

DRAFT

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE



**INSTITUTIONAL PROPOSAL
FOR
REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION**

**SUBMITTED TO THE
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

November 1, 2009

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A. Setting the Institution's Context and Relating the Proposal to the Standards

A1. Institutional Context Statement

As part of the University of California, UCI shares the mission of the whole system under the California Master Plan for Higher Education:

The distinctive mission of the University is to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits through transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge. That obligation, more specifically, includes undergraduate education, graduate and professional education, research, and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bounded by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge.¹

A more detailed account of our university and its faculty and students is available in our "Accountability Profile."² That Profile includes the following overview, remarks on the financial capacity of UCI, and selected remarks about our faculty and students. An even more comprehensive and detailed account of the university and our long-term planning through 2015 is available in our strategic plan, *Focus on Excellence: A Strategy for Academic Development at the University of California, Irvine, 2005-2015*.³

Overview of the Campus

The University of California, Irvine, admitted its first class in 1965. Since then, UCI has enjoyed an unparalleled combination of rapid enrollment growth with an equally impressive increase in the size, quality, and influence of our research programs, performing arts, and professional schools in medicine, business, and law. We have secured our place among the best public research universities in the United States with over 1,400 faculty, 22,000 undergraduates, and about 5,500 graduate and professional students from California, across the nation, and around the world.⁴ UCI is the youngest member of the Association of American Universities, joining in our thirtieth year.

As we approach our fiftieth anniversary in 2015, the era of rapid growth will come to an end. Over the next decade, the pace of scholarly and scientific discovery on the campus will continue to accelerate, but most of the enrollment growth will occur in our graduate and professional programs. We have now established programs in most of the fields designated by our planning exercises and will spend the next several years reinforcing the academic core of the campus and developing strength in new programs, reconfiguring them into departments and schools as their quality and our resources warrant.

¹ The University of California Academic Plan, 1974-1978
(<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/aboutuc/missionstatement.html>).

² At http://www.evc.uci.edu/planning/UCI_Accountability_Profile_4-24-091.pdf

³ <http://www.strategicplan.uci.edu/>.

⁴ 2008-09, three-term average, unduplicated headcount (<http://www.oir.uci.edu/enr/IIA01-total-enr-by-level-2008-09.pdf>).

Finances

Major budget decisions with campuswide impact are made by the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost in consultation with the Budget Work Group, which is composed of faculty representatives, leadership of the Academic Senate and the Staff Assembly, and selected members of the central administration. Further consultation involves the Academic Council (i.e., Deans) and the Chancellor's Advisory Council (i.e., Vice Chancellors and Deans), and other groups as appropriate for specific issues.

The Vice Chancellor of Planning and Budget serves as the Irvine campus's chief financial officer, responsible for operating expenditures of over \$1.6 billion. Operating expenditures for UCI totaled approximately \$1.6 billion in 2007-08. Capital expenditures totaled another \$280 million in 2007-08. Instruction accounted for about 28% of operating expenditures; Teaching Hospitals 29%; and Research 14%.

Fund sources for operating expenses are diverse. Current fund operating revenues in 2007-08 totaled about \$1.67 billion. Of this amount, sales and services of medical centers totaled approximately \$518 million (31%); state appropriations totaled \$271 million (16%); federal government funds totaled \$218 million (13%); tuition and fees totaled approximately \$213 million (13%), with the balance coming from state contracts, local government, private sources, sales and services of educational activities and auxiliary enterprises, and other sources.

Our annual audits demonstrate the campus's consistent financial stability.⁵ We clearly exceed the criteria for WASC reaffirmation of accreditation (CFR 3.1, 3.4, 3.5) even though, because of the State's economic downturn, the UC system will likely experience a 20% reduction in State support in 2009-10, and is required to self-fund mandatory cost increases as well as any enrollments above 2007-08 budgeted levels. Accordingly, UCI's budget has been severely and negatively affected. Throughout the campus our expenditures will contract to live responsibly within a lower budget. It is our intention to continue to pursue the goals of our strategic plan, but we realize we need to develop a new funding model to do so. Accordingly, while we have allocated budget reductions throughout the campus, we are exploring many avenues of expense reductions and revenue generation to allow us to fund our strategic objectives.

Faculty and Research

By Fall 2008 UCI had 1,123 tenured/tenure-track faculty. We have been hiring an average of just over seventy faculty per year. About half have been appointed at the level of Assistant Professor, and the rest divided between the Associate and Full Professor ranks. As a result, slightly more than one-third of UCI's faculty have arrived since 2002, bringing new perspectives, intellectual energy, training, and professional experience to complement the existing strength and experience of the campus.

Awards and Academy Members among current faculty:

⁵ For detailed information on the budget see the University of California [Annual Financial Report](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/finreports/index.php?file=07-08/welcome.html) at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/finreports/index.php?file=07-08/welcome.html>.

- 2 Nobel Prize
- 3 National Medal of Science
- 2 Pulitzer Prizes
- 3 MacArthur Fellows
- 24 National Academy of Sciences
- 37 American Academy of Arts and Sciences Fellows
- 5 Institute of Medicine Members
- 12 National Academy of Engineering
- 7 American Philosophical Society
- 77 Fulbright Scholars
- 46 Guggenheim Fellows
- 58 Sloan Fellows
- 118 American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellows

As suggested by the breadth of these awards, our strength in research is not centered in one or two fields but is distributed across the whole campus. The success of those programs is difficult to measure reliably, but according to the popular *U.S. News and World Report America's Best Graduate Schools 2010*, UCI is rated #1 in English: Literary Criticism and Theory; #5 in Criminology; #10 in Organic Chemistry; #12 in Behavioral Neuroscience and #16 in Cognitive Psychology; and #22 in the general fields of English and Chemistry. Another twelve programs are ranked in the top fifty of their fields.

In fields where research productivity can be quantified by expenditures, the data are equally impressive. Comparative data from NSF for 1998-2006 shows expenditures for extramurally-funded research at UCI increased dramatically by over 130%--the fastest rate of growth among UCI's benchmark peers (which include five of the other nine UC campuses: Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara). Since 2006, expenditures have continued to rise, reaching a campus record of \$328 million in 2007-08. To date (March 2009), expenditures for 2008-09 are on line to exceed last year's record by more than 10%.

Faculty Diversity and the ADVANCE Program

The UCI Advance Program carries out the campus commitment to gender equity and diversity in the professoriate. Originally funded by a NSF Institutional Transformation award of \$3.5 million in 2001, UCI has seen dramatic gains in the presence of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (i.e., the "STEM fields"). Based on the success of the Equity Advisor model initiated under the NSF grant, in July 2006 Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Michael R. Gottfredson institutionalized UCI ADVANCE and extended its mission to include diversity. This commitment ensures that equity and diversity will remain essential priorities in advancing excellence in the multiple missions of UC Irvine.

Among the initiatives in the ADVANCE Program are:

- the establishment of endowed chairs for distinguished scholars who have also demonstrated a commitment to gender equity

- creation of Equity Advisors in every School to advise on best practices to increase diversity in hiring, organize faculty development programs, and mentor faculty and students
- ADVANCE Dependent Care Awards, funded in part by the Provost and by the Elsevier Foundation New Scholars Program. This is an innovative pilot program for tenure-track faculty who are parents of children up to thirty-six months. Up to 60 qualifying faculty will receive travel awards to subsidize childcare costs associated with participation at conferences and research meetings.

The Advance Program has had a notable positive effect on the number of women hired since 2001. Women faculty now comprise 30% of all ladder-rank faculty campus-wide, an increase of 5% since 2001. This effect has been particularly significant in the STEM fields, where the percentage of women among new hires went from 14% in 2001-02 to 41.7% in 2007-08.⁶

Graduate Education

UCI enrolled 5,509 graduate students in 2008-09, including 3,722 in general campus academic programs, 1,115 in the health sciences (i.e., medicine), and 672 in self-supporting programs. Of graduate students on the general campus, 942 students were enrolled in Master's programs and over 2,600 were enrolled in our doctoral programs. In Fall 2008, UCI awarded 366 doctoral degrees, 934 Masters, and 92 MDs.⁷

Major research initiatives, a broad range of academic and professional programs, and the impressive achievements of faculty all contribute to the exciting intellectual environment for graduate and professional students that define the Irvine campus. UCI offers 51 Master's-level programs and 44 PhD programs in addition to other doctoral programs in Medicine (MD) and Law (JD). UCI has also been expanding its portfolio of graduate degree programs rapidly in the recent past, consistent with our strategic plan to increase the percentage of graduate and professional students on our campus. At the graduate level, nearly 20 new degrees have been established since 2000, including academic and professional programs in public health (MPH), nursing science (MS), and Master's of Public Policy (MPP), and Law (JD).

Undergraduate Education

In 2008-09, UCI enrolled 22,122 undergraduate students.⁸ In the coming decade, we expect our total enrollment to increase to about 32,000 students, with 25% in our graduate and professional programs. Our students are among the best of California's high school graduates; measures of their academic quality are high and getting even higher. From Fall 1996-2009, the Mean SAT-I (Verbal + Math) score of our students rose from 1122 to 1191, reflecting roughly similar increases in both the Math and Verbal categories.⁹ This growth with quality has been possible because of dramatic increases in the number of students applying to UCI over that same period.

