The Evaluation Team in conducting its review was able to evaluate the institution under the WASC Commission Standards and the Core Commitment for Institutional Capacity and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for Action and to the institution for consideration.
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OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

UC Santa Barbara is one of the campuses of the University of California, and one of the leading public research universities in the United States. As part of its application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, UCSB submitted a Capacity and Preparatory Review Report to WASC in 2011 and a visiting team representing WASC visited the campus from October 4-6, 2011. The team was chaired by David Skorton, president of Cornell University. The Assistant Chair, Teresa Shaw, was unable to participate in the visit and was replaced on an interim basis by Richard Fass, Vice President for Planning at Pomona College.

UCSB was last accredited by WASC in June 2001. They submitted an Institutional Proposal to WASC for reaffirmation of accreditation in May 2009, and in April 2010 they were granted a six-month extension of their Capacity and Preparatory Review from Spring 2011 to Fall 2011. In May 2010 WASC granted UCSB’s request for a modification of its Institution Proposal after extensive consultation between the campus and WASC staff, and it was this revised Proposal that formed the basis for this team’s visit.

The visiting team convened off campus on the evening of October 3, 2011, and began meetings on campus on the morning of October 4. The visit concluded with an Exit Interview at 8:30 am on October 6. The two full days on campus included meetings with many key administrators and faculty leaders, as well as open meetings for faculty, staff, and students.

The team commends UCSB for an excellent CPR report that is responsive to all of the WASC requirements for this stage of reaccreditation, and for the openness and thoroughness of all who met with us during the visit. In addition, we wish to thank the Chancellor, Dr. Henry Yang, and all of those who helped make arrangements for the visit, for their courtesies and attention to the team’s needs and requests.

The visiting team found that UCSB has responded to all of the issues raised by the Commission at the conclusion of the 2001 reaccreditation process. At the same time, it notes that progress on these issues is relatively recent. UCSB authorities explained, and the team agrees, that this delay is understandable in light of the need to deal first with the extraordinary financial crisis that has required the full attention of all campus constituencies here and at most other public universities over the last decade. We believe that the university is now moving with genuine commitment and dedication to “catch up” and move forward on these issues. Two of the three major recommendations in 2001 became the major themes of this review (“Graduate Education” and “Educational Effectiveness”) and the third (“Freshman Experience”) remains a focus of attention.
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY
FINANCES AND PLANNING

UC Santa Barbara, similar to public higher education throughout the nation and its nine sister campuses, has faced significant reductions in support from the State over the last several years. State funds currently comprise about 25% of the campus’s overall budget. The other 75% of the campus’s revenue is generated from a diverse range of sources including, for example, tuition and other fees paid by students; revenue generated by the auxiliaries, such as room and board rates and the bookstore; federal contract and grant revenue; and private funding.

Not all funds are fungible; some are restricted by policy or contract. State funds, along with tuition and a few other minor sources of general funds, support nearly 90% of the costs of the campus’s core instruction and research programs.

In response to reduced funding, the campus has taken a multi-year approach, using a combination of permanent budget reductions and efficiencies (achieved largely through consolidations of specific functions, implementation of new systems in areas such as strategic sourcing, and an increase in the G&A assessment) and one-time bridging strategies. In addition, the campus has received new revenue from student fee increases (tuition) approved by the Regents and from local strategies, such as increasing the number of nonresidents, to generate additional permanent revenue. For 2011-12, The Regents approved tuition increases of 17.6% to help address the reduction in state funds and the increase in mandatory costs.

It is clear that this changing fiscal environment is central to discussions across campus and figures prominently in all aspects of the campus’s institutional planning efforts. The campus has taken considered actions, including reductions in staff and a slowdown in the hiring of faculty, to address the loss of state funds. It is monitoring closely the impacts of these actions. At this same time, the University of California is in the first stage of implementing a new budget model, one that redefines how resources flow between the Office of the President and the campuses. This is a new budget environment that requires the campus to adjust its own budget models and strategies as growth in certain revenues, such as nonresident tuition and overhead, will benefit directly the campus’s budget.

Notwithstanding this changed fiscal environment, UCSB currently has adequate resources – fiscal and physical – to meet its core teaching and research responsibilities (CFR 3.5). The campus has had stable leadership providing continuity of organizational structures and decision making processes (CFR 3.8). While management of the campus is the responsibility of the Chancellor, the campus is expected to operate within overall parameters and policies set by either the President of the University or its governing board, The Regents (CFR 3.9, CFR 3.10). Shared governance is standard practice at the university. Consistent with the authority delegated by The Regents, the Academic Senate has plenary authority over admissions and curriculum and a major consultative role with respect to budget. The Academic Senate is actively involved at the system wide level in
the development of administrative, budgetary, and admissions policy that affect all campuses (CFR 3.11).

