



December 14, 2004

Richard R. Rush
President
California State University, Channel Islands
One University Drive
Camarillo, CA 93012

Dear Dr. Rush:

Enclosed is a copy of the final team report, based on the visit on October 13-15, 2004. The team reports will be acted on during the February 17-18, 2005 meeting of the Commission at The Fairmont San Jose, 170 South Market Street, phone (408) 998-1900.

ICSU, CI is scheduled on the agenda of the Commission on February 17, 2005. We encourage your attendance at this meeting so that you may interact with members of the Commission and review with them your response to the team report and evaluation of the visit. Please return the attached form indicating your intention to attend the meeting on February 17.

Your institution's report will be heard by a Commission panel, comprised of six - seven Commissioners. The enclosed pamphlet, "*Commission Meeting Guide*" describes how the Commission conducts its institutional reviews:

The Commission will appreciate an written acknowledgment of receipt of this final report, together with your statement of any points on which you wish to comment or with which you disagree. Absent such a statement, I will assume that the institution finds no errors in the final report. If you plan to submit a written statement for the Commission's review, please mail it to the office by *January 5, 2005*.

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Richard R. Rush
December 14, 2004
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An important aspect of the accreditation process is the use of the team report by the institution. The report should be disseminated within the institution and discussed by those who participated in the development of the institutional presentation. It also may be made public by the institution to the extent you wish. According to Commission policy, the institution should avoid quoting only those portions of the report favorable to itself.

As part of our commitment to make the accrediting process as effective as possible, we evaluate each accreditation visit. We are therefore sending the Accreditation Liaison Officer an evaluation form by email to complete and return.

We look forward to interacting with you at the February Commission meeting.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ralph A. Wolff in cursive script, with a small 'bn' written above the end of the signature.

Ralph A. Wolff
Executive Director

RW:brn

Enclosures

Cc: Theodore D. Lucas



June 14, 2004

TEAM ROSTER AND TITLE PAGE

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Date of Visit: October 13-15, 2004

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Type of Visit: Educational Effectiveness Review

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OVER

**REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

To California State University Channel Islands

December 14, 2004

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Initial Candidacy

**Team members: Barbara Cambridge (chair), Deborah Olsen (assistant chair), Lois
Becker, Sandra Kamusikiri, John Tagg, and Joseph Watson**

California State University Channel Islands is the newest member of the California State University System. On May 29, 2004 it graduated its first class of 328 students. The campus has adopted a focused mission that both links it to the system and differentiates it as a unique institution.

Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.

After the WASC Preparatory Review in Spring 2003, CSUCI agreed to a Fall 2004 rather than a Fall 2003 Educational Effectiveness Review in order to respond fully to the recommendations in the first review. As a new campus, the institution needed time to put in place structures and practices that demonstrate its commitment to educational effectiveness for its students. A July 2, 2003 letter from WASC highlighted for the campus central summary points from the team report.

The self-study for the Educational Effectiveness visit responded specifically to each of the fourteen recommendations in the Preparatory Review. A CD augmented the materials in the July 2004 self-study print document. During the team's visit to the campus in October 2004, additional materials were available for team use. Particularly helpful in preparing for and implementing the visit were President Richard Rush, Provost and Vice President Ted Lucas, and WASC Accreditation Committee Chair Dennis

CSUCI Educational Effectiveness Review
December 2004

Muraoka. All campus and community constituents who spoke with the WASC team were forthcoming and eager to explain the development and aspirations of the campus. Various members of the WASC team met with the WASC Committee, a Student Affairs assessment group, the faculty as a whole, the Enrollment Management and Student Success groups, pilot assessment project members, the faculty recruitment group, the General Education assessment group, the Office of Faculty Development, the Student Affairs management team, the Chairs and Senate leadership, student organization leaders, a technology Structure Task Force, service learning students, community members, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, two diversity groups, a Greater Expectations planning group, a central planning group, and local community college administrators.

CSUCI made significant progress during the time between its Preparatory Review and the Educational Effectiveness Review. This report refers to that progress, but it also identifies areas for the campus to address during its time as a Candidate for Accreditation. Emphases on learning outcomes and assessment practices and impacts, are particularly important as the campus develops a culture of evidence.

Standard 1: The institution defines its purposes and establishes educational objectives aligned with its purposes and character. It has a clear and conscious sense of its essential values and character and, its distinctive elements, its place in the higher education community, and its relationship to the society at large. Through its purposes and educational objectives the institution dedicates itself to higher learning, the search

for truth, and the dissemination of knowledge. The institution functions with integrity and autonomy.

Over a four-year period CSUCI has conceived and launched a new university with a unique philosophy and character through the extraordinary efforts of a small community of dedicated and visionary faculty, administrators, and staff. Together they have built a university from the ground up: they have given the University shape and definition, opened its doors, taught courses, and conferred degrees. The WASC team was continually impressed with the accomplishments of this fledgling campus and how much has been done in a few short years.

