

Section 2: Reflective Essays

Essay 1: Demonstrating Commitment to Social Justice and Civic Engagement

Higher education exists in the United States as a public trust and a public good. It is linked to the improvement of individuals, groups, and society as a whole. It provides the basis for conserving and transmitting the values of society and for reflecting on and identifying needed areas of change. Through research, scholarship, and creative activity, institutions of higher education also promote the value of discovery and learning. In offering educational programs, institutions prepare their graduates for productive and meaningful lives as citizens and members of society.

WASC Handbook for Accreditation 2001

1.0 Introduction to Social Justice and Civic Engagement

The preparation of students for meaningful lives as engaged citizens can only be accomplished by an institution dedicated to this purpose. As stated in the WASC Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR), San Francisco State has a proven history of and strong commitment to promoting the values of social justice and civic engagement. Within the WASC Accreditation Review process, the centrality of social justice and civic engagement to the mission of the university was viewed as so significant that it became a theme around which the self evaluation was constructed. During the CPR, subcommittees were formed to specifically address the capacity of the University to sustain its mission under the new environment imposed by changing faculty and student demographics along with a statewide budget crisis with tremendous impact on public higher education. This essay responds to issues raised in the CPR regarding the future of these strategic priorities, and it also reports on the EER issues of curricula, policy, scholarly and creative activities, student learning, and the overall student experience as these issues relate to Social Justice and Civic Engagement. (See *Appendix A: EER Civic Engagement Report*, *Appendix B: EER Social Justice and Equity Report*.)

1.1 Progress on Recommendations in the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The WASC CPR final report notes the importance of these two strategic priorities, and also their differing status in the minds of students and faculty.

Overall, SFSU can indeed claim that social justice is part of its DNA. The evidence is pervasive throughout the campus community. The campus recognizes that it is a value that cannot be taken for granted. The EER plans lay out work that the campus feels needs to be accomplished for social justice to remain a defining characteristic of the SFSU culture. Civic engagement, on the other hand, while also prevalent in the culture of SFSU, is not as clearly defined and understood by all members of the campus. SFSU understands what must be done to bring civic engagement to the level of social justice. (Appendix 15: SFSU CPR WASC Visiting Team Report 5/17/11, pages 10-11.)

The issue of defining both of these values has been the subject of much discussion on campus over the past four years. While the WASC CPR team suggested that social justice is well defined in the SF State psyche, the university's CPR report actually recommends the need to define this value. The discussion over this issue continued into the EER review. In the end, most of the university community concluded that it wasn't really possible to define social justice in a way that promoted this

strategic priority and cultural value. Rather than creating artificial and exclusionary definitions of social justice and equity, SF State, over the course of the EER review, created opportunities for the campus community to identify, celebrate and refine the university's collective understanding of how social justice and equity are infused throughout the areas of scholarship, teaching, curricula, and service. These opportunities included a forum on social justice and equity in the academy, a review of externally funded projects, an assessment of current course offerings, a review of institutional assessment data, and an evaluation of the Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review.

In the case of civic engagement, on the other hand, it is interesting to note that the institution seems to be recognized for this value more widely outside the campus than internally. For example, on March 11, 2012 this commitment was again recognized by the Corporation for National and Community Service by naming SF State to the 2012 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction for the fifth time. The Honor Roll "recognizes higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities ... and (their) commitment to service and civic engagement."² Nonetheless, the EER team agreed that raising awareness would be a primary area of focus for the EER Review, along with an examination of scholarship and creative activities, learning outcomes, and curricula.

The WASC CPR visiting team advised that a task force be created to recommend how to increase awareness of civic engagement opportunities for students. [CFR 1.2, 2.2] It grew out of a survey and focus groups of university students that established that many did not know where to find information on opportunities to engage with community. The Institute for Civic and Community Engagement (ICCE), working with faculty from multiple departments and colleges, undertook to address this issue by constructing a "marketing plan" for students that was developed in 2011 and is now well underway. (See *Appendix C: ICCE Marketing Plan.*) The plan has multiple goals, including:

- Increasing awareness about opportunities provided by the Institute for Civic and Community Engagement and the Community Service Learning (CSL) program among SF State students and faculty.
- Increasing the number of community engaged students by 5% over two years.
- Increasing faculty participation in CSL course designation by 5% over two years.
- Establishing communication partnerships with campus offices that can help reach our targeted audiences.
- Increasing volunteer involvement from student groups by 5% over two years.