UCSB has adopted clearly articulated budget principles that are used to guide the campus’s decisions. These principles maintain a clear focus on maintaining quality through strategic cuts as well as strategic investments. Highlights of UCSB’s principles include:

- “Strategic…not across the board with priority given to protecting and enhancing the quality of the instructional program…”

- “…reductions need to consider the impact on revenue generation…”

- “…protect …ability to recruit, develop and retain a diverse and highly qualified faculty, staff work force, and student body”

- “…strategic investments …in faculty recruitment, research, technology, graduate student support, development and physical development…position the campus for the future”

Consistent with these principles, budgets have been reduced in 8 of the last 10 years through the allocation of differential cuts across campus with a priority placed on instruction and research. Cost distribution/expense data provided to the team bears this out. Over 55% of the campus expenses are in instruction, academic support and research, and less than 5% on institutional support.

As is common to most institutions of higher education, UCSB has maintained a balanced budget in part through reduction of faculty hiring and reduction of the staff workforce. The university has reduced the staff workforce in a sensitive fashion by the judicious use of retirements, not filling vacant lines (attrition) and, to a relatively minor extent, layoffs. This approach is eminently reasonable and, yet, the apparent total reduction of approximately 10% may not be sustainable over the long term. The work of the university has not reduced in proportion to the staff workforce reduction so staff are apparently feeling the pressure of the additional burden they are shouldering. The realities of likely ongoing revenue limitations will probably not allow major rehiring of staff but the university may wish to consider stabilizing the workforce at its present level and attempting to realign work where possible with the staff complement.

The campus has in place a long-standing budget committee comprised of faculty, staff, and students that advise the Chancellor on principles and implementation strategies regarding the budget. Information appears to be readily available and easily understood. Campus constituencies are routinely provided updated information and data.

Based on the 2009-10 audited Financial Statements, in 2009-10, UCSB generated over $800M in revenue. The major revenue sources that comprised UCSB’s budget included state funds ($192M), student fees ($166M), contracts and grants ($166M), sales and services ($91M), gifts and endowments ($27M) and overhead ($12M).
In 2009-10, annual expenditures at UCSB totaled ~$670M. The largest expenditures were in instruction and academic support ($225M) and research ($162M). Other major categories of expenditure included auxiliaries ($75M), student services ($67M), scholarship support ($64M), institutional support ($34M) and operation and maintenance of plant ($32M).

The 2011-12 budget represents a special challenge as UCSB seeks to accommodate known reductions in state funding. When combined with mandatory cost increases, i.e. employer contributions to retirement, health benefit costs, salary adjustments, and the fiscal burden of the new budget methodology, the campus expects to accommodate reductions and unfunded cost increases of over $86M. An additional, mid-year cut from the State is likely and the campus is planning to address this expected shortfall using a combination of permanent and one-time strategies, with priority given to maintaining instruction, research, and academic support. If successful, the campus can manage without additional budget cuts in 2011-12. Approximately $56M of new (permanent) revenues are expected – tuition increases, growth in nonresident tuition, income from Summer Session, increases in the G&A assessment, and so on. Another $23M shortfall will be addressed through one-time bridging strategies, including funding from the UC Office of the President and existing carry-forward funds. The remaining $7M will be addressed through implementation of operational efficiencies.

One other approach the university plans to employ to generate additional revenue for the longer term is to increase emphasis on recruiting out-of-state undergraduate students. Because of the high quality of the UCSB faculty, curricula and facilities, this seems a wise approach. Our only suggestion is that the university take a more assertive approach to student recruitment. Recognizing that it is a national university, UCSB might consider investing in a more expansive out-of-state recruitment effort. This effort would likely involve more marketing efforts and may benefit from consultation with those presently excelling at such recruitment.

UCSB is also focused on increasing philanthropy and is more than mid-way through a $1 billion campaign. Priorities for private funding include increasing the number of faculty endowed chairs, student support, infrastructure and facilities. Private fundraising is a critical element of the campus’s strategy moving forward.