⁶ See UCI Advance Program [Data and Reports](http://advance.uci.edu/) at <http://advance.uci.edu/>.

⁷ OIR, <http://www.oir.uci.edu/enr/IIA01-total-enr-by-level-2008-09.pdf>;
<http://www.oir.uci.edu/deg/IVA01-degee-type-by-school-2000-2007SS.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.oir.uci.edu/enr/IIA01-total-enr-by-level-2008-09.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.oir.uci.edu/adm/IA24-fall-fr-mean-sat-by-school-2000-2008.pdf>

We received over 44,000 applications for just over 4,000 spaces for Fall 2009, making UCI the 4th most selective campus in the UC system. In line with UC policy, we have been reducing freshman enrollments during the budget crisis, allowing us to manage admissions and enrollment even further to increase the quality and diversity of our student body.

For each of the past two years, UCI has awarded just over 5,500 Bachelor's degrees--in the Social Sciences (51%), Biological Sciences (15%), Engineering/Information and Computer Sciences (13%), Humanities (12%), Physical Sciences (5%), and Arts (4%).¹⁰ UCI offers students 81 different majors and 59 minors. Among those programs at the undergraduate level are new BA and BS degrees in Public Health and a new BS in Nursing Science, which graduated its first class spring '09. Among other new initiatives, UCI boasts the only undergraduate major in Literary Journalism in the U.S. With a faculty including four Pulitzer Prize winners, this program has grown quickly enrolling 300 majors since it began five years ago.

Among the special opportunities available to undergraduate students at UCI are:

- The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), which integrates undergraduate students into the research culture of the University by providing opportunities for faculty and students to work together on research and creative projects. Over 7,300 students have participated in this program, which started in 1995 and now accommodates almost 2,000 students annually.
- First-Year Integrated Programs, which provide freshmen with an instant academic and social community by offering them year-long sequences, team-taught by a minimum of 3 faculty. Sequences offered have included Computer Games as Art, Culture, and Technology; Environmental Studies; Consciousness; and The Art of Persuasion. Courses are limited to 80 students each.
- New Minor in Civic Engagement, which will launch in Fall 2009. The minor will encourage the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources between the university and the public and private sectors by offering students opportunities to work with community groups in a wide range of areas.
- Housing, which at UCI is truly exceptional. Our student housing has received a host of awards, including several for energy efficiency and environmental stewardship, and our residence halls were featured most prominently in *Time* magazine's recent coverage of campus housing over the past half century--ours were shown as the best of modern on-campus living.

Student Diversity and Access

As we state in our strategic plan, "nothing is more essential to the academic quality of a university than a diverse intellectual community." We approach diversity "not only as a pedagogical opportunity but also as a foundation for teaching and research in the broadest sense."¹¹ It is therefore essential that UCI's academically strong student body is also one of the most diverse in the United States. We have slightly more women than men, with the broad range of Asian/Pacific-Islander ethnicities constituting about half the population, Whites another

¹⁰ See "UC Irvine College Portrait" at <http://web.oir.uci.edu/portrait/2008-uc-irvine-profile.pdf>.

¹¹ "Our Mission as a Public Research University" in *Focus on Excellence*, p. 32.

quarter, and the remaining includes Hispanic, African-American, and American Indians. U.S. News and World Report 2009 ranks UCI 26th among National Universities for racial diversity of the undergraduate student body. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education Magazine* ranks us 2nd in the U.S. for total number of baccalaureate degrees awarded to Asian American students; 4th for degrees to all minority students combined; and 31st for degrees to Hispanic students (all based on 2007-08 data). *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine* ranks UCI 41st among its "Top 100" colleges awarding baccalaureate degrees to Hispanics and 13th among its "Top 100" colleges awarding doctoral degrees to Hispanics (2008 data). We also have a number of programs designed to reinforce the pipeline to UCI for minority students. Among them are The California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP) in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. The CAMP program began at UC Irvine in 1991. It is a statewide initiative funded by the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#). The objective of CAMP is to strengthen the quality and quantity of underrepresented students receiving baccalaureate degrees in Science, Engineering, Technology, Mathematics (STEM) at the University of California. CAMP also sponsors the Summer Science Academy (CSSA) for entering freshmen, a program that prepares incoming minority freshmen for the transition from high school to UC Irvine. (See the UCOP "[Accountability Framework](#)" for a more detailed account of the student population.¹²) Even more important than these percentages is the positive impact of diversity on students' educational experience. In our most recent [UCUES](#) survey, 95% of the students reported a "good" or better rating for their "ability to appreciate, tolerate or understand racial and ethnic diversity," and 62% reported that they had "gained a deeper understanding of other perspectives through conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity."¹³

Retention and Graduation

Almost all students who enroll as freshmen at UCI remain at the university and graduate. Retention between the freshman and sophomore year is 94% and students who enter as freshmen graduate in an average thirteen quarters, or just over four years. Over 80% graduate in six-years. Our four year graduation rate places us 9th among the 34 public universities in the AAU and 12th with the 6-year rate. 88% of students who transfer to UCI from another college or university graduate; their average time to degree is 7.4 quarters, or about two and a half years.¹⁴ ("UCI College Portrait"). The education they receive prepares them for success after college. Upon graduation, our students receive some of the nation's most prestigious scholarships and fellowships: 26 Fulbright Scholarships, 25 Goldwater scholarships, 6 Truman awards, 6 Mellon Scholarships, and 40 National Security Education Program awards. In addition, in 2006-08, ten students won National Science Foundation graduate fellowships. After graduating, our students go on to distinguished careers; among our alumni are four Pulitzer Prize winners and the architect of the "HTTP/1.1" internet protocol used worldwide.

Challenges

¹² <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/accountability/>.

¹³ University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) survey at <http://www.assessment.uci.edu/academicunit.html>. See also the summary of UCUES in our "[College Portrait](#)" at <http://web.oir.uci.edu/portrait/2008-uc-irvine-profile.pdf>. Detailed data on student diversity is available at the Website of the Office of Institutional Research, "Enrollment by Ethnicity," <http://www.oir.uci.edu/enr/IIA07-enr-by-ethnicity.pdf>.

¹⁴ "[College Portrait](#)" at <http://web.oir.uci.edu/portrait/2008-uc-irvine-profile.pdf>.

The most pressing challenge facing UCI at present is how to maintain the quality of our educational programs in the face of severe reductions in our state funding as described above. Our resources are sufficient to maintain our academic programs at the high level consistent with standards for a campus of the University of California. Since we began our self-study two years ago, however, our financial situation has changed drastically. We have protected our research and educational programs and have largely maintained diversity and access during the current fiscal crisis, but only by making differential cuts that reduced operational budgets to administrative offices and to support units at a rate more than twice that of the cuts to our academic units. That strategy cannot be repeated indefinitely, nor can we continue our present hiring freezes and salary reductions for faculty and staff without undermining the academic quality of our institution.

To mitigate harm to our educational programs, we are pursuing several strategies consistent with the values and long-term objectives of our strategic plan, including a modest expansion of non-resident enrollment, creation of new revenue-generating graduate programs at the Masters' level, renewed emphasis on fundraising for financial aid at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and an analysis of institutional structures and administrative processes in search of greater efficiency and productivity. Assuming the present budget crisis will abate in two or three years, we do not anticipate radical permanent changes to our academic programs, educational mission and values, or methods of delivery for undergraduate or graduate education. Nevertheless, it would be unrealistic to imagine that any part of our institution will escape harm caused by the unprecedented financial difficulties of our state and university. Continuing reductions in our state funding will inevitably increase class-sizes and faculty-student ratios, reduce the number of Senate and non-Senate instructional faculty, reduce the number of sections we can offer in large introductory courses, and limit the staff support, administrative services, and facilities we can provide to faculty and students in those courses.

Given this imminent threat to education in the University of California that is posed by the budget crisis, it is especially appropriate that two of our three themes for review are focused on enhancing measures of success in our programs, especially regarding student learning (Theme 1) and academic program review (Theme 3). Theme 2, General Education, is also pertinent to our dire financial straits because it directly addresses the effectiveness and efficiency of our effort to ensure a broad liberal education for students in the context of a comprehensive doctoral research university, with its many competing demands on the time, energy, and resources of our faculty and staff.

Although these themes do not solve our budget problems, they will help us monitor and respond to deleterious effects of those problems as they arise. In particular, as we work on these themes for the Capacity and Preparatory Review, they will ensure the systematic and productive engagement of our faculty in that monitoring process, and they will help us integrate evidence on student learning throughout the processes for academic review and financial decision-making from the departments through the central administration. By the time of our Educational Effectiveness Review, these themes should also have helped us gather data to refine and, if necessary, refocus our efforts as we resume our growth and continue on toward our strategic objectives.

