University of California, Santa Barbara’s Institutional Proposal to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Submission Date: May 22, 2009

This Institutional Proposal is the guiding document for the formal reaccreditation of the University of California, Santa Barbara as it responds to the criteria and standards promulgated by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) for reaffirmation of institutions within its region. The Proposal sets the context, establishes themes for the self-review, and points the way to the next two stages, both of which include a site visit by an extramural team. The format presented below is dictated by WASC’s online submission template, requiring a certain amount of repetition.

A. Setting the Institution’s Context and Relating the Proposal to the Standards

A.1. Institutional Context Statement

In just six decades as a campus of the University of California, UC Santa Barbara has become internationally recognized as a leading center for teaching and research, distinguished by its interdisciplinary programs and a commitment to innovation. Once a small teachers college, UC Santa Barbara today is an integral part of the ten-campus University of California system, enrolling approximately 17,800 undergraduates and 2,880 graduate students.

With a permanent faculty of more than 870 members, UC Santa Barbara is one of sixty-two research institutions elected to membership in the Association of American Universities. The faculty includes five Nobel Prize winners (two each in 2000 and in 2004), the 2006 Millennium Technology Prize winner, numerous Guggenheim and Fulbright fellows, and scores of elected members or fellows of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Cutting edge intellectual activity spanning the academic spectrum is supported by extramural funding that has risen to $194 million in 2008, an increase of 72 percent since 2000.

The quality of the campus’s academic programs is well known. U.S. News & World Report includes UC Santa Barbara among the country’s top fifty universities and ranks it 12th among all public institutions. The campus’s three colleges (Creative Studies, Engineering, and Letters and Science) and two professional schools (the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management and the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education) offer more than 200 majors, degrees, and credentials. Since 1999, applications for undergraduate admission have more than doubled, from 26,000 to 54,000 this year; applications from prospective graduate students have increased by 65 percent over the same period, from 4,483 to 7,393.

Also in this decade, a successful capital campaign has raised more than $500 million in private support. An ongoing billion-dollar capital improvement program has seen the completion of fourteen new buildings and major additions, adding 805,960 assignable square feet to the campus, a 23.5 percent increase in five years. A strategic academic plan has been completed, and a proposed new long-range development plan has been crafted, outlining the campus’s commitment to providing facilities for world-class
teaching and research, while preserving and enhancing our unique environment and open space.

This trajectory of success has been accomplished in the face of dramatically decreasing state support coupled with increased student numbers, deferred maintenance, and competition for faculty and staff. Our challenge in the near future, including the years during which we will be pursuing WASC reaffirmation, will be to maintain our position as a top-level research university, while strengthening our accountability to Californians.

UC Santa Barbara has considered research and teaching as intertwined missions long before this was an accepted feature of national academic discourse. We pursue a vision of an integrated liberal arts education that produces literate citizens, while seeking to engage students in inquiry-based learning involving participation in basic research. What we have not done effectively is to establish complementary approaches to the assessment of student learning outcomes that enable us to measure success and evaluate trajectories, creating an effective feedback loop. However, there is planning toward this end at all levels, from the campus to the Office of the UC President.1

At the graduate level, the UC Santa Barbara Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025, developed before the present budget shortfall was apparent, foresees growth in both our graduate programs and in the number of post-graduate students. (See Appendix A or http://evc.ucsb.edu/strategic.academic.plan/). A research university cannot fulfill its mission if there is not an exciting, international cadre of advanced students attracted to working with the faculty. Their presence, especially in increased numbers, assures an expanded commitment to the research enterprise that constitutes one of the missions of UC Santa Barbara. Without a strong population of Teaching Assistants, our educational mission would be impaired. We intend, therefore, to take advantage of the impetus that the WASC process affords to explore two over-arching and intimately connected themes: Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research and Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth.

Key Factors for the Future of UC Santa Barbara

Among the factors that have characterized the history and the current trajectory of the campus are five that offer a context for understanding UC Santa Barbara in the light of WASC’s Standards and of the themes we have chosen: diversity; physical location; interdisciplinary teaching and research; global and international outreach; and shared governance. Each will play an essential role if the institution is to achieve the goals set forth in the strategic academic plan.

The University of California has recognized diversity as critical to its future, and has adopted the position that all aspects of the University are enhanced through the breadth of perspectives, interests, and experiences that a diverse population brings to each campus. Since 2000, under-represented minorities have grown from about 17 percent to

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1 See the draft of a statement of accountability at www.universityofcalifornia.edu/accountability. The Program Review Panel (http://bap.ucsb.edu/prp.html) at UC Santa Barbara as well as the assessment experiences sponsored by Instructional Development (http://www.id.ucsb.edu) also add to the measures of evaluation and accountability that already exist at the institution.
24 percent of the UC Santa Barbara undergraduate student body. This growth in
diversity is reflected in a top 25 ranking of schools graduating Hispanics,\(^2\) and a top 50
ranking of schools for Diversity Best Practices.\(^3\) California is undergoing a substantial
demographic change and underrepresented minorities will soon constitute a majority of
the population. UC Santa Barbara must continue its efforts to increase student diversity
across the disciplines to reflect the State’s population. This is especially pressing at the
graduate student level where, since 1996, the average number of newly enrolled
underrepresented minority graduate students has not risen above 10 percent. (See Part B
on Graduate Growth.) To attract and mentor both undergraduate and graduate students
from segments of society for which a college education, let alone an advanced degree,
has not been the norm, we need a faculty that reflects the State’s diversity. Many
disciplines have yet to attract women and underrepresented minorities to the degree that
parallels the composition of society. Continuing to diversify our faculty is essential to
our success.

The physical location of UC Santa Barbara on the California coastline has
attracted scholars from around the world, creating a crossroads of international exchange.
Our stature in coastal studies, environmental studies, and marine science derives in part
from the university’s close proximity to a wide range of ecosystems. The fragility of our
physical setting, wedged in a finite space between the mountains and the ocean and
subject to fire, earthquake, and drought emphasizes human vulnerability in the face of
natural dynamics, nurturing a strong campus commitment to environmental studies and
sustainability. This is reflected in the strategic academic plan, research projects spanning
many disciplines, and the environmental activism of the students, staff, and faculty. In the
Humanities and Social Sciences, many research projects spring directly from the
university’s location in Southern California—perhaps the most ethnically, religiously,
and linguistically diverse region in the United States.

