committee did not receive the support of the Academic Senate Executive Committee at that time. Therefore, drafting and implementing a GE Assessment Plan became a priority for the 2010-2011 GE Committee. The Committee unanimously approved a formal statement about the [role of Assessment in General Education](#). This document forms the guiding principles for the [GE Assessment Plan](#).

The GE Committee launched the first phase of the assessment program in an effort to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed plan, including its workload impact. In addition to the members of the GE Committee, the participants in the first phase included 16 faculty from six departments with classes in [GE Area A](#) (Core Competencies). These faculty participated in a one-day workshop in January 2011 led by Dr. Mary Allen, a nationally recognized expert in assessment and GE, to design a specific plan and rubric for subareas A1 (Oral Communication), A2 (Written Communication), and A3 (Critical Thinking). The faculty used these rubrics in their own classes in Spring 2011 and reconvened at the end of the semester to share their observations with the full GE committee (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 3.4).

The overwhelming response of the participants in phase one was that they valued the assessment task, although for a variety of different reasons. The faculty most appreciated the opportunity to talk to colleagues in other departments about what they do in their respective classes and discovered that there was much more coherence and continuity across classes than they anticipated. The faculty felt that they were approaching the GE learning goals from very different perspectives, but were achieving the same fundamental outcomes.

What transferable skills have you gained through General Education Curriculum at CSUF?

“Social skills, public speaking abilities, tolerance and appreciation for people of different ethnicities and backgrounds.”

“I have learned to communicate effectively (written and orally). Also, I have learned a great deal about the sciences, as well as, history of the United States and the world. I am prepared to participate in a variety of conversation topics, and I have truly gained insight that has helped shape me as a civic minded person I am today.”

Source: Academic Advisement



The faculty representing GE subarea A2, Written Communication, used the opportunity to create a rubric that could be used in multiple assessments. Starting with the [rubric](#) designed by the Writing Task Force 1 and 2, they adapted the criteria to suit the needs of assessing writing in GE as well as to explore the developmental progress of majors within the department. The results of the assessment indicate that while the writing of first-year students is generally at a level we would expect, it is weakest in the area of readability and correctness. In contrast, the writing of students completing the upper-division writing requirement is generally scored at the level of “proficient,” except in the area organization and analysis. As will be described in the Student Writing section of this chapter, the WASC Writing Task Force worked with the GE Committee and the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics to create and test a single scoring rubric that can be used for assessing writing across disciplines and over time.

The success of the initial assessment should not be undervalued. In 2009-2010, the GE assessment plan was not viewed favorably by the Academic Senate Executive Committee. In response to significant concern on our campus about the role of assessment, the 2010-2011 GE Committee wrote a document to clarify the purpose and how assessment would and would not be used. Additionally, the fact that faculty were successful in their initial assessments and actually stated that they *valued* the experience marks a growing shift in the climate of the campus (CFR 4.1, 4.6, 4.7).

The second phase of the GE Assessment Plan began in November, 2011. GE Committee members and faculty representatives from multiple GE areas participated in a one day workshop with Dr. Mary Allen. Assessments plans and rubrics for Area B (Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning) will be designed during Spring 2012 and implemented in Fall 2012.

Because the GE assessment plan is ambitious, it will take time and support to sustain. Assessment requires a substantial commitment of faculty time. The Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Programs readily provides financial support for additional training in assessment for current and future teams. Internal ongoing expertise and clerical support will be necessary. As the assessment for other areas of GE commences, the diversity of departments involved in each category may bring additional challenges due to the great heterogeneity in classes. The role and work of the GE Committee will need to be redefined and clarified. Even with these challenges, assessment of the General Education Program is progressing well.

Student Writing

The second portion of the theme Student Learning and Its Assessment focused on issues related to student writing skills. In particular, this section sought to understand

- How can student and faculty conceptions about what constitutes “effective writing skills” be aligned, and what existing and potential means of support would assist in developing such skills?

In our Institutional Proposal, three outcomes were established for the EER:

- A set of campus-wide student learning goals for writing.
- A coordinated set of faculty and student resources and programs for writing to learn, writing pedagogy, and writing assessment.



- A public statement that articulates how we expect student writing to develop throughout the course of the baccalaureate degree.

The campus-wide survey that was developed and conducted in 2006 in anticipation of writing our Institutional Proposal revealed contradictory perceptions about how well we “ensure the development of [student] writing skills.” Whereas 40% of students who responded to the survey believed that the way by which campus “programs ensure the development of writing skills” is a “strength” of CSU Fullerton, 48% of full-time faculty, 47% of part-time faculty, and 36% of administrative staff reported this to be a “weakness” of the campus. The faculty/administration perception was corroborated by results of the Steering Committee’s Self-Review under the Standards (CFR 2.2).

Focusing on the contradiction between student and faculty/administration perceptions, our campus committed itself to determining a means for aligning conceptions of “effective writing skills” and providing better identification of and access to the “existing and potential support [that] would assist in developing such skills” in the [Institutional Proposal](#) (p. 9). Throughout the last five years, two Writing Task Force committees were charged with assignments that would meet our commitment to resolving the misaligned expectations and unavailability of resources (CFR 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.13).

Although this research process spanned multiple years, there was noteworthy consistency in faculty participation on the two Task Forces. Writing Task Force 1 was created and charged in Fall 2007. Membership included faculty representation from all colleges, a staff member, and a student. Most of the same faculty volunteered to be members of Writing Task Force 2. The fact that staff and student membership was more varied is, it seems, less a reflection of members’ interest than it is a reflection of schedules and availability. Since the same core group of faculty worked together throughout the years of our study, they remained impressively focused from year to year, making possible an important degree of coherence among and across the annually assigned tasks. A different but equally important kind of coherence was achieved with the campus community through outreach to college, departments, committees, and programs across the University. By means of college- and program-wide data collection, campus-wide surveys, and committee-based reports, the outcomes, rubric, and resource site described below already enjoy an important degree of campus awareness and respect.

