

**WASC Data Summary**  
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During the fall 2007 semester, the WASC Steering Committee developed a survey to obtain feedback from the campus community regarding possible themes for the WASC Institutional Proposal. The committee decided to administer a five-question survey to faculty, staff and administration and a shorter, two-question survey to students (see Appendix A). Both surveys included open-ended questions to allow for broad and inclusive feedback from the campus community. Online surveys were administered during February 2008. The response rate was 7% (n = 267) for faculty/staff/administration and 9% for students (n= 2,862).

The open-ended qualitative responses were coded and summarized by a WASC subcommittee and Kasra Varzaghani and his team. This is a subjective process that began by creating a list of frequently used words and phrases. In most cases, the word/phrase lists were reduced to responses used by at least one percent of the respondents. Some phrases used by less than one percent of the sample were added to the final coding list because the subcommittee felt they might be useful for developing the WASC themes. The word/phrase lists were then summarized into a final list of 20 to 25 categories depending on the question (see Appendix B).

A team of student assistants coded each respondent's responses using these 20 to 25 categories. Given this method of interpretive data analysis, there were cases in which one respondent's comments were coded in more than one category. Consequently, respondents who provided richer descriptive responses are likely to be more represented in the data than respondents who provided very brief answers.

This qualitative research is exploratory and the results suggest trends and patterns of thought. While the self-selected sample does not represent the entire campus community, the richly textured data and careful analysis are likely to reflect some of more important thoughts and feelings of the larger campus community. What follows is a summary of these data.

### **Student Survey**

Students were asked to complete a two-question survey. The first question was "Why did you decide to come to SF State? Please list all the reasons that come to mind." Five main themes clearly emerged from this question: 1) the city of San Francisco, 2) specific programs, 3) proximity of the campus to the respondent's home, 4) overall quality and reputation of the institution and 5) affordable tuition. The most highly cited reason for coming to SF State was the city itself. Excluding responses that refer to the campus, which was cited as having very similar traits, 39% of the sample provided San Francisco as one of the reasons for coming to SF State. This included comments about the culture, the ethnic diversity, liberal attitudes and the importance of living in an urban environment. These representative quotes capture the responses in this category:

*“I mostly interested in the university's location, the city of San Francisco. I wanted to experience different cultures, meet different types of people, and of course be part of the city life.”*

*“There are a number of reasons I decided to come to SF State ... Firstly the location was important to me, San Francisco is such a beautiful city exciting and entertaining. I liked the fact that SF State was in South San Francisco, far enough out of the inner city but still close enough to enjoy it.”*

*“I came to SF State because the plain fact that it is located in San Francisco. I didn't have the grades for USF, so my other logical choice was SF State. It was more of a location choice than an academic choice.”*

*“I came to SFSU because of the location. I love living in one of the most lively, active parts of the world. I love to diversity of the university and the dynamics of San Francisco.”*

*“I decided to attend SF State because of the location. I've lived all over California, but not in San Francisco since I was a child. I thought it was about time to explore my hometown and SF State was the perfect push I needed to do it. Also, I liked the idea that many people, teachers especially, come to San Francisco to teach and live just for the sake of being here. They choose this instead of taking potentially higher paying/more prestigious jobs elsewhere and I feel that that is the unique quality that encouraged me to attend SF State.”*

*“I am a huge fan of the city of San Francisco and the school's proximity to it and other bay area landmarks was a big deciding feature.”*

*“I am an exchange student with the CSU program, I chose SF State mostly because of its location in San Francisco, which is a very cultural liberal place to live.”*

*“I am coming from Paris and San Francisco was a city I really wanted to see. Also back to Paris I met a lot of SFSU student who came to my school for a semester and who talked to me about it...I really enjoy it here so far!”*

*“The city is a living thing that is never the same, and always shifts. To attend a University in a city that is renown for its culture and thought is an honor.”*

*“The reason why I chose sfsu was because the location and the diversity that came with it. Sfsu is located in an area where networking is unlimited, I saw a potential to increase my network, business and educational, therefore increasing my opportunity to excel.”*

The second most cited reason for attending SF State, mentioned by 34% of respondents, was access to a specific program. Some of the most frequently cited majors were business, creative

writing, nursing, cinema, English, and kinesiology.<sup>1</sup> Other students mentioned that the university provided the type of program, courses or curriculum they valued (4% of responses). Graduate programs (without a reference to a specific program) were cited as a reason for attendance by 8% of the sample.

Close to the same number of respondents (32%) mentioned the proximity of the campus to their home and/or family as an important reason for choosing SF State, *“I wanted to come to SF state because I wanted to be far away from home (Sacramento), but not too far at the same time.”* and *“My auntie’ is living not far away from San Francisco....”*

The overall quality and reputation of the institution is the fourth most cited category, with 20% of the respondents reporting this as an important reason for attendance. This theme is characterized by the following quotes:

*“ SF State has a reputation for hands on education, and teachers and students with real world professional experience”*

*“Better academic standard and environment than SF Community College...Good resources/learning environment/well qualified teachers.”*

*“Because it is a prestigious university.. Because I think that they teach very good especially in my major. There are great professors...”*

*“CSU has a high reputation of academic work in west coast...”*

*“The academic standard and quality of professors...I am proud to attend a quality university in San Francisco.”*

*“Because of the opportunities offered by the "Over 60" programs...”*

*“Best University for the value in San Francisco.”*

*“the first impression was the academic experience, training, extensive coursework that was offered before I enrolled full time 2004. the schedule of courses stated it offered over 100 courses in a single dept. plus I researched all the schools in the state of California and Berkeley, Stanford Santa Clara and Fullerton are the only other that offer such program with x-amount of class per semester so I found SFSU to be # 1!”*

*“My mother graduated from SFSU a number of years ago as well as my uncle on my father’s side. They both told me of the great classes and programs that the school has to offer as well.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Given that this is an exploratory study, the resulting sample might not be representative by major.

*“Program and faculty reputation ... Plus, I had been hearing good things about SFSU for years. When I finished my B.A., I was so pleased that I went on to my MA; and now I'm working on my MFA.”*

The fifth theme that emerged as a reason for attending SF State was affordable tuition. This was mentioned by 27% of the sample. Students provided comments such as:

*“SFSU is a very affordable school with some great programs that bend over backward to help students get funding.”*

*“It was the only college I could afford at the time without having to take out student loans. However, with the fees rising, I am not sure I would come here anymore if I had to pick a college this year.”*

*“It's just about the only public school in San Francisco. It's affordable tuition.”*

*“I decided to come to SF State for several reasons, but most of all because of its affordability...I am a re-entry student and coming back to school after many years so price was definitely a factor...”*

*“Another main reason is that the tuition was reasonable enough to afford because I do not get Financial Aid.”*

*“I decided to go to sf state because it was the only option I could afford, in terms of schools. My major is dietetics and I know there are few schools in ca that offer it as a major and san francisco was the only affordable and realistic school I could get into and attend.”*

*“I did not want to be in debt when I graduated from college and SFSU has allowed me to be able to pay my tuition in full and not have any debt.”*

*“I came because of all of the history involving the strike and the ethnic studies department. I also came because it was affordable and gave me the most for my money. However, Ethnic Studies will now be losing many of its teachers therefore we will be losing courses available and tuition will also rise so it seems the reasons I came here for are already being stripped away from me in my first year.”*

