REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

To

California State University Monterey Bay

Date of Visit

March 15 – 18, 2011

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Team Roster

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The evaluation team in conducting its review was able to evaluate the institution under the WASC Commission Standards and Core Commitments and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for action and to the institution for consideration.

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SECTION I – INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A.   Brief Description of CSUMB

Founded in 1994 as the 21st campus of the California State University System, California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) adopted a vision that committed the institution to "serving the working class and historically underserved populations . . . [through] multilingual multicultural, gender-equitable learning . . . and to develop a culture of innovation . . . through a collaborative orientation" (Vision Statement). Now in its second decade, the campus remains "excited by and committed to the original campus vision" (EER Report, p.1). CSUMB's academic model includes three key curricular elements: the capstone, service learning, and second language proficiency (EER Report, p. 19). Through the years, the way the vision is implemented has evolved and been streamlined to become less labor intensive (CFRs 3.1, 3.2).

"Applied, active and project-based learning activities" are stressed as Core Values of the institution. Programs that incorporate active learning and other aspects of the CSUMB academic model were developed at times when enrollments were smaller and resources more plentiful. Now the institution is reflecting not only on how to "scale up" the academic model, but also on how to do so in a time of shrinking resources (CFR 3.5). CSUMB continues to research the value of its academic model, and the campus chose this topic as one of the themes for this EER Report.

The campus, located on approximately 1,300 acres of the former Fort Ord Army base, has encountered several physical and environmental challenges (CPR Report, p. 27) that have

required the institution to lower its 1998 Master Plan goal of serving 25,000 full-time equivalent

(FTE) students to a more modest 12,000 FTE (CPR Report, p. 9). The campus found that few of

the existing Fort Ord structures could be easily adapted for educational use; therefore, the

campus embarked on a program of demolishing existing structures to make way for new, more

appropriate buildings (CPR Report, pp. 9-10).

Prior to the 2011 EER visit, CSUMB was visited by five WASC teams: two Candidacy

visits, initial accreditation CPR and EER Visits, and the 2009 CPR team visit. CSUMB was

granted Candidacy in 1998 and Initial Accreditation in 2003. Since initial accreditation, the

University has had six programs approved through the Substantive Change process: the joint

Doctorate of Education in Collaborative Leadership (2005), which is currently in "teach-out"

(Program Teach Out Agreement, Jan. 20007); the online Executive MBA (2007); the MS in

Coastal and Watershed Science and Policy (2008); the Master of Public Policy (2008) as a pilot

program, which is being discontinued based on low enrollment and the outcomes of its recent

program review (Meeting with Vice Presidents, 3/16/11); an MS in Instructional Science and

Technology (2010); and the Master of Social Work (2010).

In 2009, the institution had 114 full- and 144 part-time faculty members (Data Exhibit

4.1), offered 18 undergraduate degrees, 30 concentrations, 20 minors, 7 graduate degrees, and

several teacher certificate options.

B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report

   1. Alignment with the Proposal

CSUMB developed a hybrid approach proposal for accreditation review. Planning was the focus

of the CPR, and three themes were identified for the Educational Effectiveness Review: 1)

Factors in Student Success: Student Success Initiatives; 2) Analyzing the Value of CSUMB

Academic Model; and 3) Quality in Teaching and Learning. The EER Report was closely aligned with the three themes outlined in the proposal. Through a period of time that included changes in personnel, the first theme, Factors in Student Success, evolved into an examination of student advising as a focus of intervention and an array of initiatives designed to create a sense of belonging and attachment.

The second theme, on the Value of CSUMB's Academic Model, was proposed as a more comprehensive assessment of the academic model than was actually undertaken. However, this is understandable, given the incremental changes in the model that have taken place since the proposal was written. The assessment focused on three key curricular elements (capstone, service learning, and second language proficiency) and four of the University's seven core values (interdisciplinarity; multicultural and global perspectives; technological sophistication; and ethical reflection and practice). An alumni survey was the primary tool used to assess the academic model.

The third theme was proposed to examine the various capstone experiences and to evaluate student learning under the different models. However, the Capstone Study does not actually assess student learning under the models, as was originally desired by the research group. Constraints of time, resources, and expertise led the group to focus on expectations, resource requirements, and perceptions of student learning under the models.

2. Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

The Institution has worked diligently to meet the stated activities, outcomes, and uses of the EER themes as previously outlined in the proposal. Despite time and resource constraints, CSUMB has produced a commendable review and report. The Visiting Team, however, learned of successful and commendable initiatives of CSUMB that were not mentioned in the EER Report

and its Appendices. For readers not intimately familiar with CSUMB, sections of the report may at times be somewhat unclear. However, overall, the report is well organized and covers required information.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The CPR Visiting Team and the WASC Commission cited two areas for continued attention: 1) strengthening feedback loops and 2) improving retention and graduation rates. The EER Report addresses both of these areas and reports significant improvements in both areas.

CSUMB indicates it has strengthened its feedback loops by "enhancing consistent use of data . . . to improve programs and services . . . across the university" (EER Report, p. 2). The EER Report cites four examples of strengthening feedback loops, and several examples were described in the Visiting Team's meetings with the Vice Presidents and with the Cabinet (3/16/11).

CSUMB has had long-standing challenges regarding retention and graduation rates. The work in these areas has been far-reaching, according to the EER Report (p. 4) and meetings with the Vice Presidents and Cabinet (3/16/11). Although there continues to be room for improvement, CSUMB has taken major steps in improving both retention and graduation rates.

SECTION II. EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. **Evaluation of the Institution's Educational Effectiveness Inquiry**

Theme 1: Factors in Student Success: Student Success Initiatives

CSUMB chose Student Success as one of the themes for the current reaccreditation cycle. In response to institutional research findings and student feedback, the campus has been actively engaged in multiple initiatives directed at increasing retention and student success. CSUMB has

had one of the lowest freshmen retention rates (EER Report, p. 10) and one of the lowest

graduation rates (Addendum on Student Success, p. 3) in the CSU system. As described in the

EER Report, "what began as deep skepticism regarding why we lose so many of our students has

given way to a strong sense of needing to understand our challenges and a willingness to change

(CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)" (EER Report, p. 42). The site visit team was impressed with CSUMB's

thoughtful and concerted efforts to address what the campus' WASC Educational Effectiveness

Committee (3/17/11) described as an inherent "tension" between the campus' core values and

what can reasonably be done with available resources (CFRs 1.1, 1.8, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

Over the past five years, efforts to improve both retention and graduation rates have

become the focus of intense institutional attention (EER Report, p. 10). Institutional research

revealed that the campus was losing students generally across the student body (CFR 4.3).

Attrition was evident across academic majors, both among students in good academic standing

and those on probation (CFR 2.10). Further, the gender and race of departing students were

proportionate to enrolled student demographics (EER Report, p. 9; EER Report Appendix 3, p.