Total academic year average enrollment is estimated to be 22,285 (including 1,942 FTE in summer) in 2011-12, growth of nearly 780 FTE since 2005-06. During this same period of time, filled faculty FTE has declined slightly from 832 FTE to 815 FTE; and filled staff FTE has declined by about 10%. In the current year, the campus reported 18 successful faculty searches and noted that up to 35 additional searches have been authorized. The campus’s Regentally approved long-range development plan envisions student enrollment growing to 25,000. The pace of this growth will be based on the availability of resources.
FACILITIES

The campus has adequate space to meet their current instructional and research needs. When growth resumes, the sufficiency and adequacy of space will need to be addressed. Partnering with its local utility, the campus has moved forward aggressively to implement energy saving projects to help reduce the ongoing utility costs.

The campus currently has approximately 1,825,744 assignable square feet (ASF) of academic space and another 425,502 ASF of academic support space including libraries and computing facilities. Academic space is within 99% of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) guidelines that are used to help determine the adequacy of academic space in relation to enrollments. There is also approximately 160,000 ASF of non-state funded research space.

UCSB has an approved 10-year state and non-state plan that is consistent with their academic plan and relies on a range of funding sources. Progress on implementation will be made as the resources are available. There is a more detailed 5-year state capital improvement program that is revised, and submitted, annually as part of the overall UC budget negotiations with the State of California. The current 5-year capital improvement program focuses on finishing projects currently in the pipeline, infrastructure, and life-safety improvements. The Chancellor has worked to transform relations with the local community and was successful in garnering their support for the campus’s proposed long range development plan. This is a major strength going forward, and will provide the campus with the physical flexibility and ability to accommodate future growth.

Student housing totals approximately 1,708,589 ASF, providing 7,750 university-owned and operated beds for undergraduate and graduate students. UCSB currently provides beds for approximately 36% of their undergraduate population and 35% of their graduate population.

The campus has one main library building totaling 247,044 ASF to house the library collection and provide students with on-campus study space and access to computing facilities. There is an additional 17,338 ASF of library space in the Music building for the Arts library and another 28,700 ASF of off-site leased storage space for library books. With the Davidson Library Addition and Renewal Project an additional 44,646 of library space will be added. Construction of this project is scheduled to begin by mid-year 2012.
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

THEME 1: UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

UCSB has introduced a serious engagement with the identification and assessment of undergraduate learning outcomes in their planning efforts (CFR 4.1, 4.2). This effort will be complemented by current data gathering and dissemination efforts which provide relevant supporting data regarding demographics, enrollment trends, and student success indicators, tracked for each campus within the UC system through an annual yearly Statistical Summary of Students and Staff and, in greater detail, through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems reporting structure. The annual Campus Profile presents an overview of these data in a simple, user-friendly format. Additionally, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning annually compiles a UCSB Planning Data Book, presenting comprehensive information in the areas of instructional workload and enrollments by major/department, degrees awarded, student ethnicity, academic unit profiles, and institutional organization charts (CFR 4.3).

Data presented as supporting documentation for this review and through the institution’s Institutional Research website (including the valuable Planning Data Book that serves as a model for the effective dissemination of key quantitative information from the full institution through the individual departmental levels) support the conclusion that appropriate data are collected, disseminated, and incorporated in institutional review and decision-making processes. Policies and procedures are well documented and easily available, both internally and externally. Additional relevant information regarding the campus environment, including curricular and co-curricular opportunities, is also regularly obtained through periodic surveys (CFR 4.6).

Assessment of student learning has thus far focused on traditional metrics complemented by self-reported gains in critical skills derived from the UCUES survey. Institutional Research will presumably play an important role in the newly-developing efforts focused on direct measures of critical skills and learning outcomes. The report does not address the periodic review of the Institutional Research office itself (CFR 4.5).

The institution appears to have received the proper message regarding the three stages of “full cycle” assessment – identification of learning outcomes, implementation of measures to gauge success at achieving these outcomes, and providing for iterative response to these measures to guide further program improvement. While fiscal realities apparently led the institution to focus their efforts on programmatic assessment, the review committee notes that meaningful assessment of student learning outcomes can also guide the institution and its individual programs in recognizing opportunities for instructional efficiency and tuning that are likely to produce financial advantages.

The pilot study on student learning outcomes and assessment strategies implemented in four departments making up 25% of enrolled students represent a significant step towards
delineating a process for departments to discuss, define, articulate, and communicate the learning outcomes for their discipline. In addition to establishing pilot learning outcomes and assessment plan, the process by which these plans will be reviewed and approved by the Academic Senate via the CLOA, Undergraduate Council, and Program Review Panel has also been piloted. This is an important step since each of the participating pilot departments and the campus stakeholders involved in the assessment effort were able to experience all of the steps for establishing and assessing student learning outcomes (CFR 2.2a, 2.7).