Responses to this question also provided five minor themes with over 15% of the sample offering one or more of the following reasons for attending the university. The diversity of the campus community was mentioned by 15% of the respondents. These comments represent this theme:

*“I came to SF State because I wanted a more diverse community experience. I moved from Bakersfield, probably one of the most conservative, homogenous places in California. I wanted to live in a completely different place”*

*"I came to SF State in order to get away from my ultra-conservative home town in Southern California (I had always planned to move to San Francisco anyway). I was excited that the school had so many international students, and I couldn't wait to know people from all around the world."*

*"diverse campus community -- I see visible diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, socio-economic class, religion, sexuality, age, and physical ability, which I value in any environment and especially in a learning institution; openness to studies related to human sexuality issues along with the availability of courses and presence of faculty who focus on sexuality related issues within multiple departments..."*

Students mentioned their personal connections (family and friends) as contributing to their decision (12%), as well as access to convenient transit options (11%). The quality and availability of the faculty was cited by 11% of the sample with comments such as:

*"... I am a business major and the professors in this department are excellent, available, and true business people. It is nice to actually be taught by professors and not TA's!"*

*"The teachers I have had have been extraordinary they care about the student and they allow us to feel like we are there number one priority. The educators at SFSU are extremely understanding and they allow you build a life long relationship with them."*

*"SF State offers a wide range of services and degrees with a highly knowledgeable staff. The teachers at State show an enthusiasm that is refreshing and keeps me motivated throughout the semester."*

*"\* I looked forward to the hands on education that San Francisco State University offers. .\* The quality of the faculty was really important to me, and I felt I was getting that at SFSU."*

*"The campus is conducive to creative thinking and the faculty encourages student input".*

Finally, just over 10% of students wrote that they came to SF State because they were accepted or because of relatively low admission requirements. Some representative comments are:

*"To be honest, I came to SF State because at the time of my transfer, I thought it was the only school that would accept me considering my GPA. Sorry, but it felt like a consolation prize. Now that I've been at SFSU for about a year now, I feel it was one of the best decisions of my life and what's even better is that I was surprised. I'm an industrial arts major and it feels so good knowing that MY SCHOOL is among the top four design schools in the WORLD. So, I get to go to a great school and not spend the*

*next sixty years of my life paying off loans. I've learned so much and some of the teachers I've had have been WONDERFUL..."*

*"...I also came to state because it had a very late application deadline."*

*"It was an easy transfer from San Francisco City College.:"*

*"SFSU is easy to get in..."*

*"I had dropped out of college leaving my academic record a mess, when I was ready to return to school Berkeley wouldn't take me, but SFSU would..."*

*"I only applied to 2 schools, NYU and SFSU. NYU was my dream school, and I decided SFSU was an acceptable alternative, for which I would not have to write a personal statement. Obviously, I didn't get into NYU. SFSU is relatively local, but a lot more fun than San Jose."*

*"I decided on SF state because for one, I didn't get into Berkeley's Engineering program, and SF State was my second choice."*

*"Cal State East Bay kept messing up my transcripts, accepted me after my registration date, and would not allow me to register until taking placement exams that I already passed...I applied to SF State and received acceptance and notification within one week."*

Equity, social justice and community engagement emerged as another minor theme with over 11% of the students mentioning one or more of these values as a reason for attending. This theme is represented by comments such as the following:

*"...the history of activism"*

*"...the legacy of the school as a progressive on environmental matters, social and political issues..."*

*"An example of SF State's social justice perspective is a diverse faculty with varying background and health perspectives."*

*"I also appreciate San Francisco State for accepting diversity and being so open minded. I will never forget what I have learned in San Francisco State and the great people I met throughout my journey."*

*"I liked the no hate policy and the open minded people that go to state. I liked the diversity..."*

*“I came here for the open mindedness of people. I had difficult issues with gender identity living in Southern California. I had come to visit here before, had loved it and decided I needed to come here for my own health.”*

*“I came to SFSU because it is a school that allows you to voice you beliefs. SFSU is know for its political activism and I was more than happy to be apart of it. There are so many organizations to choose from and be apart of... When I graduated from high school SFSU was my first and only choice in continuing my education and I am proud to be apart of this institution.”*

*“It's a more open minded campus. I was going to San Diego State and everyone there was blonde and all looked/acted the same. San Francisco has a different feel to it...”*

*“Because of its history and reputation of being open minded, liberal, progressive..”.*

*“Commitment to social justice and equity...”*

A number of other reasons were provided by students with 5 to 10% of the sample citing the recommendation of friends, a culture of respect, the beautiful campus, and that attending SF State offered the opportunity to start a new life. In addition, students (2% or less) cited the ability of obtaining funding through scholarships and grants, the high ratio of Chinese students, availability of child care and the high quality of disability accommodations as reasons for coming to SF State.

Lastly, the following are a sample of responses that not only reflect the themes listed above, but also reflect the overall attitudes that were expressed by students in their responses to this question:

*“1. It is in the community 2. It has a great early childhood care center with a superb teaching staff 3. Accessible by public transportation. 4. Conveniently located 5. It has a great environment where professors are accessible and approachable. 6. Diversity in culture, gender, lifestyle, appearances, and etc...7. It is affordable. 8. It encourages community involvement. 9. It is small and intimate...you can "whazzup" to people without being snubbed. 10. The faculty is outstanding!”*

*“My major program was only offered at 5 CSUs in California. Four were closer to home, Riverside, Ca. Those were CSU Northridge, Fullerton, L.A. and Long Beach. My fifth choice was San Francisco and I thought that it would be a good opportunity to get out of Southern California. So I guess you could say my choice was based on location, partly. Also, I had a professor at Riverside Community College who is an alumnus of SFSU and he really talked the school up. When I saw it was one of my choices that was part of making my decision. Also, my boyfriend wanted to live up in this city. Although I heard a little about the school, my choice was heavily based on location.”*

## Question Two

The second question asked students, “What could SF State do to improve your educational experience? Please list all of the ideas that come to mind.” Two focal themes emerged. Students overwhelmingly reported they would like to see improvement in the number and variety of courses and a reduction in the size of classes. This theme was mentioned by approximately 48% of the sample. Over 30% of these comments dealt with lack of variety and number of courses offered. This category of comments is represented by the following quotes:

*“I really love the school, the only thing I can think of is in regards to classes. I am a history major and I've been disappointed in the selection of my needed courses. On the information that I received at the beginning of my enrollment there are many classes that both semesters I have not seen on the schedule, the classes that are offered are very limited in subject. Other than that I have found San Francisco State to be an amazing school and I constantly sing its praises.”*

*“MORE CLASSES! This university does a disservice to its student by having too few classes. At the undergraduate institution where I received my BA, there were double as many students attending, but classes had less than half. It was also not as severe of a problem to attain the classes needed to graduate within any department. This university is going to lose more and more students as it cuts classes and as the classes get bigger. It is ridiculous that upper level courses have more than 30 students. I think the public school system in this country can show results with bigger classrooms versus smaller classrooms - university is no different, and we're playing for our own education.”*

*“Multiple sections of a class so that I can get my course work down within 4 years. Otherwise it has been difficult to get the classes I need.”*

*“Everything is excellent. I just wish classes were easier to register. I guess many students have a hard time to take the class they want because they are already full, thus had to choose another class which they are not interested in.”*

*“Offer more hybrid general education courses (English, math, science, etc.)”*

*“I'm a journalism major and my department is vastly overcrowded. Required classes are difficult, if not impossible, to get into. As a result I might have to spend another semester (or two) in college, and spend more of two things I already have too little of: time and money. We need the resources to provide more sections for each class...”*