137; CFR 2.10). In response, and as detailed in materials supporting the EER Report, CSUMB

has set ambitious improvement goals, including raising its 6-year graduation rate to 49.3% by

2015 (up from 35.6% in 2006) (Addendum on Student Success, p. 3; CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4).

Encouraging progress toward that goal is evident in the reported Fall 2010 freshmen retention

rate of 76%, up from 67% in Fall 2008 (Addendum on Student Success, p. 5-6; CFR 4.5).

In explaining the dramatic increase, campus personnel cited the fundamental importance

of simply "paying attention" to attrition issues, and engaging the campus community in dialogue

and data collection directed at identifying potential solutions (meeting with Provost, 3/16/11;

CFR 4.6). The campus' concerted effort to "tackle the problem on all fronts" (meeting with

Provost, 3/16/11) has clearly begun to make a difference. As the site visit team heard in multiple meetings (3/16/11; 3/17/11), tangible retention and graduation rate improvements, coupled with apparent indicators that "it's easier to be a student here than it was five years ago" (Cabinet meeting 3/16/11) have also helped sustain campus attention and commitment to continued improvement (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

While CSUMB's efforts to promote student success have focused, necessarily, on improving retention, campus personnel also conceptualize the notion of student success more broadly than retention and graduation rates (EER Report, p. 10). The common theme among student success initiatives detailed in the EER Report is that they are oriented toward more effectively "attaching" students to the campus community (EER Report, p. 10). Significant efforts have been made to base these and other student success efforts on data collected from current students and alumni as well as from employers (CFRs 2.10, 4.1, 4.4., 4.8). Taken together, CSUMB's efforts on this front reflect a major goal in the University Strategic Plan (2008-2018) (EER Report, p. 8; CFR 4.2). Goals for student success are directly tied to the campus mission and vision of "serving the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations" and to the 2009 CSU system-wide "Improving Graduation Rates Initiative" (Addendum on Student Success, p. 1; CFR 4.2).

At the core of CSUMB's student success initiatives has been a concerted effort to focus on "super practical problems," including clarifying degree requirement pathways and a retention-based intervention to improve undergraduate academic advising (meeting with Provost, 3/16/11; CFR 2.12). A new, centralized advising model will be overseen by a newly appointed Director of Academic Advising. Key elements of the new model include defined student learning outcomes, professional advisors with responsibility for specific degree programs and other specialized

caseloads, a changed role for faculty, centralized and satellite services, elimination of peer advisors, and an advising council and advising board (EER Report, p. 12; EER Report Appendix 3, p. 145). Based on analysis of student experience survey data (CFR 2.10) and consideration of relevant research and key principles regarding advising (CFR 2.8), this reconceptualization is the product of a two-year, cross-campus, collaborative effort led by the Academic Advising Workgroup. The aim is to make advising a CSUMB "signature strength" (EER Report Appendix 3, pp. 140-142; EER Report Appendix 3, p. 147; EER Report Appendix 4, p. 149).

The new advising model is being piloted in three academic programs during the 2010-11 academic year. Preliminary analysis will follow in summer 2011 (EER Report Appendix 3, p. 146; CFRs 4.4, 4.5). Two supporting efforts are also underway: 1) defining degree pathways for all academic majors and 2) integrating Career Planning Office activities into the Undergraduate Advising Center's primary advising functions (EER Report Appendix 3, p. 146).

To evaluate the success of this new academic advising model and to promote continuous improvement of academic advising services (CFRs 4.3, 4.4, 4.5), the campus has identified key short- and longer-term metrics (CFR 2.10) and taken steps to facilitate data gathering (EER Report Appendix 3, p. 146; CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6). Efforts during the planning stage to "focus on the fundamentals," consider multiple perspectives and potential approaches, promote "redundancy" with respect to establishing common knowledge about advising policies and practices, develop expected learning outcomes for advisement activities (CFR 2.3), and establish an advisory council (meeting with Academic Advising project representatives, 3/16/11) bode well for the successful implementation and long-term success of this model.

In addition to the new academic advising model, and again based on responsiveness to student feedback and institutional research (CFRs 2.10, 4.4, 4.5), CSUMB has implemented a

variety of other student success initiatives aimed at increasing retention and student success. These include a new Student Center to promote community building and help students integrate out-of-classroom experiences (EER Report, p. 14; CFR 2.13).

Another student success initiative is the now fully staffed Center for Student Success. This Center, developed with support of a U.S. Department of Education Title V grant, is designed to facilitate student involvement, interaction, and overall academic engagement (EER Report, p. 18). Center activities target entering first-time Educational Opportunity (EOP) students, EOP students transferring from community colleges, students identified for remediation in mathematics and English, and students on academic probation (EER Report, p. 18; CFR 2.13). As the campus continues its efforts to improve retention and graduation rates, the visiting team appreciated the expressed interest in maintaining current proportions of "special admits" and providing the necessary support programs to facilitate their success as CSUMB students (Student Affairs meeting, 3/17/11; CFRs 1.5; 1.7).

To aid in retaining high-achieving students, the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center (UROC) was founded in January 2009. This center focuses on individualized mentoring and cohort building; real-world research experiences; training and support; and rigorous academic standards (EER Report, p. 16; CFR 2.13). As partial evidence of the success of this Center, 15 of the 16 UROC students who applied to graduate programs for Fall 2010 were accepted (EER Report, p. 17; CFR 2.5).

Another notable student success effort, initiated in Fall 2008, is the development of a new model for CSUMB's First Year Seminar (FYS) in which FYS courses serve as "rigorous" introductory learning experience (EER Report, p.17; CFR 2.5). In Fall 2009, to increase first-year student engagement in curricular and co-curricular activities linked to coursework, and to

promote opportunities for peer collaboration, the campus also developed Project Higher Ground. Preliminary evidence indicates that students involved in this program were more likely to return for their third semester than their non-participating peers (EER Report, p. 16; CFRs 2.10, 4.4, 4.5).

Combined under the umbrella term "campus development," the EER Report also details a variety of initiatives to make CSUMB a more attractive campus for students, including improving campus grounds, establishing better public transportation between the campus and surrounding communities, investing in a more sustainable campus, and developing new majors in response to student needs and requests (EER Report, p. 15; CFRs 2.10, 4.4, 4.5). Moreover, to encourage the "thoughtful academic planning and exploration and selection of an undergraduate major," a Major Fair is also now sponsored annually (EER Report, p. 17; CFRs 2.12, 2.13).

Most recently, and in keeping with the campus' commitment to understanding and enhancing student success, CSUMB has joined a pilot study of American Association of State College and University (AASCU) institutions directed by the University of Alaska at Anchorage that aims to identify milestones of student success throughout students' undergraduate experiences. Ultimately, this effort is intended to develop national models for student success that transcend graduation rates in isolation (Graduation Initiative meeting, 3/16/11; CFR 2.8).