Response to Concerns Raised in the Last WASC Review

Upon the completion of our last WASC reaffirmation of accreditation review, the Commission directed the campus to respond to three issues as described below. Subsequent to the WASC review, the campuswide long-term planning initiative exercise identified several related objectives, including the need to expand participation in undergraduate research, establish a writing center, and develop more systematic procedures for assessment of student learning outcomes of undergraduate programs. Our response to the WASC directive was therefore incorporated into our long-term strategic planning, with the following results:

1. UCI Writing Programs: with enrollment growth, the campus needs “to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of well-trained instructors assigned and supported to sustain the quality and breadth of these exemplary writing programs.”

Response: The School of Humanities and Department of English devoted two line-faculty FTE to writing instruction: a Campuswide Writing Coordinator, and a Director of Composition. Additional non-line instructional faculty were hired sufficient to meet demand by offering sections of composition in WR39ABC and Humanities Core. More upper-division writing courses are being offered by academic units across the campus. The quality of these courses at all levels is monitored closely within the units and centrally as part of our new General Education requirement, which constitutes one of our themes for this WASC review, “Theme 2: General Education.”

2. Undergraduate Research Programs: “the team found a need to provide more useful definitions of specific types of student research that the University wishes to promote, and for more effective incentives to foster and sustain faculty participation as research mentors.”

Response: The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) has expanded considerably through funds designated to support student work and grants that sponsor summer residential programs (such as the National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates [REU]). The number of students engaged in funded research has grown substantially. In 2004 398 students participated in the annual symposium; last spring over 600 students gave oral presentations or presented their work at poster sessions. The number of faculty mentors has grown as well from 268 to almost 400. The University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) data indicates that UCI students are more likely to participate in undergraduate research than any other campus.

3. Assessment of Undergraduate Education: WASC noted that “the University does not yet have a comprehensive approach for determining the overall educational effectiveness of its academic programs. . . . the University may find it useful to examine other research institutions, including those within the UC system, with strong emphases on educational effectiveness and the improvement of student learning. The use of UCI’s own strong assessment programs [in Engineering, Physics, and Humanities Core] might be celebrated as exemplars.” Part of managing growth should include assessing “the effectiveness of academic and co-curricular programs to ensure that they continue to meet student needs.”

Response: We have taken this recommendation very seriously and have spent several years supporting evaluation efforts related to the effectiveness of our educational programs. For information on how we have responded to this recommendation and how we plan to further enhance our assessment efforts at the program level, please see the next section on “Approach to Assessment.”

Approaches to identifying and assessing SLO's across the campus

We define assessment as an ongoing and systematic process for monitoring and improving student learning. Assessment is the process of identifying important student learning outcomes, setting standards for the quality of learning, aligning the curriculum, assessing student performance, and using the results to improve both teaching and learning. Although results may also be used for communicating to the public about what our students are learning, its primary purpose is the improvement of student learning. UCI also holds to the principle that assessment should be locally defined, discipline-specific and faculty-driven.

Wherever possible, assessment should be course-embedded, that is, using work that students produce as a normal part of their academic courses and not an add-on activity. Course-embedded assessment maximizes students’ motivation to do well and helps reduce the burden of assessment on both faculty and students. Assessment should include multiple measures of student learning, using a mix of direct and indirect methods, collected over time. Assessment results should never be used to evaluate individual faculty or to compare academic programs.

We are working to foster a culture of assessment on our campus that coordinates visible leadership by the central administration with faculty-led initiatives in programs and departments and in the Academic Senate.¹⁵ The Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost funded a consultation visit by Dr. Rick Kroc, Associate Vice Provost, Office of Institutional Research and Planning Support, University of Arizona, in 2003, and subsequently funded a new assessment coordinator in the Office of Assessment and Research Studies. Michael Clark, Vice Provost for Academic Planning, and Sharon Salinger, Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education, have both taken leadership roles by chairing assessment workshops, talking about the potential benefits of assessment for faculty and students, providing resources to support assessment, and sponsoring workshops for faculty at UCI and other UC campuses.

Among those activities was a systemwide workshop on SLOs funded by the UC Office of the President. Designed and hosted by UCI, this UC-wide workshop brought together Chairs and other faculty from five popular majors: biology, chemistry, English, psychology, and theatre/drama. Representatives from every UC campus with undergraduate programs attended. The workshop provided an opportunity for faculty to discuss with their colleagues from other campuses the status of learning outcomes and assessment practices in their disciplines and to compare their successes and challenges.

¹⁵ Our approach is informed by the three strategies advocated by Linda Suskie: visible commitment to the ends of assessment by our campus leadership; a focus on teaching and learning rather than assessment per se; and the empowerment of faculty and staff working on assessment in Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Bolton, MA: Anker.

As Dean Salinger has said, "assessment is the right thing to do. Faculty should be engaged in this type of work as a normal part of the educational process." She has encouraged a sense of community around assessment by devoting grant fund for faculty to engage in assessment projects and sponsoring luncheons colloquia for assessment grantees to come together to talk about accomplishments and challenges. Another approach we have adopted to make assessment meaningful is focusing on student learning in the major. That focus ensures that faculty work together to identify and assess learning outcomes for undergraduate programs in their fields. Assessment is being made manageable by encouraging assessment strategies such as course-embedded assignments, staggering assessment of outcomes over several years, sampling student work, and implementing a soon-to-be-adopted assessment management system that will keep paperwork minimal. Providing additional resources and technical consulting also helps to make the process manageable.

To extend these efforts and reinforce the development of SLOs and assessment methods in the units, we have dedicated one of our themes to that topic: "Theme 2: Student Learning in the Major. To sustain our progress on this front, we also propose to include SLOs and assessment among criteria for self-study by the units in periodic external reviews overseen by the Academic Senate. The incorporation of such data in the external reviews represents one of our objectives for the CPR and constitutes one of our three themes, "Theme 3: Academic Program Review."

Under the leadership of Director Judy Shoemaker, the Office of Assessment and Research Studies in DUE is taking the lead on support for assessment activities on the campus, funding faculty assessment activities and providing staff technical support including campuswide workshops and assessment resources through its Website (<http://assessment.uci.edu/>).

A2. Preliminary Self-Review Under the Standards of Accreditation

In order to identify important themes and issues for the WASC review process, we undertook a self-study based on a systematic review of the four Standards and the 42 individual Criteria for Review (CFR) and completed the Worksheet for Preliminary Self-Review Under the Standards (see Appendix 4). A comprehensive list of activities associated with the self-review can be found in the Work Plan and Milestones attached as Appendix 6. The initial review of the CFR was conducted by a team from UCI's Leadership Academy, a staff development program for high-level staff members with potential for administrative leadership. They collected and analyzed relevant campus documents and Web sites for every CFR and identified strengths and weaknesses related to those CFR. Next we asked major campus constituencies to review and comment on the CFR: the Irvine Division of the UC Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, Associated Students (undergraduates), Associated Graduate Students, University Libraries, Student Affairs, and the UCI Alumni Association. Comments from all groups were collated and analyzed by a subgroup of the WASC Steering Committee, which rated each CFR in terms of importance to address at this time (see Appendix 5). The analysis was then reviewed and confirmed by the WASC Steering Committee and circulated among those groups for final review and comment as part of the penultimate draft of the Institutional Proposal.

This analysis showed that UCI is strongest in addressing Standards 1 and 3. Under Standard 1, UCI has a clear sense of its essential values and character, its place in the higher education

community, and its relationship to society at large. Its values are embodied in the UCI Values Statement, which is published on the Chancellor's Web site and reinforced annually by the Chancellor's Living Our Values Awards.¹⁶ Another example of UCI's clear sense of purpose is the strategic plan, *Focus on Excellence: A strategy for Academic Development at the University of California, Irvine, 2005-2015*. That plan outlines campus goals for managing enrollment growth, supporting research, and improving undergraduate and graduate education.

There are only two exceptions to our strengths under Standard 1. The first exception is the lack of a mission statement specific to UCI separate from the one established for all UC Campuses (CFR 1.1). As part of our CPR, the Academic Senate has agreed to take the lead in developing an appropriate mission statement for the campus to be published in the UCI Catalogue. The second exception is that we are working toward having educational objectives at all levels, including institutional, program and course levels (CFR 1.2). All three themes address this CFR. In terms of Standard 3, the Steering Committee determined that each CFR is an area of strength for the campus and does not need to be addressed at this time. The campus supports the educational and research missions of the campus through its investments in human, physical, fiscal and information resources and through effective organizational and decision-making structures. Decision-making is shared with faculty, deans, and administrative leaders through systematic and comprehensive consultation through several advisory groups including the Chancellor's Advisory Cabinet, the Academic Council of Deans, the Enrollment Council, the Budget Work Group, the Provost Management Group, the Academic Planning Group and the Undergraduate Dean's Advisory Council. An additional set of Councils and Committees with authority over academic programs and personnel reviews are located within the Faculty Academic Senate. Information, data, and analysis is routinely provided by the Office of Institutional Research to inform decisions by the central administration and deliberations by the groups noted above and other groups and academic units as needed. The result is an evidence-based decision process that supports a high-quality learning environment for administrators, faculty and staff.

