

Essay 3: Improving Student Success in Graduation and Learning

3.0 Student Success

In the Capacity and Preparatory Review, we focused our attention on a number of areas related to student learning. At the institutional level, we examined graduation, retention, and program assessment. At the other end of the spectrum, we gathered data on specific initiatives that we felt would have an impact on student learning. These initiatives include the Student Success and Graduation Initiative, the new General Education program, Academic Technology, and Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines (WAC/WID). Over the past 18 months, we have continued these projects and report on them here.

3.1 Student Success and Graduation Initiative (SSGI)

During the CPR review, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of time-to-degree, graduation rates, and retention, disaggregating our data by college, department, first-time freshmen, transfer students, and race/ethnicity. At that time our six-year graduation rate was 48% for the total population, 49.9% for non-underrepresented minority students (non-URM), and 43% for the underrepresented minority students (URM). We also noted that time to degree had decreased over five years across all variables and all colleges. Moreover, we were graduating more students and found that once a student began a major, different populations were just as likely to persist and graduate. [CFR 2.10]

We also found, however, that there was much work to be done in understanding the reasons for attrition, in improving our graduation rates, and for ensuring that students succeed in learning the things we consider to be most important. The Student Success and Graduation Initiative, which began shortly before the CPR visit, has served as a catalyst in our efforts to improve graduation and retention. That initiative originated in the CSU Chancellor's Office, which has tasked us to increase the six-year graduation rates of first time-full time freshmen and transfer students at SF State by 8% by 2015, and to decrease the gap between URM and non-URM students by 50% by 2015. Over the past two years, the SSGI Task Force has worked intentionally to implement policies and practices that would improve graduation (see <http://air.sfsu.edu/graduation-initiative> for the SF State Facilitating Graduation Task Force Plan).

Our initial efforts focused on administrative changes to facilitate graduation. These changes were prompted by what we learned from research and best practices at other universities with regard to helping students graduate. The policy changes included revisions to academic disqualification, administrative disqualification, mandatory advising, first-time freshman advising, graduate student enrollment restrictions, graduate student GPA minimum, incomplete course restrictions, limits on the number of units, declaration of major requirements, repeated course limits, super senior monitoring, time limit to complete requirements for undergraduate degrees, and withdrawal policy. (See *Appendix P: Student Success Enrollment Strategies* for further explanation for each of these policies.)

We have also invested a great deal of effort on gathering and analyzing data. In the initial stages of the project, we focused much attention on baseline data such as graduation rates, retention rates, and time-to-degree (see <http://air.sfsu.edu/sites/sites.sfsu.edu.air/files/FGII.pdf>). Gathering and analyzing these data were necessary first steps, but we have learned that these data points don't tell the story that we need to understand if we are to have an impact on student success and graduation. Each round of data gathering has led to yet more questions and further data gathering and analysis. For example,

in the summer of 2011 we developed a Milestone Study to examine the progress that freshman and sophomore students should accomplish in their path toward graduation (see *Appendix Q: Student Success Initiative Milestones* and <http://air.sfsu.edu/graduation-initiative>). Based on higher education research, we set expectations for GPA, number of units completed, completion of remediation, retention, and declaration of major and we measured these expectations for the freshman and sophomore students. We then disaggregated the data by URM, gender, first generation, and Pell grant students, and compared the disaggregated results for the at-risk populations to the results from the total population. Recently we have used these data to locate specific students within the at-risk group who are in need of support.

When faculty from the Health Education Department saw the results of the Milestone Study, they asked if we would investigate the same measures for students in their Metro Academy program, a pipeline program from community college through the Health Ed major that enrolls mostly URM students. This analysis showed that students in the Metro Academy were significantly ahead of the total population in all measures. These findings led us to look at all of the programs on campus in which students are receiving some kind of special attention, including EOP, Summer Bridge, the theme dormitories, Trio, and Guardian Scholars. Our results indicate that any program that gives students special academic attention (such as tutoring, advising, and coaching) improves student success. The results from these projects have prompted the creation of a Metro Academy model for the Child and Adolescent Development Department and a Metro Academy model for STEM majors. In addition, several members of the Biology and Chemistry/Biochemistry Departments have created an assessment collaboration that tracks student data on the milestone measures and a number of other areas in order to improve student success. In short, the data analysis has shown us which efforts are most fruitful. In general, any time we break down our large populations of students into smaller communities of learners and give them academic support, they succeed in greater numbers. The very encouraging recent news is that we have exceeded our goal with regard to the achievement gap. The Fall 2012 data show a 2.9% difference between the total graduation rate and the URM graduation rate, down from 8% in 2009. An additional unexpected consequence of our work has been the cascading buy-in from faculty generated by the data analysis. As the data showed specific types of trends, faculty began to ask for their departments and students to be included in our analyses. This domino effect has promoted the general value of assessment in the minds of faculty. [CFR 2.4]

These newly-formed learning communities embody what AAC&U refers to as “high impact practices” (HIPs), and one of the major thrusts of the SSGI now is the promotion and support of HIPs. This additional thrust of the initiative evolved during the summer of 2011 when a group of faculty and administrators attended an AAC&U conference on HIPs and returned with an ambitious action plan that was incorporated into the Student Success and Graduation Initiative. The action plan includes introducing first-year students to high impact practices, especially for the traditionally underserved populations, helping students to understand the mission and values of the University, helping departments explore ways to link students involved in capstone and first-year experiences, and finding ways to help students connect their first year experience to the rest of their college career. (See *Appendix R: AAC&U Institute on High Impact Practices and Student Success*.) We are very much aware of the fact that simply graduating more students is not enough. We need to make sure that the students we graduate have the knowledge and skills we expect them to learn, and our focus on high impact practices is built around this commitment. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5]

Another essential element in the SSGI initiative has been the continuous collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The plethora of co-curricular programs that were implemented over the past five years is intended to give students the kind of support that we know they need in order to succeed. (See *Essay 2, Appendix I: SFSU Student Mental Health Initiative Proposal*.) Moreover, these programs are designed to reach all of the special populations of students in the SF

State community, traditional and non-traditional, male and female, URM and non-URM, and the data indicate that we are making a difference. One-year retention rates for freshmen reached a new high of 81.4% for the Fall 2010 entry class, after ranging from 75.3 to 77.4% in the previous five years. [CFR 2.13]

As we continue the initiative, we have plans for projects that will begin in the coming year. Discussions during the summer focused on our need to more effectively communicate the importance of graduating with both students and faculty. In essence, we need to create a culture of graduation at San Francisco State. To this end, we developed a communication plan to bring more faculty into the discussion and to raise awareness of students. Several informational flyers were sent out to faculty in Spring 2012 (see <http://air.sfsu.edu/graduation-initiative>), and banners emphasizing the benefits of graduating have been hung in some of the large classroom buildings as well as buildings with high student traffic. Our communication plan going forward calls for more involvement of both students and faculty in the next phase of the initiative. [CFR 2.2, 2.4]

We will also continue to collect and analyze data that will guide us in implementing processes that lead students to graduate. For example, in Summer 2012 we examined the files of students in their sixth year at SF State who arrived as freshmen and who have not graduated. A few students applied to graduate but were on the verge of being denied graduation. Their records were examined closely for the possibility of substituting courses already completed to satisfy missing requirements. With appropriate course substitutions, they were able to graduate after all, rather than returning for another semester to complete the missing requirements. Other students in this group who have earned at least 100 units and are still enrolled have been given first priority registration in an effort to make sure they are able to get the classes they need to graduate within six years. We have also examined the GPAs and units earned by all at-risk students in the 2009 cohort, and we are in the process of asking departments to aggressively advise the students who are in academic trouble and those who have not completed the expected number of units. [CFR 2.4, 2.5]

We now know there is not one solution to the challenge of improving graduation rates. We must continue to drill down on the data until we get to the individuals who need more support. Administration and faculty must work together on developing high impact teaching practices that will engage students and keep them motivated. We will continue to try and find ways to create small communities of learners within a huge university, and we must continually communicate the value of learning and an education.