A great strength is the shared governance structure and the Academic Program Review process. The assessment group purposely chose to engage early on the Academic Senate, recognizing that their support and buy-in to this process was critical in order for the learning outcomes effort to be accepted by the campus. From our meetings, it was evident that outreach to faculty, deans, and senior administrators was both wide and deep with a great number of campus stakeholders either directly engaged or, at minimum, informed and aware of the assessment effort and its goals and purposes for the students, faculty, staff, and the wider learning environment. This ground-up approach has been a thoughtful and successful strategy for this campus, establishing a strong foundation for scaling and sustaining the proposed changes (CFR 2.3, 2.4).

Going forward, it is clear that further development and attention is needed to focus on how these learning outcomes will:

- continue to be shared with faculty, deans, graduate students and instructors, student support services, senior administrators, and other campus stakeholders (CFR 2.4);
- be communicated to students through syllabi, course bulletins, academic advising, etc. (CFR 2.5); and
- be assessed within the course and the department, and across the institution.

We share the concerns expressed in the report regarding the proposed timetable for scaling the pilot study process to the other departments and programs on campus. Establishing assessment expertise and an understanding of related issues within departments is a critical step if student learning outcomes and assessment strategies are to be successfully integrated into the academic review and approval process. In addition to the local expertise, we encourage taking steps towards changing how assessment is perceived on campus by taking advantage of the wide range of resources available via the internet (e.g., webinars) and through conferences and meetings, (e.g., Association of American Colleges and Universities, WASC, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and disciplinary societies).

Also, as discussed in our meeting with the faculty involved with the assessment pilot study, more challenging than the writing and approval of departmental student learning outcomes is the creation and actual implementation of assessment plans. While it is clear that additional resources will be needed in order to both scale and sustain these conversations and initiatives around student learning outcomes (SLO’s), the specifics of what these resources are (e.g., a dedicated staff member with assessment expertise vs. supporting the
Faculty Assessment Advisors with additional funding, release time, etc.) will be informed by the experiences of implementing the pilot assessment plans.

In addition to articulating learning outcomes within majors and departments, defining learning outcomes in the General Education program is also in need of attention. It may be that a similar process can also be used to facilitate discussions among faculty who teach courses within General Education. Recognizing the significant overlap between typical programmatic learning outcomes and typically recognized learning outcomes for General Education may lead to creative and effort-conserving approaches to this issue. Progress reported in the SLO update provided by Chancellor Yang supports the conclusion that the overall assessment effort is in good hands.

As student learning outcomes are established, a plan for assessing how these outcomes are achieved at the individual student, department, and institutional levels will be important. The proposed pathway for systematic accountability is through Academic Program Review which is well established and robustly supported at UCSB. However, the departmental learning outcomes should also be mapped and aligned to the curriculum including individual courses and ideally, to the actual student assignments that are aimed at producing evidence for each of the outcomes (as an example, see Kevin Kelly’s mapping exercise: http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/epportfolio/resources/dop/mapping.html) (CFR 2.6, 2.7).

The criteria for scholarship and creative activity are well defined and communicated. There appear to be numerous opportunities for funding support for research collaborations for faculty as well as engagement in such activities for both graduate and undergraduate students. Fostering engagement in research was mentioned by the student affairs leadership and Educational Opportunity Program. Many jointly sponsored programmatic offerings through the Division of Student Affairs as well as engagement with the broader community on campus and off campus highlight the institution’s commitment to a vibrant culture of scholarship, teaching, learning, and service (CFR 2.8, 2.9).

UCSB regularly collects and reports disaggregated student data on attrition and completion through its Institutional Research Office. At the same time, the Division of Student Affairs and Housing and Residential Services conducts extensive reviews of co-curricular programs and also oversees the collection of data related to student wellness and student engagement and success. In addition, students have initiated their own surveys regarding class availability and “Food and Financial Need” which resulted in a student-initiated and student-supported food bank (http://foodbank.as.ucsb.edu/). We encourage exploration of how these findings are being used to inform and improve practice, particularly with respect to achievement among different types of students (CFR 2.10, 2.11, 2.13).

Given the extensive data that is already being collected and is for the most part readily available to various constituents on campus, one proposal for the design of the student learning outcome assessment plans is the reliance on student surveys as an indirect assessment measure. Heavy reliance on surveys across campus may result in survey fatigue and could result in low student response rates and less reliable data. As a result, we
agree with the recommendations of the Committee on Learning Outcomes and Assessment to encourage the use of direct assessment measures.

The resources and information regarding academic requirements, student support services, and transfer are available to students through multiple sources both online and in print as well as through academic advising, departmental, and school-based resources (CFR 2.12, 2.13, 2.14).