*“Classes MUST come first. We do NOT go to State to listen to afternoon DJ's, or buy nick-nacks in the quad area. We come here because we need and want to learn, but it is impossible when all the classes for our majors are offered at the same time, or not at all! There is a SERIOUS problem with classes at state and there is no excuse for it. We keep paying more and getting less and I know for a FACT it is keeping some people*



*from continuing their education past a BA or BS. More than one section of classes MUST be offered for most classes, especially those that overlap majors, segment IIIs and minors! State is known as a school that is impossible to get through, not because of rigorous academics, but because no one can get the classes they need...An enrolled student should not have to fight for a seat in a class because 20+ students are trying to add... every-single-class! I for one WANT to continue my education past a BA, but I will do so at another university simply because I am sick and tired of all the problems that everyone has getting through state because of the lack of available classes. ..Main point: add more sections of more classes at varied times so classes aren't as impacted. Give us what we pay for!"*

This theme is also represented by comments suggesting a desire for smaller class size and more online courses (5% and 4%, respectively).

*"A decrease in class size among the less lecture savvy classes. For instance, Journalism 200 is an entry level class that should be a big lecture class, because the lecturer is mostly talking and there is little need for explicit one-on-one time with the professor. However, in some classes such as Political and Social Philosophy the lecture sizes are too large, and students such as myself feel hidden and away from the discussion because there is just too many people."*

*"If class sizes stay small, and teachers stay happy, then that is the best thing we can do to make the education experience the best. Teachers have a strong reflection on students, and whether they are enthusiastic about teaching makes students satisfied as well."*

*"Provide more smaller classes. Some classes are great for lecture halls if all the student has to do is take a couple of test, but to really learn in Psychology lecture halls are not always the best setting."*

*"offer more classes so that class size is smaller and it's not so hard to get the classes you need"*

*"SF State NEEDS to offer more classes to its students, or lower its student population. It's incredibly unfair to admit students but not allow them take the classes they need to move toward graduation. I won't drag this out by explaining in detail how this happens, but just know this injustice must stop. And I offer three solutions to stop this from continuing. 1) Offer more classes (simple, but too expensive for the University) 2) Lower its student population (almost impossible for a public University to do) 3) Open an online University (Affordable solution that not only allows the student population to be maintained, but GROWN)..."*

The increasing cost of attending SF State was the second most cited area of student concern. This was mentioned by 21% of the sample. Comments about tuition are represented by the following quotes:

*“Please do not increase the fees. It is becoming increasingly difficult to support myself and my family while also trying to pursue my educational goals...”*

*“... Lower the semester fee so that financially challenge students can focus on their studies and not have to work so much hours to pay off tuition, books and living expenses.”*

*“Stop raising tuition and fees!!!! I spent almost \$500 on books that will bring me at best, \$4 each for resale here at the school. This amount doesn't include the cost that comes from teachers who require students to use separate material on iLearn and reserve. California State Universities are supposed to be more affordable for the students, yet most of the people I know are going to be buried in loans upon graduation...I hope you realize the sacrifices that people have to make these days to come to SFSU. Most of the people I know work 20-40 hours/week in addition to a full class load. If the school's objective is to make the experience in the students' benefit, I think it is doing a lousy job.”*

There are a number of minor themes that also emerged from this question. The services of the library, including space, books, computer availability and places to sit, were mentioned by 6% of the sample as an area than needs improvement. Students wrote:

*“The library which is 24/7 open in the first floor should be extended up to max 4 floors because there are thousands of students from SF state who need to study at night time and they're all cramped up into 30 seats on the first floor...”*

*“...create more study nooks around campus -- ideally ones that are not lit by fluorescent lights, so that we have quiet places to go between classes and get work done; enforce no cell phones in the library”*

*“More seating options in the library where one can feel safe.”*

*“I feel the library needs to be more welcoming and user friendly (better lighting, longer hours, more on site resources such as Journals and Periodicals that are up to date).”*

*“The 24 hour study room in the library is simply awful, as well. It is quiet and warm yet it is incredibly small and drab and there aren't nearly enough plugs for those with laptops.”*

*“... there were not enough computer labs in the library, so it was often extremely difficult to utilize time to work on projects while I was on campus.”*

*“I think the library should be open later, or at least open one of the upper floors for after hour studying. And take finals schedules into consideration when deciding to close the library early. Last semester I had a Saturday final at 8 am. I went to the*

*library Friday to study and they said they were closing the whole library at something like 5pm.”*

*“This might seem small, but it’s one thing that frustrates me everyday: the wireless network on campus is very unreliable. Campus is a haven for me to study in—too many distractions at home—and it becomes frustrating when I do not have access to the internet and am forced to wait 30 minuets in the library to use a computer for 2 hours. Also, it would be nice if there were a few more places to study on campus besides the library (while the library is quite, food, drink and group work is not allowed). All I want in life is to have a good wireless signal, have a clean, semi-quiet place to study and have my coffee and drink it too!”*

Respondents also cited the need for more student activities (4%), advising (5%), the variety and price of food (3.5%) and the availability of computers/Internet (3.5%) as areas needing attention. Only 5% of the respondents stated that improvements in teaching should be made. These students tended to call for higher standards in teaching quality. For example, they offered the following responses: *“Use outside sources to survey instructor performance (In ADDITION to student surveys; Not all professors/instructors still teach at their optimum level. I’ve met teachers who, clearly, do not have their students’ best interests at heart. This is discouraging and often a distraction for students who are honestly trying their best!) and more engaged teachers (e.g., “I know certain instructors consistently receive BAD student reviews, beyond the “hard grader, lots of homework” type of complaints but more along the lines of “doesn’t teach, reads from power point slides, doesn’t reply to student emails”... please get rid of those because they make me feel like I’ve wasted my money coming here.”).*

Improving the availability of scholarships was a concern expressed by 4% of the students. Interestingly, the same number of students who mentioned the lack of available housing on campus (2%) mentioned the need for an improved website.

Other areas of concern (3% or less) included providing a safer campus, offering a more streamlined admitting process, more services in the downtown campus, and more tutoring; and a need for a truly non-smoking campus and more affordable parking. Although only mentioned by 1% of the sample (29 students), it is interesting that accuracy of syllabi was cited almost as many times as students mentioned the need for less expensive parking.