3.2 General Education and the Baccalaureate Requirements

Based on the belief that curriculum requirements should reflect the values of the university and the needs of the communities they serve, the Academic Senate created the Graduation Requirements Task Force (GRTF) in 2005 and called for an assessment of the appropriateness and value of the university-wide baccalaureate degree requirements for SF State undergraduate students. [CFR 2.2, 2.4] The last time such a review had taken place was in 1981. As noted in the CPR report, GRTF's recommendations to revise the requirements for the baccalaureate were approved by the Academic Senate in Spring 2010, with further revisions approved in Fall 2010 and Spring 2011. The Baccalaureate Learning Goals and the new General Education program proposed by the GRTF and passed by the Senate included best practices identified through the review process, specific degree requirements, course expectations, and student learning outcomes. [CFR 2.2, 2.3, 2.4] In addition, the proposal recommended several changes that will facilitate the completion of baccalaureate degrees. For example, the GRTF recommends that students be able to complete university-wide course requirements for a baccalaureate in 48 units out of the 120 units needed for the degree, as well as a capstone experience for every major. (See <http://www.sfsu.edu/~senate/documents/policies/F10-255.pdf>.)

Since the CPR report, the implementation process for the program has continued. In Fall 2010, elections were held for members of the Baccalaureate Requirements Committee (BRC) and seven different course certification committees. (See www.sfsu.edu/~ugs/committee_info.html for oversight and approval process.) In Spring 2011, a Faculty Director of GE was appointed. BRC has worked closely with the Office of Undergraduate Studies to create an online course review and approval process that was streamlined, transparent, and responsive to faculty needs. [CFR 2.2, 4.6]

Certification of GE courses began in Fall 2011 and is ongoing. (See http://www.sfsu.edu/~ugs/GE_Policy.html.) Oversight of the certification process is the joint responsibility of the GE Director, the BRC chair, and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. [CFR 2.4] In the first semester, submissions slowly trickled in as faculty and departments took a “wait and see” approach to find out how the process would work. In Spring 2012, the number of submissions dramatically increased. By the end of the spring semester, 130 courses were submitted for certification and 77 courses were certified by the subcommittees. See http://www.sfsu.edu/~ugs/faculty/certified_courses.html for a current list of approved courses and http://www.sfsu.edu/~ugs/GE_Policy.html for a detailed summary of the BRC implementation process. Implementation of the new General Education Program is expected to begin in Fall 2014. (See *Appendix S-1: Report of Implementation of GE* and *Appendix S-2: GE Course Approval Form*.)

3.3 Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement

As noted in the 2010 CPR report, SF State students must satisfy an assessment of writing for graduation (GWAR). The Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP) recommended in 2006 that the English test (JEPET) for the GWAR be replaced by a course requirement for writing in the discipline. Following this recommendation, a Writing Across the Curriculum and in the Discipline (WAC/WID) director was hired to establish and implement the program. The director began her work by educating faculty on the value of WAC/WID and training them in the skills and resources needed to develop quality GWAR courses. (See <http://wac.sfsu.edu>.) From 2008 until the CPR report in 2010, 60 GWAR courses were approved and implemented and data from surveys and focus groups were collected to explore faculty and student perceptions of the value and challenges of the new program. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6]

3.3.1 Implementation Progress

Since the CPR visit, progress on implementing the new GWAR has taken a variety of forms. During 2011-2012, upper division courses designated to fulfill the GWAR increased to include every department on campus but one. (See <http://wac.sfsu.edu/content/approved-gwar-courses>.) Innovative partnerships continue to define GWAR courses. The Tutoring Centers offered hundreds of tutorials and in-class workshops, and librarians offered dozens of workshops tailored to students’ specific research projects. The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) worked directly with 23 instructors to improve writing pedagogy, and the Campus Academic Resource Program (CARP) embedded Writing Fellows in 13 classes. In a Business class, one Writing Fellow was paired with an English teacher (both trained in the SF State Composition MA program) and two Business instructors. To more consistently support at-risk students in GWAR courses, the LAC launched a Writing Studio, one-unit mini-seminars, and, for 2013, the Composition for Multilingual Students program created a grammar course for multilingual writers to be taken concurrently with GWAR.

With help from librarians, the Coordinator of English 214 held multiple workshops for teachers as 214 (the pre-requisite for all GWAR courses) shifts from its literary emphasis towards teaching research skills. The Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP) sponsored a well-attended

Winter Colloquium, and departments such as Biology hosted their own workshops. To disseminate some of these conversations, CWEP worked with a BECA course in video production to create short videos featuring GVAR faculty and students. These videos have been posted on the university's WAC website and on an e-newsletter sponsored by CSU Fresno and co-edited by CSU WAC Directors. (See <http://wac.sfsu.edu/content/what-wac-wid-gwar>.)

3.3.2 Research and Assessment

In addition to the implementation efforts, considerable research has already been conducted on the GVAR. In a 2011 Roundtable sponsored by the College of Health and Social Sciences, faculty discussed how a GVAR course's success depends on its relationship to other courses in a major, a point that students consistently make (66 interviews, fall 2009-2012). (See <http://air.sfsu.edu/wasc>, the *SF State CPR Report*.) How a GVAR course is integrated into a major is also the subject of formal assessments from Liberal Studies (LS) and Sociology. (See *Appendix T-1: International Relations GVAR Assessment Report*, *Appendix T-2: Philosophy GVAR Assessment Report*, and *Appendix T-3: Sociology GVAR Assessment Report*. Also see *Appendix U-1: Tanya Augsburg Liberal Studies Research*, *Appendix U-2: Sarah Lawrence Research*, and *Appendix U-3: Tara Lockhart Research*). In their grant-funded study, summarized in a scholarly paper (*Appendix U-1: Tanya Augsburg Liberal Studies Research*), LS faculty found their GVAR course was burdened by objectives, and so they shifted some GVAR material to a capstone course. (See *Appendix V: GVAR Research Writing Across the Curriculum*.) [CFR 2.4] Additional GVAR assessment reports can be found in *Appendix V-1: Summary of Writing Assessment with HED 400*, *Appendix V-2: HED 400 Assessment of Student Writing*, and *Appendix V-3: Seeding and Affording Literate Practice from 2YC to the Major*.