As we indicate below, each academic year began and ended with a clear charge, plan, and set of goals that collectively allowed the accomplishment of the three SLA Outcomes for writing that are identified in our [Institutional Proposal](#) (p. 11). Unfortunately, the current economic situation prevented the campus from hiring a Director of Writing, a faculty position proposed in the [Institutional Proposal](#) (p. 10) and included in the suggested membership of Writing Task Force 1 and 2. Although some conversations have begun regarding such a position, current budget restrictions have slowed the process for the time being.

Campus-wide Student Learning Goals for Writing

Through the course of several meetings, as a means of developing a set of campus-wide student writing learning outcomes that would align campus perceptions of “effective writing,” Writing Task Force 1 collected from a representative cross-section of colleges existing writing rubrics that departments and programs had developed for faculty and student use. The Task Force compared



these 20+ rubrics and created a list of shared qualities that were then sorted into larger sets of characteristics. The Student Learning Writing Outcomes and Guidelines for Assessment document was drafted with the intent “to be useful for both students and faculty . . . [and to provide] students with a general sense of what outcomes faculty expect to see in successful college writing” (CFR 1.2). Acknowledging the need for disciplinary identity, the preamble to the document explains that “[s]ince each discipline has its own particular conventions and expectations, faculty are encouraged to engage in conversations that will help them to adapt these general guidelines to their specific discipline, their individual classes, and their unique writing assignments.”

To determine whether the drafted Student Learning Writing Outcomes and Guidelines for Assessment would be both representative of the collective campus perspective and useful campus-wide, the Task Force created and distributed a faculty and a student [campus-wide survey](#), the results of which were received in March 2010. Both students and faculty agreed that this set of outcomes is useful for assigning writing, completing writing assignments, and assessing writing. An overwhelming 88% of the faculty who responded to the survey said they would consider using the outcomes in their classes. Similarly, 82% of student respondents reported that they would rely on outcomes such as these when they completed college writing assignments.

Once the survey data were analyzed, revisions were made to the [Student Writing Learning Outcomes and Assessment Guidelines](#) which are now posted on the website of the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness (CFR 1.7, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6).

Faculty and Student Resources and Programs for Writing

In Fall 2010, Writing Task Force 2 began collecting writing resources from on- and off-campus websites and from their departmental and college colleagues. The committee then looked at the large number of collected resources and created a list of the *best* writing resources available to CSU Fullerton faculty and students. That is, it determined which resources were most current, most useful for interdisciplinary writing needs, and most inclusive of other resource sites. In anticipation of creating a webpage, the Task Force sorted the resources into one group for students and another for faculty. It is important that both sets of resources are available collectively. Faculty then know what information students are being provided—and can easily make suggestions to the Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness for additions and updates—and students know the ways in which faculty see and write about academic support for the development of student writing skills. Placing the information for [students](#) and for [faculty](#) on the website for the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness sets issues of writing skills and assessment in the in the broader context of student learning outcomes and assessment (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.13).

Links to the Writing Resources from student tutoring centers, and, eventually the student portal will benefit both faculty and students. Faculty teaching or proposing GE courses, which have a required writing component, will have easy access to the information, and students will be more aware of the outcomes, rubric, and writing resources (CFR 2.9, 2.13, 3.4, 4.7, 4.8).

Student Writing Development

To make a useful statement that articulates writing development throughout the course of a baccalaureate degree in a form that can be easily understood and applied by students and faculty,



Writing Task Force 1 developed a writing assessment rubric that embeds the student writing learning outcomes into a feature analytic structure.

Given that GE Core Competency category A2, Written Communication, was to be among the first categories for which the campus would develop strategies to measure student learning, the Task Force took this opportunity to integrate the work of the Writing Task Force with the charge of the GE Committee. Members of the Task Force, working with additional faculty on the GE Committee, revised the analytic rubric to create one whose feature descriptors for “below basic,” “developing,” “proficient,” and “advanced” writing would roughly parallel the development of writing along the baccalaureate continuum. That is, the rubric “articulates how we expect student writing to develop throughout the course of the baccalaureate degree” (CFR 2.2, 2.5, 2.6). The [writing assessment rubric](#) is found on the Writing Resources link on the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness website. The rubric provides general guidelines for effective academic writing. Each major field of study has its own particular sets of conventions and course-specific writing requirements and may adjust or expand the rubric accordingly.

In the Spring of 2010, the rubric was pilot tested in several sections *Introduction to College Writing*, the writing course that fulfills GE category A2 requirements for written communication. Participating faculty reported that the rubric is especially useful for helping students see the characteristics of “effective” college writing in general and to distinguish one skill level from the next. In order to assess how effectively the course helps students achieve the objectives as represented by the rubric, several faculty members scored the final essay from a randomly selected group of students. For comparison, a second set of final essays, randomly selected from *Advanced College Writing*, were also scored with the rubric.

In terms of *focus, analysis and organization*, and *readability and style*, the essays from the introductory course were most frequently rated as “developing” and “proficient,” and those from the advanced writing class were most frequently ranked as “proficient and “advanced.” While this scoring affirms our expectations about students writing, the findings also reveal that students in the introductory classes scored lowest in the area of *readability and style*. While it is possible that additional instruction would be helpful, given improvement rate evidenced in the advanced essays (25% proficient increased to 66% proficient), this may also be an area in which skills development occurs outside of formal writing instruction. In contrast, while the advanced writers’ essays were consistently ranked as “proficient” in two of three areas, 44% of the essays were rated as being “proficient” and 33% as “developing” in the area of *analysis and organization*. Given that this is likely the final academic writing instruction that students will have at CSU Fullerton, instructors may need to give more attention to students’ analytic and organizational skills. These issues will be raised with instructors as they plan their classes for future semesters and with tutors who are working with students and their drafts.