### **Faculty, Staff and Administration Survey**

Faculty/staff/administration completed a five-question survey. The first question, “When you think of an excellent university experience for students, what qualities come to mind?” produced two central themes, quality instruction and the importance of a productive environment. Not surprisingly, some aspect of the quality of instruction was mentioned by all respondents, with teaching quality representing the majority of the responses (53%). This includes comments about the importance of providing real world experience (24%), creating a strong relationship between faculty and students (20%), and providing a variety of methods to learn (26%). The following quotes represent this theme:

*“First and foremost the quality of Faculty. Truly great minds with an ability to teach well and inspire.”*

*“Availability of frequent and individualized student advising... Cohort learning experiences across disciplines structured around contemporary societal problems and build upon academic discipline learning...Mentoring experiences with faculty, graduate students, and upper division students.”*

*“High caliber professors who create a dynamic learning environment...Open minded and engaging peers.”*

*“Engaging and challenging instruction. Real-life experiences integrated into curriculum.”*

*“Challenging experiences in critical thought, new forms of knowledge, new methods for problem-solving in a real world, and the interdependence and synthesis of what used to be separate bodies of knowledge. Also, teaching tolerance and understanding of differences between people and cultures.”*

*“Exposure to professionals in the students' chosen field who can teach practical skills... A learning environment that provides a community in which the student can begin to utilize the skills... A learning environment that operates with a functional community, encouraging a holistic approach integrating the practical skills with social skills...”*

*“It is broad enough to pique their curiosity about the breadth of knowledge out there, but narrow enough to allow them to really know something and learn what they don't know...They should be able to write, have quantitative skills and think.”*

*“Broad range of exposure to ideas (a liberal education). Opportunities to discuss the difficult topics. Challenging courses that stretch the mind. A welcoming and inclusive campus climate.”*

*“...intellectual challenge, critical thinking, high expectations, strong study/work ethic, well-rounded experiences, multiple opportunities for interactions with other cultural/racial populations, lots of facilities for students to use, clean and inviting student spaces and places...”*

*“a) Quality instruction imparted by an excellent professorate...b) The availability of CHOICES that allow students to fulfill their life or career goals...c) Accessibility of instruction to all students who wish to improve their lives.”*

*“Teachers with a personal stake in the success of the student.”*

*“An excellent university experience to my mind entails well roundedness, that the education be addressed to the whole person and not just the vocational concerns of the student. It should also be one that promotes lifelong connections both to fellow students, professors and university facilities (e.g. the library) and events (e.g. theater, music etc). Finally, students should be up on the latest developments in their field, if only in a popular way, and be able to follow the exciting events in their major subject.”*

*“When I think of an excellent university experience for students, the ability to critically read, think, and articulate my points clearly comes to mind. ...This is also an environment where rigorous education - not the handing out of an A grades like candy - is the norm.”*

The second theme, providing an environment conducive to learning, included comments about the importance of providing student services (43%), quality facilities (20%) and offering small classes (11%). This theme is represented by the following quotes:

*“...availability of counseling and mentorship; internship & research opportunities; adequate facilities; availability of housing; financial aid; social atmosphere...”*

*“...access to classes, and the appropriate funding to support the classroom and infrastructure. Good customer service at all levels. Clear guidance and advice to facilitate graduation and help students get through the hurdles of their educational experience.”*

*“Small classes; A 4 year degree program (not 5 to 7 years); Excellent facilities that are well maintained.”*

*“Attractive grounds. Well-kept facilities.”*

*“... Class sizes small enough for students and teachers to get to know each other and have a personal relationship in the classroom. Facilities that are up-to-date, software that is current, an atmosphere that feels dynamic and open to growth and change.”*

*“...students should have relatively small classes and should feel welcome at university events, e.g. outside lecturers, on a regular basis.”*

Additionally, faculty/staff/administration believe that an excellent university experience should include diversity and tolerant attitudes (20%) and a sense of ethnics and morality (4%). These quotes represent these views:

*“Extraordinary focus on non-discrimination policies: accommodations for physically challenged students as well as creating a welcome environment for all lifestyle choices, be they cultural, financial, or personal...Necessary assistance for international students such as written material in native languages, professional staff who are multi-lingual to make the transition to an American university less challenging.”*

*“Beyond learning new skills and knowledge for their chosen careers a student should acquire the ability to understand others and respect different views.”*

*“...freedom from sexual harassment by faculty and staff, respectful treatment by faculty and staff (very much lacking at SFSU, as are enough classes and lack of sexual exploitation).”*

*“A diverse environment where students are expose to a variety of ideas, experiences and cultures.”*

*“An environment that welcomes the entire spectrum of ideas without judgment...A safe place that encourages lifelong knowledge, rather than putting an emphasis on grades...Diversity in all respects and the education and exchange of ideas that diversity brings...”*

The importance of funding was mentioned by 11% of the sample. Comments included those who felt an excellent university experience should include affordable tuition and fees, for example, *“...inclusive campus that provides an affordable education”* and a *“Low cost education is not a quality that comes to mind, but it is certainly a bonus.”*

## **Question Two**

Responses from the second survey question, “What are the primary responsibilities of SF State?” express the importance that faculty/staff/administration place on providing a quality educational experience for not only students, but also the greater community. Over 40% of the sample cited this theme as one of the primary responsibilities for the university. The following is a sample of representative comments:

*“To provide a quality education for its students and to teach useful skills and knowledge that are applicable in the workforce and beyond...As a staff member working with research administration, I also believe the university has a responsibility to allow its faculty to optimize their research potential, for the good of the faculty, students, the local community, and the broader benefactors of said research.”*

*“To provide a high quality education to a variety of types of students. Every student should acquire basic academic skills including an ability to think critically, strong writing skills, understanding of basic math concepts and a clear vision of their next steps when they leave SF State.”*

*“To ensure a good to excellent education to our students, to be a mentor to help students improve and strive for the best, to give the best financial support to students, to make sure the faculty members are heard/supported in their various activities (teaching/research), etc.”*

*“Providing a high-quality education to students who can't afford or aren't suited for prestigious research schools.”*

*Academic excellence. Creating a safe and respectful environment with an emphasis on personal exploration of all aspects of student development...*

*“\*Provide high quality classes taught by qualified instructors to students, involving extensive interaction and evaluation of student learning...\*Provide a depth and breadth of classes to students to enable them to get in-depth knowledge in their field of interest but also a well-rounded education outside of it..\*Provide career services and guidance for students. I know that some people look down on "vocational" skills, but most of our students aren't living off trust funds or going directly to grad school, so they need to have the skills and mindset to begin a job right after graduation. Too often I see students drift around after because they majored in something that had no real job prospects and did not take any other classes that would help them out...”*

*“Our responsibility is to provide an education that is pertinent to one's life. This includes a varied array of general education classes, as well as majors that prepares one for a future where he/she contributes positively to society.”*

*“Helping students succeed in their areas of studies. Providing them with cutting edge knowledge and information, skills, so they can save the world.”*

*“To provide a stellar education to those who come here, be a leader and liaison to the community, be a model to the world.”*

Respondents also felt that training students for the work force (16%), providing critical thinking skills (11%) and helping the human condition (12%) were all responsibilities of SF State. These views are represented by the following comments:

Work force:

*“To provide a quality education for its students and to teach useful skills and knowledge that are applicable in the workforce and beyond...”*

*“Providing an excellent education which makes a person relevant either in the workforce or in the world. Provide students with what they need to help them succeed upon graduation.”*

*“As a state-institution, I think that one of the primary responsibilities of SFSU is to provide a high quality educational experience that allows for practical application of theories learned in the classroom, in the real world (the community outside of the university) ...generating a population of graduates that are prepared for the workplace.”*

Critical thinkers:

*“Teaching students how to think critically and how to express their ideas clearly, both verbally and in written form, is essential.”*

*“To prepare critical thinkers...”*

*“To produce student graduates who not only have expertise in their field but are individuals who have critical thinking skills and contribute back to the community.”*

*“To provide a high quality education to a variety of types of students. Every student should acquire basic academic skills including an ability to think critically, strong writing skills, understanding of basic math concepts and a clear vision of their next steps when they leave SF State.”*

*“Graduating students can actually write at a graduating undergraduate student level or graduate level. Students should be able to do more than repeat what an article says, but integrate, analyze, synthesize. We are fully failing the majority of our students.”*

*“To teach critical thinking and to make available knowledge in ways that can be assimilated by students so that they may be productive citizens who both enjoy and change their worlds for the better.”*

Helping the human condition:

*“As a recent hire, it is my understanding that SF State's responsibility is to prepare students to have the courage to live up to the following motto: “Making A Difference in a Diverse Society: Leadership for a New Millennium.”*

*“Training students to think and learn effectively. Preparing them for being good citizens, not just technicians in a materialistic society.”*

*“To produce citizens and a workforce for the State of California, albeit a workforce concerned with social change and positive concern for the greater public.”*

*“As a staff member working with research administration, I also believe the university has a responsibility to allow its faculty to optimize their research potential, for the good of the faculty, students, the local community, and the broader benefactors of said research.”*

Other responsibilities cited included providing a safe environment (7%), faculty empowerment (through funding and infrastructure) (8%) and proving financial support for students (9.5%).