Since 2008, five departments have assessed student writing in GVAR courses. Together, these assessments suggest that when professors develop rubrics based on their disciplinary and institutional knowledge, as opposed to using a general skills rubric, they will agree on what constitutes "good" writing in their fields. Two departments, International Relations (IR) and Philosophy (PHIL), developed disciplinary rubrics based on the scale successfully used by History in their 2008-09 program assessment of writing in the major. In comparative studies, IR and PHIL faculty found that students improved their abilities to contextualize arguments, understand theory, present relevant data, and appropriately cite sources. [CFR 4.7] (See *Appendix T-1: International Relations GVAR Assessment Report*, *Appendix T-2: Philosophy GVAR Assessment Report*, and *Appendix T-3: Sociology GVAR Assessment Report*.)

Students' perceptions of their learning provide a rich context for writing assessment. In 2011-12, the incoming Coordinator of English 214 and the WAC Director interviewed 22 students who completed English 214 and a GVAR course and gathered their writing from both courses. The majority reported that they transferred specific strategies from 214 to GVAR. Consistent with interviews that we conducted in 2009-10, this group perceived that they learn the most in GVAR courses when their teachers offer quality feedback, sequence assignments logically, and explicitly comment on the rhetoric of their fields. Students also described passionate engagement when professors challenged them with innovative assignments in their disciplinary fields that fostered deep research and expertise. [CFR 2.4, 2.5]

A number of individual faculty members and students have also conducted assessment studies of their GVAR courses. For example, a Master's student in the Composition MA program found syntactical growth in three sets of papers. The 214 Coordinator presented preliminary findings at three national conferences, and, with the WAC Director, is collaborating with professors at Western Illinois University to develop a grant proposal for the 4Cs Research Initiative and an article for 3Cs, the

field's flagship journal. Finally, several masters' students and one doctoral student studied WAC in GWAR courses for their culminating experience papers and dissertation. The doctoral study found that students actually make more progress in their writing in the discipline if the GWAR course comes after the students have had some coursework in the major.

3.3.3 Going Forward

In 2011-12, the Academic Senate voted twice to preserve the University's Policy on Written English Proficiency, and class size in these courses has remained small despite the budget cuts. As CWEP shifts from a policy body to one focused on supporting and assessing WAC, the committee will build on the Senate's confidence by continuing to engage faculty in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Thus in 2012-13, CWEP plans to host roundtables to share assessment results and explore how WAC intersects with the SoTL in the disciplines. [CFR 2.9]

In conclusion, San Francisco State University is an institution that has been deeply committed to and engaged with the improvement of student writing for 20 years. The implementation of the new GWAR requirement and attention to writing is a campus-wide endeavor that involves faculty across the campus. This involvement has not only included writing curricula and pedagogy, but also research on writing from faculty across the disciplines. Our institutional NSSE assessments indicate that these efforts have had a significant impact on students. In the past two NSSE surveys, students report that they write significantly more and feel more confident about their writing than do students from comparable institutions. (See http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/student_engagement.) With the Committee of Written English Proficiency, the WAC Director, and the implementation of the new GWAR requirement, the infrastructure for sustaining attention to writing is now in place at SF State.

3.4 Academic Technology and Operations

The 2010 CPR self-study included an investigation of changes in the learning style preferences of students and faculty. The results pointed to newly developed technologies as one of the changes in preferred learning modes. A recurring theme in the responses was the ubiquitous nature of technology in students' lives and the increasing desire for the incorporation of appropriate technology into the learning experience. Faculty often identified the need to use technology to communicate effectively with the current generation of students, and students identified iLearn (SF State's learning management system), podcasts, video conferencing, online exams, and email as the technologies they used in their learning experiences.

Academic Technology (AT), which resides within the Office of Academic Affairs Operations, supports and advances effective learning, teaching, scholarship, and community service with technology, and has focused much research and effort towards this emerging area. (See *Appendix W: WASC Academic Technology Report*.) The WASC CPR team expressed confidence in AT's leadership and staff competencies to help advance the university's faculty development programs and teaching and learning environments. Furthermore, they stated that "SFSU is cautioned as it pursues its sense that increased integration of central IT and unit-based IT operations will lead to cost avoidance, increased capacity, and increased security that there is a positive distinction between the focus of IT and Academic Technology that is worthy to maintain."

The question of whether or not to centralize Information Technology (IT) has been an ongoing discussion at SF State. In late 2011, the University hired the Huron Education consulting group to conduct a comprehensive review of all areas of IT at the University and to provide recommendations with regard to effective organizational structure. The Huron Report Executive Summary (see

Appendix W-1: Huron IT Assessment Consultant Report 2012) outlines the recommendations from their study.

Although many of the recommendations from Huron are still in the early stages of implementation, Academic Affairs Operations (AAO) is currently leading the campus initiatives on online course evaluations, virtual labs, computer labs, common workstation standards, and streamlining of online services for learning and teaching. AAO is also partnering with the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) and the IT units on campus cost-saving initiatives related to common helpdesk ticketing, campus-wide software licensing agreements and server elimination, and consolidation.

A positive development for student and faculty use of academic technology is the recently completed, award-winning J. Paul Leonard Library, which houses the Library, Academic Technology, and the Sutro Library. The new building includes 50% more seating, 300% more group study rooms, and twice as many computers as the original building. This translates to more than 3,000 seats for study and more than 250 public computers. In addition, there are faculty and student digital media studios with 12 editing rooms and a variety of collaborative work environments. Using their own personal computers or one from the 150 available for checkout, students, faculty, and staff can also access the robust wireless network from any location within the library, including the 100-seat café.

The University still has not filled the open CIO position and the implementation of the Huron recommendations are still in the earliest stages. However, Academic Affairs has a strong interest in ensuring that the interface between Academic Affairs and other technology units is carefully and thoughtfully managed. The newly appointed Associate Vice President for Operations has been charged with representing the needs of Academic Affairs as we transition to the PeopleSoft student system, as well as promoting and maintaining the quality of our efforts in Academic Technology.

3.4.1 AT Support Services

The 2010 CPR report stressed the need to maintain a critical set of support structures for faculty to help them manage new approaches to engage students in learning. The paragraphs below provide a summary of the many support services provided by AT to faculty, staff, and students at SF State. See *Appendix W: WASC Academic Technology Report* for further details and assessment results of these services. [CFR 3.6, 3.7]

Systems, Applications and Support: AT develops, maintains, and optimizes performance on SF State's technologies in support of learning and teaching, including iLearn (SF State's Moodle learning management system), DIVA (digital virtual media archive), CourseStream (lecture capture), POWER (workshop registration and scheduling), LabSpace (virtual desktops and software applications for faculty researchers and students), Online Syllabus Tool, ePortfolios, Clickers (standardized personal response systems), and other web-based technologies.