Mission

The mission statement was under revision at the time of the last WASC Capacity Review. In the 18 months since the initial WASC visit, the campus has reframed the mission statement and sharpened its focus. An abiding theme in both versions of the mission statement was the goal of “placing students at the center of the educational experience.” The approximately two dozen current students (mainly student leaders and resident assistants) the team met with reported extensive and supportive interactions with faculty and staff and an exceptional degree of attentiveness to their academic and co-curricular needs

As indicated in the mission statement, CSUCI has also chosen to define itself in terms of learning across the disciplines, experiential and service learning, and multicultural and international perspectives. While these goals appear to vary in how fully they have been implemented, the culture on campus, as expressed by faculty and students, is highly supportive of all these goals. Moreover, they fit well with the

multicultural mix of the region, the high-tech industries it serves, and good pedagogical practice more generally.

Educational Objectives

To a considerable degree the accomplishments of CSUCI have been rooted in the small size and intimacy of the campus and the commonality of vision and purpose. As the campus grows, a major challenge will be to replace the informal procedures that worked so well in a small intimate environment with more formal, structured goals, objectives, and procedures designed to maintain and enhance distinctive campus visions and values.

In particular, it will be critical to the achievement of the distinctive aspects of the CSUCI mission and learning outcomes to establish goals and structures that foster interdisciplinary perspectives and collaborations. The founding philosophy of the campus, the small size of the faculty, and the involvement of the initial faculty in all faculty recruitments and curriculum development have instilled an interdisciplinary ethos and creative spirit. The preservation and enhancement of this interdisciplinary focus requires active attention and nurturing particularly as the campus increases in enrollment and faculty members. If articulation and assessment of learning outcomes are done only on the individual course and program levels, disciplinary concerns and perspectives may crowd out interdisciplinary considerations that are so essential to achieving the institutional mission and student learning objectives. In this context then, we recommend: that CSUCI

- 1. Establish organizational structures and administrative procedures to maintain and foster the unique character, objectives, and values of CSUCI as expressed in its mission.**

The campus has constituted key committees such as the CSUCI Structure Taskforce, the Assessment Council, and the University Planning and Coordinating Council to move this agenda forward. The University Planning and Coordinating Council, in particular, was established by President Rush in a deliberate effort to create structures that maintain and advance the University's vision and mission as the campus transitions from a "start-up" to an established campus of significant size. The Council is comprised of roughly 20 members and the Campus Master Plan, Academic Master Plan, divisional plans, and University Budget Committee proposals and recommendations are all to be vetted through the UPCC with the goal of ensuring that they foster the implementation of the University Mission and Strategic Plan and the achievement of University goals and priorities. The Council was convened last year and met once for an orientation meeting. For a variety of reasons, the Council has not yet met this year. The regular assembly of this Council will be essential to the formation of a maintainable *resource base* that coincides with university organization, planning, and goals. Similarly, the recommendations of the Structure Taskforce will be critical to the creation of a long-term *academic structure*, and the Assessment Council to the articulation and dissemination of overarching *learning objectives*. The work of these committees and the implementation of their recommendations need to be a top priority for the campus.

Sense of Essential Value and Character

In keeping with the emphasis in Standard on institutional identity and the institution's sense of place within higher education, we would like to note the campus' commitment to diversity and to serving its local community. President Rush and the campus leadership are to be commended for their commitment to diversity in all its forms

throughout all aspects of the University. The faculty, academic courses, and co-curricular programs all reflect a commitment to diversity as a valuable asset and “source of renewal and vitality.” The personal participation of President Rush and other campus leaders in diversity programs and the establishment of the Commission on Human Relations and Equity demonstrate an active commitment to diversity as a valuable defining feature of the vision and culture of the University. Further, CSUCI continues to enjoy great support and high expectations from its regional community. Wisely, the campus has taken a number of steps to both integrate itself into and serve the community. It has provided land for a local charter school to locate on the campus, developed outreach programs to serve local schools and other parts of the community, and encouraged faculty, students and staff to participate in community programs and committees. Because expectations of the university are so high and varied within the community, it is important that the campus do all it can to foster understanding of its capabilities and plans through proactive communication and dialog with all segments of its community, including local education institutions.

Standard 2: The institution achieves its institutional purposes and attains its educational objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for students' learning. It demonstrates that these core functions are performed effectively and that they support one another in the institution's efforts to attain educational effectiveness.

CSUCI has begun to establish a solid foundation to support the core functions of teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and student learning.

Administrative Support for Teaching and Research/Creative Activity

CSUCI repeatedly emphasizes the central importance of promoting student learning through effective teaching. A set of extensive hiring procedures and practices have been developed to insure future faculty's commitment to the campus goals of teaching excellence, collaborative governance, and interdisciplinarity. The Office of Faculty Development (OFD) provides ongoing support for instruction and professional development through individual consultation, library resources, and workshops. Considerable progress has been made, for example, in effective use of classroom assessment techniques. In addition, OFD administers grant funds to encourage and maintain dynamic, state-of-the-art instructional practices. Similarly, the newly established Office of Research and Sponsored Programs will support faculty's scholarship and creative activity through consultation and through grant-writing workshops. CSUCI currently provides faculty with reassigned time for research to help offset the time dedicated to service at the founding of the University. The University has also helped support and promote faculty professionally through generous travel funds.