The implementation involved multiple methods. The full list of activities is provided in Appendix C. Here we highlight several that have been initiated.

Annual Leadership Symposium – In Fall 2011, ICCE staff took part in the campus annual Student Leadership Symposium hosted by the Student Involvement and Career Center. More than 400 students attended sessions conducted by staff on opportunities to engage through educational and co-curricular activities.

Enhanced Use of Social Media – The ICCE website was redesigned to include a Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/sfsu.icce>) and a YouTube video on the value of the service learning experience (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zt1BIAIZWXg&lr=1&feature=mhee>).

On Campus Non-profit Fair – In Spring 2012 the Institute sponsored a Non-profit Fair inviting dozens of community-based organizations and civic offices to come to campus and recruit student

² President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/initiatives_honor_roll.asp

volunteers. This year 66 organizations attended the two-day event held on the campus quad. The fair attracted 1,420 students and 920 signed up to volunteer in the community. [CFR 2.5]

Move to Campus – In Spring 2012, ICCE moved its offices from its off-campus site in Daly City to a central location within the College of Health and Social Sciences on campus. The move created additional visibility and direct contact with students in ways that were difficult to support in the prior location.

1.2 Engaged Scholarship

As the CPR report noted, a tremendous amount of engaged scholarship already occurs on campus on issues of both social justice and civic engagement. However, prior to the EER Review, the campus had not really taken an inventory of these efforts for a number of years. The values of social justice and equity are well represented amongst the externally funded projects developed by SF State faculty and staff. A review of active awards from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs reveals that out of 468 grant projects, 43% (202 projects) include some aspect of social justice and equity in the scope of the project's work. (See *Appendix D: Active Social Justice and Equity Awards by Unit.*)

Projects address social justice and equity issues such as health equity, economic justice, mental health, early childhood education, women and underrepresented students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), universal design for learning, human sexuality, foreign languages, ethnic studies, environmental health, disability access, international education, social welfare, and others. Grant projects that study, advance, and/or support social justice and equity are found throughout college and administrative units.

- Academic Affairs: 17 out of 18, or 94.4%
- College of Business: 2 out of 4, or 50%
- College of Ethnic Studies: 15 out of 15, or 100%
- College of Health and Social Sciences: 84 out of 105, or 80%
- College of Liberal and Creative Arts: 14 out of 25, or 56%
- College of Science and Engineering: 34 out of 248, or 13.7%
- Graduate College of Education: 30 out of 47, or 63.8%
- Student Affairs/Enrollment Management: 7 out of 7, or 100%

In addition to raising campus awareness about civic engagement, the CPR team also recommended that the University continue to support faculty who participate in community-engaged scholarship. Moreover, they suggested that the University should develop definitions and standards for recognizing such accomplishments. [CFR 2.8, 2.9]

A key strategy in support of social justice and civic engagement is in Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP). The EER plan indicates the RTP process should support faculty who participate in community engagement and scholarship and recommends that SFSU develop definitions and standards for recognizing such accomplishments, and that departments develop criteria in their RTP policies that allow recognition of work related to social justice and commitment to civic engagement within the existing RTP categories of teaching, professional accomplishments and growth, and service. (Appendix 15: SFSU CPR WASC Visiting Team Report 5/17/11, p. 9)

In some ways, progress on this recommendation arose serendipitously from the reorganization of the colleges of the University brought about by the budget crisis. One of the key recommendations of the University Planning Advisory Council (UPAC) was to consider ways in which the University might be “restructured and streamlined” to make better use of the funds available. As a consequence, the

eight colleges of the University were reduced to six, and departments that were housed in the two Colleges that were dissolved were redistributed into those remaining. In particular, four academic programs, Criminal Justice Studies, Environmental Studies, Public Administration, and Urban Studies and Planning, formerly housed in the now defunct College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, were relocated within the College of Health and Social Sciences (CHSS). In addition, in response to a further recommendation by UPAC concerning the location of institutes, ICCE was also relocated within CHSS.

In Spring 2011 a proposal arose among newly transplanted faculty to combine ICCE and these four academic programs into a single administrative unit, and in Fall 2011 this was accomplished with the creation of the School of Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE). Subsequently, two significant activities have taken place in parallel within the College and the School regarding the definition of scholarship and its recognition within RTP.