Learning Spaces, Media and Events: AT installs and maintains all audiovisual technologies in campus classrooms, meeting rooms, and lecture theaters. AT also supports the cablecast system that broadcasts 18,000+ films on demand to classrooms and viewing stations. Other services include satellite hookups, video production and streaming for events such as Commencement and Welcome Days, and audiovisual equipment checkout to students, faculty, and staff.

Online Learning and Teaching: AT helps faculty develop curricula in an expanding continuum of instructional modes that use technology, thereby helping ensure universally accessible, flexible and meaningful learning experiences for SF State's students and faculty. Faculty development activities include AT's summer and winter institutes, modularized face-to-face and online workshops, a new faculty multimedia drop-in lab for support with instructional design and

development of technology enhanced courses, an expanding collection of online tutorials, resources and video training clips, and individual, department, and college-level consultations on instructional strategies in support of effective course and program delivery modes and assessment.

3.4.2 AT Implementation Strategies

Before implementing academic technology initiatives, AT ensures that the following three intersecting elements are in place to maintain educational quality and integrity: educational best practices, faculty and student support systems, and a reliable technology infrastructure that integrates with and extends the current campus technology environment.

Over the past three years, AT has established itself as a CSU Center for Excellence and National Leader in Moodle Code Development, Lecture Capture, and ePortfolio assessment to support Technology Enhanced, Hybrid, HyFlex, and Online course delivery. Specifically, this year AT received funding for and delivered the Common Code Base for Moodle campuses in the CSU system, which we can also use on our campus. Based on our best practices enabling HyFlex learning approaches, Echo360 designated SF State a “Lighthouse Campus” for lecture capture and awarded the campus \$10,000 to conduct research into its educational effectiveness. AT also serves as a principle investigator on a FIPSE mini-grant to study the role of ePortfolios in student transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions.

AT has built a comprehensive suite of tools that are integrated into the SF State common learning management system, locally branded “iLearn,” which uses Moodle technology. To maintain and improve reliability, usability, and performance, AT has engaged in a series of continuous improvement activities to consistently examine our work and seek incremental changes in our processes to improve efficiency and quality. [CFR 3.6, 3.7] AT has participated fully and actively in external and internal reviews of our services with students, faculty, and staff, including those conducted by the 2012 SF State Educational Technology Advisory Committee, the 2011 WASC Visiting Team, and the 2012 Huron Consultants who explored IT Cost Savings opportunities on our campus. [CFR 4.4]

As a result of the increased functionality, reliability, and performance of iLearn, along with further integrations of useful academic technologies and AT’s faculty development outreach, SF State can demonstrate a significant increase not only in the number of academic technology users, but also in the frequency with which they engage with academic technology. (See *Appendix W-2: ETAC Survey Results Presentation* for detailed assessment reports.)

3.5 Program Review

The purpose of the academic program review process at San Francisco State is to assure University degree programs of the highest quality, providing an opportunity for faculty and administrators to clarify the intellectual vision, range, coherence, and currency of each program, examine the effectiveness of its organizational structure, articulate the learning outcomes it inculcates, and assess the extent to which learning outcomes are being achieved. [CFR 2.6, 2.7]

The review process highlights efforts by instructional units to ensure and improve program quality, demonstrates how the degree program has been revised in response to evolving circumstances and changes in the field, and indicates the resources needed to accomplish program goals. The review

affords a clear and comprehensive perspective on the program's standing within its discipline, its role in its own College and in the University as a whole, and its consonance with SF State's mission, CSU plans, and State mandates. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.7]

Academic program review is governed by several senate policies:

- #F05-236 Guidelines for the Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review (<http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth>)
- #S06-238 Indicators and Standards of Graduate Program Quality and Sustainability (<http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth>)
- #S06-133 All-University Academic Program Review Committee (<http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth>)

3.5.1 The Sixth Cycle of Program Review

Over the past 30 years, the University has engaged in five cycles of academic program review, and each review has distinctive characteristics. The focus of the Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review is on the quality and currency of the University's graduate programs. This particular focus is in large measure a response to the 2001 WASC report and 2005 CUSP II recommendations that call for a thoughtful exploration of issues specific to graduate education. [CFR 4.4]

The review process is informed by explicit indicators and criteria intended to determine the sustainability and quality of programs. These indicators and criteria are best construed as normative expectations rather than rigidly prescriptive rules. In the sixth cycle, all graduate programs, whether nationally accredited or not, need to demonstrate the extent to which University- and program-established standards are being met. [CFR 2.7, 4.7]

Though the Sixth Cycle of Program Review focuses on evaluating the quality and currency of the University's graduate programs and the resources needed to maintain and improve them, academic units offering both graduate and undergraduate programs are also expected to examine the relationships between their undergraduate and graduate endeavors, including the past, current, projected, and optimal distribution of resources devoted to graduate and undergraduate education. Undergraduate degree programs are not expected to participate in a formal process of self-study and external review during this cycle, except in special circumstances. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7]

3.5.2 Academic Program Review Committee

The role of the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) is to review and evaluate the efforts of faculty and administrators to clarify the intellectual vision, range, coherence, and currency of each program. In addition, APRC examines the program's organizational structure, reviews the program's learning outcomes, evaluates their indicators of program success, and evaluates program goals and effectiveness. APRC makes recommendations for action and proposes the resources needed to accomplish program goals. [CFR 2.5, 2.6, 2.7]

The APRC performs four major functions: (1) review of the Handbook, (2) consultation with College faculty, (3) review and evaluation of all relevant documentation, and (4) recommendations in the form of a concluding action memorandum (explained further below).

Membership in APRC consists of the following:

- Six elected representatives; one from each college. (3-year term)
- The AVP for APD is an ex officio voting member.
- During the Sixth Cycle, the Dean of Graduate Studies is an ex officio voting member.
- The Program Review Coordinator is an ex officio non-voting member. (currently not filled due to budget reductions)
- The Assessment Coordinator is an ex officio non-voting member. (currently not filled due to budget reductions)

Oversight of the APRC is primarily the responsibility of the Academic Senate. The APRC sends a summary report of the committee's recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the program faculty, the college dean, and the Academic Senate. APRC also sends any policy recommendations and an annual report to the Academic Senate and makes periodic status reports to the Academic Senate. [CFR 4.6]

The chair of APRC is elected annually from among the members of the committee. Policy states that the chair shall receive one course release for two semesters, and the remaining members shall receive one course release for one semester, though this support was removed in 2009-2010 as a consequence of budget cutbacks and has not been restored. [CFR 2.4]

3.5.3 Components of Program Review

Within the context described above, academic program review in the Sixth Cycle includes the following four components:

1. Instructional Unit Self-Study and Recommendations
2. External Review and Recommendations
3. Program and Dean Response to External Review and Recommendations
4. University Review and Decision Processes

Instructional Unit Self-Study and Recommendations

At the start of the process for a given College, representatives from the instructional units (departments and/or programs offering masters or doctoral degrees), the College, the Office of Academic Planning and Development, and the APRC meet to discuss substantive and procedural matters. In this meeting, specific areas or issues needing to be addressed are discussed so that these can receive special attention in the review process. The administration provides the academic unit with the most current available data pertinent to the self-study.