CSUMB's intensified focus in recent years on student success represents a significant cultural change for the campus (conversation with CSU Chancellor 3/11/11, and meeting with President, 3/16/11). Throughout the EER visit, the visiting team was assured that the campus is ready, at this stage of its development, to intensify its focus on students. The team was also assured that the entire campus community feels responsible for students' experiences at CSUMB (CFR 4.6). Many individuals and groups with whom the visiting team met (3/16/11 and 3/17/11)

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identified the significance of new University leadership (CFRs 1.3, 4.6) that has promoted a cultural shift and supported the development of strategic and academic plans that the campus has embraced widely (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

Another recurrent theme that emerged (multiple meetings, 3/16/11 and 3/17/11) as critical to progress in CSUMB's student success initiatives is the importance of open communication, good teamwork, strong partnerships, willingness to try new approaches (and to learn from mistakes), and integrated collaborative efforts among campus colleagues (CFR 4.6). Faculty and staff described increasingly strong relationships across disciplinary and administrative units, a growing sense of trust among colleagues, and an increasing commitment to data driven decision-making (CFRs 2.10, 2.11). Importantly, these cultural changes have been supported by structural changes such as creation of an academic program review process and establishment of local community partnerships. All these efforts bode well for CSUMB's ability to sustain these multifaceted efforts over the long term and to provide increasingly positive learning experiences for students.

In keeping with perspectives expressed by faculty and staff, students expressed appreciation (3/17/11) for continued efforts to "inform" students about "what's available that we may not know about" (e.g., financial aid opportunities, graduation application procedures, degree audit services) and help maximize their use of systems such as PeopleSoft, programs, and offices designed to enhance their educational experience (CFR 2.12). Students also described the strong "connections" among members of the CSUMB campus community; the "friendliness" and "willingness to help" that characterize their interactions with other students as well as with faculty, staff, and administrators; and the many opportunities to "get involved." Students

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indicated that the campus' small size and welcoming culture contribute to their success as students.

Theme 2: Analyzing the Value of CSUMB Academic Model

For the EER, CSUMB chose a highly focused study: to learn "to what extent do the CSUMB academic model and core values impact and contribute to professional and personal growth of our alumni" (EER Report, p. 19; CFRs 2.4, 2.6). The data source used to answer this research question was a survey of alumni conducted in October 2008. (Additionally, a survey of 22 employers was provided to the visiting team, but it was not included in the EER Report as the analyses were not completed until March 2011).

Of the 2233 available email addresses, 538 alumni responded to the survey. The survey focused on three elements of the academic model: capstone courses, service learning, and second language proficiency. In addition, survey questions directly touched on four of the seven core values directly and on three indirectly (CFR 4.8).

The research findings generally supported the hypothesis that features of the academic model helped prepare alumni for additional education or employment (CFRs 2.6, 2.10). Specifically, the capstone and service learning features fared best; second language proficiency did not appear as useful to respondents. Alumni also indicated the academic model promoted technical competency and interdisciplinary understanding (CFR 4.8). An additional result of the research that may be helpful to the institution is that both alumni who had started as freshmen at CSUMB and those who transferred in felt similarly about the academic model.

The institution indicates that it learned a great deal from the survey and found alignment in the findings with those produced in the Capstone Study. The results helped inform the

refinement of the new Otter Model for General Education, reduction of the language

requirement, and restructuring of credits associated with service learning.

In summary, the alumni study appeared to support some changes in the academic model.

It is an example of a feedback loop in practice. However, the methodology was limited; the

survey could not fully address the broad issue of the value of the model in relation to learning

outcomes. While the campus has begun examining the academic model, the Educational

Effectiveness Committee (3/17/11) indicated that they will continue to assess and seek

improvement (CFR 4.6).

As the campus continues to analyze the value of the academic model, it may be helpful to

add fiscal metrics and expanded measures of student learning to better quantify and evaluate the

true costs and benefits of the model. It might also be enlightening to overlay a student flow and

retention model with the academic and curricular model; such work could enable the institution

to analyze the interaction of student progress through the academic model with students'

decisions to stay or leave the institution.

Theme 3: Quality in Teaching and Learning

In addressing quality in teaching and learning, CSUMB focused on the capstone

experience. The approach, admittedly, differs from the proposal (EER Report, p. 22).

In the proposal, the institution indicated that it intended to study student learning

produced, student and faculty expectations of learning, and resource requirements. In

identifying how capstones contributed to student learning and understanding how

student and faculty expectations differed in different capstone models as well as what

resources requirements were needed for different capstone models, the institution

wanted to be able to make data-driven decisions regarding support of different models (Institutional Proposal for Reaccreditation, 2007, p. 9).

Instead of following this plan, the campus took a "big picture" approach, comparing faculty and student expectations and experiences and surveying select faculty and administrators regarding capstones (EER Report. P. 22). The study focused on the capstones themselves, faculty and students in selected majors, and deans from the three colleges offering capstone courses (EER Report, p. 23).

"Capstone at CSUMB: An Educational Effectiveness Study" (Appendix 7, EER Report), completed in October 2010, states that the capstone experience is described as a "best practice" in the review of research literature (EER Report, p. 159). The experience is also a "defining feature" of a CSUMB education (EER Report, p. 166).

While demonstrating that faculty and students perceive the capstone experience as valuable, the Capstone Study underscores the wide array of experiences termed *capstone* at CSUMB. The study also highlights that students come to the experience with a wide variety of skills—their writing skills were cited as particularly problematic—and programs are not uniformly providing clear guidance for students (EER Report, p. 166). In some cases, transfer students find the capstone significantly challenging. The EER Report notes (p. 24), as a major finding of the study, that faculty should define their roles and responsibilities in terms of teaching and mentoring capstone students.

Further campus discussion and research will now focus on individual departments: how to better prepare students within majors for the capstone, how to

create optimal capstone models within programs, and how to provide writing-across-the-curriculum support for students and faculty (EER Report, p. 24). In a campus retreat, participants noted that scaling capstones to a growing student population, with the university's continuing limited resources, may be problematic.

The Capstone Study is a thorough and well-organized report that addresses a key aspect of teaching and learning at CSUMB. The study aligns with the Alumni Survey in which graduates asserted that the capstone had contributed to their "preparation for additional education and employment" (EER Report, p. 20). The Capstone Study demonstrates that CSUMB is committed to developing and sharing learning expectations among faculty, students, and staff (CFR 2.3) and the institution's academic programs actively involve students in learning (CFR 2.5).

It is clear, also, that CSUMB is engaging in serious thinking and discussion about capstones and examining their overall effectiveness (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). The campus understands that the Capstone Study is only a first step; the institution has yet to explore the student learning that capstones produce at the program level (CFRs 4.6, 4.7). The campus has already noted that capstone experiences in different areas inconsistently connect and support CSUMB core values and academic goals (EER Report, p. 4).