The Scholarship Task Force report, *A Collective Vision for Scholarship in the New College (Appendix E: CHHS Vision Statement on Scholarship)*, is still in draft form, but several of its tenets are already taking shape. Most importantly, the fundamental vision of scholarship within the college is described as follows:

Consistent with the social justice mission of the University, the hallmark of the College is its belief in the potential of scholarship to right a wrong – *an act of intellectual advocacy to serve the public good, to wrestle with critical social problems, and to transform how individuals, communities, and institutions function* – by advancing and disseminating the knowledge and practice of specific disciplines.

In addition, in delineating the values behind this vision, the document “affirms scholarship that leads to positive social change and addresses critical societal problems by advancing both knowledge and practice” and “emphasizes culturally competent and socially engaged scholarship that responds to and addresses the needs of communities, particularly those that are marginalized and underserved.” [CFR 2.8, 2.9]

In addition, PACE has begun work on its own RTP guidelines (see *Appendix F: PACE RTP Proposal*) that will embrace engaged scholarship. The PACE leadership team has adopted a working draft that borrows heavily from the tenure policy at Syracuse University³ in a commitment “to longstanding traditions of scholarship as well as evolving perspectives on scholarship ... [where] the role of the academy is not static and that methodologies, topics of interest, and boundaries within and between disciplines and between campus and community change over time. PACE will continue to support scholars in all of these traditional as well as emerging practices.”

1.3 Educational Effectiveness Course Offerings and Outcomes

1.3.1 Social Justice and Civic Engagement in the Curricula

To determine the penetration of social justice in campus curricula, the Social Justice subcommittee examined the content of course titles and course descriptions for the purpose of discovering the extent to which social justice and equity appear explicitly in text and the extent to which course descriptions imply the inclusion of the same.

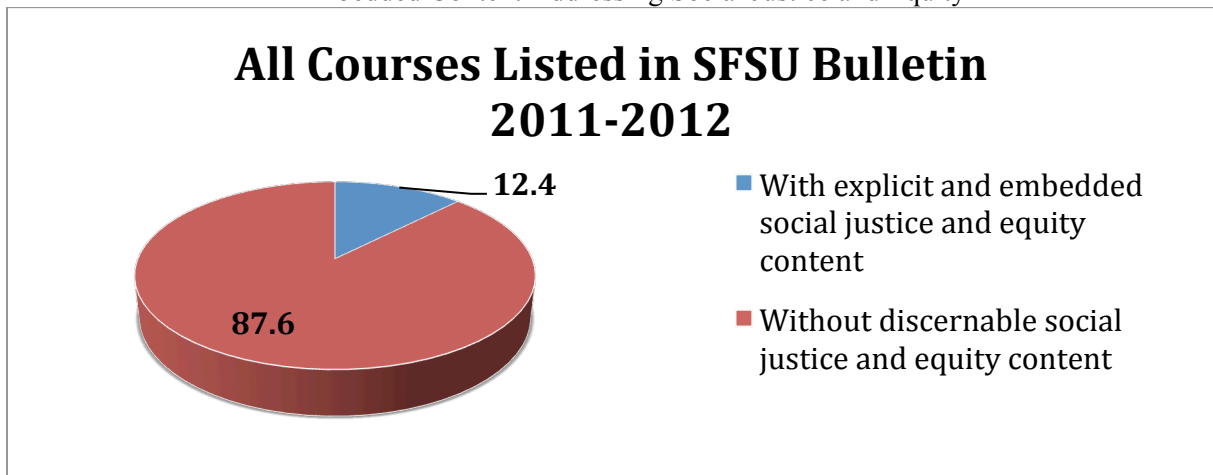
³ Syracuse University, Faculty Manual, Tenure Policies
http://www.syr.edu/academics/office_of_academic_admin/faculty/manual/tenure.html

This content analysis was based on course titles and descriptions listed in the 2011-2012 University Bulletin. Courses met the criteria of addressing social justice and equity in three ways:

1. The title of the course explicitly used the words “social justice,” “justice,” or “equity.”
2. The course description explicitly used the words “social justice,” “justice,” or “equity.”
3. The course description embedded issues concerning social justice and equity by indicating students would examine the following topics: fairness; access to resources caring for persons or environment; values and values clarification; ethics and morality; disparities in distribution of services and resources, concern for victims and vulnerable populations (elderly, immigrant, disabled, etc.), and concern for the underrepresented and underserved.