Looking forward, the available Student Writing Learning Outcomes, Writing Rubric, and Writing Resources provide the scaffold necessary for helping students, faculty, administration, and staff to align their perceptions of and expectations for college writing skills. The English department, keeper of the lower division GE writing course, will continue to sample and assess student essays; departments across campus that offer writing courses that fulfill upper division GE will be encouraged to do the same. The outcomes created by the Writing Task Force committees are



available to support and inform the direct and indirect writing instruction that occurs across campus. Aware that our commitment to developing student writing skills does not end with the completion of our Educational Effectiveness Report, we have added questions about student writing to our most recent administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collected in Spring 2011. While the results of this report arrived too late to be included in the analysis conducted by the Writing Task Forces, it is certainly worth noting that both first year students' and seniors' responses to questions about the number and quality of writing assignments and the quality of writing instruction were significantly higher than those reported by the other participating campuses. Items on which CSUF student responses on the NSSE were rated significantly higher than those of students in the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College comparison group are listed in Table 7. These results will be shared with writing instructors and will inform future assessments of writing instruction and programmatic decisions.

Table 7

NSSE 2011 Sample of Items on which CSUF Student Ratings Were Significantly Higher than Those of Students in the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College Comparison Group

Student has done...	Instructor has done...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brainstormed to develop ideas before started drafting• Talked with instructor to develop ideas before started drafting• Talked with a classmate, friend, etc., to develop ideas before started drafting• Received feedback from your instructor about a draft before turning in final assignment• Received feedback from a classmate, friend, etc., about a draft before turning in final assignment• Visited a campus-based writing/tutoring center to get help before turning assignment in• Used an online tutoring service to get help before turning an assignment in	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do• Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn• Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment• Provided a sample of completed assignment written by the instructor or a student• Asked you to do short pieces of writing that he or she did not grade• Asked you to give feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline the classmate had written• Asked you to write with classmates to complete a group project• Asked you to address a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.



Chapter 4: Promoting Student Engagement and Success

The overarching question that guides the inquiry for the third theme, Promoting Student Engagement and Success, is

- How can we better promote student engagement and success by means of our teaching, mentoring, and advising and make the best use of our resources in order to achieve this objective?

According to our Institutional Proposal, the EER outcomes are to:

- Create an improved advisement system that demonstrably facilitates student success.
- Establish a permanent working committee to review student engagement research results and recommend actions, and to monitor the impact of campus strategic initiatives to promote student engagement and success.

As indicated in the CPR, two task forces were charged to accomplish Theme 3: SE 6 dedicated to advising and SE 7, the Student Academic Life Committee, related to student engagement.

Improved Advisement System

As identified in our [Institutional Proposal](#) (p. 15), “the consistency of the quality of advisement across units” was uneven. At the time the CPR was written, our campus confronted several new advising challenges. Introduction of the Titan Degree Audit (TDA, a software system for tracking major, minor, and general education requirements) required students, staff, and faculty to become familiar with, and develop advising practices centered on, the TDA. An Academic Advising Certificate in Excellence, a professional development opportunity for advisors, only recently had been established. A critical campus study was underway to pinpoint the reasons for graduation deferrals. In addition, the CSU began a system-wide initiative to facilitate student success through improving graduation rates.

The efforts of the campus converged to create significant progress in advising and evidence of improved student success as demonstrated by the work of the SE 6 Task Force, Academic Advisement Center, Institutional Research and Analytical Studies, and the Improving Graduation Rate Committee. The [charge for SE 6](#) challenged its [members](#) to identify the advising models on our campus, improve the awareness and accuracy of the TDA, implement professional development for advisors, and identify the amount invested by the campus that pertains to funding advising. The purpose of the [Academic Advisement Center](#) (AAC) is to advise students on general education requirements, University policies, and graduation requirements. Staff from the Center work collaboratively with numerous campus departments, centers, committees, and organizations and have been involved with various WASC task forces since

“Academic advisement is seen as a priority at CSUF. A successful academic career is a shared responsibility between the students, their faculty, and their academic advisors. The University’s responsibility truly begins and ends with the achievement of a focused, intentional goal of the same message from every voice.”

*Dr. Steven Murray
Acting Vice President,
Academic Affairs*



the beginning of our current accreditation cycle. Several successful outcomes of improved advising initiated by the SE 6 Task Force and the AAC are highlighted.

Advising Models

The SE 6 Task Force successfully identified and summarized advising practices across our campus and compared them with advisement practices at 19 other universities around the country. As on our campus, models of advising at other institutions include faculty advisors, professional advisors, centralized advisement centers, and/or advisement integrated within courses of the major. One additional and highly successful component on our campus is the incorporation within the first course taken in a major of a strong, integrated presentation on the availability and use of advising tools.

In collaboration with the College of Health and Human Development (HHD), the AAC embedded advising within a course required by the various majors and presented comprehensive information concerning GE, major, and graduation requirements. Last year, the integrated model was expanded to serve the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (H&SS) and the Honors Program. The primary objectives of the model are to have students understand the requirements of their entire degree, to decrease graduation deferrals, and, ultimately, to facilitate graduation (*AAC Annual Report*, [p. 8](#)) (CFR 2.12, 2.13, 2.14).

Titan Degree Audit (TDA)

Numerous improvements to the TDA have been made since its introduction. For example, an email notification system has been introduced that informs newly admitted transfer students that their transcript evaluation is complete and that acceptable units have been added to their TDAs. The TDA has been adapted to the new GE alignment implemented in Fall 2011 for both incoming freshmen and transfer students. Most of California's community colleges already use the A-E categories that comprise the new system for CSUF, and transfer students are familiar with the categories (CFR 2.12, 2.14).

As part of an Academic Technology Summit held in June 2011, various options for improving the TDA were discussed. The campus plans to move toward a more graphic representation of a degree progress report in requirement categories (e.g., General Education [GE], majors) and by individual requirements in text form (e.g., particular courses). However, the top priority is to ensure accurate information, especially pertaining to repeated courses and equivalent credit for courses taken elsewhere.