While major research centers abound that invite collaboration across fields, the
interdisciplinary strength of UC Santa Barbara has its roots in a campus ethic that allows
ideas, research, and teaching to cross departmental boundaries. Individual academic units
ranging from programs in ethnic studies, to Feminist Studies, and Environmental Studies
are themselves founded on integrating a range of disciplines. This trend crosses college
divisions, fosters connections between undergraduate and graduate research
opportunities, and allows leading scientists and engineers to develop internationally
recognized initiatives in the emerging fields of nanotechnology, brain/mind studies, and
energy engineering. In the humanities and fine arts, visual studies, languages and
literacies, American studies, Medieval studies, and performance studies are all multi-
disciplinary in method. Interdisciplinarity has forged connections both within and across
colleges and divisions, and has served as a unifying theme for colleges and schools, with
the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management and the College of Creative
Studies both building excellence based on this characteristic.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) *Hispanic Outlook Magazine*, http://www.hispanicoutlook.com/top100
\(^4\) Interdisciplinary themes identified in the Deans’ reports can be found at
http://evc.ucsb.edu/strategic.academic.plan/.
As research and creative activities are enriched and diversified in proportion to the number of viewpoints brought to the classroom, it is not sufficient that we teach our students about diversity within the university; it must be understood in its global context, underscoring our focus on global and international outreach. UC Santa Barbara has committed itself to expanding its research and teaching horizons to confirm its standing as one of the top 50 international institutions of higher learning. We already host a plethora of initiatives that facilitate the diffusion of our students and scholars to the rest of the world and an infusion of international visitors. One of UC Santa Barbara’s major achievements in internationalizing the campus is the number of students, now approaching 1,000 per year, who study in foreign universities through the UC Education Abroad Program – more than any campus in the UC system. To be sure, a diverse cultural education can also be accomplished not only through education abroad (UC sponsored or otherwise), but also in research and instructional settings or via more experimental methods based on technology, e.g., shared, international, online classrooms.

Finally, the designation of the University of California as a public trust ensures its management relatively free from outside interference, permitting effective guidance through shared governance. The remarkable power invested in the faculty by The Regents, and specifically in the Academic Senate, to guide the academic and administrative affairs of the University, creates a deep spirit of collaboration between the administration and the Academic Senate. As a result, the faculty have worked tirelessly for the benefit of the campus through the difficult budgetary times of the past two decades out of a profound sense of playing a significant role in decision-making and long-term planning. The faculty’s contribution to the reaffirmation process will, therefore, be determinative.

Progress on Themes from Last Re-accreditation (2001)

The 2009 themes form a continuum with the topics we chose for our last reaccreditation (WASC Report dated April 12, 2001): the Freshman Year Experience, Graduate Education, and Educational Effectiveness. Following the WASC Report in 2001, our largest college, the College of Letters and Science, made a special effort to promote Freshman Seminars, courses of one unit, taught by ladder faculty, with a pass/no pass grading option, and with a maximum enrollment of twenty students. The success of the program can be measured by the fact that enrollment has increased by over 40 percent since 2001. Another program, Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA), was established in 2002 by the College of Letters and Science with the objective of providing a catalyst for undergraduate participation in research and creative projects. Students are encouraged to pursue research through grants provided to support work undertaken mainly by those in the upper division under the mentorship of a faculty member. For students in their first or second year, the Faculty Research Assistance Program (FRAP) offers a mechanism for relative beginners to work with a professor on the professor’s project. Finally, the URCA office has been responsible for restructuring the annual Undergraduate Research Colloquium such that it now attracts three times as

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5 Cf. the recent listing developed by the Institute of Higher Education at Shanghai Jiao Tao University that places UC Santa Barbara 36th among international universities.
many visitors as was the case in 2003. Budget restrictions have affected the growth of, but not the enthusiasm for, these programs.

To strengthen our Living/Learning thrust, Summer Sessions, Student Affairs and Housing and Residential Services have been instrumental in implementing two programs for connecting freshmen with the institution and with our research faculty: the Freshman Summer Start Program, which introduces selected freshmen to the campus, has grown substantially in just seven years; and the Faculty in Residence program, begun in 2003, offers a faculty member the opportunity to interact with first-years in a residential context. Reviewed favorably by an Academic Senate Committee in 2007, the Faculty in Residence program has a goal of expanding from one professor to ten by 2014. Finally, to inspire a sense of community in all first-year students, we inaugurated a Freshman Convocation each fall, followed by a faculty-student panel discussion and reception. Some of these faculty are already part of an “Adopt-A-Hall” initiative that encourages motivated professors to participate in the living/learning culture of their “adopted” residences. With these programs in place, we are ready to examine how to further integrate our research mission into the undergraduate experience.

The 2001 WASC review provided the impetus for several developments in graduate education. The campus has added seven new graduate degree programs, all with a strong base in interdisciplinarity. Six new, five-year combined bachelors/masters degree programs, cross-disciplinary in nature, have been added and five Optional Ph.D. Emphases have been approved. The training and support of our graduate teaching assistants and associates has been strengthened. A range of support programs is available that starts with the campus-wide orientation, where the basics of pedagogy and training in special circumstances are provided, and proceeds to departmental training in the disciplines. More specialized opportunities have been developed, including as the Summer Teaching Institute for Associates for advanced graduate students and the Certificate in College and University Teaching for graduate students aspiring to university teaching positions. The strength of these activities was affirmed by a recent Graduate/Undergraduate Council TA Training Committee report. With graduate education at UC Santa Barbara increasingly characterized by interdisciplinarity and effective training opportunities for teaching, the campus is poised to grow our graduate student population to a size more appropriate to our research and scholarly enterprise and to examine how to grow with excellence in all dimensions of graduate education.

The WASC Senior Commission, in its July 2001 action letter, observed that UC Santa Barbara “clearly has an effective and well institutionalized program review process, sophisticated institutional research, and a plethora of data,” and recommended greater analysis and integration of our data into a framework for reflecting upon the university’s performance and plans. Since then, there have been several University of California systemwide initiatives and campus-specific enhancements in the use of data that address this recommendation. The University of California is in the final stages of developing an Accountability Framework that measures individual campus and university-wide performance in meeting core goals that reflect our teaching, research, and public service mission (see www.universityofcalifornia.edu/accountability). Additionally, all UC campuses have created and posted online an accountability data portrait similar to the Voluntary System of Accountability initiative from the Association of Public Research Universities (see http://bap.ucsb.edu/IR/UCSB_Portrait.pdf).
documents include indicators of student outcomes, e.g., retention and graduation rates and measures of academic engagement from the UC Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES).

Internally, UC Santa Barbara is better able to measure and reflect on educational effectiveness through more systematic reporting of data to academic departments via the campus Planning Data Book and Academic Unit Profiles, both of which are shared with all academic administrators and academic department chairs. With respect to Academic Program Review, a more systematic follow-up process has been instituted that requires academic departments to demonstrate responsiveness to key recommendations arising from their review. Over the full course of the current reaccreditation process, we look forward to developing more extensive and refined tools for measuring student-learning outcomes.

Budget and Planning Context

UC Santa Barbara’s accreditation review takes place in the most challenging budgetary environment in the University of California’s recent history. Since the 2001-02 academic year, UC Santa Barbara has experienced budget cuts in every year but two, totaling more than $41 million and requiring annual cuts ranging from 3 to 10 percent in some non-academic core budgets. State funding as a percentage of annual campus expenditures has declined from 47.2 percent in 2001-02 to 35.6 percent in 2007-08. In 2008-09, the campus underwent an additional permanent budget cut of $16 million – an amount equivalent, for example, to the salaries and benefits of 160 faculty positions – with the certainty of additional reductions in 2009-10. Already lean from the previous six years of cuts, UC Santa Barbara now faces an unprecedented budget crisis.