The first four pages of the report essay convey an appreciation for the significance of and practicalities of an expanded focus on learning outcomes. The footnote on page two reveals an important campus resource – i.e., the entire College of Engineering – that has developed a functional culture of assessment. While one member of the institution-wide assessment council is drawn from the College of Engineering, we believe that greater use could be made of their efforts in the “pilot” studies for assessment plan development. We see real opportunities here for synergistic developments. The College of Engineering’s already substantial progress – e.g., the inclusion of course and program-level outcomes in all course syllabi – can indeed serve as an additional pilot, while the campus-wide assessment effort can in turn help the College of Engineering to move beyond simple identification of outcomes into a “full cycle” assessment effort.

UCSB’s approach represents a solid and typical assessment agenda, and plans for extension of the effort, while not particularly aggressive, are realistic. A helpful support infrastructure has been identified and put in place, and appropriate planning is underway for how to incorporate review of learning outcomes and assessment plans in the ongoing process of program review and new program approval. The institution is thinking about the right things, and we would urge them to adopt whichever implementation strategies seem most promising in their institutional culture, to foster faculty buy-in and ownership, and to avoid the establishment of a separate assessment infrastructure from which the faculty feel largely divorced.

The Career Services’ Partnership Program, recognizing employers with a track record of working with UCSB students, appears thoughtfully designed. We wonder if it could represent an avenue for more active solicitation of input regarding the effectiveness of educational programs in preparing students for employment (CFR 4.8).

The infrastructure for information technology services and the libraries are well positioned to be leveraged to support the proposed efforts towards assessment of student learning outcomes and graduate excellence. Institutional adoption of GauchoSpace by faculty and students, support for IT enhancements, improvements in physical learning spaces, and innovations in educational technologies within the College of Letters and Sciences via the Collaborate initiative, and transformation of the traditional library environment into a “learning commons” model highlight some of the ways in which IT, Learning, Student Information Systems and Technology will be important partners to support and sustain the initiatives going forward (CFR 3.6, 3.7).
We offer the following comments in the spirit of collegial guidance and support to the institution as it begins its earnest preparations for the EER visit.

- The pilot projects highlight the fact that the process of developing, approving, and implementing plans across the institution will be a lengthy one. It is important to note that at this point, these plans have only reached the departmental draft level, with no formal process for review and approval yet in place.

  o The Economics plan represents a very good draft effort, though it relies to a very high extent on indirect assessments and on grades (see following bullet point regarding grade analysis).

  o The History plan presents a very useful and largely well-developed matrix of learning outcomes, by and large using language that is well-suited to the development of direct assessments (with the exception of those items calling for “understanding” of various topics – refinement of these items will be in order). While again relying heavily on grades and indirect assessments, this plan does also move into potentially valuable consideration of portfolios of student work, though these are largely undefined in terms of content or evaluation at this point.

  o The Biology plan is only minimally responsive even to the institution’s tasking of its pilot departments, focusing only on a list of information-oriented learning outcomes, each of which focuses on “understanding of” or “proficiency with” specific topics without defining how this understanding or proficiency will be assessed. Reference to information about Bloom’s taxonomy and verbs that convey directly measurable outcomes (e.g., http://www.teach-nology.com/worksheets/time_savers/bloom/) will be valuable to this department. The SLO update provided by Chancellor Yang contains a revised and considerably improved Biology assessment plan, suggesting that the assessment team is working effectively with departments in refining their plans.

  o The College of Engineering has a long history of engagement with the concept of learning outcomes, including standardized identification of course- and departmental outcomes in course syllabi. As noted earlier, this represents a potentially valuable resource, beyond the units that have served as pilots for identification of learning outcomes, for departments with less-developed assessment planning efforts.

- Economics has made some effort to carry out an analysis of grades, essential if grades are to be viewed as a direct measure of learning outcomes. However, the report does not address evaluation procedures or grade analyses that would allow assessment of the rigor and effectiveness of grading policies and practices. While exploration of the institution’s web site provides relevant hints – e.g., rubrics for
grading within particular departments, commentary on grade inflation, etc. – it is not clear that analyses of grading “culture” have been carried out (CFR 4.7).

- Conspicuous in its absence from this essay is any discussion of *institution-wide* learning outcomes, perhaps most easily captured under the context of “General Education.” The Integrative Essay refers briefly to this issue (page 33 of the CPR report), noting that the institution is having difficulty in understanding and defining what constitutes a “general education.” It is commendable that the institution is taking this complex issue by the horns and trying to wrestle it into a modern and meaningful form. In this context, we note that the institution has been exploring disaggregated data on student success, with potential implications for the assessment of its general education program. Progress on this front is also substantiated by the SLO update provided by Chancellor Yang.