### **Question Three**

The third question, “What do you think are the three most important challenges that SF State faces?” produced a wide array of responses. Not surprisingly, 60% of the respondents mentioned the budget and/or funding as an important challenge with 8% mentioning the budget/funding for all three challenges (e.g., “Funding, funding and funding”). This theme is comprised of comments about dealing with budget cuts,



providing support for innovation, facilities and infrastructure improvements and student fee increases. These responses are represented by the following comments:

*“Keeping its fees within reach of the average student...Avoiding the reduction or elimination of courses due to lack of funds...Attracting and retaining full-time dedicated faculty and staff through higher salaries.”*

*“Inadequate funding in general, high faculty teaching load, severe space constraints.”*

*“The budget crunch. The ability of tenured research active faculty. To continue doing high quality research while teaching three courses .per semester. The disparity between the preparedness of the students .and the level of instruction they are supposed to receive.”*

Infrastructure and facilities:

*“An infrastructure that is aging and is in disrepair. (See Creative Arts building.)”*

*“Limited facilities, both in terms of space and in terms of teaching aides such as extensive library holdings...”*

*“...development of an effective infrastructure for sponsored programs that supports faculty research and creative projects. support for leadership development among faculty to create continuity over time...”*

*“Decaying infrastructure...”*

*“Filthy, incredibly filthy, classrooms from large lecture halls, small studios, large studios. The only thing that gets painted or cleaned are hallways. Sometimes the bathrooms are so bad you just can't use them...”*

*“Insufficient financial resources and hence not being able to offer enough classes nor to attract/retain top notch faculty and staff...”*

*“lack of funding for building maintenance, new buildings, library and other aspects of the infrastructure.”*

*“ Facilities: this is a sad looking university - library, HSS, gym, McKenna theater - it's quite embarrassing.”*

*“...upgrading physical plant to reduce overcrowding, improve library facilities, provide private offices for ALL faculty, restore faculty club.”*

Recruiting and retaining high quality faculty/staff/administrators is the second most cited challenge representing 40% of respondents. The following quotes represent this theme:

*“...Recruiting and retaining excellent faculty who are committed to the education of their students, not just to their own professional development. Expecting faculty to be devoted to instruction, excel at fulfilling professional achievement, and maintain heavy teaching/committee loads, doesn't compute. These are unreasonable expectations. New faculty will continue to accept their first jobs here, thrilled to land a tenure track position, get some experience under their belt and move on to other universities that provide more resources and/or located in places less expensive and stressful.”*

*“...The university has done an outstanding job of hiring new faculty. The challenge will be to retain them as their salaries remain stagnant and research resources decline...”*

*“hiring and retaining highly qualified faculty -- .avoid hiring faculty that are brought in for political expediency, which is sometimes the case.”*

*“Knowledge brain drain as older administrators retire.”*

*“finding and retaining good faculty and teachers in spite of the prohibitive cost of living.... The students already have far too many jaded adjunct instructors as teachers, who (somewhat understandably) are too harried by multiple, part-time jobs to be effective and reliable teachers. Bad or mediocre tenured faculty are sure to stay at SF State, as they will have no other opportunities available, but it is difficult to see how SF State can compete for good tenured/tenure-track faculty. Reflecting on the good, young faculty in the two departments I am most familiar with, it seems to me that a slight majority (maybe 50-60%) would jump at the opportunity to work in an area with a lower cost of living.”*

*“... ability to attract and retain good faculty given our pay scale relative to the cost of living.”*

*“Hiring and retaining a highly qualified professional faculty capable of performing research and training students at the most advanced levels.”*

*“All of the above...Being fair and supporting faculty and staff who have helped maintain this university...”*

*“Keeping staff and faculty. There are many incentives in working at the University, but many times the pay structure at least for staff is demoralizing”*

The third most cited challenge for SF State is to maintain a high quality educational experience for students with increases in faculty workload (e.g., class size, lack of support for research). Twenty-five percent of the sample mentioned some aspect of this theme, which is represented by the following quotes:

*“...Inadequate resources--insufficient faculty. Student-faculty ratio is too high given students' level of academic preparation. Students should learn to write competently, but*

*when upper-division classes have enrollments of 40-45 students, it is impossible to give them enough personal attention. insufficient support staff..."*

*"Providing high quality education for increasingly large number of students who want to enroll here...2. Balancing scholar-teacher workloads for new generation of faculty, who are more ambitious as scholars than past faculty..."*

*"Expanding educational offerings in a time of limited budget...Keeping students alert and healthy when many of them have to work long hours...Rewarding faculty and staff for continued engagement with their disciplines in the face of high workloads."*

*"...Research: it is so difficult to conduct research in this environment (no doctoral students, few research assistants, 3-3 teaching load, no established norm of external funding); it's actually quite amazing to me that we get as much research done as we do. We don't produce as much as a R-1 university, but we work harder for what we do get done..."*

Other themes that emerged from this question represent approximately 20% of the sample with respondents stating the need for more classes or a decrease in the student/faculty ratio, the need to recruit or attract higher quality students and an overall need to improve the campus environment and culture. These themes are represented by the following quotes:

Difficulties represented by class size or an insufficient number of sections:

*"... Class size (a lot of classes are too large, and cannot be considered an adequate learning environment). 2. Class variety (classes are often cut because funds have been diverted for other uses; students that need classes to graduate often are not able to get into the classes that they need).3. Faculty overworked in areas outside of teaching (e.g. administrative tasks, assessments, fund-raising"*

*"...Offering sufficiently diverse classes that have a low ratio of teacher to student."*

*"...Huge Class Sizes ... less classes than needed with too many students in each."*

*"1) enough classes for our students. 2) enough classes for our students. 3) enough classes for our students."*

*"Impacted classes."*

*"I think we need to be careful about relying too much on large-format, distance learning classes. Certainly, some use of technology like iLearn is great, and it's great to be able to converse electronically with students or have them develop wikis for class projects. But fundamentally we should have our classes strive to be reasonably sized and onsite- with the richness of face-to-face faculty-student and student-student interactions. Otherwise what differentiates us from University of Phoenix or any of those for-profit diploma mills?  
..There will be a lot of pressure given budget crises to go to the large format classes- maybe*

*even tape lectures and have students take a class at their own pace. Or to move to multiple-choice tests and away from more time-intensive assignments and grading. That cheapens the experience and the degree.”*

*“Offering classes to meet student demands. Every semester I see students unable to get into courses they need--to fulfill GE requirements, to fulfill pre-requisites, to fulfill their major requirements. Every semester I see what should be a graduating senior unable to get into the class he or she needs in order to graduate. This is absolutely disgusting and unacceptable. I will never recommend SF State as a university until I see this problem fixed.”*