To guide decision-making, the campus’s Coordinating Committee on Budget Strategy, consisting of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, developed a set of planning principles designed to protect the campus’s core mission and long-term interests. First established by Chancellor Henry T. Yang to respond to budget reductions in the mid-1990s, the committee was reactivated in 2003 to ensure strategic decision-making, consultation, and communication, and is currently examining revenue-enhancement strategies as well as budget-reduction targets (see http://chancellor.ucsb.edu/memos/BudgetPlanningPrinciples.pdf). The planning principles protect, for the time being, permanent faculty salaries and other areas directly related to the academic mission (which amount to more than 50 percent of the campus’s permanent state and student-fee budgets), while increasing the severity of cuts in other areas.

Despite these significant challenges, UC Santa Barbara has remained fundamentally optimistic about its future. In 2004, Executive Vice Chancellor Gene Lucas initiated a campus-wide strategic academic planning process, which, following broad consultation over several years, led to the UC Santa Barbara Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025 (see Appendix A or http://evc.ucsb.edu/strategic.academic.plan/). The plan outlines UC Santa Barbara’s desire for slow, managed growth in faculty, staff, and students as a means of advancing and maturing the institution’s intellectual resources and meeting our obligation to the State to educate a growing number of students. The plan also provides a vision and framework for academic development, emphasizing the
campus’s extraordinary interdisciplinarity, practiced approach to furthering excellence, and opportunities for faculty renewal. To effect this plan, UC Santa Barbara has prepared a new Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) that addresses the development of physical resources to support a 1.5 percent annual growth rate through 2025, a total increase in campus enrollment of 5,000 students over 18 years (see http://www.ucsbvision2025.com/). Broad consultation with local governmental agencies is ongoing, after which the LRDP will be submitted for review and, we hope, approval to The Regents and then to the California Coastal Commission.

A.2. Preliminary Self-Review Under the Standards of Accreditation

The Proposal Steering Committee for UC Santa Barbara’s reaccreditation conducted a preliminary self-review under WASC’s Standards of Accreditation, discussing how well the campus meets each criterion for review and the evidence for the committee’s conclusions. The committee found that the campus meets or exceeds the Standards in most areas and we provide responses to the WASC Self-Review Worksheet in Appendix B. Nonetheless, there are areas in which we can improve and one – student learning outcomes – that needs particular attention over the next two stages of our reaccreditation.

Under Standard One (“Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives”), we noted that, while the campus has a profound commitment to diversity and has made great strides at all levels, more remains to be done, most especially in graduate education in some disciplines.

In considering Standards Two (“Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions”) and Four (“Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement”), we concluded that our overall assessment processes are varied and interpenetrating. All academic programs are subject to systematic program review, including external peer review, and make extensive use of data indicators. Processes for approving degree programs and courses ensure appropriate pedagogical goals, but do not ensure consistent communication of those goals to students in all cases. Similarly, programs vary in the degree to which their faculty systematically use assessment tools to improve student learning. The Proposal Steering Committee has begun to inform itself and to engage other faculty in better understanding the potential of assessment to improve student learning. As part of the reaccreditation process, a committee appointed jointly by the administration and the Academic Senate will focus on improving educational effectiveness through the next two stages of our work toward reaffirmation of our accreditation.

On reviewing Standard Three (“Using Existing Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Continuity”), we found that UC Santa Barbara possesses strength through shared governance, effective planning, and staff dedication. This functionality has been achieved in the face of increasing financial stringency, which has hampered our ability to move forward in some areas, e.g., the use of cutting-edge instructional technology.

Our proposal also addresses Standard Four (“Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement”) in its plan to achieve more effective

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6 For the composition of the Steering Committee, see Appendix C.
interdigitation of our research and educational missions. Our strength in the Institutional Research office, coupled with a tradition of the Senate and departmental curriculum committees overseeing curriculum will support our efforts over the next few years. Graduation and retention rates are systematically tracked and analyzed. However, we envision needing additional data and analysis in support of our goals for undergraduate and graduate education and student learning assessment (see section B of the Proposal).

A.3. Process for Proposal Development and Leadership Involvement

In the late winter of 2008, Chancellor Yang, after consultation with the Chair of the Academic Senate, appointed a Proposal Steering Committee for the WASC accreditation review. The committee met first on March 18, 2008, and thereafter on a weekly basis, with small summer and December hiatuses, through May 2009. (For the composition of the Proposal Steering Committee, see Appendix C or http://evc.ucsb.edu/wasc/committees/. At the initial meeting, the PSC was given its charge by Executive Vice Chancellor Lucas:

- Review the last WASC report and recommendations of April 12, 2001, and update the response;
- Conduct a Self-Review;
- Identify themes as a framework for the review;
- Identify goals for the assessment process; and
- Involve the campus, especially the faculty, in proposal preparation.

The PSC reviewed the UC Santa Barbara Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025, and associated documents and assessed existing campus initiatives with the input of faculty, staff, students, and administrators. In several instances, possible themes were explored in depth by subcommittees including members of the PSC, augmented by colleagues whose expertise was essential. The conclusion was to pursue two overarching themes: Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research, and Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth. The PSC also realized it needed to develop a fuller understanding of methods of measuring student learning outcomes. To initiate this process, the ALO, the Proposal Steering Committee co-chair, the Directors of Instructional Development and Institutional Research, and representatives of five academic disciplines on campus attended an assessment workshop at UC Irvine in November 2008. In February 2009, at the Proposal Steering Committee’s invitation, Christina Maslach, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning at UC Berkeley, spoke to campus department chairs and administrators on “Getting faculty involved with student learning outcomes.” This focus is elaborated upon in other sections.

### B. Framing the Review Process to Connect the Capacity and Educational Effectiveness Reviews

#### B.1. Overview and Goals for the Accreditation Review Process


The current WASC evaluation coincides with the *UC Santa Barbara Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025*. At the core of this document are two missions, classically divided into the undergraduate sphere (education) and the graduate and faculty sphere (research). Although this distinction is as prominent at UC Santa Barbara as at other research universities, it blocks the continuum of intellectual curiosity that links the learning of existing knowledge and the creation of new knowledge. We wish to break this arbitrary distinction and create an environment that encourages undergraduates to think more like graduate students, while simultaneously enhancing the graduate instruction that lies at the core of our research success.

Both of the themes we have selected for the current WASC cycle – *Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research* and *Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth* – emphasize the continuity of research and creative activity within the university, but the former seeks immediate solutions while the latter involves establishing a planning framework to advance future success. Both themes propose goals, but their implementation will also require the identification and amelioration of structural and behavioral impediments to their realization. Further, our immediate success in realizing both will be contingent upon budgetary realities.

**Theme 1: Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research**

The importance of research in undergraduate education received thoughtful attention from the 1998 Boyer Commission in a landmark report titled "Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities.” At the core of this undertaking is the question: What separates an undergraduate experience at a research university from that achieved at other institutions of higher learning? A research university is distinguished by the presence of faculty and graduate students who are dedicated to identifying the boundaries of current knowledge and pushing beyond them to contribute to the sum of human knowledge and experience. However, even at a research university, most undergraduates take classes to learn what is known, and rarely develop a sense of where this knowledge comes from, whether it involves high-energy physics or seventeenth-century literature. Certainly undergraduates acknowledge that “it is great to take the course with the faculty member who wrote the book.” But they treat the book as a summation of certainties, not appreciating the tangled history of human endeavor that led to these answers, much less that knowledge is generally provisional, not absolute.