As noted in the Capstone Study, capstone experiences provide opportunities to identify and assess the educational outcomes of an individual program (EER Report, p. 2). It will be helpful for more work to be done within majors and through program reviews on the actual learning outcomes of the capstone experiences. And, as the

campus addresses the topic of rigor, the capstone can be an effective touchstone for the quality of a program's upper-division coursework (CFR 2.7).

It should be noted here that, in focusing on quality in teaching and learning for the EER, CSUMB also intended to address the issue of academic rigor (meetings with the President, Vice Presidents, and Cabinet, 3/16/11). More pressing issues eventually took precedence over this issue; however, the campus is committed to addressing the topic in an intentional, focused manner, beginning with research followed by disciplinary and cross-disciplinary conversations. This appears to be an exciting initiative that will align with the implementation of the new Otter Model and the ongoing development of program review, the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center, the McNair Program, and other initiatives (meeting with Cabinet, 3/16/11).

B**. Institution's Systems for Enhancing Educational Effectiveness and Student Learning**

By strengthening feedback loops, CSUMB is demonstrating its commitment to enhancing its educational effectiveness and student learning. The EER Report (pp. 2-4) cites substantial progress in the use of data to improve both programs and services as part of continuous improvement (CFR 4.4). The University provided various examples of how the program review process has resulted in program improvement. The sample of academic program reviews reviewed by the visiting team all provided for review of actual student work in various forms (documentary films, portfolios, reports, and so on). It is clear that, to a significant extent, the process of assessing "student learning as well as the efficacy of academic programs and services . . . have been regularized and institutionalized " (EER Report p. 44).

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A sample of program reviews also provided some information on graduates, their current employment and other evidence of success. This is partial evidence that CSUMB is attempting to assure that students' learning meets university expectations (CFR 2.6). The survey of 22 employers conducted in the Spring 2011 found that most employers are satisfied or very satisfied with the skills and knowledge students hired (Survey of Employers, p. 2). These findings were also voiced in a meeting with Career Development personnel (3/17/11). From both formal surveys and informal feedback, the Career Development Center reports that employers continue to seek CSUMB graduates because they are satisfied with graduates hired in the past.

There has been progress also in assessment of student learning within co-curricular programs and services provided by Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. Since the team's CPR visit, assessment activities have moved from simply tracking participation and attendance and evaluating customer service and student satisfaction to actually assessing student learning (EER Report, p. 28). A web-based structure has been designed to facilitate student learning assessment. During the past year, senior leadership and other staff have worked with a consultant to develop outcomes measures and assessment plans. Effectiveness dashboards for each department now link departmental performance indicators, primary interventions, and learning outcomes and assessment summaries.

The Personal Growth and Counseling Center provides an example of the new connections between student learning and co-curricular programming (CFR 2.11). In 2010-2011, the Personal Growth and Counseling Center identified the reduction of repeat alcohol-related sanctions as a primary performance indicator. Rather than simply tracking numbers of participants, staff members have developed a decision-making workshop to serve as the primary intervention (CFR 2.10). Pre- and post intervention instruments are now used to assess student learning (EER

Report, p. 29). Two additional performance indicators will be identified in 2011-2012.

The visiting team was interested to learn that an outside vendor, Inside Track, was contracted by CSUMB as part of a Title V grant to coach first year students and advised the campus on which student success activities are proving most helpful to students (meeting with Vice Presidents, 3/16/11; CFR 2.13).

Overall, CSUMB is attempting to create an institutionalized culture that is more student centered (EER Report, p. 31). For example, members of the visiting team met with Academic Advising staff who described the current transition from a faculty-advisor model to a professional-advisor model. A newly appointed Advising Council has developed advising outcomes and an advising syllabus (meeting with staff, 3/17/11). The President and other members of the senior leadership are creating "more alignment" and "changes in direction" that focus on a more student-centered campus (meeting with President, 3/16/11).

This student focus was evident when several students described close faculty/student relationships, mentorship opportunities, and other illustrations of caring (meeting with students, 3/17/11; CFR 2.12). When asked, "Has the University met your expectations in light of the marketing and recruitment process you experienced?" most students responded affirmatively. Students also highlighted the ease with which they can get involved with co-curricular activities, including community service, University governance, and student life programming. The only notable concern from students related to a perceived disconnect between the Housing program and the University Corporation.

Overall, the visiting team heard ample evidence of the University's efforts to create a student-centered campus. The students we met with were enthusiastically supportive of CSUMB, both its mission and its efforts to promote success and satisfaction with student life.

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However, staff reminded us that much of the University's effectiveness derives from the work of full-time and part-time staff (meeting with staff, 3/17/11). Through the recent period of budget realignment, some staff positions have been eliminated or combined, while other positions have been kept vacant. A number of job descriptions have changed. To sustain the many new initiatives designed to improve educational effectiveness and student success, staff urged that the campus recognize the work of staff and provide support, training, and professional development as needed (meeting with staff 3/17/11).

C. CSUMB Program Review

The Program Review process, revised and adopted by the Academic Senate in 2007, now provides CSUMB two full cycles for evidence of effectiveness. The new process is based on assessment of student learning results and on program improvement planning (CFR 2.3). At the time of the EER Visit, twelve programs had been through the new process. For evaluation, the visiting team selected four academic programs as well as the General Education program and the Residential Life administrative function.

The academic self-studies, organized around major learning outcomes, include a review of the curricula and resources of the program. Also addressed are enrollment and retention, two critical issues for CSUMB. The process appears to be well supported by the Office of Institutional Assessment and Research and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (EER Report, p. 30). The process is also linked to institutional planning. CSUMB has invested in the professional development of its faculty to help increase the quality and effectiveness of the review process, but staff development was reported to be a lower priority (meeting with staff, 3/17/11). It also appears that the program review process is not linked closely to the Office of

Institutional Assessment and Research, even though the IAR provides the primary base data for many analyses and research projects (Meeting with Institutional Research 3/17/11; CFRs 3.4, 4.4, 4.5).

An application of the WASC Rubric for Assessing the Integration of Student Learning Outcomes to program reviews indicates the following:

- Required elements of the self study (DEVELOPED)

Faculty are required to provide the program's student learning outcomes, annual assessment studies, findings, and resulting changes. They may be required to submit a plan for the next cycle of assessment studies.

- Process of Review (DEVELOPED)

Internal and external reviewers analyze direct and indirect evidence of student learning in the program and offer evaluative feedback and suggestions for improvement. They have sufficient expertise to evaluate program efforts; departments use the feedback to improve their work.

- Planning and Budgeting (DEVELOPED)

The campus generally integrates program reviews into planning and budgeting processes, but not through a formal process.

- Annual Feedback on Assessment Efforts (DEVELOPED)

A qualified individual or committee provides annual feedback on the quality of outcomes, assessment plans, and assessment studies. Departments use the feedback to improve their work.

- The Student Experience (EMERGING TO DEVELOPED)

Program review may include focus groups or conversations with students to follow up on results of surveys. The process is moving toward having internal and external reviewers examine

samples of student work. Students also may be invited to discuss what they learned and how they learned it.