Training Academic Advisors

A major component of improving advisement is the investment in training advisors. The SE 6 Task Force and Academic Affairs hosted an all-day campus-wide event, the Academic Advisor Professional Development Conference, in November 2010. Based on more than 200 responses to a pre-conference needs survey (*AAC Annual Report*, [pp. 36-39](#)), the conference agenda included a variety of presentations ([p. 47](#)) concerning policies, probation, graduation deferrals, GE, and the TDA. A total of 134 participants attended the workshops. Survey results regarding the conference indicated that 98% agreed/strongly agreed that the material covered was relevant to their role as advisors, 96% rated the overall conference as above average/excellent, and 100% indicated they would attend other conferences related to academic advisement practices. Outcomes from the conference identified the need for advisors to be involved in the development and implementation



phases of advising improvements. Suggestions for improvement included increasing the accuracy of the TDA, allowing a note-taking system/comment box to be incorporated into the TDA, and creating more accountability for the graduation check by students, staff, and faculty (pp. 46-49).

In another effort to educate advisors across the campus and to ensure accurate and consistent advisement is provided to students, AAC collaborated with the FDC to host two interactive informational sessions reviewing the GE realignment and the new TDA. In addition to the two sessions hosted in the FDC, identical presentations were conducted for advisors at the Irvine Campus and for the Psychology Department. Before the presentations, 55% of advisors rated their knowledge as “above average/excellent;” after the presentations, 100% of advisors rated their knowledge as “above average/excellent.” Similar presentations will be provided continuously throughout the transition period (pp. 40-42).

In preparation for New Student Orientation, AAC hosted an event for campus-wide teams of advisors. Using actual case studies and sample TDAs, participants discussed the GE realignment and other advising issues. The rating of GE realignment knowledge went from 57% “above average/excellent” to 88% “above average/excellent” as a result of the presentation (pp. 43-44).

The AAC created an Academic Advising Certificate in Excellence (AACE), a nationally acclaimed professional development model, which includes online training. Since the inception of AACE, more than 250 faculty and staff advisors across the campus have benefitted from the clear, accurate, and easily accessible training. During 2010-2011, the expansion was somewhat limited because of budget constraints. However, AAC developed a standardized curriculum that is used internally to train new advisors. The course consists of a four week curriculum with clearly outlined and measurable learning objectives, as well as methods of assessment. As an addition to the curriculum, three video podcasts were created addressing the policies for withdrawals, unauthorized withdrawals, and incompletes.

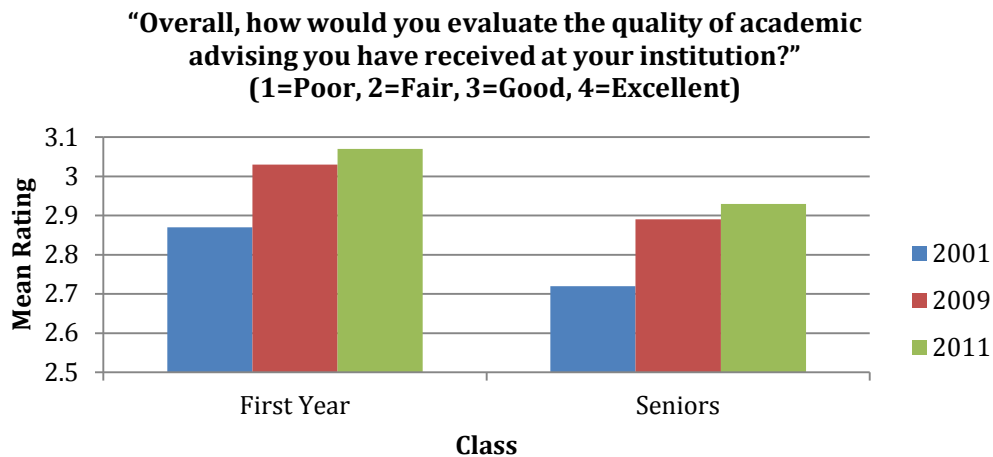


Figure 5. Mean student ratings of quality of academic advising on NSSE, 2001-2011.

The ultimate goal of the professional development of staff and faculty advisors is to decrease deferrals and improve overall graduation rates as indicated by the ongoing analysis conducted by



Institutional Research and Analytical Studies. Another indication of improvement of advising at CSUF is evident in repeated measurements of student ratings of advising on the NSSE since the last WASC visit in 2000. As shown in Figure 5, there was a significant change from 2001 to 2009 for freshmen, $t(970) = 2.76, p < .01$, with improvement steady from 2009 to 2011. A similar pattern was observed for seniors, $t(1158) = 2.65, p < .01$.

Addressing Retention, Probation, and Graduation Deferrals

Perhaps the most remarkable areas of demonstrable student success are found within the efforts to support students on probation and those potentially receiving graduation deferral notifications.

To increase the retention rates of first-time freshmen (FTF), the AAC increased the points of contact support (online tutorial, Academic Contract, January Workshop, small group advising, online student support tutorial, and meeting with an instructor) resulting in an increase in student participation from 2009 to 2010. As shown in Table 8, after completing their second semester, 40% of students in the Fall 2010 cohort were removed from probation, as compared to 29% among the Fall 2009 Cohort. The percentage of FTF who continued on probation dropped seven percentage points, and those who left the university decreased by four percentage points ([pp. 64-67](#)).

Table 8
*Comparison of Spring Academic Standing for 2009 versus 2010
First-time Freshman Fall Probation Cohorts*

Action	Fall 2009 FTF Probation Cohort	Fall 2010 FTF Probation Cohort	Percentage Change
Probation Removed	29%	40%	+11% Improvement
Academic Disqualification	27%	27%	+0% No change
Continued Probation	31%	24%	-7% Improvement
Left with Probation	13%	9%	-4% Improvement

Another area where retention is an issue concerns transfer students. In a proactive effort, the AAC and Associate Deans from three colleges conducted probation workshops for transfer students. The AAC developed a specialized probation [video podcast tutorial](#) addressing the probation issues and needs of transfer students and required that participants view the podcast prior to attending the workshops. The podcast identifies practices that differ from community colleges such as grade forgiveness and cumulative versus CSUF GPA. Prior to watching the video, 27% of students rated themselves as having “above average/excellent” knowledge about probation and disqualification; after watching, 90% rated their knowledge as “above average/excellent” ([pp. 31-34](#)). Students demonstrated their new understanding about the seriousness of their situation when asked to identify one action step to avoid academic disqualification, as shown in Table 9 (CFR 2.14).



