

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW
To California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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

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SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Brief Description of Cal Poly Pomona (CPP)

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (CPP) serves as a regional campus for over 22,000 undergraduate and post baccalaureate students seeking an affordable, comprehensive education. The main campus is located on 1,438 acres in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. As one of two polytechnic universities in the California State University system, it has a rich heritage committed to applied student learning. The “learn-by-doing” (Educational Effectiveness Review [EER] Report, p. 1) is integrated throughout its broad liberal arts education, applied sciences and professional fields.

CPP evolved from the Voorhis Unit of the California State Polytechnic College. The land of the current campus was donated to the state of California in 1949 by the W. K. Kellogg family. In 1956, 508 students and 44 faculty and staff relocated from the Voorhis Unit to the Kellogg campus. The Pomona campus separated from the San Luis Obispo campus in 1966 and became the California State Polytechnic College, Kellogg Campus. In 1970, WASC granted initial accreditation to CPP and University status was granted to CPP in 1972. CPP’s most recent reaffirmation of accreditation occurred in March 2001. At that time the next Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) visit was scheduled for 2007 and the EER visit for Fall 2008. In

2006 CPP requested that its CPR visit be moved to 2008 and the EER visit to 2010. Both requests were granted.

A 25-member Board of Trustees provides oversight of all aspects of the CSU system, including CPP. As one of seven polytechnic universities in the United States, CPP shares a commitment to accessible, practice-oriented education by blending theory and practice in all disciplines.[CFR 1.1]

In 2009 CPP had 735 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) faculty, 565 faculty positions were full-time, while the remaining 170 FTE positions were composed of 455 part-time faculty members (EER Report Appendix VI d -128). CPP reports nationally recognized programs in agriculture, architecture, business, hospitality management, engineering and science that attract students nationally and internationally. (EER Report, p. 1)

CPP has four off-campus programs; the team reviewed one: a grant funded master's degree in History offered at an elementary school in Riverside, CA. The cohort program has approximately 15 students currently enrolled in the program. The site was visited by one member of the WASC Visiting Team the day prior to the visit to the main campus. A report of this visit is included in Appendix B.

B. The Educational Effectiveness Review Report

CPP submitted its Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) report to the Western Association of Schools and College (WASC) in July 2010. The WASC Accreditation Review Team's (Team) appraisal of the Report was to determine its alignment with the *Institutional Proposal* as well as the quality and rigor of the review and EER report; effectively to ascertain the extent with which

CPP demonstrates its core commitment to educational effectiveness meets the standards for the reaffirmation of accreditation.

1. Alignment with the Proposal

The Educational Effectiveness Review report was well aligned with the CPP Proposal submitted in 2006. The proposal addressed the issues raised in the Commission Action Letter (February 2004) following a 2003 Special Visit. In addition the proposal described a preliminary self-review under the WASC Standards and framed the review process around three specific themes: Institutional Excellence, Evolution of the Teacher-Scholar, and Student Success. The proposal identified three anticipated outcomes from the reaccreditation process: 1) Establish an ongoing practice of inquiry and analysis; 2) Integrate and align activities with the University Mission and goals and with each other; 3) Develop the habits of ongoing reflection, improvement and planning that are central to a learning organization. (Institutional Proposal).

The EER Report begins with explaining CPP's approach to establishing a practice of inquiry and analysis and describes CPP as a "Learning Centered University" (EER Report 5-8). The EER Report also describes the university's approach to evidenced based decision-making and processes to assure activities are aligned with and integrated with the University Mission [CFR 1.1, 1.2]. The three themes, introduced in the Proposal are the major focus of the EER Report. Each theme receives a dedicated chapter, describing background and context, development, implementation, assessment and sustainability. The final chapter of the EER Report focuses on challenges and the results achieved on educational effectiveness.

2. Quality and Rigor of Review Report

The Team found that the EER Report is well organized and well written. All tables and required information were well referenced and easily accessible through a provided electronic copy on a flash drive. As previously mentioned, it is aligned with the institution's 2006 Proposal and addresses issues raised during the 2008 CPR as well as issues raised by the March 2009 Commission's Letter and the September 2009 Letter, written in response to CPP's 2009 Interim Report.