Support for Teaching and Research/Creative Activity through the RTP Process

We were impressed that the faculty with whom we spoke repeatedly provided evidence of dedication to teaching and deep engagement with students. The "University Retention, Tenure, & Promotion Policy and Procedures" (RTP Policy), likewise, espouses a philosophy that follows the university mission in "placing students at the center of the educational experience" and teaching at the center of the faculty role. However, the RTP Policy, as it stands, does not clearly embody this philosophy at the detail level. It fails to adequately stipulate the features of teaching that should be documented and evaluated or the features of the scholarship of teaching and learning that

should be documented and evaluated as faculty scholarship. The RTP Policy prescribes certain conventional and traditional assessments of teaching quality—classroom visitations and student evaluations—and leaves further evidence to the option of the individual program.

Applied research, especially such research related to teaching, is a necessary hallmark of CSUCI; hence, clear definitions of this kind of applied research are essential. If CSUCI is to place students at the center of the educational experience, then it must place students at the center of the faculty experience, and encourage and reward faculty members for paying careful, close, and scholarly attention to their students. If the institution is to nurture a culture of evidence about student learning that seeks continuous improvement, then it must not only allow but also encourage the scholarship of teaching and learning. That is to say, faculty must be fully rewarded in the tenure and promotion process for studying not only the disciplines in which students should learn but how students learn in those disciplines and how they might be assisted to learn better. Student learning must be seen as an end in itself, not merely a side effect, of faculty scholarship. In light of this, we further recommend that the University:

2. Define the scholarship of teaching and learning for CSUCI. Distinguish between scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning so that the university will hold all faculty members accountable for effective teaching based on student learning and will acknowledge and reward those faculty who choose scholarship of teaching and learning.

In making this recommendation, we do not suggest that the university fails to recognize the value of the scholarship of teaching and learning. Indeed, we encountered

evidence that indicate many faculty members are actively engaged in such scholarship and alive to its possibilities. We were given to understand that the university RTP committee is likewise cognizant of the great value of this scholarly option and determined to reward it. Our concern is with the future development of the faculty and the evolving evidence base for developing a better learning environment. While at some institutions there could be conflicting pressures on this front, at CSUCI we believe that the case is clear. To reject or devalue the scholarship of teaching and learning would be to reject or devalue the institutional mission. Therefore, we can see no reason why the institution would not affirm its commitment to such scholarship and every reason why it should do so. To clearly authorize the scholarship of teaching and learning and a fully rewarded option in tenure and promotion will assure that as the institution grows in size and complexity it will maintain the same commitment to placing students at the center that its founding faculty embraced. We make this recommendation not to change the nature of the university, but to preserve it.

As CSUCI should affirm its commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning, it should as well affirm its standards of quality teaching. The RTP Policy attends to the importance of quality teaching, but fails to define it. The constituent elements of excellent teaching are left to the individual programs to determine in the Program Personnel Standards. The "California State University Program Personnel Standards Guidelines, April 26, 2004" prescribe some mandatory criteria and processes, but these are conventional and emphasize the presentational skills of the teacher, not the resultant learning of the students. They do not mention actual learning outcomes. The governing documents for the RTP process seem to us to open the door to a future decline

into formal and conventional standards for the evaluation of teaching, standards quite different than those informally implemented by the CSUCI faculty. There is, for example, no explicit encouragement for faculty to integrate the evidence produced by their scholarly research into the effectiveness of their teaching strategies to confirm their teaching quality. The formal standards expressed in the policies do not mention the achievement of actual learning outcomes by students as a category of evidence for quality teaching. While we do not wish to prescribe any specific definition of quality teaching, we suggest that CSUCI seek to provide one that is fully congruent with its mission and purposes. Again, our intention is not to change the trajectory of faculty development over time; rather, we would hope that, through the creation of an explicit reward system, the university would perpetuate and preserve the values it embraces today. (Cross reference to personal development plans.)

Support for Student Learning

The Institutional Effectiveness Report demonstrates the campus' commitment to student learning in varied and important ways. The campus has developed a general education curriculum by combining the general education requirements mandated by the California State System with its own writing, language and multicultural, and multidisciplinary requirements. As a set, these requirements have several strengths: They address the major content areas within general education; they reflect the values of the campus and underscore the importance of diversity and interdisciplinarity; and they incorporate general education into students' upper division coursework. Service learning opportunities will grow with the development of the newly created Office of Service Learning, and provide students with venues to learn civic responsibility and how to work

with others in the community. The campus has developed several helpful road maps that illustrate which courses students need to take to meet general education and graduation requirements. At a more informal level, the campus has created a culture that prizes faculty-student interaction inside and outside the classroom. Average class size is relatively small at about 20 to 25 students. Students we spoke with indicated that CSUCI faculty members were friendly, welcoming, and always ready to help them.