As part of the CSU Chancellor's initiative to improve graduation rates, the AAC analyzed nearly 4,700 May 2009 undergraduate candidate records. The analysis indicated that 22% (1,038 students) of the sample received graduation deferral notices due to a deficiency in requirements ([p. 58](#)). The deficiencies included not meeting major requirements, not completing the required 120 units, and/or an insufficient GPA, for example. A similar study conducted within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (H&SS) in 2006 produced comparable results ([pp. 58-59](#)).

Deficiency notifications are typically sent after graduation, precluding students from making any adjustments to their schedules prior to the anticipated date of degree completion. As a strategy to assist students, the AAC developed "Celebrating Our Seniors," a presentation specifically designed for seniors in H&SS that reviewed how to read the graduation check, identified common reasons for deferral notification, and provided solutions for preventing deficiencies. The presentations were offered during the first two weeks of the Spring 2011 semester when students still had the opportunity to change their course schedule if necessary. Of the 137 students who participated, 21 students (15%) prevented a deferral and postponement of graduation. Another 7% avoided a deferral notice by postponing their graduation date to complete a requirement they were not aware of prior to the session. In an effort to create long term sustainable change, the AAC is working in close collaboration with the new leadership of the Graduation Unit. The end goal is that students receive an email or text regarding their graduation deficiencies prior to their last semester registration period ([pp. 8-13](#)). Deferral and deficiency notifications will be tracked systematically.

Additional Efforts to Improve Advising

Along with improved undergraduate advising, recommendations for graduate student advising were proposed. Using current study plans as templates, the recommendations are threefold: (1) to develop a TDA or create web-based study plans for graduate students; (2) to provide training for new and continuing faculty advisors and office staff; and (3) to create a better electronic means of tracking the required 3.0 or better GPA.

After identifying the advising practices at CSUF, the annual costs of all identifiable advisement activities on campus were quantified. The estimate of approximately \$6.1 million per year includes any advisement that moves students closer to graduation. Knowledge of current advisement costs will facilitate accurate projections for the cost of implementing recommendations for future enhancements ensuring sustainable long-term planning.

The final charge of the SE 6 Task Force was to create a new Professional Advisement Development Committee that would focus on professional development for academic advisors. Comprised mostly of representatives from colleges and advising centers and under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Programs, this committee is responsible for ongoing training for advisors and maintaining updated web-based information for all advisors. The plan includes: (1) one

Table 9

Probationary Student Comments in Response to Video Tutorial on Probation

"I think having the video really allowed the information to sink in as to what probation really means and the consequences I am facing are severe. Thank you."

"I'll treat class the same way I treat my job. I'd never viewed school this way before, and had always taken a more relaxed approach to academics."



or two academic advising conferences each year; (2) the development and maintenance of online training programs via the Academic Advisement Center (AAC); (3) the institutionalization of the Academic Advisement Center's successful Academic Advising Certificate in Excellence (AACE) online advisor certification program; (4) the provision of assigned time for faculty who do significant amounts of advising; and (5) training workshops on academic advising for undergraduate and graduate advisors. The [Professional Advisement Development Committee](#) was convened in October 2011.

The work of SE 6, the Academic Advisement Center, the Improving Graduation Rate Committee, and the analyses provided by Institutional Research and Analytical Studies, clearly illustrate that CSUF's improved advisement system demonstrably facilitates student success (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 4.5). The active, new Professional Advisement Development Committee is creating and implementing effective strategies to further enhance high quality advising at all levels. The expansion of advising strategies pertaining to retention, probation, and graduation deferrals should continue to demonstrate a positive impact with data available at the end of the current academic year (CFR 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 4.5). Continuing efforts will address additional technological advances in the TDA. CSUF is well-situated to sustain the improvements and continue to use data to increase retention and graduation rates.

Assessment of Academic and Co-Curricular Student Engagement

In the campus Institutional Proposal submitted in Fall 2007, the outcomes were to establish a permanent working committee to review student engagement research results and recommend actions, and to monitor the impact of campus strategic initiatives to promote student engagement. Actions and accomplishments are displayed in Table 10.

After considering four standardized tools for assessing student engagement, the SE 4 task force recommended the use of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (CFR 2.10). In Spring 2009, invitations to 2,500 freshman and 2,500 seniors to participate in the web-based version of the NSSE yielded responses from 842 freshmen and 1,025 seniors (37.3% response rate).

At the time of the CPR, the [members](#) of the Student Academic Life Committee (SALC), a standing committee of the Academic Senate, were reviewing the results of the Spring NSSE 2009. Since the CPR, SALC assumed ongoing responsibility for reviewing campus student engagement research results, recommending actions, and monitoring the impact of campus initiatives to promote student engagement. In its [annual report](#) to the Academic Senate for the 2009-2010 academic year, SALC recommended that the results of NSSE 2009 be shared and discussed with the parties who could take action on improving them.



In line with this strategy, SALC prepared an [interactive presentation](#) in Spring/summer 2010 to share the NSSE 2009 results with various campus constituencies, including but not limited to college deans, department chairs, Academic Senate, Division of Student Affairs, and the Board of Directors of Associated Students, Inc. Highlights of the NSSE results are included in the [College Portrait](#) on the campus website; [reports from NSSE](#) and the interactive presentation are posted on the Institutional Research and Analytical Studies website.

Prior to sharing the results during each interactive presentation, attendees were asked to [rate 17 NSSE items](#) on two dimensions: (1) the importance of the item for students to have a high quality educational experience at CSUF and (2) each attendee’s individual ability to impact the students’ experiences of that item. Items were from two of the NSSE scales (Enriching Educational Experiences [EEE] and Student-Faculty Interaction [SFI]); these two scales were selected for emphasis because the campus results were relatively lower than at comparable institutions. Based on the combined ratings of importance and control, audience members were asked to identify several of the items with high totals. Next, the results for several of these important items under their control were discussed by viewing the frequency data on the aforementioned presentation and the summary of [mean comparisons](#). Attendees seemed quite engaged during the interactive presentation. In response to requests during the presentations, NSSE results were disaggregated by ethnicity and college for further review (CFR 2.10).