The EER report demonstrates substantial work by the institution during the past 18 months. Numerous groups, committees, and individuals have been involved in collecting and analyzing data. Older processes have been revisited and in many instances modified or completely redesigned. The faculty, staff and administration are reported (EER Report, pp. 10-11) to have worked together to streamline planning. In meetings with the committees (WASC Steering and EER Committees) that were involved in these efforts, it was apparent everyone worked on the reports and was involved in developing the report and associated materials.

The EER report shows rigor in processes and quality in reporting. The rigorous process undertaken by CPP was reported to have resulted in helping the University "further develop and refine its core commitment to educational effectiveness." (EER Report, p. 46) Meeting on campus with planning and assessment committees confirmed this assertion. Many examples were given as to how what initially was a WASC exercise, became institutionalized and are now part of the culture. Examples were given as citing ways in which preparing for the EER resulted in improvements in the curricula and student learning. (AA Assessment Implementation Task Force Meeting 10/20)

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

The CPR cited five recommendations:

1) *CPP's academic units establish and adopt a core set of understanding of the Teacher/Scholar model, appropriately tailored to the respective disciplines.*

CPP has engaged the campus in a dialog about the Teacher-Scholar Vision, which resulted in a definition of the Teacher-Scholar Vision (EER Report, p. 17). The definition focuses on “reflective teaching, scholarship broadly construed and the integration of teaching and scholarship”. The general nature of the definition allows each academic unit to tailor it appropriately to their needs. The EER Report states that data suggest that CPP’s faculty have “enthusiastically” embraced this vision and it is well accepted by many of the highly productive faculty.

2) *The CPP administration and the Academic Senate establish clear understandings of their respective roles in the strategic planning process.*

Both the 2009 Interim Report and the EER Report discuss the roles of the Academic Senate and the CPP administration and how they evolved during the development of the University’s Academic Planning process that resulted in the adoption of a plan in 2010. The EER Report states “CPP’s commitment to share governance has grown in significant ways.” (p. 3). CPP is described as becoming more open and inclusive in its operations, which has led to greater mutual respect among the participants in shared governance (p. 10).

3) *CPP establish and implement its strategic planning processes and begin using the resulting plans to make critical personnel and funding decisions.*

CPP began working on its Strategic Planning processes immediately after the CPR visit. The development and approval process of the *Academic* strategic plan is described as evolving with “consensual decision-making and lively debates” (Interim Report p. 6) [CFR 3.8]. Open forums were held that involved the entire campus community.[CFR 4.1, 4.3] Consistent with the

previous Prioritization and Recovery plan (abandoned in 2007), the current Academic Strategic Plan includes indicators of success for making choices and distributing resources. According to the EER Report (p. 3), the “crafting of the University Strategic Plan highlighted the balance that CPP strives to seek between a centralized and decentralized decision-making model.”

4) CPP establish and implement a workable General Education assessment plan in 2008-09 in order to demonstrate its use for improving student learning by the time of the EE review.

The 2009 Interim report said that significant progress had been made in revising the General Education assessment plan. Using the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) principles as a framework, CPP focused on general education as an integrated program, and articulated learning outcomes. Flaws in the 2004 protocol became evident and new protocols were developed and approved by the Academic Senate.

5) By June 2009, in anticipation of its Educational Effectiveness Review in 2010, CPP submit a written report that produces a complete campus strategic plan (including measurable goals, metrics, and a funding plan) and that provides documented assurance that general assessment is underway.