A key challenge still facing the campus, however, is the articulation of a set of baccalaureate learning objectives. Faculty members have defined learning outcomes for individual courses at all levels as well as two general institutional level learning outcomes. A task force is currently attempting to define the outcomes that students should achieve throughout the general education curriculum. We believe that defining and disseminating specific learning outcomes for baccalaureate learning is central to both curricular development and institutional mission. The difficulty of institutionalizing organizational values and goals, however, is illustrated in the comments of a number of faculty that they had not yet seen the two learning objectives-- although when asked about them, they felt the objectives were generally consistent with the course and program objectives articulated so far. The formulation of general education objectives was a recommendation of the preparatory review, and while the university has laid the groundwork for this essential step, its actual accomplishment is now even more critical. Moreover, CSUCI cannot embark upon meaningful, university-wide assessment of student learning until it has articulated what learning it seeks to assess throughout the baccalaureate degree. In summary we recommend CSUCI:

3. Develop educational outcomes for the baccalaureate degree. The campus needs to affirm, modify, or add to the two already identified learning objectives and implement them throughout the curriculum. The campus needs to move quickly to define learning outcomes for the baccalaureate degree as a framework for assessment of student learning, consistent feedback to students, program development, and alignment of the educational program around student learning.

In its mission statement, CSUCI has declared its intention to provide a distinctive learning experience for its students that involves learning “across disciplines through integrative approaches . . .” The first of its two institutional learning outcomes calls upon students to adopt “multiple perspectives including those within and across disciplines . . .” Perhaps the strongest endorsement of the value the institution places upon interdisciplinarity, however, is within general education where there is a requirement that students take *three upper level interdisciplinary courses*. It will be essential to the success of this interdisciplinary instructional agenda that faculty define the transferable abilities that cross disciplinary boundaries and thus provide a framework for developing and documenting these integrative approaches and cross-disciplinary perspectives.

The university is seeking to develop a structure for faculty and academic affairs that will support its approach to integrative learning. This is a complicated task, and we believe that the development of general education learning outcomes will help clarify and advance this work. Such learning outcomes can provide a framework emerging from the institution’s goals to clarify and provide alternatives to traditional organizational categories. The institution has placed great emphasis on the importance of *alignment*:

aligning the curriculum with the institutional mission, aligning individual course work with major and institutional learning outcomes, aligning learning outcomes with graduation requirements. We believe that this emphasis on alignment emerges both from the WASC standards and the mission of CSUCI. The learning outcomes common to all students at the institution are the irreducible core of the educational experience, the shared purpose of curriculum and co-curriculum, all programs, all courses. The project of defining those outcomes is the project of creating the center around which the rest can be aligned, the structure of ideas that can give growth a trajectory and planning a purpose.

Support for Teaching, Scholarship/Creative Activity and Student Learning through Program Review

CSUCI has declared its commitment to continuous improvement and to a culture of evidence. The route to improvement is ongoing review of its programs to assess their accomplishments and make adjustments in light of the evidence. The university is making progress on instituting program review. Student affairs has led the way with a phased process that includes advanced planning, self study, internal review, outside professional review, and application of lessons learned both during the process and after it. Comprehensive program reviews of each student support unit yield information to “identify future directions, needs, and priorities; recognize and respond to the strengths and weakness of the program and identify important directions in the professions; assist in assessing a unit’s relationships with and contributors to other programs within the University; strengthen and improve its programs and services to students; and provide the mechanisms and impetus for change” (Division of Student Affairs Final Report,

10/4/2004). For example, Disability Accommodation Services, which has completed the full cycle, identified in the areas of mission, operations, capacity, and assessment items for improvement and progress already made to date on those items. Eleven recommendations provide guidelines for action based on the review.

Academic units are in the process of developing review processes. As indicated in the educational effectiveness report, a five-year review cycle has just been established along with general parameters for the review (listed in page 44 of the report). Whereas student affairs decided to use national CAS standards for all its units, individual academic programs are drawing up their own standards. For example, the English program has already identified its standards. The academic advising program has adopted the major elements of an assessment and review process designed by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA).

Some standards may hold across all units, and some may be individual; but a regularized process of program review for all units will benefit the campus. It may be that some standards or processes would be appropriate for all curricular programs but not, for example, for academic advising or some of the new centers being created. We do not propose a rigid format or an inflexible algorithm for program review. However, we heard many times that staff members are overextended and resources limited. In such an environment, programs should not be required to reinvent processes already in place elsewhere. CSUCI can best create a permanent culture of evidence by codifying the criteria for evidence that would support changes in programs and procedures. Some of those criteria will be program-specific, but where they can be generalized they should be

designed to save time and effort and assist in responding more quickly to evidence pointing toward change. The WASC Review Team recommends that the University:

4. Refine common features for all program reviews and particular features for each program review. Adapt features and practices being used in student affairs unit reviews, including immediately applying what is learned as the review proceeds through its various phases.

The institution should provide a coherent framework for program review and should formalize processes that will support programs and individuals in moving as swiftly as possible to improve. A review process that is coherent, systematic, and adaptable will help the institution to produce the maximum value from scarce resources. By facilitating institutional learning such a process will reward and reinforce the dedication and creativity of CSUCI's excellent faculty and staff.