Following the interactive presentations in Fall 2010, college deans were asked by [SALC 2010-2011](#) to submit an [action plan](#) for their college. They were asked to identify three to five items from the NSSE for intervention, strategies to address each item, a timeline, and an assessment plan. During Spring 2011, SALC received [responses](#) from all colleges with undergraduate students (Arts, Communications, Engineering and Computer Science, Health and Human Development, Humanities and Social Sciences, Mihaylo College of Business and Economics, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics) and from Freshman Programs and Student Affairs. SALC reviewed the action plans and discussed feedback to be given in response to each. [Feedback from SALC](#) was disseminated to each unit in late Spring 2011 (CFR 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8).

Table 10	
<i>Student Engagement Assessment</i>	
	Fall 2007
Student engagement theme identified in Institutional Proposal	
	Spring 2008
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) selected as assessment tool	
	Spring 2009
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) administered to 5,000 students	
	Fall 2009
Student Academic Life Committee (SALC) asked to review NSSE 2009 results	
	Spring 2010
SALC developed interactive presentation of NSSE 2009 results for dissemination	
	Fall 2010
NSSE 2009 presentation shared with various campus leadership groups	
Colleges and programs asked to review NSSE 2009 results and submit action plans	
	Spring 2011
NSSE 2011 administered to all freshmen and seniors	
SALC reviewed college action plans on NSSE 2009 and provided feedback to colleges and programs	
SALC forwarded recommendations to President’s Administrative Board and PRBC (Planning, Resources, and Budget, Committee)	
	Fall 2011
SALC will synthesize findings of NSSE data (2001, 2009, 2011), communicate results to campus, and coordinate plan to assess college-based interventions	



SALC recommended in its 2010-2011 [annual report](#) that its functions be formally amended in the Academic Senate bylaws to reflect its new responsibility to review NSSE results, identify areas for improvement, and recommend procedures to address them. The committee recommended that the process it instituted in 2010-2011 be continued. In addition, to close the assessment loop, SALC will monitor implementation of action plans over time. Given that the NSSE will be administered every two years (instead of every three years as planned during the CPR preparation), SALC recommended developing a timeline to streamline the process. Because the units completed their action plans in Spring 2011 (when the NSSE 2011 data were being collected), the NSSE 2011 may be most appropriately viewed as a second baseline measure to the NSSE 2009.

SALC forwarded [recommendations](#) for funding priorities to improve student engagement to the President's Administrative Board and to the Planning, Resources, Budget, and Planning Committee, based on items addressed most frequently and with greatest emphasis in the unit action plans. This year, those items included (1) working on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements, (2) discussing career plans with a faculty member or advisor, and (3) practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment. SALC recommended that student-faculty research collaborations be encouraged by providing greater incentives to faculty to involve students in research projects and that faculty be rewarded in the RTP process for such efforts; that vacant advisor positions be filled to enhance capacity for career advising; and that faculty with significant advising responsibilities be provided assigned time (CFR 2.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7). The latter recommendation mirrors the recommendation of SE-6 (see *Improved Advisement System* section on page 29). Related to the first recommendation and Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) outcomes, President Gordon announced in Fall 2011 ([Slide 16](#)) funding for 75 one-course releases for faculty scholarly and creative activities at an estimated cost of \$445,000 and establishment of a \$1,000,000 program for faculty research support. The impact of these and other efforts in terms of student-faculty interaction can now be gauged using the NSSE as one indicator. As discussed in the next paragraph, the new 2011 NSSE results show similar patterns to those observed in 2009.

[SALC 2011-2012](#) reviewed the NSSE 2011 data during Fall 2011. [Results](#) indicate, although the effect sizes were small, that our campus scores continue to be relatively lower than those of our comparison institutions on two scales, SFI and Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). The [multi-year benchmark](#) report shows that both SFI and EEE means have improved for seniors, although both constructs showed a small decline among freshmen. These are not surprising outcomes given the timing/maturation of ongoing campus efforts to improve the underlying elements that make up the two constructs coupled with the economic turbulence experienced by students in recent years. The improvement in senior experiences on both items suggests some progress has occurred since the NSSE 2009.

In terms of sustainability of efforts to enhance student engagement, it is clear that SALC has enthusiastically embraced this responsibility. Given that the process of developing action plans involves colleges, a recent action of the Academic Senate to include a faculty member from each of the eight colleges on all standing committees should facilitate this process (SALC had only five faculty members for the past several years). This will also address a challenge raised by the chair of SALC regarding continuity across time. Although there is strong continuity in administrative representation on SALC over time, the chair and faculty members serve two year terms, creating a rotating faculty membership. There should now be four faculty members continuing from one year



to the next, rather than only two or three. Another indication of the sustainability of this practice is that colleges and other units may build the review of the NSSE into annual reports or program performance reviews; the College of Humanities and Social Sciences has already implemented this practice.

A potential challenge to the institutionalization of this process is the ongoing cost of administering the NSSE. Additionally, the effectiveness of interventions may be difficult to assess when periodic revisions of the NSSE instrument are made, as we understand will happen between the 2011 and 2013 assessments. The opening of new campus housing or events beyond the control of the campus (e.g., employee furloughs in response to budget cuts) may also complicate assessment of interventions over time. However, events such as these also provide important incentives for ongoing and careful assessment of student engagement.

In addition to SALC, a second working committee, the Promoting the Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE), was constituted to enhance student-faculty collaboration in the areas of scholarship, research, and creative activities. This committee continues implementation of the recommendations of the SE 5 Task Force described in the CPR. During 2010-2011, PURE reported the following actions/accomplishments:

- Award of incentive grants to seven faculty members for projects involving undergraduate students;
- Design, administration, and analysis of a survey of faculty on research involving undergraduate students in research;
- Representation of the campus at the [CSU Undergraduate Research Leadership Conference](#) at CSU Channel Islands in April 2011; and
- Identification of two faculty members to coordinate undergraduate research during 2011-2012.