*“Enabling students to gain access to their first choice of courses and classes. Creating informal learning spaces on campus.”*

Inadequately prepared students:

*“...Recruiting well qualified, excellent students who add to the environment.”*

*“... lack of English skills from English as second language students, and poorly prepared high school and junior college graduates.”*

*“...Getting students up to speed either to make up for K-12 shortcomings or .- getting students' English up to par, if they are foreign students.”*

*“Extreme variations in skill levels of entering students.”*

*“...providing high quality curriculum to students who are not prepared (academically)...”*

The last main theme emerged with 25% of the sample reporting a need to improve and/or change the campus culture. Comments that reflect this sentiment are:

*“Changing the campus culture of mediocrity. \*Seriously”*

*“...establishing a sense of identity in SFSU students; improving alumni relations...”*

*“...sense of community could be stronger.”*

*“Our known "brand" is mediocrity, if that...We talk about diversity, but have no expectations of those who have had difficult beginnings, but who could, in fact, improve given correct support...The student association perpetuates mediocrity.”*

*“... More venues for faculty to socialize, eat together and have “water-cooler” conversations. This was an intimidating place to be in my first year. The humanities building and the scattered distribution of departments with no eating areas seems designed to alienate to the maximum; incredibly poor design.”*

*“...commuter college mentality-(take class, go to job, do homework, no time to reflect on ideas or opportunity to discuss ideas with classmates).many students don't read or understand what a college education means or demands...”*

Although cited less often (less than 10%) , respondents mentioned the following areas as potential challenges for SF State: too many rules and regulations, the need to provide a real world experience for students, a need for a better website, expanded internships and some type of collaboration with Muni.

#### **Question Four**

The fourth question, “What could SF State do to improve the educational experience of students?” reiterated two main themes that were expressed in previous responses. The importance of offering a better variety of courses and number of sections (34%), and improving funding (24%). The following quotes represent respondents’ attitudes towards these two themes.

Improving the variety of courses and the number of sections offered:

*“One thing to improve the educational experience would be more classes that would meet general education requirements. The most popular classes are always full, and the student is left with very limited choices. ..I do think, however, that the two-tiered registration system has definitely been a step in the right direction.”*

*“...offer more courses and sections, mandatory advising, contacts with faculty advisors...”*

*“Smaller class size...Do not admit more students than the faculty can handle.”*

*“Expand class offerings into the evenings and weekends and summer sessions, especially for bachelor degree students...Build more classrooms/buildings. .Increase distance learning options for students...”*

*“Find a way to offer the appropriate number of courses each semester to facilitate graduation in 4 years. Think outside the box by offering more on-line and hybrid courses which allows for larger enrollments.”*

*“Stop overcrowding classes that are already impossible for most students to even get into.”*

*“If budget cuts are required, not to cut them by taking away classes. Make the students' experience the #1 priority, without the students, there would be no university.”*

Improving funding:

*“Get more commitments from the chancellor and state legislator and more development money to add more sections and inure us from budget crises (at least relatively). More funds to expand on faculty and get top quality teachers are also key.”*

*“The university must focus its resources on the educational experiences of students - faculty, courses and classrooms.”*

*“SUPPORT THE FACULTY. raises. faculty development. recognition for lecturers. adequate supplies. better equipped classrooms. BETTER LEADERSHIP. FIGHT FOR MORE STATE FUNDS...”*

*“Facilities need to be improved. Class size needs to come back down. But these things take money, which is currently scarce.”*

*“Fund existing programs...Provide enough faculty and staff to implement the existing programs...Administration, Faculty, and Staff working together to create a growth environment.”*

*“Avoid the temptation to save money by offering large classes.”*

*“The campus needs more locations and funding where academic, cultural, athletic and community events and programs can be held.”*

*“Raise money from other sources besides state...”*

Other areas of improvement, mentioned by 10-20% of the sample, were improving facilities and equipment, improving faculty recruitment and development, more hands on experience for students and improving student activities.

### **Question Five**

Two main themes emerged from the last question on the survey, “When you reflect on your experiences at SF State, what do you think we do well?” Comments expressing a positive view on the high quality of teaching, faculty and staff were made by 42% of the sample. Examples of this theme are represented by the following quotes:

*“Provide exceptional learning experiences by hiring talented and dedicated faculty...Support faculty to achieve and to seek innovative teaching and learning experiences for students.”*

*“Offer courses taught by extremely qualified faculty. The faculty care about teaching. The faculty care about the students we get.”*

*“SFSU faculty for the most part are well-educated, experienced, enthusiastic, and dedicated to teaching first...SFSU website is user-friendly...”*

*“...the dedication of many faculty to their students, their community and their scholarly work; the dedication of many staff...”*

*“Teach! We have passionate and talented faculty and majority of classes are taught by the faculty not assistants.”*

*“SF State does well within very limited resources at changing students' lives. Many of our students go on to stunning successes in life due to their educational experiences here. Our faculty are devoted to bringing their research to our students in hands-on experiences.”*

*“There have been faculty on this campus that have been truly devoted to their students and when I speak with alumni by chance in other settings, they talk positively about their experience at SF State, usually are referring to the classes and instructors that they had..... they don't speak fondly of the physical campus or any extracurricular programs. My fear is that our newer crop of faculty have been given a different message, to focus on getting published in peer-reviewed journals, and they don't have the same commitment to teaching excellence that we have seen until recently.”*

*“We provide a high quality education to a diverse student body. Despite all our constraints, we are sincere teachers and researchers.”*

*“Teach, give students a broad understanding of the world, offer diverse perspectives.”*

The university's commitment to social justice, equity, and civic engagement is another area that respondents felt SF State excels at, with 33% of the sample expressing views such as the following:

*“...Provide community service learning for our students. Promote social justice. Celebrate diversity. Contribute to the leadership of the Bay Area.”*

*“I happen to work for DoIT in an office in Fresno (the SAC group) so I do not have close involvement in the daily experience at SFSU but when I happen to be on campus I notice that the SFSU student population features people from many cultural backgrounds. That multi-cultural population provides tremendous richness for the university. I notice that the vast majority of the students appear to be either smiling or at least appear comfortable and confident. That leads me to believe that they feel that they are in a place, at an institution, that makes them feel at home, feel that they are wanted as a unique person. That is a very powerful, very empowering, state of being. From that solid sense of self one can build toward dreams.”*

*“Encourage participation and dialog in education from a diverse population of students and faculty leading to creative ideas and perspectives.”*

*“We embrace diversity pretty well, but I'm not sure we use or leverage our incredible diversity for specific outcomes.”*

*“We take a tremendous diversity of students and provide them opportunities to learn not only a profession, but provide the opportunity for self-development.”*

*“We are able to provide students with a multicultural environment and teaches students to respect and accept differences.”*

*“SFSU values social justice, critical thinking. It is a non-racist all inclusive university...I am proud to be associated with my institution because of commitments to those values even if they are not always exercised effectively...the values are genuinely felt, if unevenly practiced.”*

*“Yes, but we have a long way to go. We need to practice what we preach from the inside out. If we value diversity, we need to make sure people feel valued, I know that this is not always true. Equity and social justice need to be part of our culture; just because we are a “diverse” campus, it doesn't mean that we appreciate diversity. Finally, this campus needs an ombudsperson immediately. IF there is any one thing we can do to improve the culture of SF State, it is to hire someone to help us work on the problems and solutions needed to make this campus a true learning community. There are things I hear from students and colleagues that make me concerned that we are not confronting serious problems on our campus because there is no one to listen to the problems and make appropriate responses...thanks for asking.”*