The program review process meets WASC's expectations and appears to have moved from the emerging to the developed level (CFR 3.8). All academic and most co-curricular programs are subject to program review. CSUMB gave several examples of how the program review process aligns program needs and institutional resources; it is less clear as to how this budgeting process actually works. Nevertheless, significant institutional actions overall appear to link the program review process with institutional goals (CFR 4.2).

The program review process itself was evaluated after its initial two-year implementation. This will result in both a revision to the Program Review Procedure Manual and a fine-tuning of the general model (EER Report pp. 32-33). As the evaluation continues, the institution is striving to more fully link the process with institutional planning processes. CSUMB has made significant strides in strengthening its feedback loops, and the program review process is a good example of a relatively new institutional process that supports educational effectiveness.

1. General Education

The EER Report indicates that the General Education requirements (termed University Learning Requirements or ULR's) developed by CSUMB founding faculty are now seen as having idiosyncratic ULR titles, being difficult to navigate, and contributing to transfer difficulties (pp. 6-7). In 2002, CSUMB completed a self-study and external review of ULR's, but there does not appear to have been follow-up to this work (2008-2009 URL Work Group Final Charge).

In academic year 2008-2009, the CSUMB Academic Senate Executive Committee and the Provost's Office formed a ULR Work Group that was asked to develop alternative ULR models that address matters of concern to students, faculty, and community members (EER

Report, p. 7). The charge to the group asks them to also consider a new Executive Order: "More recently, a new Executive Order (1033 CSU General Education Breadth Requirements), developed with the leadership of the Statewide Academic Senate, asks campuses to define their general education outcomes within the framework of the Liberal Education and American Promise (LEAP) campaign, an initiative of the American Association of Colleges and Universities."

In Fall 2009, the Work Group finished its work and gave its findings to another group, the University Learning Requirements Operations Committee (ULROP). Their effort led to a new General Education program, titled the Otter Model, that is planned to be fully implemented in Fall 2012.

The spring 2010 ULROP Report on Campus-wide Efforts to Reform General Education outlines substantive changes to the CSUMB General Education program. The campus is also now establishing rubrics, processes and structures to assess both learning outcomes and the overall success of the program (General Education Reform Narrative; CFRs 2.3, 2.4). The Academic Senate Executive Committee passed changes to bylaws to form a General Education Committee that will review GE courses as well as develop assessment for GE learning outcomes. In addition to vetting the new learning outcomes, the Senate Curriculum Committee Council has developed instructions to faculty regarding course submissions and methods for reviewing courses. Meanwhile, departments have been studying the Otter Model to determine which of existing ULR courses are best suited to serve in the new GE system and what courses will need to be developed.

Clearly, the reform of General Education at CSUMB is a massive undertaking and is still in progress. It appears that the process is being done thoughtfully, with input from departments

across campus (CFR 2.1). The assessment of the new Otter Model—both its contributions to student academic success and to student retention—will need to be examined carefully over the coming years. However, the significant work put into this project underscores CSUMB's commitment to creating programs that meet students' needs and contribute to their success.

2. Communication Design

The Bachelor of Science in Information Technology and Communication Design (ITCD) program self-study was completed in February 2009. This was one of the first programs to complete the full program review process using the new model. The faculty were very appreciative of the new design, including the organization and scalability of the process, and the support they received (meeting with ITCD faculty, 3/17/11). The need for the program was addressed through a review of the student demand, alignment to institutional mission, and contribution to society and the field. A significant problem with program enrollment was noted but not fully addressed (CFR 2.1).

Program quality was assessed by evaluating the curriculum, major learning outcomes, faculty composition, and student success and satisfaction. The eleven program learning outcomes were stated with sub-outcomes, the type of evidence that is used for evaluation, criteria and standards, and curricular pathways. Generally, the outcomes were well stated although, in some cases, the details around the standards and criteria for each were not fully articulated. Assessment data included student grades (based on course learning outcomes), portfolios, and student surveys. Analysis of the rubrics and outcomes was impressive (ITCD Program Review Self-Study; CFRs 2.3, 2.6).

Finally, a resource analysis was provided that touched on areas such as library and IT resources, campus services, partnerships, facilities, and funding. While each of these sections

held information of interest, there was no real link between resource evaluation and learning outcomes (ITCD Program Review Self-Study). This was a weakness of the ITCD self-study report.

The following evaluation resulted when applying the WASC Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes.

- Program Learning Outcomes (EMERGING)

The list includes reasonable outcomes but does not specify expectations for the program as a whole. The visiting team could not discern from the self-study whether the program aligned outcomes with institution-wide learning outcomes or with national disciplinary standards.

- Assessable Outcomes (DEVELOPED)

Each outcome describes how students can demonstrate learning, e.g., "Graduates can write reports in APA style" or "Graduates can make original contributions to biological knowledge."

- Alignment (EMERGING)

Students appear to be given reasonable opportunities to develop the outcomes in the required curriculum.

- Assessment Planning (DEVELOPED)

The program has a reasonable, multi-year assessment plan that identifies when each outcome will be assessed. The plan may explicitly include analysis and implementation of improvements.

- The Student Experience (EMERGING TO DEVELOPED)

Students have some knowledge of program outcomes. Communication is occasional and informal, left to individual faculty or advisors. It would be useful to verify whether students truly grasp program outcomes even though they are included in most syllabi and are readily available in the catalog, on the web page, and elsewhere.

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Generally, the ITCD program review is a good example of a developed integration of student learning assessment into the process. Program improvement priorities were clearly stated with details and timelines, and many have already been completed. The program's enrollment issues appear to be significant, but the program improvement plan did not address what will be done to balance resources and enrollments (CFR 2.3).

Documenting and archiving the program review process will be an important consideration for CSUMB as program reviews in the new format accumulate over time. It will also be important for the reviews to be shared, so that others can learn from the process. This was less of a problem for ITCD, given the electronic nature of ITCD program material, than it may be for other programs (meeting with ITCD faculty, 3/17/11; CFRs 4.3, 4.4).

3. Masters in Education

The Masters of Arts in Education (MAE) includes two strands—Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) and Special Education (SPED)—and typically enrolls more than 300 students. The most recent program review (2008-2009) included a self-study addressing program need and quality along with a resource analysis, a report by external reviewers, and a response to program review and improvement plan for academic years 2009-2014.

The self study notes that the mission and vision of the MAE program are derived from, and reflect, the mission of the Teacher Education Department as well as the broader mission and core values of the CSUMB campus (MAE Portfolio Part 1: Program Self-Study, pp. 5-6; MAE Portfolio Part 2: Program Quality, pp. 14-19). Program purposes and learning outcomes (MAE-LOs) reflect professional expectations explicated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBTPS) for National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in that they "are designed to develop further the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of practicing educators for

working within a pluralistic society and for continuously examining and enhancing their own practice (MAE Portfolio Part 1: Program Self-Study, p. 9). Within the program portfolio materials, various assessment efforts are also addressed, with acknowledgment throughout that the scale, scope, and/or current availability of previously collected information limit interpretability.