The report on the [Faculty Survey on Undergraduates in Research](#) was issued in June 2011. A total of 229 full-time faculty responded to the online survey, which was conducted during Spring 2011. Key findings of the survey revealed:

- 80% of faculty respondents reported including undergraduates in their research during 2010-2011, most frequently supervising undergraduates in developing individual projects (73%), involving undergraduates in literature review/analysis (52%), and supervising undergraduates in conducting laboratory projects, and/or supervising students in managing, collecting, and/or analyzing data (40%).
- 49% of faculty respondents spent between 1 and 4 hours weekly mentoring or supervising undergraduate students in their projects, and an additional 17% reported spending more than 10 hours per week.
- 50% of faculty respondents worked with between 1 and 5 students during the year, and an additional 23% worked with between 6 and 10 students.
- Faculty perceive that student experience with research and creative activities significantly enhances student development in communication skills, innovative thinking processes, working independently, getting along with others, and understanding/applying research methods.
- An overwhelming majority of faculty respondents reported that, as a result of collaborating with undergraduate students on research and creative activities, they better understood the



needs of their students (87%), the types of preparatory skills/courses that students need before doing research (93%), and the importance of undergraduates' involvement in research (81%). Faculty (84%) also learned about teaching and mentoring methods.

- Major barriers discouraging faculty members from supervising or mentoring students in research and creative activities included the time required to mentor undergraduates (69%), lack of funding (54%), and no recognition in the retention/promotion/tenure process (31%).

Currently both SALC and PURE are working side-by-side to improve student engagement. In addition, the Division of Student Affairs, including Associated Students, Inc. (ASI), continues to monitor and promote student engagement in a wide variety of ways. Examples of monitoring student engagement include [ASI Engagement Reports](#) and [utilization statistics](#) imbedded in the Student Affairs Annual Reports. Examples of the promotion of student engagement can be found in the programs and services of the Division of Student Affairs departments viewed via [departmental websites](#). The promotion of student engagement is also a highlight of a major campus initiative, the “Titan Student Involvement Center,” which students access via their student portal (see [example](#)). Because the data collected from the Titan Student Involvement Center interface with the CSUF student data system, data will eventually be analyzed using a wide spectrum of involvement and outcome variables including NSSE results, departmental engagement reports, and other assessment tools. Continued collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs demonstrates that improving student engagement is a priority on our campus.



Chapter 5: Integrative Essay

Overview

When we started the process of re-affirmation in 2006, who would have anticipated that the federal economy was about to take its most severe downturn since the 1920's, that the state of California would be at the leading edge of that downturn, and that for its part, Cal State Fullerton would be handed an unprecedented series of budget cuts? Who would have predicted that our campus would be crippled by a state-wide employee furlough, would declare enrollment impaction, and, in a matter of only weeks, be served with conflicting orders to raise and then lower targets at the risk of losing state funding? For the first time in its history, two campuses in the largest and most prestigious state university system in the country have tipped the funding balance that defines California's support for higher education away from state support and toward private funding. And we at Cal State Fullerton find ourselves on the brink of an administrative leadership reconfiguration that will result in our having new Associate Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents, and, most significantly, a new campus President.

Yet, in the face of these unanticipated and unpredictable circumstances, not only have we reached the point of successfully completing the final report of our WASC re-affirmation, we have successfully accomplished every goal that we set for ourselves in our Institutional Proposal six years ago. Furthermore, we have included the participation of an off-site campus that is larger than many free-standing institutions of higher learning and an on-line instructional component that reaches across the campus, through the regular academic curriculum, and into free-standing programs.



As Cal State Fullerton faces the future, not knowing the members or the configuration of our campus higher administration and with little certainty about the health of state and federal economies, we are buoyed by the confidence that comes from a history of strong and enduring shared governance and a functioning collegial philosophy that, together, have provided the foundation for our success in updating campus planning with the creation of an Integrated Strategic Plan; creating sets of campus-wide, measurable student learning goals; and establishing several campus-wide programs that have improved student success and promoted student engagement.

Needless to say, the actual cost of conducting and completing such a long re-affirmation process is enormous and required considerable institutional support along with the commitment of substantial time and money. Beyond the hours and dollars that we can count are the conversations, meetings, and public and private discussions that were remunerated in ways that do not appear on the shaded boxes of the outlook calendar or the financial ledger. These are the benefits of this six-year process that are difficult to measure. For while none of us would argue for WASC to continue this arduous and unwieldy five-year model for reaccreditation, it is because we devoted more than half a decade



to conducting and completing the process, that we were able to accomplish a great deal with the assurance of ongoing high quality. We planned for change and made the change happen. We created processes that will assure that the change is sustained well after our EER visit is completed. In fact, while the re-affirmation process proceeded, many of policies and structures initiated on account of the WASC review have lost their WASC identity. That is, they have become part of the campus culture—and in this way are likely to thrive and to retain the campus investment necessary for their sustenance. In the same way that our initial task forces were built from pre-existing campus structures and committees, the work that will continue after WASC re-affirmation is integrated into those pre-existing structures as well as new ones that have been created and are already functioning. Indeed, to affirm for ourselves the future of the work we had begun, we used the questions posed regarding the “sustainability of effectiveness plans” in [Table B](#) to create our own [Ten-Year Plan for Sustaining Effectiveness of Student and Institutional Learning](#). The processes identified in this plan are well-integrated throughout the institution and ensure the on-going quality of campus educational effectiveness. Occurring annually, biannually, or on prescribed rotations, these processes guarantee our commitment to accomplishing and sustaining the goals first set in our Institutional Proposal.



Summary of Educational Effectiveness Outcomes

Related to campus-wide planning, we created and enacted a process to identify our most current campus priorities and develop a long-term Integrated Strategic Plan that builds on the planning of the past in a way that both respects pre-established values and promotes attention to values aligned with the present and directed toward the future. We have established linkages between planning processes and strategic objectives in a manner that includes the integration of distance learning and off-site instruction at our Irvine campus. To accomplish the application of this plan, our campus data sources and planning processes have been inventoried and integrated and a planning process has been established.