Our review under Standard 4 resulted in a mixed picture. UCI has demonstrated strengths under CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5 and 4.8, but needs improvement under CFR 4.4, 4.6 and 4.7. UCI engages multiple constituencies, including faculty, in its planning processes and monitors the effectiveness of those plans and modifies them as needed. It aligns its academic, personnel, fiscal, physical and technology needs with its strategic priorities. The Office of Institutional Research provides data and information used in the academic program review process, including retention and graduation rates analyzed by gender and academic unit. In addition, external stakeholders are regularly involved in the assessment of educational programs as required for professional accreditation, such as engineering, nursing, business and medicine. The areas of improvement are the CFR related to the assessment of student learning, including using evidence of educational effectiveness as part of the program review process, incorporating educational objectives into the assessment of campus climate, and using inquiry-based assessment results for the improvement of teaching and curricula. The Campus Climate Work Group is addressing the CFR on the assessment of campus climate, while the other two topics will be addressed by our three themes.

¹⁶ http://www.chancellor.uci.edu/values/award_program.php.

The Steering Committee identified Standard 2 as the area that needed the most improvement. As also noted in the campus strategic plan, *Focus on Excellence*, the campus needs to develop more systematic procedures for assessment of student learning outcomes of undergraduate programs. Furthermore, it needs to reinforce processes for institutional learning and quality assurance by integrating the results of those assessments more fully into its processes for academic and administrative review. All three themes selected for the WASC reaffirmation of accreditation review are related to CFR under Standard 2 and are discussed below.

A3. Process for Proposal Development and Leadership Involvement

Development of the Institutional Proposal began with the formation by the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost of the WASC Steering Committee in 2006. (See Appendix Six for a detailed timeline of activities related to the WASC reaffirmation of accreditation review.) The group consists of faculty, student, and administrative leaders and is charged with overseeing the whole WASC reaffirmation of accreditation process. Its membership, which continues to expand as themes and foci have been defined, includes the following:

- Administration
 - Vice Provost for Academic Planning (Chair of the Steering Committee and co-WASC ALO)
 - Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education (co-WASC ALO)
 - Dean of the Graduate Division
 - Director of the Office of Institutional Research
 - Director, Office of Assessment and Research Studies
 - Representative from the Academic Council (i.e., Deans of the Academic Schools)
 - Representative from the Undergraduate Council (i.e., Undergraduate Associate Deans in the Schools)
- Academic Senate Representatives
 - President
 - Incoming President of the Academic Senate
 - Chair of Graduate Council
 - Chair of the Council on Educational Policy
- Student Representatives
 - President, Associated Students of UCI (undergraduate)
 - President, Associated Graduate Students
- Alumni Representatives
 - President
 - Asst. Vice Chancellor Alumni Relations

The membership of the WASC Steering Committee helped generate broad institutional support for the effort and has guaranteed continued input from all of the groups represented on the committee. The first step was to consider optional formats for the Institutional Proposal and agree on a “Special Themes” approach. That decision was reviewed and approved by the Chancellor, Provost and by Senate leadership. As the proposal was developed, members of the Committee were charged with keeping their constituents apprised of the progress. The Vice Provost reported on progress several times a year to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost in the Provost Management Group; to the Deans at the Academic Council; and to the Chancellor

at the Chancellor's Advisory Council. The Dean of DUE reported regularly to the Associate Deans at the Undergraduate Council. Both the Vice Provost and the Dean of DUE worked regularly with academic leadership on various sections of the proposal as described above, including extensive interaction with the President of the Academic Senate (and, through her, the Cabinet of the Academic Senate), the Chair of the Council on Educational Policy, and the Chair of the Academic Program Review Board, who contributed significantly to the development of our statements on Themes 2 (General Education) and 3 (Academic Program Review).

As we commenced the self-study, each of the groups represented on the committee were asked to review and comment on the Standards and CFR. (See the Worksheet and Spreadsheet of Summary of Responses in Appendix 4.) Ideas for themes were then solicited from those groups and vetted by the Steering Committee. As we narrowed down choices for the themes, specific councils of the Academic Senate were involved even more extensively to help develop the themes on Theme II: General Education (the Senate Council on Educational Policy) and Theme III: Academic Program Review (the Senate Executive Committee and the Academic Program Review Board, which includes chairs of the Graduate Council and the Council on Educational Policy). Departmental Chairs from across the campus were involved in developing and implementing outcomes and assessment processes for Theme 1, Student Learning in the Major. Work by those groups was reviewed periodically by the WASC Steering Committee to ensure consistency with the format and wording of the WASC Standards and CFR. In addition, following the identification in the self-study of a need for a formal mission statement for the university, the Academic Senate agreed to oversee development of that statement for review and adoption by the campus.

The text of the Institutional Proposal was written by a subgroup of the WASC Steering Committee. Drafts of separate sections were circulated for review and comment by pertinent specific groups as they were developed, and a complete draft of the Institutional Proposal was sent back out for review and comment to all segments of the campus in summer 2009. A draft of the complete proposal was also submitted at that time to WASC Assistant Director Diane Harvey for advice and comment. Results of that consultation with all groups were then incorporated into a final revision before the Institutional Proposal was formally submitted to WASC in the fall of 2009.

The commitment of campus leadership to the process of reaffirmation of accreditation is dramatically evident in the amount of effort devoted to the development of the Institutional Proposal by the Vice Provost and Dean of DUE and the leadership of the Academic Senate, as described above. The highest level of our advisory councils repeatedly devoted significant time on their agendas to reports of progress, and our CEO/CAO, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, has continued financial support for the reaffirmation of accreditation review despite the current budget crisis, which has resulted in significant cutbacks and layoffs in most other activities on the campus. Most recently, both the Chancellor and the EVC/Provost have reviewed and approved the Institutional Proposal and the course of action it describes for the CPR and EER over the next three years.

B. Framing the Review Process to Align the Capacity and Educational Effectiveness Reviews

Overview and Goals for the Accreditation Process

Our vision for the WASC review process is to embed the review process into our three institutional themes. Both Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) and Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) will take place within each theme, as described below. Our themes are

Theme 1: Student Learning in the Major

Theme 2: General Education

Theme 3: Academic Program Review

Our institutional goals for the entire WASC review process are aligned with those recommended by WASC:¹⁷

1. Greater clarity about the institution's educational objectives and criteria for defining and evaluating those objectives (Themes 1 and 2);
2. Improvement of the institution's capacity for self review and of its systems of quality assurance (Themes 2 and 3);
3. A deeper understanding of student learning, the development of more varied and effective methods of assessing learning, and the use of the results of this process to improve programs and institutional practices (Themes 1, 2 and 3); and
4. Systematic engagement of the faculty with issues of assessing and improving teaching and learning processes within the institution, and with aligning support systems for faculty more effectively toward this end (Themes 1, 2 and 3).

Theme 1: Student Learning in the Major

At our last review (2001), WASC encouraged the campus to develop a more systematic and comprehensive approach for determining the overall effectiveness of its academic programs. We have taken this recommendation very seriously and have spent several years developing and implementing plans to support faculty engagement in the assessment of student learning, starting with the Work Group on Accountability which issued its report in 2004. The Work Group, formed by EVC and Provost Michael Gottfredson to review progress toward the WASC recommendation on assessment, endorsed those recommendations and concluded that assessment “is essential for improving academic programs, classroom teaching, and student learning.” The report also noted that although implementing outcomes-based assessment would require a shift in thinking about education, it would result in an improvement of the curriculum:

Outcomes-based assessment requires a paradigm shift. It asks us to think of undergraduate education not in terms of delivering content in loosely related segments but rather as a reflective and coordinated process focused on student learning. Assessment provides a forum for reflecting on and making decisions about programs

¹⁷ WASC Handbook of Accreditation, 2008, “Outcomes of the Review Process. 25

[i.e., majors] as a whole, asking how individual courses fit together in a curriculum; it invites us to discover how our students learn best and how they learn differently. (Work Group on Accountability, p. 7)

Among their final recommendations, the Work Group concluded that UCI should establish a centralized assessment office to provide expertise and support for faculty-driven assessment activities and integrate assessment with curricular planning and program review. The campus confirmed the importance of these two recommendations by including both of them in UCI's 2006 Strategic Plan, *Focus on Excellence*.

In 2007 Michael Clark, Vice Provost for Academic Planning, and Sharon Salinger, Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education, asked the Office of Research and Evaluation (a unit within the Division) to take a more formal role in leading campus efforts in assessment. In 2008 a new assessment coordinator was hired, and to reflect its new direction, the unit changed its name to Assessment and Research Studies (A&RS).

In Fall 2007 a group of UCI faculty and staff attended the WASC Regional Workshop and Retreat on Student Learning which was held in the city of Irvine. Several important outcomes came from that retreat. First, the faculty members of our team especially liked the idea of focusing on student learning in their own disciplines. Second, several team members designed their own specific assessment projects while at the retreat, including one to assess information literacy. And third, Dean Salinger developed the idea of supporting faculty assessment projects by converting instructional improvement funds to faculty assessment grants.