As a research university, UC Santa Barbara has a responsibility to bridge this gulf to encourage undergraduates to create and discover anew, and not simply to accept the existing. This is a practice that will serve them throughout their lives, regardless of the discipline or profession that they subsequently follow. To this end, our overarching goal is to develop a curricular approach that will transform student viewpoints, to subtly enable them to realize that the most important things that you can learn at a research university are the intellectual processes by which we explore the unknowns of the natural, social, and aesthetic worlds that we inhabit.

We will address this goal by exploring mechanisms to introduce “research as a way of knowing,”7 and the pedagogy of discovery into a greater breadth of undergraduate courses. Faculty will be asked to consider how they can better provide a context for

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explaining the ways in which current knowledge was achieved, a feature that will vary by discipline. We envision this as a multi-step process that will involve ever-widening circles, ultimately embracing instruction across all disciplines over several years. UC Santa Barbara already possesses a tradition of attention to teaching and the infrastructure to support a wider application of this approach.8

Campus Questions for the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR): Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research

- How do we engage faculty in reflecting on the pedagogical differences necessary to introduce research thinking into lower division, upper division, and general education courses?
  - What kinds of activities will create a valid research perspective for undergraduates?
- What departments and courses currently embrace this approach; what courses and disciplines are amenable to instituting this approach?
- What resources will be required to expand this approach?
- How will we effectively deliver new methods/activities to students?
  - How do we engage transfer students who may have missed two years of this education?
  - How do we deal with an anticipated increase in students who want to participate in research or creative activity?
  - How do we strengthen the current network of support systems for students who actually do research or creative activity?
- How will we assess the impact of this approach on students?
- How will the use of state-of-the-art instructional technology facilitate this approach?

Theme 2: Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth

Graduate students are vital members of the scholarly and creative communities that expand human knowledge and understanding. Through their own investigations and experimentation, as members of research collaborations and as apprentice teachers, they contribute to the productivity and quality of the research university. For this reason, furthering our mission of excellence in research and teaching depends upon attracting and retaining the best graduate students.

The success of our graduate programs and their achievements in recent years matches that of other universities with graduate programs of much greater size in proportion to their undergraduate programs. At the time of the last WASC report, our graduate population was 2,424, or 12 percent of the student body. While that percentage rose to 14.4 percent in 2003, it has retreated to 13.5 percent since then. Our comparison institutions such as UC Berkeley, UCLA, Harvard, Princeton, Cal Tech and MIT all have graduate programs that make up more than 30 percent of their student bodies. Our aspiration, as the strategic plan indicates, is to expand the graduate program to 17 percent

8 See the array of services offered by Instructional Development at http://www.id.ucsb.edu.
of a total student population of 25,000 by the year 2025.

While the current quality of our faculty and graduate programs suggest the campus is ready to grow, the challenges are significant. UC Santa Barbara and the UC as a whole are currently struggling to realize the budgetary base needed to effectively support graduate students. We are optimistic that growth will be possible in time, and it is essential that the campus be prepared to recruit and provide for a growing population of excellent students.

Planning for Excellence. The national graduate education community has increasingly focused on indicators of program and student quality that go beyond the traditional graduate ranking emphasis on faculty quality. This trend is evident in the data collection associated with the 2006 National Research Council Assessment of Research Doctorates. This study emphasizes not only faculty productivity indices, but also program-related quality indicators such as level of funding support, time-to-degree, degree completion, and diversity.

National ranking schemes provide important information for consumers about graduate programs. However, and even more significantly, such assessments serve as a stimulus for the academic community to reflect upon what “excellence” in graduate education really means, and how we might fully realize it in our programs. It is our vision that all graduate students will thrive in the rich environment at UC Santa Barbara, but what does that mean for the learning experiences that we provide our graduate students? In this review period, the faculty will reflect upon “excellence in graduate education” and how we will establish our objectives to achieve this goal.

Recent program reviews have highlighted variations in department practices and measures of success that should be examined as we seek to define excellence. These include facilitating the timely progress of graduate students through their programs, the provision of appropriate advising and mentoring, and the establishment of fair and transparent mechanisms for providing financial support. There is tension between existing curricular and pedagogical structures and the apprenticeship mode of graduate education. This tension is discussed in recent national publications about graduate education (for example, “Re-envisioning the PhD, 2000” and The Formation of Scholars: Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century, 2008). The latter report, based on a study funded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, emphasizes the importance of reconsidering the historical traditions of the apprenticeship model (e.g., expand experiences to multiple mentors) and explores different methods of developing intellectual communities.

The series of questions posed below under “Excellence” provides the template for exploring the definition and implementation of excellence in graduate education. UC Santa Barbara currently has a strong system for monitoring major indicators for graduate programs both through data collected by our Institutional Research unit and through the assessment and feedback that occurs within our Academic Program Review process. The next steps will involve a focus on aligning the goals that we have for student development with the evaluation and feedback mechanisms that are built into graduate

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programs (e.g., qualifying exams, advancement to candidacy processes, development of research and scholarship associated with dissertations).

Planning For Growth. The UC Santa Barbara Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025 proposes an increase of more than 1,000 graduate students over the current population. To prepare for this, the campus academic, administrative, student, and staff community will work together to answer questions about principles for decision-making, conditions for growth, impacts of growth, methods for strategic growth, funding for growth, and how growth will address diversity. The issue of diversity requires particular attention. Our strategic plan calls on us to “celebrate and enhance the diversity that enriches our living and learning environment.” Since 1996, the average number of newly enrolled underrepresented minority graduate students has not risen above 10 percent (less than 5 percent in some divisions to more than 20 percent in others). The many difficulties involved in raising this number include the nature of the recruitment pool, the current characteristics of our campus (location, diversity of faculty and students, and community), our financial funding base for graduate students, and retention. Similarly, while the campus average percentage for female graduate students hovers around 44 percent, some disciplines remain at 21 percent, again, varying by discipline and division. Consequently, our commitment to the goals of excellence and diversity require us to redouble our efforts to ensure that our graduate student population better reflects the diversity of our nation.

Research and scholarship at UC Santa Barbara are strengthened by our ability to attract and engage scholars and students from around the world. Therefore, graduate student growth plans must address the impediments to enrolling international students. Over the past four years, our graduate student applicant pool has averaged 2,690 international students of 6,800 total applicants. While we admitted 30 percent of the domestic applicants, we were able to offer admission to only 17 percent of the international students. The main hurdle for foreign students is the cost of non-resident tuition, a topic that has been, and will continue to be, a focus of discussion at the UC systemwide level. We also need to address at the campus level how we facilitate international exchange of students in a seamless fashion. There are a multitude of informal partnerships with international universities on campus; however, ongoing issues of how we support and facilitate the exchange of students and scholars remain.

To achieve a graduate population that represents true excellence and diversity, a fundamental requirement will be a principled decision-making process to guide key choices about where growth should occur and how limited resources can best be used to secure this growth. Steps in this process, as outlined under the “Growth” section below, must be accompanied by parallel efforts to improve support for existing, high quality programs.