The faculty of every instructional unit offering a graduate program (other than any subject to periodic accreditation review) prepares a self-study that serves as a basis for all subsequent levels of review and recommendations. In this self-study, the unit describes and assesses each graduate degree program offered, following the guidelines in the *Handbook for the Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review* (see http://air.sfsu.edu/air/files/handbook_6th_cycle.pdf). The self-study describes the recent history of the program or programs under review and identifies current aspirations for development and improvement. Department and/or unit heads are encouraged to assure widespread faculty participation in the development of the self-studies and that faculty members are made aware of all findings and recommendations generated by the review process. The unit forwards its completed self-study to the Office of Academic Planning and Development and to the College Dean for review and signature indicating that the document is ready for external review. At this same time, the Dean is encouraged to submit his/her own independent comments regarding the program. [CFR 2.4, 4.8]

Handbook for the Sixth Cycle of Academic Program Review

A handbook to guide the Sixth Cycle is provided to programs; it incorporates the general guidelines required by Academic Senate policy. Additionally, the Handbook describes specific self-study and external review expectations in regard to those indicators and criteria of program sustainability and quality set forth in policy. (See <http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth>.)

Units undergoing program review are encouraged to review copies of previously completed reports (self studies, external reviewer reports, APRC reports) provided to the campus community at http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth_reports.

One of the major changes in the Program Review Policy for the Sixth Cycle was the development of Indicators and Standards of Graduate Program Quality and Sustainability. An explicit goal of the University's 2005-2010 strategic plan was that the institution "offers high quality post-baccalaureate education widely recognized for its intellectual value and contribution to society." It further calls for the establishment of "university-level criteria to assess graduate program quality and sustainability" and for the integration of those standards into a "revised process of academic program review." [CFR 2.6]

To accomplish this goal, all units with graduate programs are expected to demonstrate whether University-wide and program-specific indicators and standards of program sustainability and quality are being met. "Indicators" are areas of evaluation used to determine the quality and sustainability of a university, department, or program. "Standards" are those levels of performance towards which the university, department, or program seeks to strive. Units with graduate programs that do not meet a specific University-wide standard must explain how they are working towards the standard or why these normative expectations are not applicable to their particular degree program. These explanations and justifications are included in the department or program's self-study to the APRC. (See Handbook for the Sixth Cycle, Academic Program Review at <http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth>.) [CFR 2.5, 2.6]

External Review and Recommendations

The purpose of the external review is to provide each instructional unit with a well-informed, independent analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of its curriculum, complement of faculty, and organizational structure, as well as an evaluation of the relationship of all of these to the quality of its degree programs. The external review evaluates program goals and the program's success in achieving them, and suggests strategies for implementing recommendations for program improvements. Typically, a team of two experts, one from within and one from outside the CSU system, conducts the external review. Reviewers receive a copy of the unit's self-study and supporting documents. They are expected to spend two days on campus interviewing students, faculty, staff, and administrators and to prepare a report of findings and recommendations.

Program and Dean Response to External Review and Recommendations

Within one to two months of receipt of the external reviewers' report, the unit head, in consultation with the faculty of the unit being reviewed, may respond to the external report with corrections of factual errors. Additionally, the Dean may submit an independent written response to the review team's recommendations. The unit's complete program review file self-study, the external reviewers' report, and the responses to the external reviewers' report by both the unit head and the Dean is forwarded to the APRC for evaluation. [CFR 2.4]

University Review and Decision-Making

To provide a University-wide faculty perspective and assist in University planning, the APRC scrutinizes each unit's complete program review file. APRC meets with the College Dean and program head to ensure that APRC fully understands all recommendations made and all responses to those recommendations. The Committee then evaluates all recommendations, and in consultation with the program, College, and Academic Affairs representatives and with the assistance of the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Development, develops a Concluding Action Memorandum (CAM). This memorandum specifies any actions the unit and/or College is advised to consider or is required to carry out, together with timelines for implementation and consequences resulting from failure to appropriately act. The program review culminates with the signing of the CAM during a debriefing meeting that is attended by the Provost, Dean, and Chair, the Associate Vice President of Academic Planning and Development, and the chair of the APRC. [CFR 4.4]

Review of Accredited Programs

For programs that are nationally accredited and undergo periodic accreditation review involving a self-study and a campus visit by an accrediting team, the accreditation review normally substitutes for academic program review. All accredited graduate programs, at the time of completing their accreditation self-studies, submit brief documentation to APRC demonstrating performance in regard to the “Indicators and Criteria of Graduate Program Sustainability and Quality.”

Following receipt of notification from the accrediting body that a program has been accredited or re-accredited, APRC, in consultation with the program, College, and Academic Affairs representatives, evaluate both the accrediting body’s recommendations and the program’s performance vis-à-vis quality and sustainability criteria. APRC’s conclusions are incorporated into a Concluding Action Memorandum that specifies any actions the program will be advised or required to undertake. This memorandum, kept on file in the Office of Academic Planning and Development and the Academic Senate, is in effect until the program’s next accreditation.

3.5.4 Program Review Schedule

As nearly as feasible, programs are scheduled for review on a six-year cycle in a sequence corresponding to the alphabetical order of the Colleges. Deans are entrusted to make sure that the programs in their respective Colleges are reviewed in a timely fashion, that there is appropriate involvement of program faculty and dissemination of findings and recommendations arising from the review process, and that APRC requirements are implemented.

To facilitate the academic program review process, programs are provided with support that includes clear guidelines for the preparation of documents, timely access to pertinent data, and self-studies singled out as exemplary by APRC. Under special circumstances (normally those involving accreditation, quality, and/or budgetary issues), the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Dean, or the program itself may call for a special program review – either undergraduate or graduate – outside of the normal academic program review cycle. For example, during the sixth cycle, the College of Business received a special review of its undergraduate programs as part of its preparations for AACSB Accreditation Review. [CFR4.5]

3.5.5 Sixth Cycle Progress

Since Fall 2006 when the Sixth Cycle was initiated, program review has been completed for the Colleges of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS), Business (COB), Creative Arts (CCA), Health and Social Sciences (HSS), and the Graduate College of Education (GCOE). During 2012-2013, the College of Ethnic Studies (CES) and the College of Science and Engineering (COSE) are undergoing program review. The College Liberal and Creative Arts (LCA) and the College of Extended Learning (CEL) are scheduled for program review in 2013-2014. Due to campus-wide re-organization in 2010-2011, the graduate programs from two disestablished colleges (BSS and CCA) have been incorporated into other colleges. Therefore the remaining program review schedule overlaps colleges to some degree.

In 2007, APRC began using the iLearn learning management system to share documents and support online collaborative work (report reviews, commenting, and drafting) between scheduled meeting sessions. The use of iLearn to support committee process and to act as a “knowledge management” system has made a significant contribution to the work of the committee. When committee members are unable to attend a scheduled session, they can stay connected to the work of the committee and contribute their efforts at another time more convenient to them. The ability to connect members in a live web conference session as an alternative participation mode is also provided. One challenge noted is that not all committee members are equally familiar with the online collaborative tools, nor are all members equally comfortable participating remotely (in time or location). As the use of online communication and collaboration technologies continues to expand into the normal workflows (for both university administrators and faculty), these “technology-related inequalities” should lessen.