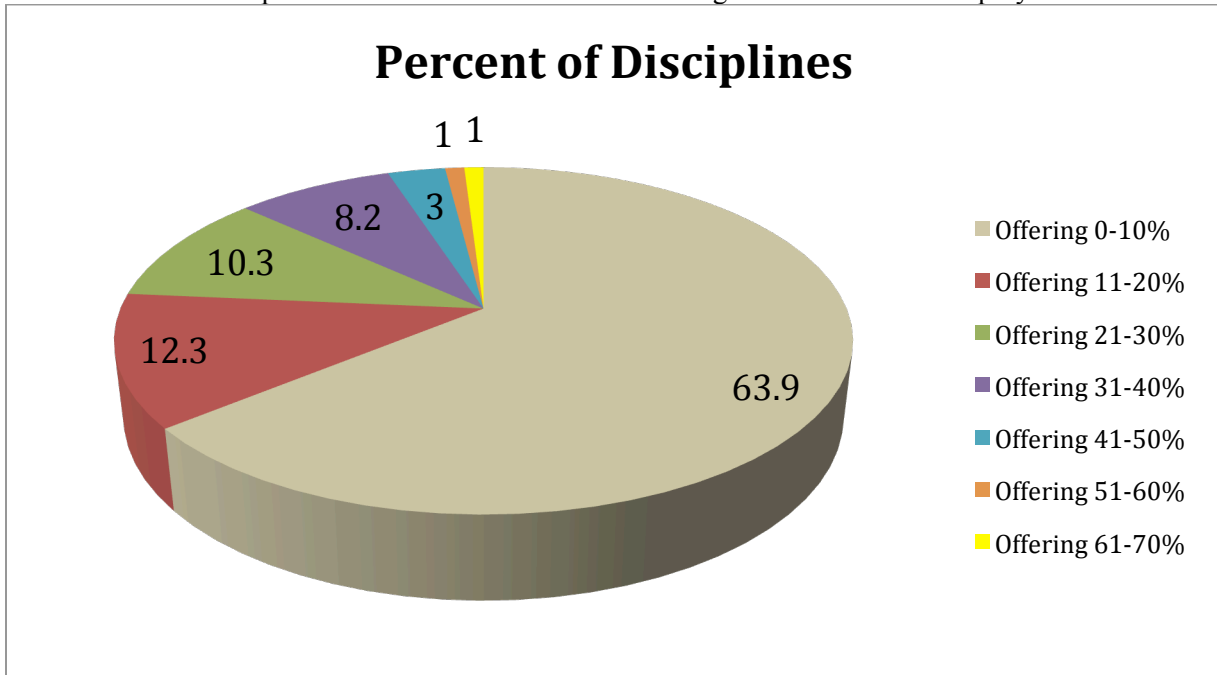
During the 2011-2012 academic year, 5,119 courses were listed in the Bulletin. Of all courses listed, 609 courses (11.7%) contained language indicating that social justice and/or equity was embedded in the course. The number of courses containing explicit references to social justice and/or equity in their descriptions combined with the number of course descriptions in which social justice and equity were embedded totaled 645 (12.4%) of all courses listed, as illustrated in Figure 1. (See *Appendix G: Courses with Explicit or Embedded Social Justice Content in Titles-Descriptions.*)

Figure 1: Percentage of All Courses Listed in the SF State Bulletin that Have Explicit and Embedded Content Addressing Social Justice and Equity



Though not evenly distributed in all colleges, courses containing content dedicated to the exploration of social justice and equity were found in all colleges. The highest percentages of courses addressing social justice and equity offered by departments are in the domains of social science and the humanities. For instance, disciplines in which over 25% of courses offered contained explicit or embedded content addressing social justice and equity included: Social Science, Race and Resistance, Africana Studies, Cinema, Labor and Employment Studies, Anthropology, Asian American Studies, Criminal Justice, Economics, Health Education, Latina/o Studies, Urban Studies and Planning, Women and Gender Studies, Political Science, History, and Social Work. There are several areas in the STEM disciplines that offer courses with explicit and/or embedded social justice and equity content, but only in one discipline, Geography, is the total percentage of such courses over 10%. The percentage of courses in STEM with explicit or embedded social justice and equity content by discipline are as follows: Biology 3.3%, Chemistry 3.0%; Computer Science 1.1%; Engineering .89%; Marine Science 3.0%. Math, Oceanography, and Physics and Science have zero percent.