The external review report (May 2009) addresses specific "concerns and questions" that were posed by the Provost and by the external reviewer, including issues pertaining to student recruitment, learning outcomes, "track" delineations, the capstone experience, time to completion, and governance structure (External Review for Master of Arts in Education at CSUMB Report, p. 1).

The external review report commends faculty commitment to providing a "superior" graduate program but expresses concern that a lack of resources impedes their vision and plans (External Review for Master of Arts in Education at CSUMB Report, p. 2; CFR 3.5). Concerns about the availability of selected data and the apparent disconnect between selected learning outcomes and student experiences were also expressed (External Review for Master of Arts in Education at CSUMB Report, pp. 1, 3, 4, 5; CFRs 2.3, 2.6). External review team members encouraged consideration of eight significant topics: program track delineation, faculty compensation for capstone advising, research methodology coursework, degree conception, hiring plans, rule-based governance, learning outcomes fit and alignment, and enrollment (External Review for Master of Arts in Education at CSUMB Report, pp. 7-9).

The Master of Arts faculty and staff prepared a program review response and improvement plan that identifies three program strengths and twelve program weaknesses while offering a broad plan to "create and maintain program quality" that includes detailed "threats" to

program improvement (Response to Program Review 2009 and the Master of Arts Program Improvement Plan Academic Years 2009-2014, pp. 3-5; CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). As reflected in the Master of Arts Improvement Plan Academic Years 2009-2014 and reaffirmed in discussion with program representatives during the WASC team's visit (3/16/11), Master of Arts faculty and staff have used the program review process to engage thoughtfully and intensively as they continue to develop strategies for addressing foundational program issues (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

The WASC Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes outlines key areas of the program review for the Masters in Education program:

- Program Learning Outcomes (EMERGING)

Learning outcomes have been developed, and they have been mapped with both C&I and SPED strand courses (Master of Arts in Education Portfolio, p. 20; CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6). However, as acknowledged in the Academic Program Improvement Plan, some outcomes are seemingly disconnected from student experience; others are not measured in the program or consistently addressed in the coursework (Response to Program Review 2009 and the Master of Arts Program Improvement Plan Academic Years 2009-2014, p. 2; CFRs 2.6, 2.7).

- Assessable Outcomes (EMERGING)

Recently established efforts to enhance the assessment of learning outcomes include the identification of rubrics for each MLO which will also be included in the MAE Program Manual (Response to Program Review 2009 and the Master of Arts Program Improvement Plan Academic Years 2009-2014, p. 19; CFRs 2.3, 2.6, 2.7).

- Alignment (EMERGING)

The overall concept of the program aligns with the mission of the Teacher Education Department and the broader mission and core values of the CSUMB campus, but there are questions now

being addressed related to whether there should be support and resources for both or for just one of the MAE tracks.

- Assessment Planning (EMERGING)

As described in the MAE Portfolio, the program faculty has made efforts to assess student learning outcomes (Master of Arts in Education Portfolio Part II: Program Quality, p. 23). The Response to Program Review 2009 and the Master of Arts Program Improvement Plan Academic Years 2009-2014 document (p. 13), note that the recent self-study process helped faculty identify key areas for improvement. Corresponding plans for responsiveness include strategies for improving documentation and the creation of rubrics to help facilitate the assessment process (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7). Program representatives highlighted the value of the TK-20 platform as a mechanism for organizing evidence to assess student learning outcomes; faculty also encouraged consideration of managing such a system at the university level to more broadly support departmental outcomes-based assessment efforts across campus (Master of Arts in Education meeting, 3/17/11).

- The Student Experience (EMERGING)

Since its inception in 2000, the program has systematically collected, via course evaluations, evidence of candidate perceptions of program courses and faculty (CFR 2.4). Very recently, the program began to conduct more holistic assessments both of current students' satisfaction and of graduates' success and satisfaction with their educational experience (CFR 4.6). Response rates have been challenging, but it appears a foundation is being established to understand the student experience more comprehensively.

Overall, the Master of Arts in Education program review, conducted during the 2008-2009 academic year, identifies areas of strength as well as areas of significant challenge that

program faculty are actively and thoughtfully addressing. Reflecting on their academic program review process, Master of Arts in Education representatives indicated that the opportunity to receive feedback on current program practices and status and to reflect on future directions toward program enhancement was very positive (Master of Arts in Education program review meeting, 3/16/11). When asked about insights to enhance the review process in the years ahead, representatives suggested clarification regarding expectations for the program improvement plan (PIP) and developing self-study questions that more clearly distinguish graduate programs from undergraduate programs (Master of Arts in Education program review meeting, 3/16/11).

4. Teledramatic Arts and Technology (TAT)

Introduced in 1994, Teledramatic Arts and Technology (TAT) is the largest arts program at CSUMB. Through the years, the program has experienced several transitions (TAT Self-Study, p. 4). Enrollment in the program has recently increased after experiencing declines from 2005 through 2008. Several personnel changes have taken place since the last review in 2005. Now that TAT is in the initial stage of its second program review, major program revisions have been proposed and new Major Learning Outcomes (MLOs) developed (approved December 2010).

The first part of the Self-Study for Program Review appears to have focused on creating capacity for evaluating effectiveness rather than on the actual effectiveness. New learning outcomes and rubrics are being created and refined. There was a pilot test of the new MLOs on five student capstone projects. Program faculty understand the need to clearly define and refine rubrics, and they are looking forward to an external evaluator's visit next Fall (meeting with TAT faculty, 3/16/11).

- Program Learning Outcomes (EMERGING)

During the Self-Study process the faculty used student MLO narratives to help target the areas that students felt built specific skills. Student project portfolios were then assessed using the information from student narratives and the newly drafted MLO's. During this process, problems with the language of the MLO's were identified, and work began to revise them. Revised MLO's received final approval in December 2010.   There has not yet been sufficient time to determine their appropriateness (CFRs 2.2, 2.4).

- Assessable Outcomes (EMERGING)

For five of the six MLO's the department has developed dimensions or attributes, which are to be assessed for each MLO. The assessment rubric has three ranked categories: "Exemplary," "Accomplished/Proficient," or "Developing/Basic."   However, expectations for each proficiency level are not delineated at this time. The faculty are working on descriptions as to what it means to assess at each rank. (CFRs 2.1, 2.4, 2.5) The TAT faculty thought they were at the "Initial" stage of assessment (meeting the TAT faculty 3/16/11), while the visiting team evaluated this dimension as "Emerging."

- Alignment (EMERGING)

As part of the review process the TAT department is redesigning courses and curriculum to identify where students will be given the opportunity to develop in the areas identified by MLOs (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 4.6).