- Also largely absent is a discussion of how student learning will be measured and assessed for graduate programs, and how this assessment might be related to the other indicators articulated in the main report and in appendix E on “graduate lifecycle indicators.”

During our visit, we had the opportunity to speak with individuals and organizations around campus who are potential stakeholders in the assessment efforts around student learning outcomes. As these learning outcomes are defined and the assessment plans are implemented, the evidence of student learning that is produced as a result of this effort has value and benefit beyond the students and faculty who are directly involved in the activity and leveraged to address the needs of other stakeholders both on and off campus. The following table represents a summary of how the deliverables of the student learning outcome assessment efforts could be practically and more broadly useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>How might the process of assessment of student learning outcomes and the resulting evidence of educational effectiveness address this stakeholder’s needs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WASC</td>
<td>Demonstrates how the institution is meeting the criteria for accreditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Provides a more objective and potentially valid alternative for measuring student learning at the course level as compared to the current teaching and course evaluation system (Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans</td>
<td>Similar to faculty, deans are looking for additional evidence of the impact and quality of teaching on student learning other than student evaluations. The deans also meet with students and faculty and could be viewed as ambassadors to the broader UCSB community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Students are perhaps the most important and critical stakeholder in this assessment effort. Defined learning outcomes can encourage students to increase awareness of and responsibility for their education through greater individual and institutional accountability. Once understood and adopted, students can also serve in the role as ambassadors to donors, fellowship sponsors, prospective students, etc., for their UCSB education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior administrators – Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor, Vice Chancellors</td>
<td>As the individuals who advocate for UCSB with students, alumni, UC Office of the President, parents, trustees, donors, government leaders, policymakers, employers, and the broader community, authentic evidence of the impact and effectiveness of the educational experience at UCSB can support fundraising, marketing, and recruiting efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Student Affairs</td>
<td>Evidence of how student learning outcomes are met can and should come from both in class and out of class learning experiences through mentoring, undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, and co-curricular activities. The division’s emphasis on scholarship, leadership, and citizenship suggests that a strong partnership between student affairs and academic affairs could result in more diverse examples of student learning from a range of environments, contexts and collaborations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>Alumni have a strong interest in today’s graduates and a personal stake in the quality of education that UCSB is now delivering. Chancellor Yang described his interactions with alumni as going beyond fundraising to “idea raising.” It might be useful to consider ways to leverage the alumni network to foster alumni-student interactions about the undergraduate education experience they share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Parents’ emotional and financial investment in their students’ education is not insignificant and authentic evidence of student learning (especially student voices) could reassure parents of the value of their investment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate programs</td>
<td>While the two theme essays emphasize two parallel efforts in both undergraduate and graduate education, evidence of undergraduate student learning might inform graduate programs about the preparedness of prospective applicants and identify potential gaps in undergraduate training that are necessary for success in graduate work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

THEME 2: EXCELLENCE IN GRADUATE EDUCATION

UCSB has a strong graduate program and should be commended for its outstanding performance in the 2010 National Research Council rankings --71% of its programs received rankings in the top 20, with nine in the top five. (CFR 2.1) UCSB is however, very small for a major research university; the undergraduates outnumber the graduate students 7 to 1, one of the lowest ratios among the AAU universities. This offers a special challenge to maintain the highest quality of graduate education and to grow when possible. Several proposed initiatives address quality. They focus on assuring that graduate education at UCSB clearly prepares students while they are progressing toward their degree and for their future careers inside and outside of academia.

The Excellence in Graduate Education Committee (EGEC), formed in 2010 to address the quality of graduate education, determined that core research training is the key to graduate education, and that it is performed well at the departmental level at UCSB. (CFR 4.1) There are, however, wide differences among programs in terms of structure and practice. This sometimes creates problem since the university thrives on interdisciplinary activities and students are sometimes caught between two different structures and procedures. These discrepancies may affect their support and their time to degree. There is also a concern that the majority of the students will not find careers in academic research positions. The Committee determined it had two important tasks to fulfill. First, it must learn more about student career outcomes; what are the labor markets and the skills that will better prepare students. Then it must deliver the information and provide professional training to prepare students for the workplace. Second, it must employ a close analysis of departmental structures and procedures in order to assist the student with support, timely progress and completion to degree. A particular challenge will be to assist students who wish to pursue their degree collaboratively between departments.