To improve student learning and its assessment on our campus, we continue to engage in organized and systematic campus conversations about campus-wide learning goals. As a result of these conversations, we made information about learning goals and assessment more accessible and have created an infrastructure and sets of resources to support the development and implementation of high quality assessment practices in all programs and colleges. In particular, faculty members are provided with instructional resources related to GE instruction and baccalaureate-level learning goals. To assure the continuation of the processes we have begun, the Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness working in collaboration with faculty from across campus will use direct and indirect assessments to collect evidence for the student learning outcomes we want students to achieve. Similarly, we will continue to implement and use systematic means for gathering of evidence regarding co-curricular activities. Our assessment processes will reach beyond measures such as grade point average or degree completion to continually improve our programs.



Committing ourselves to the importance of student engagement, we have created and enacted a number of avenues for enhanced academic advising, improved graduation rates, and increased attention to the need for providing more training for graduate student advising. We created an improved advisement system that demonstrably facilitates student success. We expanded the charge of a standing committee to include the review of student engagement research results, to recommend actions, and to monitor the impact of campus strategic initiatives to promote student engagement and success. In addition, we conducted a follow-up survey that confirmed faculty members' reports that developing and teaching on-line courses require considerable time and effort. We instituted student identity verification procedures.

We have collected, documented, and assessed evidence of the educational effectiveness of our campus in an exponentially inclusive process. First, in our Institutional Self-Study, we provided evidence for and an assessment of our success in meeting each CFR. Next, we collected and assessed evidence to demonstrate how well we met the requirements of the supplemental changes made to the CFRs in 2008 ([Table A](#)) and the new requirements of the institutional review process also made in 2008 ([Table B](#)). The culmination of evidence collection and assessment appears in the [EER Framework](#) (see Table 11). It is in the Framework that inclusive and expansive evidence for the educational effectiveness of our campus is comprehensively documented. The policies, procedures, documents, and structures explicated in the Framework are inclusive of evidence provided in the Self-Study and Tables A and B. Furthermore, the Framework distinguishes the evidence that existed at the time of our Institutional Self-Review from those evidentiary items created since and includes a rating for each element of educational effectiveness. We are confident that Cal State Fullerton's educational effectiveness outcomes are those of a "developed/highly developed" learning organization. Importantly, as demonstrated in our [Ten-Year Plan for Sustaining Effectiveness of Student and Institutional Learning](#), not only do we have the structures in place to support a level of educational effectiveness required by WASC and desired by our campus, we also have the necessary momentum and anticipatory planning to assure their continuation and growth and to provide the philosophical and practical insurance we will need in the next years and the decades to follow.

Table 11

Conclusion: Educational Effectiveness Framework

Based on the evidence detailed above, we are confident that our institution can best be described as *Developed* and moving toward *Highly Developed* in the three educational effectiveness categories provided in the Framework. In summary, with respect to each of the three categories assessed in this Educational Effectiveness Framework rubric:

- 1. Learning**
Learning outcomes are established for university, programs, courses; they are communicated and used by students, faculty, and staff; assessment uses multiple methods, produces improved student learning (including co-curricular), and results are widely available.
- 2. Teaching/Learning Environment**
Educational experiences are aligned with learning outcomes and informed by good learning practices; faculty are rewarded/supported by campus policies and resources.
- 3. Organizational Learning**
Many indicators of educational effectiveness are used and systematically reviewed at multiple levels; results of this process are used to inform budgeting, decision making, and planning; educational effectiveness data contribute to a culture of inquiry and evidence, and they are widely available/disseminated.

(page 15 of 15)

[More...](#)



In conclusion, we must acknowledge that the process of re-affirmation could not have ended successfully—nor would the promise of sustained attention to student and institutional learning have been secured—were it not for the diligence of faculty, staff, students, and administrators who are dedicated to sustaining and advancing our shared vision of California State University, Fullerton. This massive endeavor truly reflects the spirit and realization of the “Fullerton Way.”



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
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Index of Criteria for Review

The following index shows the page of the EER report on which specific criteria for review (CFRs) are referenced. Previous documents, including the Institutional Proposal (particularly “Self-Review under the Standards Institution-Wide”) and the Capacity and Preparatory Review Report, also provide evidence of how Cal State Fullerton meets the CFRs.

CFR 1.1	4, 23	CFR 2.14.....	12, 30, 32, 33, 34
CFR 1.2.....	5, 6, 23, 25, 26	CFR 3.1.....	7, 12
CFR 1.3	12	CFR 3.2.....	7, 12
CFR 1.4.....	5	CFR 3.3.....	7, 12
CFR 1.5	5, 6, 22	CFR 3.4.....	12, 23, 26
CFR 1.6.....	4	CFR 3.5.....	10
CFR 1.7	6, 26	CFR 3.6.....	8
CFR 1.8.....	10	CFR 3.7.....	8
CFR 2.1	5, 36	CFR 3.8.....	5, 11, 12
CFR 2.2.....	5, 23, 25, 27	CFR 3.9.....	5
CFR 2.3.....	12, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 34	CFR 3.10.....	5
CFR 2.4.....	12, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 34	CFR 3.11.....	5, 7, 11
CFR 2.5	19, 20, 21, 26, 27	CFR 4.1.....	3, 7, 24
CFR 2.6.....	19, 20, 23, 26, 27	CFR 4.2.....	7, 17, 36
CFR 2.7	19, 20, 21, 23	CFR 4.3.....	7, 17, 23, 36
CFR 2.8.....	12	CFR 4.4.....	7, 12, 35, 36
CFR 2.9	4, 12, 26	CFR 4.5.....	7, 34, 35
CFR 2.10.....	34, 35	CFR 4.6.....	3, 12, 23, 24, 35, 36
CFR 2.11.....	12, 19, 22	CFR 4.7.....	3, 24, 26, 36
CFR 2.12.....	30, 34	CFR 4.8.....	22, 26, 35
CFR 2.13.....	22, 25, 26, 30, 34		