Standard 3: The institution sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its educational objectives through its investment in human, physical, fiscal and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision making structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high quality environment for learning.

Managing Resources: Student Enrollment, Serving the Region and Growth

Great strides have been made since our last visit. An enrollment management plan has been adopted and implemented and is continually assessed. Many faculty and administrators are involved in the decisions. Good data are kept, aggregated according to a series of sub-groups that will guide recruitment activities as well as acceptance patterns.

The admittance of 76% of students from the local service area coincides with the community's goals for the institution. Because the service area is large, it is commendable that the University is breaking this area down further into smaller regions, high schools, and ethnic groups.

Campus plans now project a student population of approximately 5,000 by 2010. It is anticipated that significant economies of scale will be achieved at this size. Last year there was substantial concern over fluctuating state funding policies and enrollment caps. With state policy likely to remain unpredictable and state funding limited, revenue stability based on enrollment growth may become increasingly problematic. This makes it essential to have in place good data models for projecting enrollment, an accurate estimate of the cost of instruction as well as projections of revenue from other sources (overhead, development etc). Here the newness of the institution may be an advantage with opportunities to establish data structures and accurate cost estimates that older, more established and byzantine institutions do not have.

Enrollments are impacted by relationships with area community colleges. Providing needed baccalaureate degrees for working adults requires continuing dialogue and planning among area community colleges and CSUCI. A strong collaboration between CSUCI and the community colleges with extensive faculty-to-faculty interaction assures the best opportunities for students.

Organizational and Decision-Making Structures: Faculty and Student Involvement in Committees and Governance

CSUCI has made a strong commitment to faculty governance and it is visible in the structure and membership of committees. Most notable is the new policy of having five

faculty members on the budget committee, which is comprised of a total of twelve individuals. The faculty voice will be heard and will be influential. In conjunction with the concerns reflected in a later recommendation, we recommend that the campus:

5. Reinforce the strong commitment to shared governance.

CSUCI rightly emphasizes faculty participation in key policy and budget committees. Students are involved in the decision-making processes by serving on important committees within student affairs and in the university at large. This involvement could be further emphasized through an even stronger student governance structure. Students are being educated to be strong leaders and will undoubtedly make the student voice heard in an effective and persuasive way. As student leaders are trained in assessment procedures, such as Student Affairs is currently doing, they will expect to encounter them throughout their university experience. Students will become a driving force for assessment and a culture of evidence.

Organizational and Decision-making Structures: Faculty Reward Structures and RTP

A reward system should align with institutional priorities. The new RTP guidelines represent a marked improvement over the original RTP guidelines in aligning the faculty reward structure with the instructional priorities at CSUCI. However, some of the faculty still expressed concern that there were mixed messages about what accomplishments will count toward tenure. Some reported stories they had heard about shifts in the tenure criteria at other start-up institutions. The academic structure is not in place, and it is not clear who will be supervising faculty, or even what organizational structure will be in place, as they go up for tenure. The long-term solution to these

problems lies in completing the RTP process and the restructuring of academic affairs.

The WASC accreditation team recommends that CSUCI:

6. Expedite development of the RTP guidelines, insuring that new guidelines reflect the student-centered, instruction-focused nature of the campus.

Clarify and communicate expectations of faculty and the corresponding reward structure.

As indicated in Standard 2 above, definitions and evidence for both scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching must be agreed upon, articulated and disseminated. A minor problem, but one indicative of the need to firm up the RTP process, is the organization of peer reviews for teaching. Faculty said that they often found it difficult to get someone to be their reviewer since no one was assigned and all the faculty were so busy. The chair, in consultation with the faculty member, should designate a peer reviewer, so this important process can be carried out.

The Program Personnel Standards and the Personal Development Plans both appear to hold potential for establishing a more tailored, more iterative faculty evaluation feedback loop. As indicated earlier, however, not all programs have defined and had approved their PPSs, and other areas of the RTP process must be spelled out.

We will discuss the structural issues around interdisciplinarity below, but as it relates to RTP, much needs to be done. Faculty said that everyone knew what interdisciplinarity was but that it needed to be codified. This is nowhere more valid than in the RTP procedures. How does choosing interdisciplinary courses and research impact one's career at CSUCI? For example, once all the PPS and the GPS documents are created and approved, the Personal Development Plan is developed in concert with a

disciplinary chair. The faculty member is reviewed and judged against the standard for the discipline. How will interdisciplinarity be judged and weighted? Similarly, what weight will be assigned to faculty contributions to building the institution and of service or community-based learning?

Organizational and Decision-Making Structures: Academic Affairs

CSUCI has done a remarkable job of fostering trust among the faculty and administration, but this trust can be easily damaged. Rightly or wrongly, without a structure and a clear description of the functions of the leadership of this administrative structure and decision-making apparatus, resentments can develop. Senate leaders and other faculty expressed concern over program chairs role in determining faculty hires and in tacitly establishing a more formal departmental structure. Another area for potential misunderstanding is in the RTP process. Faculty members with allegiances to structurally undefined areas do not understand who represents their interests and judges their progress. Such a situation will lead to disaffection. To avoid any loss of the goodwill and vitality demonstrated by CSUCI faculty so far, we recommend the campus:

7. Establish an academic structure that supports student learning and enforces CSUCI ambitions for distinctiveness and interdisciplinarity. This decision, however imperfect its first iteration will be, is essential to prevent an unintentional drift toward a traditional departmental structure. A departmental structure is only one among several viable options available to the campus and, if implemented, should be the product of a self-conscious choice.