1. Student Career Outcomes

UCSB already collects exit data on its doctoral students and has determined that the majority do not enter the tenure track faculty. They propose to gather more information on what happens to their graduates by careful analysis of the Survey of Doctoral Recipients. (CFR 2.10) They also propose several ideas such as “compiling a list of best practices for gathering job outcome information” and “implementing departmental and campus strategies for gathering job outcome information.” They offer more concrete ideas about providing faculty with data for the purpose of preparing the students for the career options within their disciplines.

Thus far, Committee has interviewed 27 departments and is beginning to engage others. (CFR 4.4) It is expected that by the time of the EER all departments will be engaged and a good deal of concrete information and data about long range careers will be assembled and made public. For instance, the information about the career paths their graduates take should be available on each department’s website.
In spite of the existing knowledge that general career preparation skills are necessary for the more than 50% of graduating Ph.Ds who will not assume tenure track positions there are few tools or information sources currently available. The EGEC proposes the development of metaprofessional skills, such as communications and digital skills which are relevant for all modern employment. To this end it is expected that by the time of the EER, opportunities to develop these skills will be available for all graduate students. Forms of delivery may include working with the Teaching Center to develop teaching portfolios and teaching certificates, workshops to develop job interview and resume writing skills. Digital Skills should start with advanced library research techniques. The campus librarian is eager to assist in this effort and the library has a world class digital database shared by the UC system.

The graduate students themselves offered thoughtful recommendations regarding the availability of professional development skills workshops. One student observed; “The professional development series organized by the Center for Science and Engineering Partnerships are regarded as a good model, yet students from the Humanities and Fine Arts are largely unfamiliar with the series or found the advice given in some workshops to be inconsistent with the nature of their discipline. Professional development workshop organizers continue to struggle with getting the word out to all graduate students and attracting attendance from graduate students around our already busy schedules. It is possible that some students aren’t making the time to attend because they aren’t fully aware of the importance of the material being offered. All of their eggs are in the tenure track faculty basket.”

Other students suggested that the administration poll graduate students to get an idea of when they would be most likely to attend professional development workshops, and create an online resource so graduate students can obtain the workshop materials from UCSB and links to professional development material on other campuses. The Graduate School at MSU, for instance, has a well-developed website on the professional development of graduate students.

2. Internal Development of Program Excellence

UCSB is well equipped to review and adjust the core research and scholarship components of graduate education. Each department offers milestones to assess learning outcomes along the course of study towards the degree (CFRs 2.10 and 4.4). These include papers, presentations, oral and written exams and dissertation proposals and committee reviews (CFR 2.2). (Yearly reviews of each graduate student are encouraged (CFR 2.3). In addition the university supports a robust program review procedure, utilizing external reviewers that thoroughly examine the academic and cultural environment of the department. This review also includes surveys and interviews of graduate students. The departments are reviewed one year and three years afterward to assure compliance with the review has been achieved (CFR 2.7). A very active senate faculty committee, Graduate
Council, also carefully monitors new programs and is actively involved with program reviews. (CFRs 2.7 and 4.6)

Graduate Division also collects a great deal of data. The Graduate Report includes characteristics of incoming students, their progress through the program and the sources of financial support. There are other rich data sources, such as the 2010 NRC national report on graduate education and the national Survey of Doctorate Recipients, available for analysis and comparison of data. (CFRs 2.7, 2.10, and 4.4)

The robust institutional review system and the rich data collections should support understanding and improving programs. The Committee suggests that an important improvement it will undertake is to better integrate the varying structure and culture of departments so that an individual student can freely collaborate with other departments without losing support or time to degree. We expect that by the time of the EER this task will be completed.

In conclusion, the university is well positioned to take on the two tasks identified by the Excellence in Graduate Education Committee: compile more information on the career paths of its Ph.D. graduates in order to better prepare them for these careers and use its rich data sources to better support students in all aspects of their careers and facilitate student collaboration between departments.

In the EER, UCSB should be able to provide evidence of the following:

- Data regarding the career outcomes of their graduates featured on the web page of each department.

- Professional development workshops and resources, including a website, available to all graduate students at convenient times. These should include development of communication and digital skills.

- In depth analysis of the rich data sources to produce new support for students at all stages in their academic progress. Specifically, the difficulties of working collaboratively between departments should be resolved.
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY
SPECIAL TOPIC ESSAYS

The CPR report addressed two “Special Topic Essays” – one dealing with “Student Success” and the other “Academic Program Review”. Although the team focused primarily on the report’s two major Themes, it did briefly address the two Special Topics in conversations with campus officials.