Campus Questions for the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR): Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth

Excellence

- How does UC Santa Barbara define excellence in graduate education?
- What are the goals for student outcomes and desired program outcomes?
- What are the steps toward achieving these outcomes?
• How will we know when these outcomes are achieved?
• How will graduate education be supported by informational technology?

Growth
• What principles will guide the decision-making process about growth?
• What are necessary conditions for growth (faculty size, physical space, market demand, research support, graduate student fellowship support, etc.)?
• Which programs will grow (new programs, existing programs)?
• What are the likely impacts of growth?
• What are the funding needs for growth?
• How will graduate programs recruit, retain, and financially support a diverse/global community of graduate students?

To move these two themes from vision to reality requires campus participation across a wide range of intellectual fields and administrative units, and, because both themes involve the core function of education, the full participation of the faculty. To accomplish our work, the following committees will be established:
1. A Steering Committee including members from the other three Committees;
2. A Committee on Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research;
3. A Committee on Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth;
4. A Committee on Student Learning.

The composition of committees will reflect the breadth of campus perspectives, with members appointed from the student body, staff, faculty, and administration in consultation with the Academic Senate. In particular, the Undergraduate Research committee will draw members from the Undergraduate Council and the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate, while the Graduate Education committee will have parallel ties with the Graduate Council. The Committee on Student Learning will draw on administrative expertise and faculty leadership. Committee members will be appointed with a concern for continuity of membership and stability of leadership through the multi-year WASC process.

We initially planned to intertwine both themes with two other campus strengths that emerged in our academic planning process, internationalization and sustainability. Both of these emphasize interconnectedness – the interconnectedness of the human race and of humanity and Earth. As noted above, UC Santa Barbara places a strong emphasis on internationalization, and we believe that in the future an international dimension will be understood to be just as essential to a first-rate undergraduate education as current general education requirements are for a traditional liberal education. Similarly, sustainability and environmental concerns permeate the intellectual life of campus from the diverse research of the sciences to the social justice and ethical interests of the social sciences and programs in environmental media, literature and the environment, and environmental architecture in the humanities. The campus wishes to build on and enhance these strengths, as evinced by their centrality in the Strategic Academic Plan, 2007-2025. However, the growing awareness of the depth and duration of the current economic downturn and its direct effect on university function led many campus reviewing agencies to suggest restricting the WASC proposal to the two basic themes,
rather than exceeding our ability to achieve stated goals. Following this advice, the current proposal does not develop these two sub themes, but many on campus will seek their reactivation at the slightest promise of economic feasibility.

B.2. Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

B.2.i. Self-Assessment of Capacity

For both themes, the key indicators, participants, and organization of activities to achieve our anticipated outcomes are identified in B.1 above, and B.2.ii and B.2.iii below. The specific Criteria for Review (CFRs) that are emphasized throughout our proposed reaffirmation activities are identified in Appendix D, “Relation of UC Santa Barbara’s Reaccreditation Topics to WASC’s Standards of Accreditation and Criteria for Review.” While not all forty-two CFRs receive equal attention, a focus on student learning lies at the heart of both themes and thus will be at the center of our work through the CPR and EER stages of the accreditation process. Other parts of this proposal (e.g., B.2.ii) enumerate the standing Academic Senate committees and administrative offices that exist to support the effective education of our students and that will participate in this thematic self-study; their existence and purposes are in the spirit of Standards 1, 3, and 4. The Office of Institutional Research will assist committees in establishing baselines and ways of measuring progress through surveys, analyses of course offerings and enrollments, and other studies; Instructional Development and Academic Program Review units will assist committees with questions of learning goals, outcomes, and assessment. Among the mechanisms that may support (or be revised to support) our accreditation goals are existing approval processes for courses and degree programs, the instructional improvement grant program, presentations sponsored by Instructional Development, program review procedures, and our campus-wide system of student evaluation of courses and instruction. Our data gathering and analytical capacity is discussed specifically in C.2 below.

B.2.ii. Infrastructure

Since the membership of the three committees charged with developing our capacity for undergraduate research, graduate growth and excellence, and student learning cannot encompass the full breadth of campus knowledge and resources, each committee will, in the tradition of consultation typical of UC Santa Barbara, draw upon campus infrastructure. The following list of resources is, therefore, an extension of B.1 and B.2.1 above, and a further illustration of the depth of campus capacity. Many of these resources will be used to address both themes. In an institution as vibrant and complex as UC Santa Barbara, such infrastructural resources range from established offices and programs down to individual faculty with vision and passion. As a result, not all will be enumerated here.

Resources to be engaged: Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research

- Academic Deans
- Academic Senate leadership and Committees on Planning and Budget, Research and Instructional Resources, and the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils
- The College of Creative Studies
- All academic departments and programs
- The Honors Programs in the Colleges of Letters and Science and Engineering
- The Office of Budget and Planning, including Institutional Research and Planning and Academic Program Review
- The Office of the Registrar
- The Office of Research, Organized Research Units, and Centers
- The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (College of Letters and Science)
- Summer Sessions Programs in Research, including University and federally funded Research Internships in Science and Engineering, Internships in Nanosystems Science, Engineering and Technology, UC Leadership Excellence Through Advanced Degrees, Freshman Summer Start, etc.
- The University Library to ascertain research opportunities and use for and by undergraduates

**Resources to be engaged: Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth**
- Academic Deans
- Academic Senate leadership and Committees on Planning and Budget, Research and Instructional Resources, and the Graduate Council
- Department Graduate Advisors
- The Division of Student Affairs
- The Graduate Division
- Graduate Outreach and Advancement Committee
- Graduate Student Association
- Housing and Residential Services
- The Office of Budget and Planning, including Institutional Research and Planning and Academic Program Review
- The Office of International Students and Scholars
- The Office of Research

**Resources to be engaged: Assessing Student Learning**
- Academic Senate leadership and the Committees on Research and Instructional Resources and the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils
- All academic departments and programs
- The Graduate Division
- Office of Budget and Planning, including Institutional Research and Planning and Academic Program Review
- Office of Instructional Development, with particular attention to services and programs involving instructional evaluation and Teaching Assistant development
- Undergraduate Deans in Colleges of Engineering, Letters and Science, and Creative Studies
Many of the infrastructural resources that support student learning and educational effectiveness are described in A.2 and B.2.i above, and C.2 below. The following discusses several key resources in greater detail:

The Office of Instructional Development (ID), within the Office of Academic Programs, has worked to support course-level student outcomes assessment through a program of instructional improvement grants, expert speakers and fora.\(^9\) ID also provides evaluation support services, including Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction (ESCI), the results of which are considered in the faculty merit-review process.

UC Santa Barbara has a robust system of Academic Program Review that was praised for its effectiveness in the last WASC reaccreditation review. Reporting to the Executive Vice Chancellor (the chief academic officer), Academic Program Review addresses all facets of an academic department’s effectiveness (using data indicators that include graduation and retention rates). The resulting reports influence decisions in the department, the college, the Academic Senate, and the senior administration.

