

Section 1: Introduction

The Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) is aligned with the Capacity and Preparatory Review: “Its primary purpose is to invite sustained engagement by the institution on the extent to which it fulfills its educational objectives. Through a process of inquiry and engagement, the Educational Effectiveness Review also is designed to enable the Commission to make a judgment about the extent to which the institution fulfills its Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness.”¹ More specifically, the EER investigates efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs with a special focus on program review. It examines institutional practices for evaluating student learning and shares good practices for using educational results to improve teaching and learning. It also examines the alignment of institutional resources with activities designed to achieve the institution’s educational objectives.

In keeping with the Commission’s goal of a focused accreditation process that permits adaptation and responsiveness to institutional context and priorities, San Francisco State University elected to conduct its Capacity and Preparatory Review and its Educational Effectiveness Review with a focus on three themes:

- Social Justice and Civic Engagement
- The Changing University
- Student Success

The activities surrounding this cycle of reaccreditation for San Francisco State University began in Spring 2007 with the appointment of the WASC Steering Committee by President Robert A. Corrigan. Under the leadership of the Provost, the Steering Committee developed the SF State Institutional Proposal after an extensive self-review following the WASC guidelines in the 2001 Handbook of Accreditation. Leadership in the Educational Effectiveness Review has continued under the direction of the current Provost, Sue Rosser, and our recently appointed President, Leslie Wong. [CFR 1.3]

The first theme (Social Justice and Civic Engagement) represents two of the university’s strategic priorities, which are embedded in SF State’s culture and programs in myriad ways. [CFR 1.1] Preserving and maintaining these priorities is essential to the future of the University, and for this reason, it was chosen as a theme. The two remaining themes, The Changing University and Student Success, represent issues that are crucially important to the current context of the University. Deep engagement with these issues across the campus, both in terms of capacity and educational effectiveness, will facilitate the university’s ability to respond to current trends and needs.

Preparation of the Educational Effectiveness Review

The Educational Effectiveness Review began immediately following the March 2011 WASC Capacity and Preparatory visit. Much data had been gathered during the CPR process, and the subcommittees were able to further mine that data as they turned their attention to the educational effectiveness perspective of the themes.

Each of the subcommittees met on a regular basis during the EER. Some of the subcommittee groups are ongoing with long histories of campus involvement, while others are relatively new. For example, the subcommittee that focused on writing, the Committee on Written English Proficiency (CWEP),

¹ Western Association of Schools and Colleges, *Handbook of Accreditation*, Alameda, CA, January 2001.

began many years ago and will continue its work long after the WASC review has been completed. Campus involvement in this committee is deep and wide and reflects the university's commitment to writing as an institutional priority. Similarly, the Baccalaureate Requirements Committee (BRC) was formed in the fall of 2011 as a part of the Implementation of the new General Education (GE) program. The work of the many subcommittees of BRC will continue over the next two years as the new GE package is implemented. During the CPR review, a specific subcommittee studied graduation and retention. However, for the EER this work was subsumed under the Student Success and Graduation Initiative (SSGI). SSGI began its work in 2009 in response to the CSU system-wide mandate to improve graduation rates. The initiative will continue, as required by the CSU system, until 2015. However, the work of this group will gradually be absorbed into ongoing Academic Senate and University committees so that the work on student success will continue as an integral element in the university's commitment to learning and graduation. The University Academic Assessment Advisory Committee (UAAAC) and the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) are groups that have existed for many decades. They are composed of both faculty and administrators who jointly oversee and take responsibility for academic program assessment and academic program review.

Human Resources, Safety, & Risk Management (HR) and the Dean of Faculty Affairs handled the EER issues related to faculty and staff. Staff issues have been incorporated into the ongoing training and research of HR, while the Dean of Faculty Affairs, as this report will show, involved dozens of faculty in surveys and focus groups. Similarly, the Division of Student Affairs has developed a wide variety of permanent initiatives and programs in response to the changing student demographics, which were highlighted in the CPR report. The activities around Civic Engagement have drawn on the organization and expertise of the Institute of Civic and Community Engagement (ICCE), which has been moved within the School of Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) in the College of Health and Social Sciences (HSS). These changes are a result of the new university organization and have served to embed the institute more directly within the academic programs of the University. We believe the change in infrastructure will result in greater educational effectiveness of all the programs and services offered by ICCE. In addition, the work on Civic Engagement and Social Justice has been incorporated as a required element of the program review self-study. In short, all of the WASC inquiry for this review has been integrated into the university's infrastructure in ways that will sustain its impact on educational effectiveness in years to come. [CFR 3.8, 4.1]

The Steering Committee was composed of the subcommittee chairs and a few others who have been a part of the review since the WASC SF State process began five years ago. We met monthly over the past year and a half to share progress and solicit advice from one another. Our institution has been deeply affected by the budget cuts that have occurred over the past five years; however, we believe you will find much good work going on here despite the economic downturn. We are no less committed to our mission and values than we were when the budget was more aligned with campus needs. Our level of scholarship has increased. Our active commitment to understanding how students learn and making sure they graduate has significantly improved over the past five years, even as the budget has tightened. In short, the WASC review has given us the opportunity to aggregate the evidence and work that is ongoing in many areas across the campus and to reflect on how we can continue to offer both access and excellence to our students.