Figure 2: The Percentage of Disciplines Listed in the SF State Bulletin that Offer Courses with Explicit or Embedded Content Addressing Social Justice and Equity



Lastly, it is important to note that this report might underrepresent the extent to which the curriculum at SF State addresses social justice and equity because many course descriptions are highly generalized. There exists the possibility, for instance, that instructors of history courses integrated a great deal of material and do much to advance students' thinking about social justice and equity without asserting in the course description that such instruction took place. Surveys of history routinely examine the human experience from political, economic, and social perspectives, with the inevitability that students will encounter narratives depicting the conflict between populations that have advantages and those that do not.

The clearinghouse for coursework that includes civic engagement is situated in the Institute for Community and Civic Engagement (ICCE), which coordinates campus service learning, collects data on faculty and student involvement, promotes faculty and student participation in civic engagement, and conducts research regarding the educational impact of these activities. Two years ago ICCE conducted an internal survey and found that SF State students enrolled in 472 course sections in which community service learning was an integrated course element. These sections enrolled a total of 8,978 students, or 38% of the total student population. Those who opted to participate in a community service learning course provided almost 500,00 hours of service. Included in this number are nearly 100,000 hours that social work students provided to hospitals, clinics, homeless shelters, and other programs. Many students earn educational awards for their stellar service. For example, during Academic Year 2008-2009, SF State placed #1 out of 89 higher education institutions in California by awarding \$147,000 in *Students in Service* educational scholarships for performing 51,000 hours of service in their communities. [CFR 2.6, 2.7]

In addition to community service and interaction with others in the classroom and beyond, SF State has made great efforts to encourage students to vote in public elections. During 2008, for example, the voter registration efforts assisted more than 5,000 SF State students to register and vote. Student participation in voting was particularly successful. Though only 30% of freshmen voted in the federal election, 90% of seniors indicated that they had voted. The campus registration drive was repeated in

Fall 2012 for the November election, and San Francisco State (along with San Diego State) led the CSU by registering 4,060 students (http://www.dailybreeze.com/news/ci_21859136/csu-campus-groups-register-31-000-new-student). [CFR 2.6, 2.7] The success of these efforts has led to the campus becoming its own voter precinct.

To introduce students at the earliest possible moment to the concepts of social justice and community engagement, a new feature has been added to Welcome Days when students first arrive on campus for the new fall semester. In Fall 2012, students were invited to participate in one of three service projects to join on the Saturday after they were welcomed to campus:

- **San Francisco Rec and Park Team** – Join the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department clean and beautify Lake Merced! Projects include habitat restoration, weeding, trash pickup, and getting to know your backyard of Lake Merced.
- **Department of Public Works (DPW) Clean Team** – Participate in a great opportunity to improve the community you live in. Join the San Francisco Department of Public Works Clean Team to clean up the neighborhood around the San Francisco State Campus. Volunteers will work in teams to pick up litter and trash from 19th Avenue and Holloway Avenue.
- **San Francisco State Facilities and Sustainability Team** – Join in an exciting day of planting native, drought tolerant plants that provide food and habitat for bees, butterflies, birds, and other pollinators and beneficial insects. Plant to save water, increase biodiversity on campus, and beautify our surrounding environment.

Clearly, the issues of social justice and civic engagement are infused in the campus academic curricula and the co-curricular programs in ways that have an impact on both the students and the San Francisco greater community.

1.3.2 Social Justice and Civic Engagement in Undergraduate Education

In Fall 2010 the Academic Senate and the University President approved the recommendations of the Graduation Requirements Task Force, a project that took several years to complete. Academic departments across the campus are now proposing courses to be approved for inclusion in the revised General Education program and graduation requirements to be launched in 2014⁴. [CFR 2.4] It is greatly significant that the new programs recognize civic learning and social justice outcomes in important ways. Under the new program, students must complete at least one course in their undergraduate education that meets student learning outcomes in each of the following areas: Social Justice (SJ), Global Perspectives (GP), American Ethnic and Racial Minorities (AE), and Environmental Sustainability (ES). In addition, the upper division requirement of the GE program is designed around nine Topical Perspectives; students will select one topic and complete three courses related to it. Of specific interest is the Topical Perspective on Social Justice and Civic Knowledge/Engagement in which “students will explore their responsibility to work toward social justice and equity by contributing purposefully to the well-being of their local communities, their nations, and the people of the world. Courses might address, but are not limited to, such subjects as social power and privilege, characteristics and dynamics of systemic oppression, economic exploitation within societies and beyond their borders, the personal and social consequences of phenomena like racism or sexism, scientific and pseudoscientific accounts of racial or gender differences, art or literature that represents or resists social injustice, liberation movements and