The faculty repeatedly told us that they knew what about CSUCI was interdisciplinary, but that they needed to codify it. This codification will be very helpful to establishing an academic structure that supports this unique feature of the Channel Islands academic program. The other repeatedly stated goal was the desire to avoid academic silos. There is considerable conjecture on campus among faculty leaders and others that a process leading to isolated units is already occurring.

In contrast, centers, such as the Center for Integrative and Interdisciplinary Studies, appear to help integrate work across disciplines and promote interdisciplinary studies through a more formal organizational structure. Clearly the Center will assist with one problem that was mentioned – identifying people whose interests can be combined to create interdisciplinary courses. Right now this is being done on an ad hoc basis and opportunities for successful collaboration have probably been missed. Another goal for the Center is to modulate the friction between and within programs, especially around issues of faculty staffing of courses. The Center will not be able to accomplish this goal if it is not on an equal footing with disciplinary programs. And the Center, as currently construed, may not be able to solve other problems that arise from the current traditional structure. For instance, if program chairs develop faculty PDPs, how will the goals of interdisciplinarity be achieved? Who supports the hiring of faculty in the interstices of the traditional programs? The hiring practices to date have been excellent and the goal of interdisciplinarity is clearly supported by the process described in the written procedures. However, will this continue as the institution matures, majors multiply, and faculties within disciplines grow? There were many comments on the survey done by the Structure Task Force that demonstrate how trust and the desire for

innovation are threatened by lack of clarity on such issues. As one respondent writes: “The incentive structure favors strong programs, and the strong will continue to get stronger under the current structure.”

The creation of carefully selected Centers, paralleling kinds of scholarship, particular areas of CSUCI’s mission, or other mission-related emphases, offers a possible structural mechanism to support interdisciplinarity and innovation.

Human Resources: Key Strategic Hires

The WASC committee heard a great deal about limited resources, most notably and repeatedly from the academic faculty. In such conditions, the proper prioritization of hiring decisions is essential. The campus must work to strategically hire in areas that will bring the most benefit to student learning. In several notable instances, the greatest benefit to student learning will not come in the form of more tenure-track faculty lines, but in the positions that can most fully support student learning and provide professional guidance to a busy faculty. It is the recommendation of this committee that CSUCI:

8. Act immediately to fill key positions in three support offices critical to the instructional mission of the University. An Assessment Officer, a Chief Information Officer, and a Faculty Development Officer will provide the coordination and expertise essential to optimal deployment of faculty efforts in instruction and assessment.

Assessment Officer— As detailed later in this report, assessment efforts have been initiated unevenly across the campus with little coordination in campus-wide or even program-wide assessment. It is uncertain, for example, how the results of initial pilot programs will be disseminated among the faculty. Similarly, it is unclear what research questions

faculty members have about student learning. And, of course, the university needs the general education outcomes for forward movement in assessment in the lower division courses. For assessment to lead to successful results that will challenge and entice other faculty members to take part in it, it is imperative that someone with an experienced background in assessment be hired to pull together the individual efforts at CSUCI and make sure that new efforts are undertaken in a thoughtful and systematic manner. Not only will this hire ensure that assessment of learning outcomes occurs, in the long run, it will streamline effort, disseminate effective assessment tools, and help faculty develop their own culture of evidence around teaching.

Chief Information Officer – The committee heard from valued members of the university community who worked on IT issues. They were hard working, dedicated, and creative people. However, they voiced a need for leadership, a need for someone with a big vision in this area. Although our team understands that some personnel issues have not been controllable, a chief technology officer with a broad knowledge base and experience is sorely needed. If CSUCI has ambitions to be a model university of the 21st century, information technology cannot lag.

Faculty Development Officer – CSUCI faculty are advancing rapidly toward tenure and promotion. They need support to develop their portfolios and make decisions about their careers. The flux of both the academic structure and RTP make the environment ripe for tensions around tenure to negatively impact the collegiality that the faculty presently enjoy. Especially because the RTP process is still in development, a new faculty development officer can at this juncture be of substantial service to the University,

providing information about both the practice and scholarship of teaching--to those creating the tenure standards and those working to meet them.

Human Resources: Committee Structure and Participation

The WASC team recommends that the University should:

9. Increase decision making effectiveness by limiting the number of committees, limiting the size of committee memberships, and clearly establishing sunset time periods and procedures for individual committee members.