In its discussion of “Student Success,” UCSB focused on the population of low-income first-generation undergraduate students served by the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). The EOP student population has grown to 27% of the overall undergraduate population (from 20% in 2001), and is demographically and ethnically quite different from the rest of the UCSB student cohort. Although the university has identified disparate academic performance indicators (e.g., higher rates of academic probation in the first year), the graduation rates of these students are equal to or greater than those of similar students at other AAU institutions. (For example, the four-year graduation rate for freshman EOP students is now 67%, compared to 45% in 2001.) UCSB has used survey data to develop hypotheses about the reasons for the remaining performance gaps between EOP and other students, and is working to test these hypotheses through strategies that include:

- an online orientation program for new students who are unable to attend the on-campus program
- housing a member of the advising staff in the EOP offices
- creating an exit survey to gather information from students who are not retained

The team looks forward to seeing the results of these experiments at the time of the EER review.

The other Special Topic Essay dealt with the Academic Program Review, and here the team was overwhelmingly impressed by the thoroughness and robustness of the process for reviewing academic programs at UCSB. The involvement of faculty and the faculty governance structure at various levels is exemplary, and the external review process that takes place on an eight-year cycle is comprehensive and commendable. The visiting team urges UCSB to ensure that as student learning outcomes are developed in all programs, analyses of these outcomes are embedded in the successful Academic Program Review process in the future.
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UCSB currently has adequate resources – fiscal and physical – to meet WASC’s standards for core teaching and research responsibilities.

- The campus has had stable leadership providing continuity of organizational structures and decision making processes.

- There are articulated budget principles that are used to guide the campus’s decisions.

- UCSB has built support for assessment of student learning methodically from the ground up – rather than top-down – a formula for success in the efforts that lie ahead.

- UCSB has developed the right approach (through pilot projects) and necessary infrastructure and capacity to help departments develop student learning outcomes.

- A good start has been made on the issue of connecting the graduate education program with the realities of the career choices of its graduates.

- The data presented about student success in the EOP program are impressive and strategies have been developed for improving these outcomes in the future.

- The campus has a mature, well-developed, and well-executed program for Academic Program Review that will be strengthened as new measures of student learning are incorporated into the process.

CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

The Santa Barbara campus faces significant challenges over the next several years. Among these will be 1) maintaining the desired number of faculty to deliver the curriculum; 2) employing an adequate level of staffing to deliver needed services; 3) successfully achieving efficiencies; 4) maintaining momentum with assessment and student effectiveness strategies; 5) increasing revenues, through such strategies as increasing nonresident tuition; 6) increasing philanthropy; and 7) upgrading current information systems.

UCSB leaders are aware of and appear poised to address these challenges. They have conservatively managed resources and spending, and are optimistic about their ability to weather the budget uncertainties. Stable leadership and an engaged faculty, as currently exists, will continue to be important – and will serve the campus well as they move forward.
PREPARATION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

- Each of the departments involved in the pilot project for student learning outcomes should be able to show a) a final, approved set of learning goals, b) an approved program of assessment, and c) data and conclusions from at least one application of the assessment methods.

- Other departments should be able to show a) approved sets of learning goals, and b) concrete plans for assessing student achievement against those goals.

- The graduate program should be able to demonstrate concrete actions and processes that have been put in place to address the questions first raised in 2001 about career options for graduate students.

- We suggest that the undergraduate assessment effort exploit synergies that might exist between the outcomes approaches practiced in Engineering and the efforts being developed in other programs and departments.

- Progress should be made toward infrastructure and systems to support increased out-of-state student recruitment.
APPENDIX:

Credit Hour Policies and Procedures

University of California – Santa Barbara
Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR)
October 4-6, 2011

Policy on Credit Hour
The UCSB credit hour policy on credit hour is clearly stated and consistent with WASC and federal guidelines.

Processes/periodic review
The robust UCSB program review and approval processes include critical analyses of courses and curricula, ensuring consistent adherence to the credit hour policy.

Schedule of on-ground courses
The evidence provided supports the conclusion that on-ground courses meet the credit hour policy.

Online and hybrid courses
Information about on-line or hybrid courses was not provided.

Other kinds of courses
Syllabi were provided for a range of courses for which standard credit hour calculations based on class meeting times are less appropriate, including internships and practica (3), laboratory (5), studio (5), independent study (6), and field courses (3). All were at the lower-division undergraduate level, primarily at the 1xx level, in disciplines ranging from anthropology and economics to molecular, cellular, and developmental biology. The programs appear well-designed to warrant the credit awarded.