College Summary Reports

In 2010, APRC began creating an additional college-wide report that summarizes the program review findings across a particular college, comparing relevant metrics and program quality indicators among graduate programs. This report provides comparative data analysis of these graduate programs, summarizes their achievement of the University’s Standards for Graduate Programs, and provides overall comments on themes and patterns that emerged from the review of the College’s graduate programs. To date, summary reports have been generated for the Colleges of BSS, Creative Arts, Health and Social Sciences, Business, and Education. [CFR2.7] The College summaries demonstrate that with few exceptions departments are meeting the new standards. These threshold measures include a minimum 3.0 GPA admissions requirement, evaluation of writing at two points in graduate programs, a baseline level of faculty involvement in grad programs, and timely offering of graduate courses. Summary reports are available to view with other APRC reports at http://air.sfsu.edu/program-review/sixth_reports. Graduate program comparison reports for Business, Creative Arts, and HSS can also be found at this link.

3.6 Assessment and the Assurance of Learning

As noted in the 2010 CPR Report, San Francisco State University has three levels of assessment: Institutional Assessment, Academic Program Assessment, and Student Affairs Assessment. The processes and results from recent assessments are detailed below.

3.6.1 Institutional Assessment

The Office of Academic Institutional Research (AIR) largely carries out data gathering and analysis for institutional assessment. [CFR 4.4, 4.5] Eight types of measures are ongoing and were used for both the WASC CPR and EER reports:

- NSSE survey
- FSSE survey
- Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
- The Pulse Survey
- Senior [Undergraduate] Exit Survey
- Graduate Exit Survey
- HERI Faculty Survey
- SF State CUSP II Strategic Plan

Links and analyses of these measures can be found at <http://air.sfsu.edu/acad-inst-research> and below.

NSSE and FSSE

The NSSE survey is conducted every two years, while the FSSE survey was conducted in 2008 and will be repeated again in 2013. (See http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/student_engagement.) Results from these surveys have pointed to very interesting institutional issues that are both being addressed and need to be addressed. For example, as noted earlier in this report, SF State does extremely well for all questions related to diversity and writing on any survey. These are two areas that the university has adopted as strategic priorities for a number of years. At the other end of the spectrum are conflicting results. A comparison of the NSSE and FSSE results indicate that there is a conflict in the student demographics and the faculty perceptions of the student population. Faculty believe that our students are largely non-traditional, commuting, working outside school, and have dependents. The student results, however, indicate that we have two quite different populations, one matching the faculty perceptions and another equally large population of traditional students who mostly come from outside the Bay Area. This fact has prompted a great deal of development on the part of Student Affairs, particularly in offering additional activities to students who live in the dormitories. However, the University, and in particular Faculty Affairs, probably need to invest more effort in responding to the classroom challenges presented by these two very different populations.

Another clear response from students in the NSSE survey over the last two administrations is that students don't feel challenged by their classes. This finding turns up among both freshmen and seniors and is particularly apparent in the written comments included by students in the NSSE surveys. Some speculate that this response from students is associated with the faculty misperception that school is among many other student priorities and insistence on hard work and rigor is unrealistic. In the coming years, this is a finding that needs to be explored further in order to ensure the quality of education that students receive.

In a great number of NSSE questions, students at both the freshman and senior levels express a desire for many more opportunities to meet with and connect with faculty outside the classroom. This yearning for connection can be found across a wide variety of questions in the survey, and again might result from our faculty demographics. While our students no longer represent a "commuter" campus, our faculty are the ones who commute. With the extraordinarily high cost of living in San Francisco and the absence of faculty salary increases for five years, a large percentage of the faculty commute from long distances. This situation creates a desire on the part of many faculty not to come to campus every day, thus limiting their time on campus. As we have seen from the Student Success

and Graduation Initiative, students succeed best when we can break them into small communities of learners and give them support. The work within Student Affairs over the past several years has helped resolve some of the need for support, but students still seek more one-on-one contact with faculty. This is an issue that we must address more intentionally in the future.

Over the summer of 2012, we took a first step in this effort by including “faculty ambassadors” at the new student orientations. Faculty representatives from the colleges attended each orientation to provide advising for majors in their areas and to share faculty expectations with incoming students. The initial reports from the experience have been extremely positive from the perspective of all involved: students, staff, and faculty. This fall the ambassadors continued with their assignment by holding a meeting of faculty advisors within their colleges to discuss the advising needs of students and to convey what they learned about best practices in advising over the summer.

Collegiate Learning Assessment

Each year, SF State administers the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) as required by the Chancellor’s Office, and the results are posted on the College Portrait. (See <http://www.collegeportraits.org/CA/SF-State> and http://www.collegeportraits.org/CA/SF-State/learning_outcomes.) While the SF State CLA scores show strong, positive value-added for our institution over the past two years, we continue to have concerns about the validity of this assessment tool since different students are tested in the freshman and senior years. Despite the widespread public attention that the CLA has received based on the analysis of *Academically Adrift* (Arum and Roksa, 2011), we are concerned that this assessment tool was not intended for use on large comprehensive campuses that have a significant transfer population and do not have internal incentives that motivate students to perform well on the test. We remain impressed with the test itself and are hopeful that the Chancellor’s Office can follow up with plans to create a more appropriate value-added tool for our educational context.

Pulse Survey and Exit Surveys

The Pulse survey is administered each semester as students register for their classes. Each student who uses the University’s online registration system is presented with five questions with multiple-choice response options. The questions for the Pulse survey focus on issues of interest to campus administration at that particular time. The Senior and Graduate Exit Surveys, on the other hand, maintain the same set of questions over long periods of time in order to gather longitudinal data on enduring issues. See http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/data_sets for a complete analysis of the Senior Exit and Pulse surveys. A Graduate Exit Survey has just been implemented (see https://sfsu.us.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_cPg7NOF8OxHVOwR). (Also see *Appendix X: Student Survey Fall 2012*.)

HERI Faculty Survey

SF State participated in the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey for the first time in 2010-2011. The analysis of this survey can be found at http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/heri_survey and in *Appendix Y: SF State Results 2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey*. One of the most interesting findings from this survey is the differing perceptions of male and female responders in terms of their job satisfaction and how they teach. The results of this survey have been passed along to Faculty Affairs to consider as they implement their faculty development plan. We will continue to administer this survey every two years.

CUSP II Strategic Plan

The SF State Strategic Plan expired in 2010. Between 2008 and 2010, four of the goals were assessed (Social Justice, Post Baccalaureate Education, Internationalization, and Full Participation) and three of the goals were incorporated into the WASC review: Writing, Community Engagement, and Institutional Purpose. The findings from these assessments are embedded within this report and can also be found at <http://air.sfsu.edu/planning/plan05-10>. With the completion of the CUSP II Strategic Plan, the retirement of President Robert Corrigan, and the transition to President Leslie Wong, we expect to begin a new planning process in the coming year.