CPP submitted a written report to the Commission on June 30, 2009. As required, the report, addressed the issues of an *Academic* Strategic Plan and General Education Assessment. The report explained that based on the principle that academics as a core mission of the University should drive planning; therefore, academic strategic planning was seen as the means to make progress in the university strategic planning process (Interim Report p. 6). The Academic Strategic Plan was approved by the Academic Senate and the administration in 2009. Three broad foci comprise the plan: 1) learning and teaching; 2) the university as a community; and 3) the roles of the university and individuals in larger communities (Interim Report p. 6,

EER Appendix 1A). The EER Report states that the University Strategic Plan, which is based on the Academic Strategic Plan, was adopted by the campus in 2010 (p. 3). The campus views this Plan as a dynamic document that will be tweaked and revised as the environment and situations change. (Meetings with Academic Affairs Planning Evaluation Committee and University Strategic Planning Committee 10/20/10).

The document also reported on the processes that resulted in a substantially changed protocol for GE Assessment. From 16 committees involved in GE assessment, the new protocol has one committee with six members, who represent the eight colleges. The new GE Assessment Plan was scheduled to be implemented in Spring 2010. However, at the time of the visit, the Team observed that GE assessment is only in its initial stages of development. The GE committee has agreed upon four GE goals with 13 sub goals. The Committee worked with departments and faculty members to map GE courses with GE Assessment goals. The mapping process is relatively complete. Over the summer of 2010 workshops were held to develop rubrics for assessing student work. Four rubrics have been developed in draft form, though the rubrics have not been pilot tested on any classes. CPP will need to continue its diligent efforts on GE Assessment.

SECTION II. EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

Theme 1: Institutional Excellence

CPP's approach to Institutional Excellence was to demonstrate the institution's growth as an outstanding learning institution in an Urban Environment (EER Report, p. 5). The EER Report describes CPP's questions and metrics in four sub theme areas: Development of Planning;

Programs of Distinction; Sense of Community; and Cultivating Resources. Each of the sub-themes is linked to WASC Standards and Criteria for Review (EER Report, p. 2). Focusing on the over-arching goal of becoming a Learning Centered University, the campus is striving to develop an evidence-based culture of continuous improvement [CFR 4.4].

Development of Planning

The recent efforts of the University in the development of the University Strategic Plan gave the university an opportunity to practice an evidenced-based approach to planning. Using a decentralized, bottom-up method the campus compiled and analyzed massive amounts of data and engaged extensive discussions in the development of its University Strategic Plan. The plan, which articulates the university's goals and priorities, is designed to guide the campus through 2015. The Plan is reflective of the University's Mission and represents the campus' core values and shared vision [CPR 1.1 & 1.2].

The Academic Strategic Plan served as a foundation for the University Strategic Plan. The process of developing the Academic Strategic Plan, approved in May 2009, was led by an Academic Senate appointed Ad Hoc Academic Planning Committee that involved extensive consultation within all the colleges. This effort was based on goals and some informal/formal plans already developed and being implemented among the departments and units.

The Ad Hoc Academic Planning Committee also proposed two committees as a structure for moving forward. The Academic Affairs Planning Evaluation Committee is composed primarily of faculty members and is designed to serve as a bridge between the departments and colleges and the University level planning efforts. The second committee, the University Strategic Planning Committee, was charged with developing the University's Strategic Plan

using an inclusive and transparent process (EER Report, p. 9).[CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3]. The University Strategic Plan, adopted in 2010, has eight goals that are to serve as a guide to university decision-making and resource allocation.

Programs of Distinction

In its EER Report, CPP identifies its programs of distinction in the context of institutional excellence as those programs that “support engaged and effective learning experience and that exemplify our university’s stated mission, values and vision.” (EER report, p. 6) Through a rigorous evaluation process, each of the university’s programs was evaluated based on answers to questions in three areas: 1) How, in terms of on-going planning, do the program’s activities fit with the university’s mission statement and listed core values?; 2) How are the program’s operations and activities assessed and how this information was used to make improvements?; and 3) How are resources allocated within the unit. Based on the answers to these questions, CPP compiled the results in a spreadsheet, which outlined each program’s effectiveness in the three areas.