From those early beginnings, we developed the theme of "Student Learning in the Major" which we used for the first campuswide workshop on assessment. This theme allows us to focus on teaching and learning rather than assessment *per se* or assessment as something required for accreditation. We selected the undergraduate major because it defines the student's primary area of study and also reflects the individual and collective interests and expertise of faculty. As we learned from the first workshop, when faculty are engaged in important questions about student learning in the major, it is a natural progression to start talking about what faculty expect their majors to learn or be able to do by the time they graduate, that is, to begin identifying important student learning outcomes for the major (the first step in the assessment process).

At that same workshop, we announced the availability of assessment grants that would provide one-time funding for departments to develop student learning outcomes in their undergraduate majors, to design an assessment plan, and to carry out at least one assessment project. We also expected grantees to become assessment leaders within their own departments and to become assessment ambassadors to other departments in the same school. Our long-term goal is to provide one-time funding for every department on campus with undergraduate majors to provide them seed funds to start their assessment project. In addition, assessment grants demonstrate commitment from the administration regarding the importance of assessment. To date 18 assessment grants have been awarded for a total of \$152,000.

During 2008-09, A&RS provided a number of assessment workshops for department chairs, faculty and staff (including Student Affairs and DUE managers) and also established a Website for assessment resources.¹⁸

In November 2008, UCI and UC Office of the President sponsored the first-ever UC-wide workshop on assessment. We expanded on our theme of “Student Learning in the Major” and identified five popular undergraduate majors: biology, chemistry, English, psychology and theatre. The workshop brought together UC department chairs and faculty from all UC campuses to share their strategies for identifying and assessing learning outcomes in each of the five majors. Given the positive response of participants, UC is considering sponsoring similar workshops for other majors.

Regarding the second recommendation – to integrate assessment with curricular planning and program review – there has been some success. In May 2008 the Council on Educational Policy (CEP) revised its guidelines for new majors by requesting that all proposals include the educational goals of the major, how the goals will be assessed, and how the curriculum supports the stated goals. In May 2009 CEP adopted a similar change for its guidelines for new minors.

As of June 2009, approximately 90% UCI’s undergraduate majors have student learning outcomes (see Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators in Appendix 1). However, we have a long way to go before assessment of student learning becomes a sustained faculty-driven enterprise. Therefore, we selected “Student Learning in the Major” as a theme for our WASC review. The primary goal of this theme is to create and sustain a campus culture of assessment in which faculty are regularly engaged in identifying student learning outcomes for undergraduate majors, assessing the degree to which their students achieve these learning outcomes, analyzing the results, and then using the findings for the improvement of teaching and learning in the major. Our second goal is to achieve greater clarity in what students know, understand and are able to do as a result of completing the undergraduate major. (CFR: 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)

Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR)

Our approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review consists of three linked initiatives which will provide permanent infrastructure and support to sustain faculty engagement in the assessment of student learning.

1. Establish a University Assessment Committee (CFR 1.2, 2.4, 2.7, 3.4, 4.6)

The first step is to establish an Assessment Committee which will have the following charge:

- Build capacity for and expertise about assessment within the group;
- Frame the campus approach to, or philosophy of, assessment; and,
- Provide guidance and advice to faculty on their student learning outcomes, assessment plans, and using results to improve their educational programs.

¹⁸ See <http://www.assessment.uci.edu/assessment>

The Committee will start with a core 10 faculty and staff, with the long-term goal of expanding its size and making it a permanent campus group by forging a formal affiliation with the Academic Senate. As part of the CPR, the Committee will prepare a Reflective Essay on the status of assessing student learning in the major.

2. Continue the Assessment Grant Program (CFR 1.2, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)

Our early experience with the departmental assessment grants indicates that this approach is already having an impact on how departments view the undergraduate curriculum, including course sequencing and pre-requisites. Therefore, DUE will continue the Assessment Grant Program with the intention of providing one-time seed funds for all departments with undergraduate majors. In addition, A&RS will continue to hold an annual, year-end event to highlight the work of the assessment grantees for the campus.

3. Develop a Campuswide Assessment Management System (CFR 1.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.5, 4.6)

Given the expected amount of assessment information departments will be gathering and producing (UCI has over 80 undergraduate majors), A&RS is working with Network and Academic Services (NACS) to develop an electronic Assessment Management System for the campus. (CFR 4.5) The on-line system will simplify the assessment reporting process for faculty and reduce the amount of administrative work associated tracking, monitoring, and evaluating campus assessment efforts. Another important feature will be its ability to keep track of feedback provided to departments from the University Assessment Committee and the departmental responses to that feedback. (CFR 1.2, 2.4, 2.6)

The assessment management system will be based on an open-source software solution called PRISM (Plan for Researching Improvement and Supporting Mission) which was developed at Colorado State University and also is used at the University of Nebraska-Linda. We will pilot test the new system with 2-3 departments in Fall 2009 before rolling it out to the rest of the campus in Winter and Spring 2010.

In addition to the three initiatives listed above, A&RS will continue to provide regular assistance and resources to departments through yearly individual meetings as well as quarterly workshops and working sessions on assessment. Additionally, A&RS will continue to provide departments with data from the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) for use in assessment studies. UCUES data includes self-reported learning gains on a number of general learning outcomes and can be disaggregated by academic major.

Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER)

For the Educational Effectiveness Review, we will focus on the extent to which assessment of student learning in undergraduate majors has led to program improvements, including the improvement of teaching, learning and curricular planning. Our work will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the assessment process impact student learning?

At the time of the EER, we should have many examples from our assessment grantees of how departments have approached and assessed student learning in the major and how they are using the findings for program improvement. The Assessment Management System will be our primary tool for tracking departmental progress on assessment of student learning and how assessment has impacted teaching, learning and the curriculum. We are especially interested in any documentation that shows student learning has improved as a result of program changes. A summary of the findings from the assessment efforts will be completed by staff from A&RS in consultation with the Campuswide Assessment Committee and submitted at the time of the EER.

2. What are best practices in assessing student learning?

Similarly, we should have many examples of the assessment methods that were developed or adopted by faculty to assess student learning outcomes. We anticipate that there will be a variety of such methods including common final exams across course sections, scoring rubrics for research papers or senior projects, electronic portfolios of student work, interviews and focus groups with graduating seniors, and many course-embedded assessment strategies, such as homework assignments, test items, and final exams. Best assessment practices will be showcased in a campuswide end-of-year assessment event and publicized through the Web. Staff from A&RS will summarize findings on best practices in assessment for the EER.

Goals:

1. Achieve greater clarity in what students will know, understand and be able to do as a result of completing an undergraduate major at UCI. (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6)
2. Create and sustain a campus culture in which faculty are engaged in identifying and assessing student learning outcomes and using the results for the improvement of teaching, learning and the curriculum. (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)

Expected Outcomes:

1. Faculty will identify student learning outcomes for each undergraduate major describing the important knowledge, skills and attitudes that faculty expect their majors to achieve by the time they graduate. These outcomes will be widely disseminated among faculty, students, staff and the general public. (CFR 1.2, 1.7, 2.3, 2.4, 4.6)
2. Faculty will collect and analyze direct evidence of student learning in each undergraduate major and use the results for programmatic and curricular improvements. (CFR 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)
3. Faculty will use the Assessment Management System to document their assessment efforts at the program level, including descriptions of how the results are used to improve student learning in the major. (CFR 1.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.5, 4.6)

Theme 2: General Education

As part of our commitment to the values of a liberal education, all UCI undergraduates regardless of major or professional program complete the same set of general education (GE) requirements. General education courses are designed to place the specialized study undertaken in the major within a broader context and to cultivate the skills, knowledge, and understanding that will make students effective contributors to society and the world. (CFR 2.2a) GE enables our undergraduates to apply the abilities developed in their studies to identify significant issues, gather and evaluate available evidence, analyze alternatives, reach conclusions, communicate the results effectively, and take considered actions. (CFR 2.2a)

UCI's current GE requirements were the product of a multi-year process involving the entire UCI campus. In 2004, the Report of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education published a set of recommendations that included changes to the existing "breadth requirements" that would "accommodate greater flexibility and a broader scope of students' interests" (Task Force Report, p. 3). Noting the complexity of those requirements and the large number of courses required, the Task Force recommended reducing the number of courses, re-structuring and simplifying the existing categories, and providing students with more latitude in the selection of courses. The campus was then invited to submit comments.