While the current committee structure may have been appropriate and useful for the first phases of institutional development, a new structure needs to emerge to reflect CSUCI's growing maturity and the limitations on faculty time and energy. Again, the degree of faculty governance at CSUCI is admirable and should be encouraged. However, the effectiveness of committee participation must be considered in light of strained resources. Currently, for example, there are not clear demarcations between standing committees and task forces, and some task forces might work better as committees and vice versa. Sometimes there are multiple committees e.g., those dedicated to planning and building use, that might better be combined into one standing committee. The 50 committees convened to work on the Institutional Effectiveness Report were a daunting number for the number of faculty and staff at CSUCI. Also, committee numbers at times seem unwieldy. There was mention in the report of a task force on the development of the Academic Master Plan composed of 150 people, a number difficult to function as an effective committee. Similarly, the WASC accreditation team met with the enrollment management committee, comprised of about

25 people. A reduction in size, while still representing essential constituencies, might increase efficiency and would cut down on the committee load of individual faculty and staff. Given the dynamic state of the campus, there should be adequate provision to end committees or turn over membership as one set of tasks is completed or one set of individuals has had a chance to serve. This is true even in the case of community committees that help the campus in its deliberations; there must be adequate opportunity for different community voices to be heard to insure the University serves the broadest set of constituencies.

Standard 4: The institution conducts sustained, evidence-based, and participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving its educational objectives. These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities at different levels of the institution and to revise institutional purposes, structures, and approaches to teaching, learning and scholarly work.

Revising Institutional Purposes, Structures and Approaches: Evolution of the Strategic Plan

Substantial time and energy have been dedicated to the development of a much-needed strategic plan. This plan articulates many of the key values and aspirations of the campus and provides a useful touchstone for future efforts. However, it is difficult to fully assign priorities when the campus is still completing foundational tasks and cautious about prematurely foreclosing organizational options. With the recent appointment of a new Provost, the imminent restructuring of academic affairs, and new leadership in IT

and faculty development and assessment, it will be critical to revisit the strategic plan to insure that it supports the evolving structure and goals of the campus. Obviously, any revision of the plan will be best accomplished through collection and use of data bearing on different aspects of institutional effectiveness. We recommend that the campus:

10. Insure that the Strategic Plan aligns with the evolving nature of the University. As the campus engages in restructuring activities in Academic Affairs and the establishment of new leadership positions in IT, assessment, and faculty development, the institution must revisit the strategic plan to insure that it supports the new structure and goals of the campus.

Creating a Learning Organization

The second part of the institutional effectiveness report addresses how CSUCI collects and uses data for institutional improvement and for the enhancement of instruction and student learning in particular. In this context, the campus cites a number of studies conducted by Institutional Research, use of classroom assessment techniques, student course evaluations and selected pilot projects. Assessment work in the area of general education was beginning with elaboration of learning objectives. Assessment at the program level was discussed as part of a broader five-year program review. While each of these efforts holds promise, only a few have collected data and used it to improve the teaching-learning environment. We appreciate the press that faculty and staff have been under to establish the university, its academic programs, and its courses. We also appreciate that there are some excellent examples to lead the campus forward in its data collection efforts. We applaud the pilot projects, the comprehensive assessment implemented by Student Affairs, and the logically evolving nature of the education

credential programs. At the same time, a culture of evidence has not yet been systematically developed across the campus.

At the most general level, three foundational pieces must be in place to implement a successful, comprehensive program of continuous quality improvement: policy, culture, and practice. CSUCI has established a high level “Policy on Assessment” which clearly articulates the support of academic leadership for assessment and evaluation activities across campus. In addition, the newly proposed Assessment Council has oversight responsibilities related to campus policy and goals for assessment. More importantly, our conversations with faculty and administrators demonstrated a sincere commitment to assessment in general, and assessment of student learning, in particular. It is much harder to achieve this culture than to establish policy. Finally, however, there is the *practice* of assessment and evaluation and here the campus must do more to capitalize on its own culture and interest in the assessment area.

This report has already addressed the need to develop learning objectives for the baccalaureate degree. We want to underscore that we realize how difficult it is to craft such objectives and recognize the work that has gone into the development of learning goals at the program and course level. The main guidance we offer here is to suggest a relatively greater focus on student skills and abilities relative to specific content area mastery.

In this section of the report, we wish instead to discuss more fully and specifically the urgent need to: (1) begin data collection on student learning, (2) establish a feedback loop that enables faculty and other campus members to use the data collected to improve

teaching and learning, and (3) coordinate assessment efforts vertically and horizontally across campus.

Some data have been collected in pilot projects such as the English self-placement assessment, the Computer Science peer review project, the evolving Education survey and portfolio assessment, and the writing evaluation in Business Economics. Most programs, however, have not collected data and not yet given serious consideration to the kinds of measures they might employ to get data in the near term. It is critical as new curricular programs unfold to have a ready, reliable flow of data to enhance instruction and curriculum. Given the nature of CSUCI's mission, programs should be especially concerned to demonstrate the value they have added to students' learning and lives. This is best done by examining students' abilities upon entry and again at completion of a course or program of study such as general education (a pre-post evaluation). Metrics can be broadly defined and include student surveys, essays and projects coded according to particular assessment rubrics, transcript analyses indicating the efficacy of foundational courses to later success, retention and graduation rates, employer surveys, alumni surveys, capstone projects, certification test scores and so on. While none of these metrics are perfect, combined and administered over time, they all contribute to a larger pattern of student performance, weaknesses, and strengths that can be used to better calibrate instruction and enhance student outcomes.