⁴ Graduation Requirements Task Force Recommendations
<http://www.sfsu.edu/~senate/documents/policies/F10-255.pdf>

political strategies aimed at eradicating injustice, freedom of the press and civic knowledge/engagement, and community activism and advocacy.” [CFR 2.1, 2.2, 2.3]

Though it is too early to establish gains in educational effectiveness that will accrue with the new program, it is possible to establish baseline measures of civic learning to be compared with future student achievement once the program has been in place. To this end, the Subcommittee on Civic Engagement examined two sources of data on student learning to analyze current levels. [CFR 2.4]

The first instrument was the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). San Francisco State does well in certain NSSE categories but not so well in others. In the 2011 Survey, for example, in the area of “educational and personal growth,” the students surveyed in the First and Senior years scored highly in the civic behavior of “voting in local, state, and national elections.” (See http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/student_engagement.) Similarly, SF State does well in the area of “understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.” Moreover, SF State was comparable to the comparison groups in the area of “contributing to the welfare of your community.” However, in the area of “participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course” the results were more mixed. Among first year students, SF State responses were considerably lower than comparable institutions in California. This is an area that deserves more research and focused effort in the future.

The second set of data that was examined was an internal survey that is conducted each semester as students register, the Student Pulse survey. The set of questions each semester can differ from previous semesters, which makes comparisons across years difficult. And because this survey is limited to SF State only, there is no opportunity to make comparisons with other institutions. Nonetheless the Pulse survey does provide an opportunity to make comparisons from the freshman to the senior year. (See http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/pulse_survey and *Appendix X: Student Pulse Survey Fall 2012*.)

In Spring 2012, specific questions were added to the survey concerning student commitment to social justice and civic engagement. Here we point out a few of the results. The majority of undergraduate respondents to the questions in the section about “ethical engagement” reported that they agree or strongly agree that their coursework and other campus experiences attained the goals listed in the survey. [CFR 2.4, 2.5, 2.10, 2.11] Three quarters of the respondents (75%) indicated that coursework has helped them understand ethical dimensions of decision-making and develop their own sense of values.

- Nearly seven in 10 respondents (69%) reported that courses have helped them embrace a personal responsibility to work toward social justice and equity in their community.
- Slightly more than half of the respondents (53%) indicated that courses have motivated them to do community work.

The indirect data on social justice and civic engagement clearly show that these issues are embedded in the coursework and student experience at SF State. Our task in the years to come will be to measure the impact of these experiences on learning in the assessment of the new General Education program.

1.3.3 Social Justice and Civic Engagement in Graduate Education

The Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review began in the academic year 2006-2007. The purpose of the review was to describe the achievements, needs, and recommendations of graduate programs, and to ensure the quality of graduate degrees administered by San Francisco State University. These

reviews are part of a larger effort to monitor student learning outcomes and assess the quality of all academic and co-curricular programs. The focus on graduate programs resulted from recommendations made by the 2001 WASC Report and CUSP II recommendations. [CFR 4.4]

Sixth Cycle reviews, guided by Senate Policy F05-236, called upon the faculty to conduct studies of their graduate programs with particular attention to the appropriateness of the curriculum and sustainability of the programs. The guidelines require faculty to evidence the link between stated learning outcomes and student achievements. The criteria addressed in these reports also include the program's achievements relative to social justice, international relations, and community service. [CFR 4.6, 4.7]

In Fall 2011, there were almost 4,200 students enrolled in 67 graduate programs at SF State.⁵ At the time of this study, 28 of the 67 programs had their Sixth Cycle listed on the Academic Planning and Development website. Fifteen of those studies were selected for a content analysis that identified: (1) categories of activity, and (2) the specific evidence offered to support claims about student learning and overall departmental achievements. In the Sixth Cycle Reports, there are five broad categories of activity in which graduate programs manifest their commitment to advancing social justice and equity; these are:

1. Community outreach and liaisons for support and development of community programs
2. Curriculum and instruction that explicitly addresses matters of social justice and equity
3. Publications, conference presentations, and aesthetic works
4. Hiring process and efforts to maintain a high level of diversity in faculty
5. Admissions process and efforts to maintain a high level of diversity in student enrollment

The evidence that supported claims that the department was dedicated to promoting social justice and equity included specific references to individuals who received grants to conduct research, titles of publications, discrete course content, specific internships and programs in which students participated, and data related to student enrollment and faculty hiring. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.11, 4.7]

Community Outreach and Liaisons

All programs included in this study reported that graduate students are active in the community to some degree, though two of the 15 programs indicated that the extent to which their students are able to participate in community service, internships, and other social projects is extremely limited because the majority of students are working either full- or part-time.