*“Promote acceptance of diverse cultures, languages and lifestyles in society...Develop awareness of the global nature of society and the importance of taking perspectives from many sides of issues and conflicts.”*

*“...diversity across the board in consciousness, scholarship, teaching, cultural experience...”*

*“It focuses on teaching and on diversity. Two great things. The passion is there, even if the infrastructure isn't.”*

*“...the diversity of the student body and, increasingly, the faculty”*

*“...The campus is richer than most across the nation when it comes to diversity and social justice- it is a shame not to share more of our experiences with the larger educational community.”*

*“... Value diversity -- integrated into discourse, coursework.... I think we do this well...”*

*“Promote an attitude of tolerance for diverse economic and cultural backgrounds”*

*“Infuse social justice and equity throughout the curriculum; engage with the community; and educate first-generation students.”*

The beautiful landscaping was mentioned by 10% of the respondents:



*“The landscapers are great...”*

*“The landscape of this campus is beautiful and appreciated.”*

*“...our grounds (flowers and trees) are beautiful considering our limited resources.”*

*“SFSU must have the cleanest grounds of any CalState campus because the maintenance, landscaping and grounds keeping staff are ceaseless in their efforts to maintain the beauty of our campus setting.”*

*“The campus is beautiful, well laid out, clean, pleasing to the eye, e.g., the Quad, the landscaping, trees, statues, buildings. Truly an "oasis" within the city...”*

The university community was noted as being an open and inviting place by 12% of the sample:

*“We care deeply about the accessibility issue. We do have an .appropriate sense of priorities in times of need.”*

*“...the willingness of the campus to talk about, and reflect, the best values of an academic institution and a community. i am a proud, though sometimes beleaguered, member of this community.”*

*“We SF State is are pragmatic and encourage involvement in all aspects of the community both locally and globally to improve lives of others. ..We have many groundbreaking, unique programs (e.g. Whirlwind Wheelchairs, Christine Azocar's Journalism Program ensuring that the people of color are represented in the media.)... We are a campus of ideas, generating new and unique program.”*

*“I feel a strong sense of a vital community. When I reflect on the student newspaper now and compare it to the student newspaper when I was a student, I believe this University is a living, changing spirit, destined to excel and be glorious. We are also nurturing our alumni. It is a lesson to see who really excel in their fields, and examine their individual experiences here at SF State.”*

General negative comments were made by 9% of the sample; some examples are:

*“Allowing a diverse group of students to waste their time and money attempting to get a bachelor's degree from a university they expect to give them an education better than what they would receive from a community college...Students at SF State would be much better off getting their degrees elsewhere, even if elsewhere means a community college. At least there they will not spend so much money and be able to graduate on time without the stress associated with attempting to get into classes every semester and failing to do so. The educational experience being offered at SF State disgusts me and I hope something will be done to remedy all of its awful problems.”*

*“Some majors seems to be good at preparing their students for entry into the work world (possibly business, cinema). But I do not think we are preparing students to be productive, self directed citizens, nor do I think we encourage a love of learning.”*

*“We enroll students who do not have a chance of succeeding in their academic pursuits because they are woefully unprepared for this level of education. They can not read or write on a high school level, let alone a college level. We do this very, very, well. These students take precious scarce resources from those who have the tools to possibly succeed. This, we do very well. We pack so many students into small classrooms, offer less and less course choices, and move them through to a college degree even though so many of them can not communicate meaningfully in the English language after graduation. We do this very well. But, on a positive note, we do offer the only chance many of them will ever get to attend a university and many of them actually rise to the challenge and succeed with good advising, tutoring, and mentoring. We do this very well too.”*

*“Very little. We have isolated programs that our excellent. The faculty work very hard and are engaged with their students. One seldom hears about that. How many of our students feel good about having an SFSU degree?”*

*“I have seen resources, classes, and budgets consistently dwindle. The mood among faculty and students is grim...The system is overstretched and students are frustrated by not being able to take classes they expected to have, and not being able to graduate on time as they were promised. Faculty are overworked and feel that the system is failing them and their professional development is being stymied due to resources that are either not there or are improperly portioned out...I think that the situation is tense and stability needs to be restored.”*

## Summary and Conclusions

The open-ended survey responses from students, faculty, staff, and administration reveal a number of interesting patterns that helped the WASC Steering Committee develop and support the themes of focus in the WASC Institutional Proposal.

The **students** who responded to the survey reported that they *came to SF State* (Q1) for five main reasons: (1) the appeal of San Francisco, (2) specific academic programs, (3) proximity to home, (4) the school’s excellent reputation, and (5) affordable tuition. Other attractive qualities of SF State include the diversity of the campus community, personal ties of family and friends, transit options, quality/availability of the faculty, acceptance to the university and/or relatively low admission requirements, and the values of equity, social justice and community engagement. Finally, some students reported SF State was appealing due to friend/s recommendations, a culture of respect, the beautiful campus, an opportunity to start a new life, funding through scholarships and grants, the high ratio of Chinese students, childcare, and the high quality of disability accommodations.

In general, students reported that their *educational experience would be better* [Q2] if two main objectives were realized: (1) more – and more varied – courses, and smaller classes, and (2) less worry about the increasing cost of attending SF State. A number of minor themes also emerged, including better library services, more student activities, better advising, less expensive and more varied food, more access to computers/Internet, better instruction, higher teaching standards, more scholarship opportunities, more campus housing, and a better website. Some students also expressed a need for a safer campus, a more streamlined admitting process, more services in the downtown campus, more tutoring, the need for a truly non-smoking campus and more affordable parking. Some students mentioned a need for more accurate syllabi and less expensive parking.

Responses by **faculty, staff, and administration** [FSA] to five questions resonated and expanded upon most of the points raised by students who responded to two questions. FSA mentioned two main attributes that mark an *excellent university experience for students* [Q1] (1) quality instruction (quality teaching, real world experience, strong faculty/students relationships, various methods to learn), and (2) a productive learning environment (student services, quality facilities, small classes). Other qualities of excellence noted by FSA are diversity and tolerant attitudes, a sense of ethnics and morality, and the importance of funding as markers of excellence.

Quality instruction is a broad theme that runs through the faculty and student responses to the collective questions. When asked to describe the primary responsibilities of *SF State* [Q2], FSA agreed that the most important task is providing a quality educational experience for students and the broader community. This was variously described, for example, as training students for the work force, providing critical thinking skills, helping the human condition, providing a safe environment, faculty empowerment through funding and infrastructure, and financial support for students.

FSA generally agreed that the *three most important challenges faced by SF State* [Q3] are (1) budget and/or funding issues, (2) recruiting/retaining high quality faculty/staff/administrators, and (3) maintaining a high quality educational experience for students with increases in faculty workload. Other challenges mentioned are more classes or a smaller student/faculty ratio, recruit/attract higher quality students, improved campus environment and culture. Some faculty expressed concerns about excessive rules and regulations, providing a real world experience for students, a better website, expanded internships, and collaboration with Muni.

To improve the educational experience of students [Q4], FSA reiterated two main themes expressed in previous responses: (1) the importance of offering more sections and variety of courses, and (2) improving funding. Some faculty mentioned a need to improve facilities/equipment, faculty recruitment/development, and student activities, and a need for more hands on experience for students.