As noted in B.1 above, as part of our work toward the CPR, a Committee on Student Learning will take the lead in engaging faculty in developing and enhancing student learning outcomes assessment at the program level. To begin this work, the Executive Vice Chancellor asked all departments to complete the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators that is attached as Exhibit 6 at B.3. It demonstrates that many departments examine student learning outcomes, as they each define them, and may or may not systematically use the results for curricular and pedagogical improvement.

The University of California as a whole has been examining the question of what forms of assessment are most appropriate to ensure educational effectiveness within the context of a research university. We anticipate a University taskforce report that may lend support to our Student Learning committee’s work by recommending a faculty-driven effort to develop discipline-specific learning goals and methods of outcomes assessment. The taskforce is also likely to recommend that program review processes be revised to include review of each department’s learning assessment practices. Within UC, the faculty, through the Academic Senate, are responsible for the quality of academic programs. At Santa Barbara, two committees of the Senate, the Undergraduate Council and the Graduate Council, ensure high standards of education, overseeing all matters of “policy, planning, programs, and practice that impact the quality and diversity” of students and their educational experiences. Both Councils rigorously review proposals for degree programs and courses and actively participate in academic program reviews.

B.2.iii. Preparation and Progress toward EER

Our current goals for the CPR follow from the questions enumerated in B1 and are subject to new findings and ideas that may arise in this process. Our progress will be discussed in reflective essays to be presented at the time of the CPR, focused upon (1) tools for realizing enhanced undergraduate education through research, (2) standards for excellence in graduate education and mechanisms for planning for graduate growth, and

\(^9\) For example, earlier this month, new ways of engaging students in the process of learning was the focus of a faculty forum sponsored by ID.
(3) planning for effective assessment of student learning. (As prescribed by WASC, our CPR report also will include an analysis of student success, drawing on our data on retention and graduation rates, by program and student type, with comparative information and recommendations where appropriate.)

We anticipate the two thematic essays will reflect the following activities:

(1) Tools for realizing Enhanced Undergraduate Education Through Research.
As part of the lead-in to the CPR the committee will survey departments to identify those where teaching knowledge as cumulative and historical is already an approach used in at least a few lower-division courses. This will lead to the identification of “lead” departments who can serve as test beds for inculcating a research perspective into lectures. Working with Instructional Development, we envision identifying and working with at least two such departments in each of the three major areas (Social Sciences, Humanities, Sciences) in the College of Letters & Science (in which the vast majority of undergraduates are enrolled) and perhaps one department in the College of Engineering. In each case, by the time of the CPR, each of these departments will have developed a plan to effectively integrate research questions pertinent to the discipline into lectures and laboratory exercises or their equivalent. These endeavors will be tracked over the next year and student response determined in time for the EER. Success will be determined through baseline questionnaires applied before and after the introduction of this new instructional emphasis. Faculty will be asked to examine and report on direct measures of student learning.

In parallel, baseline data on existing undergraduate participation in research will be assembled by discipline and compared to expressions of interest in research participation after it becomes the focus of one or more large lecture courses in the discipline.

(2) Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth
For purposes of planning, we here break this theme into two parts; the resulting essay will likely take a similar format.

(2a) Standards for Excellence in Graduate Education
The development of standards for excellence implies judgments about how graduate education is delivered. Before this can occur, an assessment of current and possible practices must be conducted. A survey of departmental practices in graduate education will serve as an impetus for gathering data and reflecting on current practices. Discussion of what is discovered from this survey will be complemented by a presentation of national trends in graduate education. Since each discipline tailors its educational practices to its own traditions, faculty in graduate programs will confirm existing or establish new benchmarks and standards for graduate education in their own department or program. The reflective essay will represent our collective thinking about what standards are held in common among graduate programs and what uniquely distinguishes them.

(2b) Mechanisms for Planning for Graduate Growth
Planning for growth in graduate education requires determining needed resources, impacts of growth, methods for strategic growth, and how growth will ensure the participation of a broad and diverse graduate student population. These questions will guide the gathering of data to inform the answers to these questions and provide key background for making decisions. Equally important will be the delineation of principles
to guide the discussion and process by which decisions will be made. For example, key principles may be: the balance of undergraduate and graduate education, the consideration of standards of excellence (note the parallel discussion of the “excellence” described above), and the key qualities of a top research university. The plan for making decisions will provide a road map for implementation as resources become available. The reflective essay on “planning for growth” will expand on principles, decision-making, and key information and data.

B.3. Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review

The Proposal Steering Committee conducted a survey of all academic departments to determine the extent to which they have explicit learning goals tied to systematic approaches to collecting and using evidence to improve student learning. We used the results to complete WASC’s “Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators,” attached as Exhibit 6.

Of the departments reporting on their undergraduate programs (roughly half of them completed the survey by the deadline), more than three-quarters indicate that they have formal learning outcomes. Most are published in a variety of locations and formats including the department website, the general catalog, and less frequently a departmental undergraduate handbook and/or printed material distributed to students by undergraduate advisors. The assessment of student achievement of those goals varies widely by discipline, but frequently involves capstone courses, senior theses, senior projects, supervised research projects, and awards for academic distinction. How this evidence is used also varies widely by department, but is most often reviewed and acted upon by departmental undergraduate curriculum committees, as well as through departmental self-assessments prepared for program reviews.

With respect to graduate programs, 73 percent of faculty graduate advisors responded. Most, but not all, provided information for both a master’s and a doctoral program, indicating that graduate program goals are mainly published in department handbooks and on websites. The majority of graduate programs consider timely progress toward the degree (normative time) as an indicator of student success; 33 percent are using departmental honors and awards as evidence; 10 percent reported using a variety of other methods such as extramural funding, completion of portfolios, and exit interviews. The faculty graduate advisor and the student’s faculty mentor are the main interpreters of evidence. A variety of committees (thesis, admissions, graduate, etc.) also weigh in on key program milestone evaluations. Respondents noted that a variety of department advisory structures were in place to review cumulative progress indicators such as milestones, progress reports, and yearly evaluations. Most programs use findings to revise their curriculum and other aspects of the student’s experiences; 50 percent reported that they used evidence to revise pedagogical approaches.

The results of the survey provide baseline information for the Committee on Student Learning’s work toward the CPR and EER stages of our reaccreditation (see B.2.ii). In sum, we conclude, that while many programs report a rich variety of methods for collecting and considering evidence of student achievement, we have work to do in defining and broadening understanding of learning outcomes, and especially in
encouraging more systematic interpretation of evidence and use of findings to improve learning.

B.3.i. Outcomes

Both themes are presented here as tools to help UC Santa Barbara achieve permanent improvements in undergraduate and graduate education. As a research university, our lasting contributions will be in the creation of new knowledge for posterity. To do so, we need to create an effective climate to nurture new scholars, starting at the undergraduate level and moving through the graduate. The two themes selected here follow that common goal.

If the approach to Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research is successful, our metrics of student learning outcomes should demonstrate heightened awareness of (1) the processes by which knowledge comes into existence and (2) the provisional nature of knowledge with many “facts” being but fleeting measures of current awareness and technology. Further, we would expect to see an increased expression of interest in participating directly in research. A part of our planning should be to ensure that space may be found for this surge in the laboratory and (virtual) library, although we realize that faculty time will ultimately limit the number of students actually involved in research.