The community engagement projects include internships, volunteer work for ongoing programs and special projects, collaborations with external and internal agencies (such as the Institute for Community and Civic Engagement), and research. Hundreds of these are mentioned in the sample of Sixth Cycle Reports, and many of them are specifically aimed at improving the health, education, and general well being of the public. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism offers examples of this practice: the Pacific Leadership Institute offers outdoor recreation and self-sufficiency education to marginalized urban youth, the Sajai Wise Kids program educates children ages 6-11 to make healthy dietary choices, and the Insieme project provides education and life-skills training to women and children who have been victims of domestic abuse. In the Department of Kinesiology,

⁵ San Francisco State University. Retrieved from <http://www.sfsu.edu/~gradstdy/stats/> – *Total Enrollments By Department 1995-2013(EXCEL file)*.

graduate students deliver lectures to at-risk youth in the Outreach School Program, which strives to keep children out of gangs and in school.

It is evident in the descriptions of outreach programs and community liaisons that the University's graduate programs are proactive in seeing that students understand the social component of learning and the social implications of their learning. The descriptions reveal that programs and outreach consistently target the poor, the under-served, and the vulnerable; these populations include children in poverty, people who are incarcerated, and victims of violence, racial discrimination, sexual discrimination, and institutional neglect. [CFR 2.5]

Curriculum

Course content plays a significant role in the promotion of social justice and equity. Of the 15 programs in the study, nine described explicit course content that addresses issues of discrimination, inequitable access to resources and services, exploitation of labor, and institutional indifference to human suffering. In the Theater Arts program, students study the impact of social injustice and inequity by analyzing and performing plays that speak to the diversity of human experiences and the stories of those who have endured discrimination, poverty, institutional abuse and neglect, and social marginalization. Several programs use community service, which immerses students in communities that have acute and special needs including health care, safety, nutrition, and education as a teaching strategy.

The curricula examine not only the physical and legal implications of injustice and inequity, but the psychological as well. The Psychology Department, for example, offers a course, *The Psychology of Social Justice*, that examines the adverse effects of abuse and discrimination on the perception of self. The graduate program in the Department of History requires students to examine the causes and effects of discrimination, injustice, and inequity, and the program in Human Sexuality requires students to explore how the biological sciences and psychology have revolutionized society's knowledge about the complexities of human sexual behavior and identity and what that new knowledge implies about social justice. In the Cinema Department, all theory classes address the matter of fair representation and the value of recovering marginalized voices and perspectives.

Curricula addressing social justice and equity in graduate studies also pertain to non-human populations, as illustrated by the work of the Department of Geography and Human Environmental Studies. Coursework in the graduate program explicitly requires students to examine the variables that create inequities and injustices impacting humans, animals, plants, and the ecosystem. The curriculum also requires students to explore institutional and governmental responses to these inequities and injustices.

Finally, some descriptions of curriculum include statements that reveal the mindfulness of purpose of the graduate programs themselves. In particular, as noted in the descriptions of programs found in History, International Relations, and Human Sexuality, the purpose of the curriculum is to inform and inspire students to be better citizens and better advocates of human rights.

The study demonstrates that the SF State graduate curricula provide students with significant exposure to issues of social justice and civic engagement in many fields. Our next step as an institution should be the development of institutional outcomes for these issues and the creation of benchmarks for evaluating student learning. [CFR 1.5, 2.5]

Publications and Projects

Graduate students are involved in both research and publication. At least the programs in this study noted specific scholarly work that students produced; some were conference papers, others were articles co-authored by instructors, and some were works of art and films.

Social justice and equity are both prominent themes in graduate publications. The Art Department, for instance, emphasizes in its curriculum and expectations for student work that art is a valuable and powerful medium of social criticism. The department notes: “Because artists make cultural objects, it is nearly impossible to discuss creative research without invoking cultural context. A prevalent theme, particularly in the Bay Area, concerns the questions of equity and social justice.”⁶

Like the Art Department, the Cinema Department explicitly encourages students to explore themes of social justice and to use their medium as a means of social criticism. Students have presented their work in animation, documentary film, and other genres locally and at the International Graduate Film Conference.