- Assessment Planning (EMERGING)

The TAT has made an excellent initial effort towards developing its assessment plan. Department faculty are in the initial phases and are expected to develop more experience in assessment planning as they go through the process.

- Student Experience (EMERGING)

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Students have been involved in writing narratives about their experiences with and perceptions of the MLOs. From the Self Study for Program Review, it appears that students are satisfied with the program and are actively involved in the development of the program. Many graduates of the program are successful in their fields and report positive experiences in the program.

5. Global Studies

The Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies (GS) is a small program within the Division of Social, Behavioral, and Global Studies (SBGS). The program review of Global Studies, conducted in 2007-2008, included central questions, answered by the program faculty, and a report by external reviewers. To report on the success of GS graduates, the CSUMB reviewers referred to a few individual examples and a survey of SBGS Division alumni, completed on 2007, that provided data from 55 respondents, only 11 of whom identified themselves as GS alumni (Global Studies Program Review, p. 5; CFR 2.7).

The self-study comments that the program faces issues regarding course scheduling and availability, and that it draws disproportionately fewer diverse students than the percentages represented in the rest of the University (Global Studies Program Review, p. 22). The self-study also underscores that "In most cases, [the] curriculum is as much course-based as it is outcomes-based, meaning that it is essentially a list of required courses" (Global Studies Program Review, p. 10; CFR 2.2).

The university's Academic Program Committee wrote a brief response to the self-study (CampusReviewCommittee.GS.doc) indicating that, while the nature of the GS program is aligned with CSUMB's values and priorities, the program is isolated, not drawing sufficiently on the resources of the larger university, and suffers from poor internal and external communication. The response does not specifically comment on student learning outcomes.

It appears that the program review has been followed by some work to improve the program. In 2009-2010, this work included an assessment of GS capstone portfolios that examined selected students' portfolios using five key questions (CFR 2.6). However, an assessment of learning outcomes is not readily available in this report as there are no defined criteria for evaluating portfolios. A section on diversity of the portfolio topics simply lists the titles of portfolios (Global Studies Assessment Plan 2009-2010).

The WASC Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes outlines key areas of the program review of Global Studies:

- Program Learning Outcomes (EMERGING)

The program review underscores individual courses; however, overall, while there are learning outcomes for the program (CFR 2.5), they are very broad: "The curriculum is learner-centered, outcomes-based, and broadly interdisciplinary and seeks to integrate the study of the global society with the planetary biosphere" (Global Studies Program Review, p. 8).

- Assessable Outcomes (EMERGING)

Again, outcomes appear to be course based, with individual instructors grading students rather than truly assessing outcomes. Projected outcomes are broad: "Through the GS major, students deepen their knowledge, skills, and competencies in various aspects of global life" (Global Studies Program Review, p. 5).

- Alignment (EMERGING)

The overall concept of the program aligns with the values and goals of CSUMB, but there is little discussion of alignment with university needs and resources.

- Assessment Planning (EMERGING)

Other than the portfolio review, there is no evidence of ongoing assessment planning.

- The Student Experience (EMERGING)

There is only anecdotal information about students' perception of their experience.

The Global Studies review, done four years ago, reveals a program that lacks internal cohesion and focus on integrated student learning outcomes. The program appears to be based on individual courses rather than on a rigorous curriculum leading to an intentional progression of student learning. The university's Academic Program Committee's response to the program review indicates concerns but stops short of laying out a plan for the program. In meeting with the GS faculty (3/17/11) the visiting team was told that the program faculty would now focus on establishing learning outcomes, gathering data, assessing student learning, and creating a plan that will enable their next self-study to provide for ongoing feedback loops (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6).

6. Residential Life

In 2009, CSUMB Student Housing and Residential Life (SH&RL) staff members began examining the area's mission statement to evaluate whether it would provide effective direction for the future (CFR 4.1). Focus groups with paraprofessional and staff members were held to brainstorm departmental goals and directions, as well as priorities for meeting constituent needs (SH&RL Fall 2009 Program Review Report, p. 1; CFR 2.13). The work resulted in a new mission statement and goals endorsed by the department's student and professional staff. By summer 2009 the department had a comprehensive document containing the mission statement, goals, planning objectives, and learning outcomes (SH&RL Fall 2009 Program review Report, page 2; CFR 4.6).

Planning goals are supported by a comprehensive set of strategic objectives; co-curricular areas are defined in relationship to their support for student learning, academic success and personal development.

In addition, the program review for student housing and resident life includes areas important to a living learning community. These include student conduct, alcohol education, mental health concerns, living-learning initiatives, professional development and maintenance of the physical plant.

An experienced housing professional conducted the SH&RL external program review, meeting with stakeholders and conducting staff interviews (SH&RL External Program Review 2010 , CFR 2.11) . Related to mission and goals, the external reviewer recommended that the department undertake two fundamental tasks: (1) significantly narrow the array of planning goals and program objectives from trying to be "all things to all people" to center resources on the most essential elements and (2) identify how the department intended to meet its goals. "What would success look like?" (External Reviewer Report, pp. 3-4).

Related to physical plant maintenance, the external reviewer recommended that the department conduct a lifespan evaluation/feasibility study of current housing stock, especially Main Quad facilities. The reviewer also noted that planning, development, and construction of new, on-campus facilities for single students should be a high priority of the University administration (External Review Report, p. 5).

The reviewer also addressed student attrition in the housing program. The report suggests implementing a resident student "exit survey" that would provide department administration with immediate feedback as to why students leave the University housing program (SH&RL External Program Review, p. 7). The reviewer also encouraged the Vice President for Student Affairs to review how the University Corporation manages and allocates resources generated by Student housing and residence Life (SH&RL External Review, p. 23). During the 3/17 meeting with the visiting team, the SH&RL staff shared a copy of the draft Student Housing and Residence Life

Program Review Improvement Plan. The plan, which includes recommendations resulting from both the Administrative Program Review and the external review (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3), also includes an update on actions and goals identified at the Fall 2010 retreat.

Visiting team members were impressed with the department's efforts, especially the leadership's support and development of a multifaceted approach to planning and program review.

D. Other Issues Arising from the Standards and CFRs

1. Sustainability

CSUMB has undertaken a significant number of initiatives in support of educational effectiveness. The institution has substantively revised program review processes, focused intentionally on student learning outcomes, and embarked on major program improvement planning. These processes are linked with the strategic plan, operational through 2018, and with the academic plan, operational through 2013 (meeting with WASC Steering Committee, 3/17/11). New initiatives include defining and implementing academic rigor, implementing and assessing a revised general education program, and prototyping and implementing a new advising model.

Faculty members communicate a sense of ownership with both assessment and program improvement processes (conversations with Faculty Senate and Global Studies faculty, 3/17/11) and indicate a commitment to the success of their endeavors. Moreover, as CSUMB budgets are aligned with institutional priorities, funds have been allocated, even in a difficult economy, to support educational effectiveness as well as to provide faculty support through release time and summer hours as they tackle these university-wide initiatives (CFRs 2.9, 3.8, 3.11, 4.1, 4.6, 4.7).