The Theme of Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth poses a different set of goals – goals that will guide us through future decades with perhaps more slowly-realized statistical validation. At the time of the EER, we hope to have blueprints for future success in each of the two sub-topics: Excellence and Growth Planning. The ultimate outcome of establishing a clear definition for UC Santa Barbara “excellence” will be ready placement of our graduates in post-doctoral, university, teaching, and other career positions. The identifiable on-campus outcomes will be evident in the timely and smooth progress and scholarly productivity of our graduate students in their graduate programs. The practices identified through defining excellence will be clearly identified in handbooks, websites, and program literature. Finally, although our aspiration for growth will only be realized as resources permit, our university will have a roadmap established for implementation within our planning document.

B.3.ii. Research Questions and Key Indicators

How do we know if we have succeeded in meeting our goals, and who will be paying attention? To a degree, partial answers are alluded to in B.2.ii, B.2.iii, B.3.i above. In all cases the primary agents of responsibility during the WASC reaccreditation period will be the WASC Steering committee and the separate committees on Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research, Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth, and Student Learning. To sustain our work following reaffirmation of our accreditation, we envision responsibility for tracking and maintaining these initiatives will pass to subcommittees of the Academic Senate’s Undergraduate and Graduate Councils as the Senate bodies most closely associated with each of these concerns. It is precisely to ensure this continuity that we recommend that
these two Senate Councils be involved from the outset of the process. This assignment is logical, as it is the faculty of UC Santa Barbara who both set the goals of our undergraduate curriculum and who have the deepest investment in the success of our graduate program.

The precise metrics for evaluation will need to be worked out by the two committees in the process of planning for the CPR. The undergraduate research theme will certainly require a baseline survey to be taken prior to the initiation of the proposed establishment of lower-division courses focused upon “research thinking.” Once the initiative is underway, subsequent surveys can determine success in altering student perception of the origin and stability of knowledge. Similarly, assessment of per capita participation in existing research opportunities will be compared with post-initiative expressions of interest in research. However, the committee may, and likely will, identify other modes of evaluating the initial success of this effort and suggesting further modifications and corrections.

Reflections and discussion about how faculty define excellence in their educational approach to graduate education will be seen in text that will be readily available to students as they consider our university for attendance, as they enter and begin their studies, and as they progress through major milestones to graduation. Key indicators throughout this process are application, admission and enrollment statistics, persistence and graduation rates, time-to-degree metrics, satisfaction survey results, and placement data. These data are available through the collaborative work between Budget and Planning/Institutional Research and the Graduate Division.

B.3.iii. Systems of Quality Assurance

As mentioned elsewhere (e.g., B.1, B.2.ii, C.2), by the time of the Educational Effectiveness Review, we expect to have in place fully developed student-learning assessment processes for each degree program. Current “quality assurance systems” that may be revised as part of this undertaking are course and degree program approval requirements; program review procedures and criteria; the instructional improvement grant program; ESCI (Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction); and various student surveys (e.g., indirect measures of student learning and satisfaction such as UCUES and program review student surveys). As our work on graduate education progresses, a set of “best practices” will be developed that provide a basis for program assessment (program review procedures already include criteria for assessing graduate programs, but campus-wide agreement on best practices will add specificity to them). In Section C.2., we describe the Academic Unit Profile and graduate profiles that are used by departments for self evaluation and by deans to examine performance on key indicators. Depending on the directions taken in each theme and by the Committee on Student Learning, these may be revised to incorporate additional outcomes measures.

B.3.iv. Rationale for Approach

Please see A.1, A.2, B.1, B.2.i and B.3.i (Outcomes) above.

B.3.v. Reference to CFRs
Please see the attached table, Appendix D, “Relation of UC Santa Barbara’s Reaccreditation Topics to WASC’s Standards of Accreditation and Criteria for Review,” as well as responses to B.2.i, B.2.ii, B.3.i, and B.3.iii.

B.3.vi. Student and Organizational Learning

All academic degree programs and units are periodically reviewed under UC Santa Barbara’s procedures for Academic Program Review. Extensive comparative data and analysis and student surveys conducted specifically for program review create the foundation for a department’s self-study. External review teams use standard criteria (contained in our procedures) and their comparative, disciplinary perspectives in conducting peer evaluations; a campus committee of faculty (the Program Review Panel) guides the review, providing evaluation in the campus context. The Program Review Panel, which is advised by major committees of the Academic Senate, submits its reports to the Executive Vice Chancellor, who initiates periodic follow-ups with the departments and appropriate academic deans to ensure responsiveness to recommendations. By the EER stage of our re-accreditation process, we expect that program review will include ongoing attention to student learning and department assessment practices. (See also, B.1, B.2.ii, B.3.iii.)

C. Demonstrating a Feasible Plan of Work and Engagement of Key Constituencies

C.1. Workplan and Milestones

Clearly, the proposed themes are in the nascent stages of planning. In the next 18 to 23 months of preparation for the CPR, members of each of the two theme committees and the Committee on Student Learning will work to create a strong, multidisciplinary and cross-institutional mechanical and intellectual framework. This will address the stated goals of each theme and identify related questions, methods of inquiry and key indicators, and consult with appropriate campus groups involved. In preparation for the CPR, each committee will generate a detailed essay indicating how the academic and administrative units at UC Santa Barbara have cooperated to create mechanisms that will achieve the goals of *Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research, Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth,* and *Student Learning* and to ensure that these goals are self-sustaining through future generations. Each of these essays will undoubtedly include modifications and elaborations of the theme goals as presented in the Institutional Proposal, as these are evolutionary endeavors that will reveal both new and exciting opportunities and alliances as well as unforeseen impediments.

The actual Capacity and Preparatory Review will provide a useful point of examination where, with the assistance of the WASC Visiting Committee, the two theme committees and the campus can take a step back from the process and assess directions and mechanisms. From this point, the theme committees and the Committee on Student Learning will move to fully implement the actual goals of the themes, the success of which will be summarized in a second set of essays that will constitute the basis for the
Educational Effectiveness Review of 2012.

Timeline

May 22, 2009
UC Santa Barbara Submits Proposal

May-June, 2009
Committee structure and assignments refined; request to the EVC to start process of seeking and appointing members to:
(1) The WASC Steering Committee. This committee will have members on the other committees and will ensure communication between the committees, and with administrative and Senate leaders.
(2) The Committee on Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research
(3) The Committee on Excellence in Graduate Education and Planning for Graduate Growth. This may require subcommittees and subsequent appointments as the Committees develop their agendas.
(4) The Committee on Student Learning.

June 22, 2009
Conference call with WASC representatives.

Fall 2009
All committees define specific subgoals and identify data they will require to develop solutions to these goals.

Fall 2009 – Winter 2010
All committees consult with constituencies and campus resources and collect necessary data.

Spring 2010
Committees (2), (3), and (4) draft specific mechanisms to address their stated goals and circulate these to involved campus bodies, the Academic Senate, and the Administration for feedback.