In the International Relations program, scores of students have presented papers at national and international conferences and several have published articles in academic journals. The list of topics posted in the IR program’s Sixth Cycle Report includes discrimination against women, civil rights, and labor exploitation. Graduate students in History also participate in local and national conferences where their work is presented; the most frequent outlet for student manuscripts is *Ex Post Facto*, a journal dedicated to encouraging historical research and scholarship in graduate programs. [CFR 2.8, 2.9]

1.3.4 Forum on Social Justice and Equity in the Academy

One of the highlights of the WASC activities for the year was the Forum on Social Justice and Equity in the Academy. The WASC Steering Committee and the Subcommittee on Social Justice created the forum to invite the campus community to think about the current work that was being done on social justice and to consider how this value can be preserved for future generations of faculty and students.

On Friday, April 17, 2012, faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, administration, and executive leadership engaged in collegial dialogues about weaving social justice and equity throughout the efforts of academic departments and disciplines. (See *Appendix H: Social Justice and Equity Forum Invitation and Agenda*.) Academic Senate Chair Pamela Vaughn and President Robert A. Corrigan welcomed forum participants. President Corrigan reminded audience members how SF State had come to hold equity and social justice as institutional values. Three panels followed these opening remarks: scholarship, teaching and service. Panelists were asked to address the following questions:

- How do/does you/your field define social justice and equity?
- How are social justice and equity manifested in your work?
- How do you assess the impact of social justice and equity in your work?
- How do/will you maintain/sustain social justice and equity initiatives?

Each panel included three faculty members and a moderator. The presentations and the discussions that followed were spirited and engaging. Faculty, staff, administration, and students participated in

⁶ Department of Art (2010). Sixth Cycle Report, p. 87. Retrieved from <http://air.sfsu.edu/sites/sites.sfsu.edu.air/files/6th%20Cycle%20Art%20Self%20Study.pdf>

the question-and-answer period, and there seemed to be no doubt that Social Justice is alive and well at SF State and will be carried forward as a value in years to come.

The forum ended with reflections on the day by Dean Jacob E. Perea, Graduate College of Education. Dean Perea emphasized the breadth and depth of social justice and equity work being done on campus, stating that campus efforts are broadly representative, including access to education for underrepresented students, disability access, economic justice, environmentalism, and LGBTQQI concerns. Additionally, he was impressed by the diversity of disciplines represented on the panels. He cautioned the audience to not lose sight of the importance of service in public higher education. [CFR 4.6, 4.7, 4.8]

This essay demonstrates the educational effectiveness of social justice and civic engagement as a value at SF State. These issues are represented in both graduate and undergraduate curricula and are included in student learning outcomes at all levels. They are also included in the criteria for reporting in the Sixth Cycle of program review, and there is much evidence represented in both student activities and student work that these values are part of the educational programs at SF State. In addition, there is enormous evidence that faculty are deeply committed to social justice and civic engagement in their teaching and in their research. The WASC review has served as a welcome opportunity to reaffirm this commitment and to ensure that these values continue as Core Commitments of the University.

The project for the University in the coming years will be to measure these values as competences at the GE level, to develop institutional outcomes at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, and to benchmark our progress in attaining our goals.

Essay 2: Facing the Challenges of a Changing Faculty and Student Profile

2.0 Changing Student Demographics

SF State has seen a dramatic shift in the last 10 years in the student population driven largely by the number of first-time freshmen arriving each fall on our campus. The freshman population grew by 63% from Fall 2002 to Fall 2012 (Fall 2002 = 2,328; Fall 2012 = 3,804). This change in the profile of new students occurred at a time when both new transfers and new graduate students held steady or declined slightly, causing the overall student body to trend younger than in previous decades when SF State was known primarily as a commuter university.

A parallel trend during this time period was a significant increase in the number of freshmen coming to the campus from outside the local region. In 1992, 80% of all freshmen came from the six-county San Francisco Bay Area. By 2011, over 50% of freshmen came from counties outside the Bay Area. More freshmen choose SF State as a result of targeted marketing to students in Southern California where the State's largest population of high school graduates resides. The increase in out-of-area students has created a younger, more residential student body with all of the social and developmental needs that a younger population requires. [CFR 2.10]

Although it is still true that SF State enrolls many students who commute to campus while living at home with their parents or in apartments in the vicinity, our changing demographics are affecting the nature of our student body and their housing patterns. Currently, 48% of new first-year students live in campus-based housing or residence halls, and a total of 12% of all undergraduates live in campus housing. This year approximately 42% of current residents reapplied to live on campus for the 2012-