Many measures will be collected by faculty and within programs, but institutional offices, Institutional Research in particular, can and should do a great deal to augment and facilitate this work. Institutional Research can provide data from institutional databases on student background characteristics as well as data on courses and grades. If

IR has access, they can also help programs use all or some of the items from campuswide student surveys in program or general education assessment. It is important that IR be directly charged with this task and enabled to develop data systems that will allow them to distribute the information in a timely and efficient manner. Faculty Development at CSUCI has been very successful in promoting the use of classroom assessment techniques (CATs). The routine use of CATs, and the improvements that ensue from them, can readily be put in an assessment plan and used as valuable evidence of continuous improvement.

This data is worth collecting, however, only if faculty members use it to promote change for the better in their classes and majors. On the CSUCI campus, the Student Affairs and the Education Credential program should be commended for developing assessment processes that regularly make use of assessment results to change and improve their programs. Student Affairs is, additionally, training its student leaders to conduct their own assessment metrics and to become lifelong advocates for continuous improvement processes. Both Student Affairs and Education can serve as “early adopter” models for the campus. Feedback loops may be more readily established within programs and majors where faculty can link student performance data more immediately to specific aspects of curriculum and instruction. Efforts to change in response to assessment data must be encouraged and supported through some type of University guidelines. Institutional reporting requirements should reward academic improvement and progress rather than absolute numerical goals and accountability, particularly at the University’s early stage of development.

In summary, CSUCI must move forward in the creation of a culture of evidence across the university that includes the collection and use of data for institutional improvement and for the enhancement of instruction and student learning in particular. At present, fledgling assessment efforts are hampered by a lack of coordination and lack of professional support. There is simply no center to the enterprise. It is unclear how course, program, and baccalaureate assessment can or will relate. Assessment is part of program review but is it considered in faculty merit decisions or budget allocations to units? Discussions with faculty indicated a real commitment among many to continuous cycle of learning assessment. But few had the know-how to make good use of their energy and commitment, and neither fiscal nor professional support resources address this issue. Given the many demands on faculty time, they will soon become disenchanted with a process that is likely to produce few tangible benefits to them or to students. A trained assessment coordinator, must work cooperatively with key institutional research, faculty development, and student services personnel toward the promotion of assessment work throughout the institution. The campus must now move beyond isolated faculty assessment projects to the development of a campus wide, clearly articulated and sustainable structure to measure students' learning.

The campus needs to intensify its efforts to define measurable learning outcomes; develop methodology appropriate for assessing the majors, general education, and the baccalaureate degree; collect data, analyze them, report the findings widely; and use the findings for ongoing improvement. CSUCI must now construct an outcomes assessment infrastructure and develop and implement comprehensive practices that support a

continuous cycle of learning assessment. In this way CSUCI can create its desired culture of evidence

Summary of Major Recommendations in the Educational Effectiveness Review

Establish organizational structures and administrative procedures to maintain and foster the unique character, objectives, and values of CSUCI as expressed in its mission.

2. Define the scholarship of teaching and learning for CSUCI. Distinguish between scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning so that the university will hold all faculty members accountable for effective teaching based on student learning and will acknowledge and reward those faculty who choose scholarship of teaching and learning.

3. Develop educational outcomes for the baccalaureate degree. The campus needs to affirm, modify, or add to the two already identified learning objectives and implement them throughout the curriculum. The campus needs to move quickly to define learning outcomes for the baccalaureate degree as a framework for assessment of student learning, consistent feedback to students, program development, and alignment of the educational program around student learning

4. Refine common features for all program reviews and particular features for each program review. Adapt features and practices being used in student affairs unit reviews, including immediately applying what is learned as the review proceeds through its various phases.

5. Reinforce the strong commitment to shared governance.

6. Expedite development of the RTP guidelines, insuring that new guidelines reflect the student-centered, instruction-focused nature of the campus. Clarify and communicate expectations of faculty and the corresponding reward structure.

7. Establish an academic structure that supports student learning and enforces CSUCI ambitions for distinctiveness and interdisciplinarity. This decision, however imperfect its first iteration will be, is essential to prevent an unintentional drift toward a traditional departmental structure. A departmental structure is only one among several viable options available to the campus and, if implemented, should be the product of a self-conscious choice.

8. Act immediately to fill key vacancies in three support offices critical to the instructional mission of the University. An Assessment Officer, a Chief Information Officer, and a Faculty Development Officer would provide the coordination and expertise essential to optimal deployment of faculty efforts in instruction and assessment.

9. Increase decision making effectiveness by limiting the number of committees, limiting the number of members on committees, and clearly establishing sunset time periods and procedures for individual committee members.

10. Insure that the Strategic Plan aligns with the evolving nature of the University.

As the campus engages in restructuring activities in Academic Affairs and the establishment of new leadership positions in IT, assessment, and faculty development, the institution must revisit the strategic plan to insure that it supports the new structure and goals of the campus.