3.6.2 Academic Program Assessment

As noted in the CPR report, scheduled assessment reports are reviewed by the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Development, who determines report timelines. Some departments submit reports on an annual basis. [CFR 2.7] Departments that have fully assessed all of their learning outcomes are encouraged to conduct mini-studies on a currently relevant learning issue and are given an appropriate timeline for completion. In the past five years, a number of faculty members have attended the annual WASC Academic Resources Conference to learn about assessment, and several faculty have attended the WASC assessment academies. The Office of Academic Planning and Development regularly offers training sessions on how to write outcomes and construct rubrics.

Whether or not we are obtaining the appropriate information on student learning from program-level assessment depends on the department and its attitude toward the assessment process. Most departments that have specialized accreditation are well informed with regard to their students' learning and are making changes based on that knowledge. In addition, just as many departments without specialized accreditation have embraced the value of assessment and are also making changes. The results across the campus are interesting.

Most students are learning the content of their majors, and departments are generally satisfied with student learning in the major. The places where issues arise are in the use of basic skills in the discipline and the level of learning in the prerequisite courses needed to move into the major. Writing continues to be an issue across the curricula, and we expect that over time the WAC/WID initiative, together with changes in our lower division composition program, will yield discernible improvement in the quality of student writing. In a variety of fields, the ability of students to analyze a problem or a situation often comes up in departmental assessment reports. A number of programs, notably Computer Science and the College of Business, have turned their attention to soft skills such as teamwork, self-directed responsibility for timeliness, and communication skills as major areas of focus. The focus on soft skills has come as a result of feedback from employers and alumni. While each department might not be fully satisfied with the evidence of their students' assessments, more importantly, a systematic process is in place to evaluate student progress, one that engages faculty in conversations that lead to curricular and pedagogical changes intended to improve student learning. [CFR 2.4, 2.6, 2.7]

A few departments still remain resistant to assessment, even when they are allowed to develop qualitative, constructivist approaches and methods. Departments that have demonstrated strong pushback on assessment typically have one of two characteristics. In some cases, departments are composed of sub-disciplines that differ to a large degree in their perspectives and values. In these cases, assessment is difficult because the faculty cannot agree on the skills and knowledge that they value, and so determining what to measure becomes the sticking point. Another impasse occurs in

departments that have an individualistic culture. In these cases, it is difficult for the faculty to view the student experience from the programmatic level, which is obviously necessary for program assessment. We are still working with these departments and have made much progress in the past few years due to the exigencies of the imminent WASC visit. We should also note that the level of resistance to assessment has diminished significantly over the past five years. Most faculty nowadays assume that assessment will be a part of any campus initiative, and they are generally curious and enthusiastic about measuring the effectiveness of their own work. The Educational Effectiveness summary grid and the most recent departmental assessment reports for all departments can be accessed at <http://air.sfsu.edu/assessment>. We very much look forward to the day when some resources can be returned to the campus assessment efforts. Resources for summer assessment institutes, faculty attendance at assessment conferences, and faculty assigned time for assessment projects would greatly increase the university's effectiveness in this area.

3.6.3 SF State's Efforts to Develop General Education Assessment

As mentioned in the description of the implementation of our new GE program, one of our challenges has been developing an assessment plan. Developing institutional Baccalaureate Learning Goals was one of the first steps in the GE revision process. That document was endorsed by the Academic Senate and served as the template for the GE program. However, it has become clear that the plethora of outcomes that were drawn from the goals were not written in assessable language. Thus, in some ways we have had to go back to the drawing board in terms of our approach to learning outcomes. However, since the existing GE program is now over 30 years old, rather than halting the GE course proposal process that began in Fall 2011, we chose to continue that process while simultaneously reworking our Educational Goals into assessable institutional outcomes for the baccalaureate degree as a whole, as well as those that should be addressed in the GE curriculum. [CFR 2.3, 2.4]

Teams of faculty and administrators have participated in a number of professional development programs and retreats over the last two years in order to develop a meaningful approach to assessing the educational and extra-curricular activities that students will complete as part of their baccalaureate degree. The CSU has been instrumental in supporting assessment efforts on our campus by providing both programming and some level of financial support, allowing us to participate in activities that would have been otherwise impossible in these fiscal times. Teams attended the WASC "Retreat on Student Success" in February 2011, an AAC&U HIPs institute in June 2011, a WASC "Retreat on Assessment in Practice" in October 2011 that was paired with a CSU workshop on GE assessment, a CSU-sponsored "Engaged Learning Workshop" in December 2011, and the CSU Institute for Teaching and Learning Summer Institute on GE Assessment in June 2012. The faculty team's goal for the latter was to develop a preliminary assessment strategy and to draft a plan for converting the Educational Goals for the Baccalaureate Degree into assessable institutional outcomes. Campus committees will review the team's assessment proposal in 2012-2013 with a goal of having a campus-approved assessment plan for both the Baccalaureate and GE programs by the end of Spring 2013. [CFR 2.4, 4.4, 4.7, 4.8]

Although the original plan for the rollout of the revised GE program was Fall 2013, that date has been moved forward one year for two reasons. First, in these challenging budget times, it has taken longer for departments to prepare and submit course proposals. Second, the university will be making a switch in its course management system, which will not be in effect until Fall 2014. It did not make sense to program the new requirements into a system that would be obsolete within a year. This extra year should give us the time needed to have a truly thoughtful assessment plan in place.

During this time, because the new GE requirements were designed to address the Educational Goals for the Baccalaureate (<http://dus.sfsu.edu/grtf/Main/vision.html>), we decided to obtain some baseline

data about how much students felt that their coursework and campus experiences related to these goals, even before they were explicitly built into the curriculum. To this end, students registering for Spring 2012 courses were asked questions that related to the goals (see *Appendix X: Student Pulse Survey Fall 2012*). Although a majority of respondents answered questions positively, room for improvement definitely exists. As we develop courses and an assessment plan, we will pay careful attention to the areas where students seem less engaged than we would like. For example, fewer students reported that their campus experiences helped them understand concepts in science and mathematics than in other areas. Fewer students than we would like participate in community work, which we have also seen in NSSE results. [CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.7]

From the report:

More than two thirds of the respondents to the questions addressing lifelong learning and critical inquiry indicated that their coursework and other campus experiences:

- Are relevant to the issues that they read or hear about in the media.
- Have helped them understand how other people form their opinions.
- Have broadened their perspective, curiosity, or creativity.
- Have helped them become better problem-solvers and more independent thinkers.

More than two thirds of the respondents to the questions on intellectual attainments and domains of knowledge reported that their coursework and campus experiences have helped them:

- Understand concepts in and the differences between the physical and biological sciences, mathematics, the social sciences, humanities, and arts.
- Employ different intellectual strategies based on the various problems they confront.

More than half of the respondents to the questions about ethical engagement reported that their coursework and campus experiences have:

- Helped them understand ethical dimensions of decision-making and develop their own sense of values.
- Helped them embrace a personal responsibility to work toward social justice and equity in their community.
- Motivated them to do community work, with 68% reporting that they plan to dedicate some of their time to improving their community after they graduate.