Summer – Fall 2010
Responding to feedback, committees (2), (3) and (4) draft final work plans for both themes, and from this, reflective essays for presentation to the CPR team.

Spring 2011
WASC CPR Visit. All participate.

Spring – Summer 2011
Respond as necessary to the feedback received from the CPR process. From this the Committee on Enhancing Undergraduate Education Through Research will finalize the mechanisms for implementing the initiative in classrooms and work with
selected test-bed departments to put it into practice in the 2011-12 academic year. Similarly the Committee on Student Learning will initiate trial approaches in selected departments, seeking feedback to allow a more widely applied system in the coming years. The Graduate Committee will refine its findings and develop finalized guidelines per its goals.

Fall 2011- Spring 2012
The goals of the undergraduate theme are refined in practice, as are the suggestions for assessment and learning outcomes; The graduate guidelines are mooted to appropriate parties and refined according to feedback.

Fall 2012
WASC EER Visit. All participate.

C.2. Effectiveness of Data Gathering and Analysis Systems

UC Santa Barbara’s Institutional Research and Planning Group (IRP) is responsible for collecting and maintaining key institutional data and conducting analytical studies for the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor, deans, and other academic administrators and faculty committees, including the Program Review Panel. In addition to enrollment management (e.g., projections, models, and yield studies) and survey administration and analysis, IRP maintains a comprehensive data profile as the foundation for regular reports and ad hoc studies. Among the profile’s key indicators are retention and graduation rates, which are made available in several public reports (http://bap.ucsb.edu/IR/index.html), including the UCSB Portrait, Campus Profile, and the Common Data Set (a project of the Association for Institutional Research to provide comparable and easily obtained data for college guidebooks). Institutional retention and graduation rates disaggregated by gender and ethnicity are reported to academic administrators through internal reports or memoranda. IRP has tracked retention and graduation rates by gender and ethnicity in selected departments. Program reviews of all departments examine indirect measures of persistence by gender and ethnicity (by looking at gender and ethnicity in cohort enrollments and in the number of degrees awarded over time). More systematic examination of retention and graduation rates by gender and ethnicity at the program or department level is under discussion.

A comprehensive internal report used for academic planning and improvement by administrators at all levels (department chairs, deans, Executive Vice Chancellor) is an annual publication called the Planning Data Book, containing a data profile of every academic unit. Profiles include descriptive data on department faculty, budget, research funding, instruction, and student characteristics, including academic outcome measures (e.g., time-to-degree) for departments and programs, divisions, colleges, and the campus as a whole (http://bap.ucsb.edu/IR/index.html). These data are reviewed by deans and staff, who may request special studies. Of note at the graduate level is the Graduate Dean’s use of these data to systematically analyze (in partnership with each department) how well the department meets conditions for successful graduate programs. This project compares campus data against national data where available, assesses the use of best practices at the department level, considers the most effective use of resources, and
includes indicators of persistence, time to degree, and graduation and placement rates, among many other aspects of graduate education.

Job placement data for doctoral and masters degree recipients are compiled and reported by academic departments during their regular program reviews. Departments are encouraged to collect and review these data on a regular basis, but there is no institutional mechanism for encouraging this practice. Placement data were also collected on a one-time basis as the campus prepared for the most recent National Research Council study of research-doctorate programs.

Undergraduate placement data (graduate school and employment) are obtained through an alumni survey administered in alternate years to students who graduated the previous year. (UC Santa Barbara also monitors the National Science Foundation’s report on the baccalaureate institutions of Ph.D. recipients.) The alumni survey also broadly addresses learning outcomes (self-reported) in general education. For example, of students who graduated in 2006 and currently attend graduate or professional school, 80 percent report that UC Santa Barbara prepared them well or more than adequately for their studies. Identifying ways to improve the quality, analysis, and reporting of data will be part of our work toward the Capacity and Preparatory Review.

UC Santa Barbara participates in the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) designed to understand the social and academic experiences of undergraduate students across the university. Survey results, especially for questions addressing student development and learning outcomes, are analyzed and reported to internal decision-makers. Selected results are included in public reports. (See UCSB Portrait, pp. 5-6, http://bap.ucsb.edu/IR/UCSB_Portrait.pdf.) For example, the percentage of students rating their analytical and critical thinking skills as “very good” or “excellent” increased by 60 percentage points from their freshman to senior year. Making greater use of UCUES and broadening and deepening our analyses of what it can tell us about student learning are topics of discussion at the University-wide level as well as on campus.

Currently, customized surveys are conducted for department program reviews that examine students’ perceptions of and satisfaction with their academic and intellectual experiences. The results of these departmental surveys are compared against college and campus-wide norms. Articulating the UCUES and program review surveys and enhancing both survey reports are among our goals for improving assessment practices at UC Santa Barbara.

Another source of data concerning student learning is the Office of Instructional Development (http://www.id.ucsb.edu/) that provides support to faculty members in instructional design, delivery, and evaluation. Instructional Development (ID) administers the Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction (ESCI) and Instructional Improvement Grant program. ID’s other support functions (TA training, for example) and their potential to contribute to better understanding of student learning also will be reviewed as part of the faculty’s engagement with the broad issue of assessment and improvement.

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10 The survey research function within IRP is limited by staff size, but nonetheless conducts surveys related to co-curricular issues, student satisfaction with all aspects of their majors, and analyses of UCUES and the national CIRP survey. Development of this capacity, attention to articulation among surveys (including the doctoral exit survey conducted by the Graduate Division), more attention to student learning assessment, and effective use of survey results to drive improvement, are among our goals.
student learning outcomes.

In their report leading to our 2001 reaffirmation of accreditation, the external evaluators characterized UC Santa Barbara’s review process as a well-integrated, effective process of institutional assessment and improvement – “its thoroughness matched by few universities.” The centrality of program review to academic planning and improvement at UC Santa Barbara make it a potentially suitable vehicle for broadening understanding and use of student learning assessment.

C.3. Commitment of Resources to Support the Accrediting Review

The Executive Vice Chancellor has made clear that he will offer the necessary support to bring the multi-year review to a successful conclusion. Data collection will be assured by the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Instructional Development. Both offices will support surveys and analyses of questions relevant to the measurement of student learning outcomes. The process will continue to be overseen by a Steering Committee appointed by the Chancellor in consultation with the Chair of the Academic Senate. Specific committees and available resources are described above.

D. Presenting Appendices Connected to the Proposal

D.1. Data Exhibits

Exhibits 1 – 7 are attached.

D.2. Off-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

UC Santa Barbara has had a satellite program in Ventura, CA since 1972, where students can complete their junior and senior university coursework and earn their Baccalaureate of Arts (BA) degree in one of seven majors. The campus instituted a BA degree for graduates of Allan Hancock Community College in Santa Maria, CA, in 2002. However, financial pressures have forced the closure of the program. In 2008, we agreed to collaborate with California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, on a Joint Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership. The program in Ventura will be evaluated as part of the current UC Santa Barbara reaccreditation, while the Joint Ed.D. in San Luis Obispo will be reviewed in 2010 through our academic program review process.

D.3. Institutional Stipulations

Institutional Stipulation Statement follows.