CEP reviewed the Task Force Report and the comments, developed a set of Educational Goals for General Education to guide their deliberations, and designed a Plan for General Education which went to the campus for comment in Spring 2006. They also recommended changing the name from "breadth" to General Education. CEP reviewed the comments and developed a Revised Plan for General Education (GE) which was approved in May 2007 and went into effect with the entering class of Fall 2008. The revised Plan has the following new features:

- An intent to focus on students' learning outcomes: the knowledge, abilities and experience they will have at graduation. (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.3)
- A division of GE requirements into three major groups: academic competencies (Writing; Quantitative, Symbolic and Computational Reasoning; and Language Other than English); foundations of knowledge (Arts and Humanities, Science and Technology, and Social and Behavioral Science); and real-world awareness and application (Multicultural Studies, International/Global Issues, and Laboratory/Performance). (CFR 2.2a)
- A broadening of the subject matter categories, allowing courses on many more topics to satisfy GE, such as broadening the Humanistic Inquiry category to Arts and Humanities.
- A relaxation of the previous requirements that courses in each category should be offered as three-course sequences (except for writing and foreign language).
- A one-course Laboratory or Performance requirement to ensure that every student has at least one academic experience that goes beyond traditional classroom delivery.

In addition, to further define each of the new GE categories, in Fall 2008 CEP developed and approved student learning outcomes for each category. (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.3) The General Education Learning Outcomes are published in the 2009-10 UCI Catalogue. (CFR 2.4)

CEP performs periodic program reviews for each of the General Education categories. (CFR 2.7, 4.4) In 2008-09 CEP reviewed Category I: Writing. The review was conducted by one external and two internal reviewers. Although the results of that review have not yet been released, it included results from a pilot assessment study of student writing in upper division writing courses from two academic disciplines. (CFR 2.7, 4.4) Thirty-four randomly selected papers were assessed by readers trained in the use of a scoring rubric developed specifically for the study. Results were analyzed by course, by students' language background, and by freshmen/transfer status, all of which were found to be significantly related to the quality of student writing. One of the outcomes of the study was the development of a scoring rubric to assess writing in more than one discipline. Although agreement among readers was only moderate, the scoring rubric was found to be helpful for exploring various components of the quality of writing in upper division courses. The scoring rubric is being further developed for use in a second study of upper division writing scheduled for Summer 2009. (CFR 2.4, 2.6, 4.4, 4.7)

Despite these recent changes in UCI's General Education requirements, challenges remain: primarily to fulfill the promise of the new requirements to focus on student learning outcomes; that is, the knowledge, skills and understandings that faculty expect students to achieve as a result of completing UCI's General Education requirements. Although CEP has adopted learning outcomes for each of its GE categories, it has yet to integrate them with the selection or review of courses or the program review process. In addition, CEP has made no decision for additional GE reviews at this time. Finally, there have been few systematic efforts to help students or academic advisors understand the rationale of the new requirements, beyond the publication of the new requirements in the current Catalogue.

Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The purpose of the CPR is to develop the infrastructure and support needed to accomplish the goals identified above. Our approach also includes the following research questions which will be addressed in essays for the CPR:

Research Questions for CPR:

1. How can student learning outcomes be incorporated into the course review and approval process for GE requirements?

How have peer institutions combined review with student learning outcomes? How can the course review process be expanded to include more than just a review of the initial course syllabus? To what extent do previously-approved courses align with the CEP learning outcomes for each category? To what extent do students' self-reported learning gains in GE courses align with the CEP learning outcomes for each category?

2. What are the most appropriate methods for assessing student learning outcomes associated with general education?

What are best practices used by other research universities? What are the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches, such as course-embedded assessment strategies, capstone courses, common exams across sections, and standardized exams? What are the most promising assessment approaches identified by UCI's assessment grantees?

The following activities will be undertaken for the CPR:

1. The Programs and Policy Subcommittee will review the current GE requirements for possible changes and improvements (CFR 1.7, 2.2a)

The important players in designing and refining GE requirements are the Council on Educational Policy, the undergraduate associate deans in each school, and Sharon Salinger, Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education. Dean Salinger has discussed the need for revising the GE requirements with the associate deans and sent a list of their concerns to CEP for their May meeting. As a result of that discussion, and as part of its ongoing review process of the GE requirements, CEP has agreed to concentrate on the following items:

- Courses that satisfy GE were "grandfathered" in based on the old breadth requirements without any attention to the new GE philosophy.
- Is there too much overlap between courses in the student's major?
- Are there are too many GE categories?
- Writing was not addressed in GE revision.
- There have been few systematic efforts to inform students about the goals and philosophy of GE requirements.

2. CEP will consider possible assessment strategies for upcoming program reviews of each GE category. (CFR 1.2, 2.4, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)

- Send 2 faculty members to AAC&U conference on assessment in GE (February 2010)
- Explore how peer institutions are assessing their general education outcomes
- Identify pros/cons of various assessment approaches
- Develop a plan for the next review which incorporates evidence of student learning, in consultation with faculty who teach courses in that category

3. DUE will develop and implement strategies to inform both students and academic advisors regarding the aims and importance of GE. (CFR 1.7, 2.3, 2.4)

Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER)

The focus of this stage is the educational effectiveness of the new procedures put into place during the CPR. We will work on answering the third research question:

Research Question for the EER

1. To what extent does incorporating information about student learning in program reviews of GE categories improve teaching and learning?

Data for the research question will be in the form of case studies of the GE categories reviewed to date. For example, how and to what extent were the results from the writing assessments completed in 2008-09 and 2009-10 used to improve teaching and learning? What evidence is available to make that determination? In addition, we will assess whether or not our outreach efforts have improved students' and academic advisors' awareness and understanding of the new GE requirements. Results of this research study will be summarized in an essay for the EER.

Goals:

1. To promote a campus culture that values and uses evidence of student learning as a basis for making decisions about the general education program. (CFR 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7)
2. To assess the effectiveness of the general education program and demonstrate our commitment to ongoing improvement. (CFR 1.2, 2.7, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7)
3. To develop a deeper understanding of student learning and more and varied effective methods of assessing student learning, and to use the results to improve both teaching and learning. (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6)

Expected Outcomes:

At the end of the WASC Review process, we expect that the following institutional outcomes will be accomplished. Achieving these outcomes will provide the campus with ongoing evidence of the effectiveness of our general education program for undergraduates and will ensure alignment between courses and the intended learning outcomes for each GE category.

1. CEP will reinstate regular program reviews of GE categories and incorporate evidence of the extent to which students have achieved the stated learning outcomes of each category. (CFR 2.7, 4.4, 4.6)
2. CEP will incorporate student learning outcomes into its procedures for reviewing and approving courses for each GE category to insure alignment between course and GE learning outcomes. (CFR 2.2, 2.2a, 2.3)
3. Undergraduate students and academic advisors will become more aware of the aims of the general education program and will develop meaningful programs of study around general education themes. (CFR 1.7, 2.3, 2.4)

Theme 3: Academic Program Review

Overview of Academic Program Review

Systematic periodic review of academic programs is a long-standing practice at UCI and is an essential part of shared governance. Academic Program Review (APR) is a faculty-driven process under the leadership of the Academic Senate with administrative support from the Provost. It exemplifies our commitment to evidence-based evaluation of research, teaching, and learning within our academic units. APR was chosen as a theme for our WASC reaffirmation of accreditation review because it exemplifies major strengths of the campus in terms of CFR related to systematic review of our academic programs and the integration of those reviews into strategic planning the decision-making processes of the campus. At the same time, those strengths can be enhanced by addressing one of our weaker areas in the CFR related to the definition and assessment of Student Learning Outcomes and their incorporation into Academic Program Review, particularly CFR 1.2, 2.2-4, 2.6-7, 4.6-8.

The academic review process is overseen by the Academic Program Review Board (APRB) of the Academic Senate, which includes representatives from the Graduate Council and the Council on Educational Policy, which focuses on undergraduate education.¹⁹ This long-standing process was revised most recently in 2005 and now combines reviews of research, graduate education and undergraduate education within the academic unit (i.e., in most cases, a School and its departments). Each academic unit is reviewed every ten years, including its graduate and undergraduate programs. Three years after the completion of the review, the unit has a follow-up evaluation by Graduate Council and the Council on Educational Policy to determine which of the recommendations have been acted upon. (Many units are subject to additional concurrent review by professional accrediting boards, but those reviews are managed by the unit.) Apart from that three-year follow-up, there is no formal instrument for determining the effectiveness of the APR itself, but the creation of such an instrument constitutes one of our goals for the CPR.

The purpose of APR is to assess the general quality of academic units and degree programs, ensure their currency, and enhance their effectiveness. As the APRB says, “Reviews are intended to be helpful and supportive in (a) recognizing strengths and achievements, (b) promoting goal setting and planning, and (c) identifying areas in need of attention.”²⁰ The immediate audiences for the APR are (1) the faculty in the unit, who are expected to incorporate the results of the reviews into their continuous examination and improvement of their programs; (2) the Academic Senate, which oversees academic programs and approves new degree programs and curricular changes; and (3) the Chancellor and Provost, who oversee administrative operations and allocate funds to the academic units.

Current APR Procedures

The Academic Program Review Board is responsible for administering the reviews on behalf of the Senate. The formal policy and procedures for APR are described in the “Joint Review of Academic Programs Description and Procedures May 2005.”²¹ At the start of each review, the

¹⁹ For a full description of the APRB, its charge, and membership, see <http://www.senate.uci.edu/Committees/APRB/index.asp>.

²⁰ <http://www.senate.uci.edu/Committees/APRB/index.asp>.