Two major themes characterized what FSA respondents *think SF State does well* [Q5]: (1) high quality of teaching, faculty and staff, and (2) the university's commitment to social justice, equity, and civic engagement. Minor themes included the beautiful landscaping and a university community that is an open and inviting place.

Nine percent of the FSA respondents offered negative feedback, and their comments are worth noting here. Individuals expressed distress with the amount of time and money students spend trying to get into classes and graduate in a timely manner, the extent to which faculty prepare students to be productive, self-directed citizens and encourage a love of learning, the enrollment of students who have little chance of success as they take up space and resources, and the grim mood that results from overworked faculty whose professional development is taxed in the face of a system that is diminished by dwindling classes, budgets and resources. What is interesting about these comments is that these concerns are also addressed in a less emotional and critical tone throughout the responses of FSA to all five of the questions posed in the survey. What is important is that these faculty responded to the questions with a measure of distress and dismay that might match the feelings of other FSA on campus.

The result of this qualitative survey reveal a strong call for changes that will enhance the educational experience of students and the educational and professional experience of the faculty who are charged with educating these students. Both populations have changed in significant ways since the last WASC accreditation process. For example, students at SF State are younger, and they come to SF State with distinct needs for instructional methods, classroom space, and learning resources. With many new faculty who are teaching and conducting research, and finding meaning in the SF community and Bay Area as a place to live and work, it seems we are in an ideal position to explore how faculty can address and experience both the changing student population and the rapid changes in the technologies of education and research. All of this is taking place in a university culture that is populated by students, faculty, staff and administration who are committed to the SF State values of social justice, equity, and civic engagement.

## Appendix A

### Administration, Staff and Faculty Survey

1. When you think of an excellent university experience for students, what qualities come to mind?
2. What are the primary responsibilities of SF State?
3. What do you think are the three most important challenges that SF State faces?
4. What could SF State do to improve the educational experience of students?
5. When you reflect on your experiences at SF State, what do you think we do well?
6. I am a) staff    b) faculty    c) administration

### Student Survey

1. Why did you decide to come to SF State? Please list all of the reasons that come to mind.
2. What could SF State do to improve your educational experience? Please list all of the ideas that come to mind.

Before you go, please take a moment to respond to these demographic questions. We need this information for our analysis:

1. How long have you been a student at SF State?
2. What is your current class standing?  
Freshman                  Sophomore                  Junior                  Senior                  Graduate student
3. In a typical 7-day week, about how many hours per week do you spend commuting to class (driving, walking, riding a bicycle, riding on Bart, etc.)?  
0                  1-5                  6-10                  11-15  
16-20                  21-25                  26-30                  30+
4. In a typical 7-day week, about how many hours per week do you spend participating in co-curricular activities (SF State organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)?  
0                  1-5                  6-10                  11-15  
16-20                  21-25                  26-30                  30+

## Appendix B

### Faculty Data Analysis Categories

#### 1. When you think of an excellent university experience for students, what qualities come to mind?

- Good facilities & Equipments
- Providing real world experience and preparing for future careers
- Well paid(Faculty/Staff), long tenured faculty
- Smaller classes (lower faculty/student ratio)
- Encouraging Students
- Various and available classes in different fields
- Student Services (guidance, advising, tutoring)
- Affordable tuition and fees , and acceptable funding
- Not a discriminating place
- Extracurricular activities and good environment outside the class
- Relationship student/faculty)
- Learning community
- A productive and nice curriculum
- Good Teaching Quality (nice, knowledgeable and approachable faculty and instructors)
- Nice administration and helpful staff
- Open experiences and many ways to learn
- Diversity (faculty or students)
- Sense of ethics, morality

#### 2. What are the primary responsibilities of SF State?

- Nurture
- Contribute
- Progress of humanity
- Connection with knowledge
- Opportunity
- Critical thinking
- Open minded
- Equal access
- Provide a faculty environment
- Library
- Entrance into professions
- Ensure education quality
- Produce excellent graduates

- Ensure Safety
- Train for workforce
- Provide financial support for students
- Making better leader
- Diverse body
- Faculty Empowerment

**3. What do you think are the three most important challenges that SF State faces?**

- Budget/Funding
- Too many rules and regulations
- Dealing with budget cuts
- Provide more resources ( facilities/infrastructure)
- Student fees (increasing)
- Expand internships
- Support of innovation in terms of funding
- Not providing real world experience
- Improving graduation rates (retention, time to degree, etc.)
- Technology advancement classroom/lab equipments
- Attracting / recruiting high quality faculty
- Attracting / recruiting high quality students
- Handling large class sizes (or faculty heavy load of work)
- Collaboration with Muni
- Improving the campus environment and changing the campus culture
- The need for more Classes ( sections of popular/required classes)
- Services (Advising, Food, counseling, Extracurricular activities)
- Better website
- Negative points or complaints

**4. What could SF State do to improve the educational experience of students?**

- Hands on experience
- Community involvement
- Funding
- Student campus activities
- Facilitate graduation in four years
- Larger enrollment through more online & hybrid classes
- Require higher math level
- Upgrade/improve writing and reading skills
- Better faculty recruitment and development
- More room and space
- Better and well equipped classes
- Improving faculty and staff performance (professional development by training or hiring new faculty)
- Connect to alumni

- Higher teaching quality (or need to improve level of difficulty and etc..)
- More new technology and computers
- Offering a better variety of courses and sections
- Improve the facilities and equipments (library, classes and)
- Negative points or complaints

**5. When you reflect on your experiences at SF State, what do you think we do well?**

- Advancement opportunity
- Hands-on experiences (including real world experience for students, etc.)
- Diversity (students or faculty)
- Quality of teaching ( or good faculty and Staff)
- Social justice
- One-to-one assistance and more time spent with students out of class
- Working with limited resources
- Accessibility
- Encouragement on student opinion
- Creating an open and inviting place
- Union bargaining
- Providing an excellent community service/ involvement
- More concentrated on teaching and practical knowledge and less on research
- Beautiful campus
- Low tuition (affordable education)
- Connected alumni
- Student services (and extracurricular activities)
- Any general negative comments

**Student  
Data Analysis Categories**

**1. Why Did you decide to come to SF State? Please list all the reasons that come into mind.**

- Equity
- Diversity of people (on campus)
- Social justice
- Community engagement
- Close to home
- Accepted, ease to get in
- Enjoyed visit to school
- Respectful people around
- Start a new life
- High Chinese population
- Child care



- Good disability accommodation
- Personal life in SF
- San Francisco /major city/culture/liberal/ethnic diversity of the city (not campus)
- Friends recommendation
- Transit access
- In state (because of location, not cost)
- Scholarship and grants
- Graduate degree programs
- Named a specific program
- Overall quality ,reputation of institution (not specific program) SF State
- Faculty
- Affordable (tuition)

**2. What could SF State do to improve your educational experience? Please list all of the ideas that come to mind.**

- More student life activities
- More tutoring
- More advising
- More / cheaper parking
- Non-smoking campus (any mention of smoking on campus)
- Safer campus
- Easier admitting process, less paperwork
- More eating variety and lower prices for food
- Smaller class size
- More courses (variety)
- More online courses
- More accurate syllabi
- More available computers
- Less hard hw
- Better and more Updated website
- Higher teaching quality/engaged teachers
- Lower tuition fee
- Better library services (including space, books, etc.)
- More scholarships
- More services in downtown campus (also just “downtown campus”)
- More housing on campus
- Student services