The institution (EER Report p. 42) highlights the planning cycle that integrates budget planning and resource allocation with educational effectiveness and program planning. This planning cycle recurs annually, with a three-year window for each cycle (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8).

To sustain momentum, CSUMB will need to maintain a pipeline of individuals to replace faculty and administrators who leave the institution over time. Coordination among administration and faculty, combined with appropriate training and professional development, should serve CSUMB well in sustaining and completing the initiatives the institution has undertaken. Engagement across the campus is impressive.

From numerous conversations with faculty, staff and administrators (3/16/-3/17/11), it seems clear that CSUMB has remained true to its initial vision yet has initiated and accepted change in ways that make it a stronger institution and keep student learning at its core (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.4, 4.1).

2. Recognition of changes in CFRs

CSUMB recognizes and has addressed changes in CFRs. As a supplement (Table B) CSUMB addressed each of the new required coverage areas: Student Success, Program Review, and Sustainability of Effectiveness Plans. The institution also addresses the 2008 changes to the CFRs through Supplemental Table A. CSUMB does state a need to make data on student learning outcomes more public and easily accessible. However, CSUMB presents evidence that it is addressing the revised CFRs.

3. Finances

As a public institution, CSUMB receives a substantial portion of its funding from the State of California. Due to a projected $25 billion deficit, the Governor of California proposed $500

million cuts to the California State University system in January 2011. However, the Governor also proposed an extension of temporary tax increases put in place in 2009. The temporary tax extension, which requires legislative and voter approval, is scheduled to appear as a referendum on the June 2011 ballot. If the referendum does not pass it is possible that deeper cuts in support for education will be proposed (CFR 3.5).

While the CSU System-wide budget has some uncertainties, CSUMB is reported to have managed its funds well (conversation with CSU System Chancellor, 3/11/11, and meeting with Vice President for Administration and Finance, 3/17/11). The campus has approached budgeting based on realistic forecasts and has allowed for contingencies. Through a series of budget tightening efforts and a budget process aligned with its strategic plan, the campus has been able to fund priorities and several new key initiatives (CFRs 3.5, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). The Vice Presidents are jointly setting budget priorities, working with a campus budget committee, and assuring that resources are aligned with campus goals. Based on interviews with the Vice Presidents (3/16/11), the visiting team is confident that CSUMB will be able to sustain key initiatives supporting growth and success despite the state's financial challenges.

4. Admission (promotional/marketing)

The Visiting Team reviewed on-line and print student recruiting and admission materials. The materials were well done and accurately reflect the campus, its programs, and activities (CFR 1.7). In reporting that their experience at CSUMB clearly met or exceeded their expectations (meeting with Students 3/17/11), students support the conclusion that the recruiting and admission materials are accurate and appropriate.

SECTION III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW AND THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

CSUMB wrote a very ambitious proposal that focused on planning for the CPR and three themes for the EER. Expected outcomes from the CPR included: 1) The establishment of institutional goals and the establishment of program priorities; 2) an analysis of retention data that would aid the institution in understanding the factors that led to retention and establishing best practices for improving the retention rates; and 3) an evaluation of academic space requirements in relation to enrollment projections. The EER themed approach listed the following desired outcomes: 1) Identify attributes of successful initiatives, develop and improve interventions to increase student retention; 2) Evaluate and rank components of the academic model to be used in guiding resource allocations; and 3) Learn how the capstone model contributes to student learning, examine resource implications and sustainability of various capstone models.

CSUMB has made significant progress in all areas. The campus now has a Strategic Plan and an Academic Plan that are used for making resource allocations and other decisions. Through the planning process, CSUMB has set planning priorities that guide campus initiatives and decisions. Through a variety of initiatives, CSUMB has increased retention and graduation rates. The campus is unsure which initiatives have had the most impact, but they believe that the work of Inside Track, a firm hired to help advise students and provide feedback on retention issues, is proving useful. Many Inside Track activities are expected to be institutionalized when the Title V grant that is currently supporting these efforts ends in 2014 (meeting with Vice Presidents, 3/16/11).

The campus has assessed its space requirements and has made significant improvements in functionality and attractiveness of campus structures. The University continues to seek funds to demolish or remodel some remaining structures.

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Outcomes of the EER efforts are evident on campus. Student retention has improved. Graduate rates have increased. The campus is in a deep dialogue about advising and General Education. In the examination of the academic model, the methodology was so highly focused that it could not fully address the broad issue of the value of the model in relation to learning outcomes. Nonetheless, the visiting team is assured that a sustained examination of the academic model will continue in earnest.

CSUMB is also engaging in serious discussion of capstones and is examining their overall effectiveness. The campus understands that the Capstone Study is only a first step; the institution has yet to explore the student learning that capstones produce at the program level.

CSUMB is an active and dynamic institution that continues to embrace its vision, adapt to its environment, and plan for the future. Administrators, faculty, and staff are invested in student learning and are committed to the institutional vision. Student success appears to be paramount, and decision-making is founded on what is perceived to be best for the students (CFRs 1.1, 1.2). Based on evidence presented to the Visiting Team, CSUMB appears to be making significant progress in achieving its goals. The direction the campus is heading is clearly understood and supported by students, faculty and staff. To continue making progress towards its goals, the campus is urged to finalize and fully implement its many initiatives.

Commendations

1. The visiting team wishes to commend CSUMB on the extensive materials provided prior to the EER visit and the well-organized and hospitable support for the visit. University personnel were generous in responding to team requests as well as sharing time and information with the team.

2. The University is to be commended on the numerous processes and plans developed and implemented since the CPR visit. The continued coordination of these processes and plans will be instrumental for the University as it continues building an institution committed to student learning and success.

3. The University is to be commended for improving processes that have dramatically affected student retention. The institution's multi-targeted and comprehensive approach includes extensive data collection and analysis as well as implementation of changes ranging from improving facilities to designing a new advising model and mapping routes to graduation.

4. The University is to be commended for aligning resources with strategic goals and priorities, even in a challenging economic environment, to support educational effectiveness.

Major Recommendations

1. It is recommended that CSUMB continue aligning assessment, program planning, and institutional research functions to develop further a culture of evidence and documentation and to ensure data-driven decision-making (CFRs 2.10, 4.5).

2. It is recommended that the University improve training and development for staff engaged in numerous initiatives and core activities, particularly those supporting student retention and educational effectiveness (CFR 3.4).

3. It is recommended that CSUMB continue encouraging and supporting faculty in the effective establishment, dissemination, and assessment of student learning outcomes, especially in developing and refining rubrics for assessment and communicating them to students (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6).

4. It is recommended that the campus establish a working definition of academic rigor and then ensure that rigor is embedded in program planning and review processes as well as in teaching and learning (CFRs 4.4, 4.7).