²¹ http://www.senate.uci.edu/Documents/joint_review_may_20_2005_procedures-final.pdf.) A detailed account of the APR process and samples of the documents mentioned below are available on the APRB Website. (www.senate.uci.edu/Committees/APRB/index.asp)

APRB meets with faculty and administrators in the unit under review to describe the process and initiate the self-study, which includes required sets of data and a list of questions relevant to undergraduate and graduate education that is negotiated with the unit. Additional information about the unit is provided by surveys administered by APRB to faculty, graduate students, alumni, and postdoctoral scholars when applicable. Results from the UCUES survey are used instead of a separate survey for undergraduate students. The UCUES results focus on undergraduate student satisfaction indicators and learning gains self-reported by seniors.

The APRB uses information from the self study and these other sources to compose a formal charge for the external review committee, which is made up of a team of experts in the fields covered by the unit who are chosen by the Senate in consultation with the Provost. The external reviewers conduct an on-site visit of two-three days, meeting with faculty and students in the unit, the Dean, staff and other personnel. The visit concludes with an exit briefing for the Dean and a separate meeting with the Provost. The reviewers then issue a written report, which is forwarded to the unit for comment and response. The report and those responses are then reviewed by the pertinent Senate councils, which add their comments and then forward the report and accompanying documents to the Provost for use in campuswide academic planning and budget decisions. Results of the reviews are also considered by the Academic Planning Group (a joint Senate-administrative committee) when recommending allocation of new faculty lines and related resources to the units. The Senate and central administration also consider these results when reviewing plans for new academic programs and other curricular and institutional changes.

Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

For the Capacity and Preparatory Review, we propose to develop and incorporate direct and indirect assessments of student learning outcomes into the review process, and to use the results of those assessments to improve the teaching and learning process in units under review (CFR 4.6). Through the activities described above for Theme 1, we will revise review processes to incorporate a description and assessment of programs' learning objectives and outcomes and to account for how the results are used for program improvement. Currently, the APR process incorporates data on student retention and graduation rates plus survey data on self-reported learning gains, but no direct evidence of student learning. Revising the guidelines for program review will ensure that assessment of student learning becomes an expected part of the review process and will help promote the sustainability of assessment on campus. (CFR 2.7, 4.6)]

Goals for the CPR:

1. Revise the criteria used in APR for self-studies and for the charge to external reviewers to include evidence on the degree to which undergraduates achieve the stated learning goals for each undergraduate major being reviewed. The new criteria will include
 - a) results of Student Learning Outcomes and assessment procedures as part of an evidence-based measure of educational effectiveness in the unit, especially at the undergraduate level (CFR 1.2, 2.7);
 - b) designation of individuals or a committee within the unit charged with overseeing the development and assessment of SLOs;

- c) integration of assessment results into decision-making processes in the unit used to improve student learning.
2. Develop a formal instrument for determining the effectiveness of the APR that includes a comprehensive review of the APR process every six years and continuously thereafter. The instrument should
 - a) develop knowledge of best practices for outcomes-based academic program review;
 - b) measure the impact of academic program review on student learning;
 - c) evaluate the efficiency, consistency, and accuracy of data collected by the units and provided by the Office of Institutional Research;
 - d) survey stakeholders (alumni, current students, faculty);
 - e) assess the integration of the APR into planning and self-reflection within the units and into the more general administrative planning and budgeting processes.

Research Questions for the CPR:

1. What are best practices for academic program review which incorporate analyses of the achievement of the program's learning objectives and outcomes at the undergraduate level?
 - How are our peer institutions incorporating student learning outcomes into the academic program review process?
 - How have those practices improved the academic programs?
 - What are the most promising approaches and the most useful types of evidence of student learning that have led to improvements?
2. How extensively are the results of the APRs integrated into systematic decision processes in the central administration related to academic planning and the allocation of resources, including faculty positions and budget?
3. Are there benefits to separating the undergraduate and graduate components of the academic program review? For those programs that serve both student populations, seeing as the aims of the programs differ dramatically, might it not make sense to split those out? What do academic programs share across these two student populations in terms of curricular disciplinary aims?
4. Would it be appropriate to address the role of research programs separately in the review? The research component is assessed now mainly in light of its role in the educational programs. A clear statement about APRB reviews and the research mission of the reviewing entity would be helpful to clarify the centrality of research to our mission.
5. How well does UCI's current academic review process align with the WASC recommendations for making program review more useful for improving academic programs?

Anticipated Results of the CPR:

1. Revise the requirements of the self-study from units as the first step of the review process to require student-learning outcomes and methods of assessment from all units in the School under review, and to reinforce the importance of evidence-based claims of educational effectiveness in

addition to the current use of course descriptions and syllabi, student opinion in course evaluations, anecdotes and testimonials, and advocacy by the programs' participants.

2. Modify the charge to reviewers to consider the quality of SLOs and the assessment of student learning as an evidence-based measure of educational effectiveness in the unit that goes beyond present data and the qualitative impressions and anecdotal evidence of educational quality most often cited by reviewers now.
3. Develop a more formal instrument to assess the effectiveness of the review process itself.
4. Map the points at which results of APRs are integrated into centralized administrative decision processes and enhance that integration to make the outcomes of the reviews an even more important part of the decision processes.

Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review

For the EER, we propose to use the instrument developed in the CPR to evaluate the effectiveness of the APR following the incorporation of SLOs and assessment of student achievement within the criteria by which the units' self-studies are conducted, and within the charge to external reviewers. We also intend to use the map developed in the CPR to assess the extent and depth to which reviews are incorporated into the decision-making processes of the campus.

Primary Goals for the EER:

1. Using the instrument developed in the CPR, compare the academic program reviews after the changes implemented for the CPR to reviews completed in the prior cycle in order to determine the effectiveness of the changes. We will establish a baseline by assessing reviews of the past 4 years (Schools of ICS, Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Department of Education, and the College of Health Sciences). We will conduct a pilot assessment for two upcoming school reviews. If these reviews prove successful in terms of the pilot assessment, based on our follow-up activities immediately after the review and at the three-year review point, we will make the changes permanent, and we will continue to review the APRB review process comprehensively in 6 years and continuously thereafter.
2. Using the map developed for the CPR, assess the integration of APR reports into academic planning within the units, and into the administrative decision processes. Determine ways that integration might be productively extended in the units and in decisions made by the central administration. Determine the extent to which the APR process might be modified to make the results more useful to the units and in administrative decision-processes.

Research Questions for the EER:

1. How thoroughly has evidence of the educational effectiveness of the program, including student learning outcomes, been integrated into the APR process? Have UCI's departments identified and assessed student learning outcomes at the program level on a regular basis, using

the results for the improvement of the programs, and reporting on this process as part of the academic program review process?

2. To what extent has the revised program review process actually been useful for the improvement of academic programs and student learning at UCI? Have UCI's departments identified and assessed student learning outcomes at the program level on a regular basis, using the results for the improvement of the programs, and reporting on this process as part of the academic program review process?

3. Has the three-year follow-up review been made more systematic and useful?

4. How do modifications to the APR process increase or diminish the effectiveness of the process itself? Does the process end up taking less time? Are more programs able to be reviewed in a given year? Is the feedback more specific? Are the academic programs under review more satisfied with the academic program process?

Anticipated Results of the EER:

1. Make the APR more effective and efficient as a means to improving the educational programs in the units under review, particularly by increasing units' responsiveness to the APR and by using Student Learning Outcomes and assessment of students' progress toward achieving the programs' objectives to identify strengths and weaknesses and address the latter effectively.

2. Integrate SLOs and assessment in units' consideration of programmatic success.

3. Focus external reviewers more directly and precisely on student learning in their assessment of the quality of a unit's educational programs.

4. Make the APRs a more productive part of central administrative decision processes, particularly in academic planning and the allocation of financial resources.

5. Make the evaluation and revision of Academic Program Review process more systematic and substantive.

C. Demonstrating a Feasible Plan of Work and Engagement of Constituencies

C1. Workplan and Milestones

A detailed workplan with milestones is located in Appendix 5.

C2. Effectiveness of Data Gathering and Analysis Systems

At UCI the Office of Institutional Research provides a wide variety of institutional and comparative data that are used to inform planning, policy development, and decision-making at the executive level and by the Academic Senate, deans, departments and faculty. In addition, the Office of Assessment and Research Studies provides data on assessment of student learning and evaluation of instructional programs. Both offices will provide data for the reaffirmation of accreditation review process.

Current data systems and resources

1. Institutional Decision-Making and Strategic Planning

The Office of Institutional Research provides institutional and comparative data on key indicators of success for decision-making by groups such as the Academic Planning Group, Enrollment Council, Budget Workgroup, deans and department chairs, plus the Academic Program Review Process. Information includes annual and ad hoc reports as needed for decision-making. Examples include:

- Information on student enrollments, faculty, and staff; class sizes; instructional workloads; expenditures; research and grant funds; plus trends over time.
- Peer benchmarking data, using a select group of peer institutions.
- Institutional data for the UC Accountability Framework and the Campus Profile and other UCOP initiatives.
- School profiles for Academic Program Review (Academic Senate).
- Admissions information (selectivity, yield, source schools);
- Retention and graduation data for enrolled students for entering freshmen and transfer classes; disaggregated by school, gender and ethnicity.
- Change of major information.
- Enrollment projections.
- Graduating student surveys.