The majority of the respondents to the questions addressing the integration and application of knowledge reported that their coursework and campus experiences achieved the goals specified in the survey.

- More than half indicated that they have helped them understand the economic crisis, environmental problems, political issues, and global conflict(s).
- More than two thirds indicated that their coursework and campus experiences have been useful to them in non-university settings.

The final group of questions examined the amount of time spent or frequency of participation by undergraduate students in various activities.

- More than three quarters of the respondents reported that they spend 10 hours per week or less on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter, while more than half reported spending 10 hours per week or more on academic work outside of the classroom.
- Nearly two thirds of the respondents indicated that they do not belong to any student organizations.

- Nearly half indicated that they do not spend any time doing community service. Of those who indicated that they do, most reported spending one to five hours per semester on it.
- Nearly four in 10 respondents indicated that they never participate in campus events and activities. Of those who indicated that they do participate, most reported that they participate occasionally, i.e., once or twice per semester.

The University Academic Assessment Advisory Committee is currently working on developing an assessment methodology for the General Education program. Once that methodology has been adopted and the program has been in place for two years, we expect to have program-level, quantitative direct measures of student learning that can be compared to this baseline data.

3.6.4 Assessment of Co-Curricular Programs

Student Affairs/Enrollment Management (SAEM) is preparing to enter its fourth cycle of outcomes-based assessment. Launched in April 2009, the division-wide assessment program has fundamentally changed the ways in which SAEM professionals conceive, develop, deliver, and assess programs and services.

In Spring 2010, an associate vice president of SAEM was charged with overseeing strategic planning and assessment efforts for the division. This AVP now chairs the SAEM Assessment Team. The team, made up of three directors and one professional staff member, meets monthly to coordinate SAEM assessment activities. Team members developed a rubric to assess the 2010-2011 departmental assessment plans and reports and the 2011-2012 plans. Upon completion of this review, team members met with each department to provide feedback and guidance for the development of future assessment efforts.

The team also created a new format for departments to report more consistently on their plans and results. The team will convene an assessment refresher workshop for SAEM assessment leaders in the fall of 2012. These structures, tools, and workshops will provide the division with the capacity to continue to evaluate its work in terms of student learning.

Directors were asked to develop instruments and collect data to measure the student learning that occurred. As might be expected in an inaugural effort at identifying measurable outcomes, some instruments and assessment approaches proved to be more valuable than others. The second and third cycles of developing and measuring outcomes were greatly improved based on the experience gained in 2009-10.

In an effort to illustrate the effectiveness of our division's assessment program, four examples are listed below:

1. In the 2009-10 assessment period, Student Outreach Services (SOS) had four goals, three of which dealt with helping prospective students gain a better understanding of requirements for admission and of the application process while actively involving faculty and staff in outreach efforts. To get an idea of how prepared future students are to apply for admission, SOS collaborated with our most impacted program, the School of Nursing (SON), on their preadmission advising presentations. At the end of each session, attendees were asked to complete a short survey developed by SOS and SON focusing on basic criteria of the major and transfer admissions. Of the 140 completed surveys, SOS learned that potential upper division SON students (more than 90%) were overwhelmingly informed about the criteria to not only apply to SF State, but also to the Nursing major.

2. Another example from the 2009-10 assessment period is the Athletics department's goal to "provide equitable athletic opportunities for both men and women." This goal aligns with one of the key campus tenets to provide equitable access and opportunity to all students. The Athletic Director is responsible for providing funding that ensures a just distribution of resources between the men's and women's teams. To meet this goal, the department's budget maintains a 5% to 10% difference between scholarships and operations funding for both men's and women's teams. To measure the consistency of this goal, the department's budget manager prepares the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) report annually. The EADA report has proven to be an excellent measure of equitable distribution, and the department has continued to meet this goal.
3. During the 2010-11 assessment period, one of the goals of the Residential Life department was to "increase residents' awareness and knowledge regarding the negative impact of alcohol consumption and/or drug abuse." In order to measure their goal, a quantitative resident survey was administered in Fall 2010 that included questions linking the enhancement of knowledge surrounding alcohol use and abuse to living on campus. Out of the 2,463 on-campus residents, 1,132 responded, yielding a 43% return rate. The results of the survey proved that residents' knowledge about alcohol use and abuse had increased either greatly or moderately, with 82% of the responses indicating an increase in their understanding since becoming residents. However, Residential Life also noted the importance of continuing outreach and education surrounding this topic, and would like to partner with Prevention Education Programs in the future.
4. The final example, taken from our 2010-11 assessment period, is a goal by the Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CPSC) to "enhance the psychological well-being and support academic success and retention of students by increasing the number of students who attend their follow-up sessions" at CPSC. Judging from the results presented in a report on the previous year's appointments, CPSC observed that 28% of students with follow-up appointments failed to keep them. Although CPSC services and appointments reduce student distress, students under a lot of stress may easily forget about their follow-up appointments. As a result, CPSC established a \$20 no-show fee and input a system to contact students 24-48 hours prior to their scheduled appointment. At the end of the assessment period, CPSC noted a significant increase (20%) in students showing up for their follow-up appointments. With this decrease in missed appointments, CPSC continues to meet their goal by supporting students' psychological well-being and academic success.

All SAEM assessment plans and reports can be found at www.sfsu.edu/~vpsa/assessment.html.
Assessment plans/reports for the following departments are included:

- Athletics (Note: Effective January 1, 2012, the Athletics reporting line was moved to the Vice President for University Advancement.)
- Campus Recreation
- Student Involvement and Career Center (SICC)
- Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC)
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
- Enrollment Management
- Financial Aid
- Registrar's Office
- Residential Life
- Student Health Services

- Student Outreach Services
- Testing Center
- Undergraduate Admissions

The academic co-curricular programs are also assessed on a regular basis. (See *Appendix M: Campus Academic Resource Program Year-end Report 2011-12*.) The Campus Academic Resource Program (CARP) evaluates its tutorial sessions, academic support sessions, test preparation programs, and outreach projects on an ongoing basis. The reports are discussed by the CARP staff and submitted to the Office of Academic Planning and Development. The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) also conducts ongoing program evaluations. During the 2011-2012 Academic Year, LAC conducted a study of retention of First-Time-Freshman students. The purpose of the study was to examine outcomes for students who successfully completed the LAC Writing Workshop Program compared to the outcomes for students who were registered for the workshop but did not receive credit because of lack of attendance. The results of the study demonstrate dramatic success in the retention, matriculation, and graduation of students who completed the course. (See *Appendix L: Learning Assistance Center Year-end Report*.)

3.6.5 Integrating Assessment in Future Planning

As this essay indicates, a great deal of assessment activity is occurring across divisions throughout the University. Particularly in the area of academic programs, assessment has become an integral aspect of curriculum planning and development. Faculty now often come to administration and institutional research with their own designs for studying student learning. Our area of greatest challenge lies in developing an adequate assessment and program review process for the new General Education program. The task force groups for this effort are in place, but much work remains ahead.