2. Assessment of Student Learning.

The Office of Assessment and Research Studies provides several types of data and information on student learning which are used for program and policy decisions related to the improvement of undergraduate education. Groups who use the results include the Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education, undergraduate associate deans in the schools, individual faculty, and

Academic Senate groups (Council on Educational Policy and Academic Program Review Board). Below are some examples of data and information provided:

- Evaluation studies of innovative first-year programs such as Freshman/Transfer Seminars, the First-Year Integrated program, Summer Bridge, and the Undecided/Undeclared Program.
- Assessment of writing in lower division and upper division courses for review of General Education Category I: Writing (2008-09).
- Assessment of the quality of summer instruction and its impact on success in subsequent courses.
- UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES), a biennial survey of the undergraduate experience, including self-reported academic and personal development gains, academic engagement and post-graduation plans; comparative data for every school and undergraduate major.

Future Enhancements

While UCI has adequate resources for data collection and analysis, as part of the review process we would like to develop the following enhancements.

1. Enhanced analysis of retention and graduation data

The campus needs to analyze retention and graduation data in more depth to understand the factors associated with student success, including personal characteristics, level of academic engagement, and participation in retention-related services such as academic support services. To that end, OIR and A&RS will explore ways to combine data from student surveys (UCUES and Senior Surveys, for example) with retention and graduation data.

2. Enhanced dissemination of information on student learning outcomes and assessment

As part of the WASC review process, the Assessment Website will be enhanced to include: 1) additional UCUES information on student learning outcomes for use by schools and departments, and 2) reports from assessment grantees to describe their findings. Additionally, the adoption of the online assessment management system, as described in this proposal, will be another tool used to share assessment results across campus.

C3. Commitment of Resources to Support the Accreditation Review

Organization, Oversight, and Support for the Review

The review will be overseen by the WASC Steering Committee under the direction of its chair, the Vice Provost for Academic Planning, co-WASC ALO, in consultation with the Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education, co-WASC ALO. The co-ALOs will be responsible for keeping the Chancellor and the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost informed of progress on the review and for identifying the resource needs as they arise. They will also inform the faculty Senate and coordinate contributions to the process as needed from faculty, staff, students, and alumni/ae. Requirements for the review will be met through assignment of specific tasks to

workgroups under the direction of individuals as described below. Workgroups will report to the Steering Committee, which will collate the results of the work and integrate them into the reports for the CPR and EER.

The review will be supported by human resources consisting of reassigned staff time and faculty service credit from the individuals noted below. Technological support will be provided by the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Assessment and Research studies in conjunction with the new campuswide technological support service, Information and Academic Technologies. Physical resources will be made available by the central administration and will include office space for the individuals mentioned below, meeting rooms to support group meetings, and modest amenities to support and encourage collaboration and cooperation among departmental chairs and other faculty and students.

Data Gathering and Analysis Systems

- Head:
 - Michael Poston, Director, Office of Institutional Research
- Groups responsible:
 - Office of Institutional Research
 - Office of Assessment and Research Studies

Coordination of self-study results with themes and specific CFR: Associate Vice Provost Rob Ameele

Development of Mission Statement

- Head:
 - Academic Senate President
- Groups responsible:
 - Academic Senate Cabinet and selected Councils to develop draft
 - Faculty, Staff, Administration, and Students to review drafts and adopt a statement for the campus

Themes

- Theme 1: Student Learning in the Major
 - Head:
 - Sharon Salinger, Dean of DUE
 - Judy Shoemaker, Director of Assessment and Research Studies
 - Groups responsible:
 - Division of Undergraduate Education
 - Office of Assessment and Research Studies
 - Associate Deans of Academic Schools
 - Departmental Chairs
- Theme 2: General Education
 - Heads:
 - Chair, Academic Senate Council on Educational Policy
 - Dean Sharon Salinger, Division of Undergraduate Education
 - Groups responsible:
 - Academic Senate Council on Educational Policy

- Division of Undergraduate Education
- Theme 3: Academic Program Review
 - Heads:
 - Michael P. Clark, Vice Provost for Academic Planning
 - Derek Dunn-Rankin, Chair of Academic Program Review Board
 - Groups responsible:
 - Academic Senate Academic Program Review Board
 - Senate Cabinet, esp. Chairs of CEP and Graduate Council

Budget, Links to Institutional Structures, Sustaining Improvements

The campus will fund the review at the level necessary to address the WASC requirements for reaffirmation of accreditation. Most of the activities associated with the reaffirmation of accreditation review are extensions of responsibilities already assigned to existing offices, councils and leadership on the campus. In addition, the central decision-making process of the university is thoroughly evidence based and data-driven. It incorporates extensive use of institutional data to inform allocation of resources for funding and staff and faculty personnel allocations. It is therefore impossible to identify with any precision the exact budget for the review itself because most of what it requires is part of our on-going practices.

The EVC/Provost has already funded the appointment of a full-time assessment expert in DUE and the expansion of DUE staff to create the Office of Assessment and Research Studies. Substantial support for local development of SLOs and assessment activities has already been allocated to the units by the Dean of DUE, including the grants and workshops described above and the nearly full-time release of OARS Director to the School of Engineering to support development of assessment procedures required as part of their concurrent accreditation by ABET. Whatever additional resources are necessary to support the gathering of assessment results and other data and the incorporation of that evidence into more local levels of decision-making (i.e., in the departments and schools) will be provided by those units through their operational budgets as negotiated annually with the EVC/Provost.

What follows is a list of administrative staff and offices and Academic Senate officers most extensively involved in the review and charged with specific responsibilities as described in the organizational outline below:

Administration

- Vice Provost for Academic Planning (co-WASC ALO)—Michael Clark
 - Assistant Vice Provost—Rob Ameele
 - Executive Assistant—Deborah Chennault
- Dean of Undergraduate Education (co-WASC ALO)—Sharon Salinger
 - Director of Assessment and Educational Research—Judy Shoemaker
 - Principal Administrative Analyst--Chris Procello
 - Senior Admin. Analyst--Natalie Schonfeld
- Director, Office of Institutional Research—Michael Poston

Academic Senate

Chair—Jutta Heckhausen
Chair Elect—Judith Stepan-Norris
Chair, Council on [Undergraduate] Educational Programs
Chair, Graduate Division
Chair, Academic Program Review Board

Additional Officials with specific responsibilities in the review

President, Associated Graduate Students
President, Associated Students of UCI
President, Alumni Association
Executive Director, UCI Alumni Association

The link between activities and the reaffirmation of accreditation review process and existing institutional structures are close and continuing. With the substantial exception of the WASC Steering Committee, activities associated with the review should require no additional committees or administrative positions. Considerable amounts of staff time and faculty service credit have been reassigned, however, to address requirements for the Institutional Proposal. Continuing reassigned time will be necessary for the CPR and EER reports. (See the list of people with primary responsibilities and the organizational outline for the review above.)

Sustaining improvements accomplished over the course of the reaffirmation of accreditation review process will occur by incorporating those improvements in the operation and responsibilities of the people and groups charged with overseeing activities associated with the review. In particular,

- Student Learning in the Major—SLOs and assessment will be required parts of the newly revised academic program reviews; external reviewers will be asked to address them directly in their reports, which are used to inform decisions about the allocation of financial and faculty resources. The newly created Office of Assessment and Research Studies (A&RS) is charged with overseeing such activities.
- General Education—requirements for General Education are subject to nearly annual review and revision by the Council on Educational Policy, so changes related to improvements on this theme can be adopted quickly and sustained as requirements for the future.
- Academic Program Review—improvements to the review process will be sustained as formal requirements that appear in the charge to external reviewers. They will also be included as criteria or topics for the self studies required of all units undergoing periodic review.

Improvements in data gathering and analysis will be sustained through incorporation into the practices of the Office of Institutional Research and its reports to advisory groups including the Academic Planning Group and the Budget Workgroup, as well as to the Provost and other academic and administrative leaders.

D. Presenting Appendices Related to the Proposal

Appendix 1: Data Exhibits

- A. Summary Data Form [insert Poston]
- B. Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators
- C. Inventory of Concurrent Accreditation

Appendix 2: Off-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

Appendix 3: Institutional Stipulations [DRAFT placeholder]

Appendix 4: Self-Review Under the Standards

- A. Worksheet for Preliminary Self-Review Under the Standards
- B. Self-Review Under the WASC Standards 2008-2009: Responses to Campuswide Survey

Appendix 5: Work Plan and Milestones for the Institutional Proposal, Capacity Program Review, and Educational Effectiveness Review

Additional information regarding activities at UCI associated with the WASC process for reaffirmation of accreditation can be found at the UCI WASC Reaccreditation Website at <http://www.accreditation.uci.edu/>.