Creating a Sense of Community

The sense of community among the constituencies was also identified by CPP as a focus of Excellence. The team learned that CPP has identified and implemented several events and activities designed to create campus community for students. Other activities and events are organized to link current students to alumni, community neighbors, staff and faculty (EER report, p. 10). The report also cites the results of a 2009 Collegiate Senior Survey to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of its efforts to build community. Based on responses to several items, it appears that a vast majority of the students hold positive feelings of belonging and a strong sense of community at CPP. [CFR 2.10]

The 2008 Visiting Team's CPR report cited "identifiable tension between the faculty and the administration, which was having a negative impact on the feeling of community." (CPR report, p. 14). This was attributed, in part, to a lack of clear understanding of the role of faculty versus administration in shared governance [CFR 3.8, 3.11] and to the lack of effective and stable academic leadership. The EER report states that CPP is moving towards becoming a more open and inclusive institution and that communication among the stakeholders is improving. It also notes that working through the processes involved in developing the University Strategic Plan helped open lines of communication among faculty, staff and administration. The report states there is a "deepened engagement of the campus community." (p. 11)

In several meetings with the Team, the participants verified the information in the EER report and expressed the notion that the campus has experienced a culture shift from one of distrust and suspicion to one of engagement. (Meeting with Academic Affairs Planning Evaluation Committee 10/20 and Academic Senate Executive Committee) They recognize reorienting the culture is an on-going process. For the most part, the campus sees itself working together to achieve its goals of student learning and student success. The campus respect for students and the learning process is both broad and deep. Student learning permeates every aspect of the institution, including the areas as diverse as Parking and Transportation (Open Forum meeting 10/21).

Shared governance is currently seen as effective on the campus. The Provost is perceived to be faculty-oriented and is seen as having been effective in creating a respectful relationship between faculty and the administration. The centrality of Academic Affairs in the University is expressed openly among the University community and is demonstrated through using the Academic Strategic Plan as the basis for the University's strategic plan.

CPP identifies diversity as one of its core values (EER Report, p. 11). CPP appears to rank very well in terms of ethnic diversity and has been recognized as a LGBT-friendly campus. The proportions of females and ethnic minority faculty members have also increase during the past decade (EER Report, p. 13) [CFR 1.5, 3.2]. CPP reports that more than 50% of the new hires in the past 10 years have been female – and many of these women have been the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The diversity of the student body is evident merely walking around campus. Working with the Office of Student Life there are eight cultural centers and each center offers a variety of activities, including tutoring and one-on-one counseling designed to support students in achieving success. [CFR 1.5, 2.11, 2.13]

Communicating the Mission and Cultivating Resources

CPP has a distinct mission of learn by doing, hands on education. [CFR 1.1] It has many excellent programs that rank among the top tier on national rankings. It also has highly satisfied students [CFR 2.10], a high quality of campus life and positively impacts its community through a variety of programs. However, CPP perceives that its mission and positive attributes are not known or sufficiently appreciated outside the University.

Since its last WASC review, CPP has undertaken several initiatives designed to better communicate with the external communities about what it does and how it can serve their needs. For example, 66 class sections now operate as service learning courses. In 2008-2009 students logged more than 18,000 hours working on projects in the communities. Outreach has been increased; however, due to lack of funding, the Downtown Center CPP, where a range of programming was offered, was closed in 2010.

CPP has recently launched two fund raising initiatives: the Identity Campaign and the Comprehensive Campaign. The first is designed to position CPP in the minds of the community through a series of marketing actions. The second, a fund raising campaign --the Comprehensive Campaign-- has a goal to raise \$150 million by 2013 (p. 14). At the time of the visit, the University had raised \$78.5 million, of which \$42 million was donated by the Kellogg Foundation. The kick-off celebration will be held in November and members of the Alumni/community group that met with the WASC Team said they will contribute to and be strong supporters of this effort. As part of the fund raising effort, the Alumni Association will match the donations of first time alumni donors up to a limit of \$100,000. The President and Alumni are confident that the campaign will be successful. (Meetings with President and Alumni 10/20)

Theme 2: Teacher-Scholar Model

Cal Poly Pomona's innovative learn-by-doing approach to education permeates their educational experience. In order to effectively achieve this driving pedagogical paradigm, CPP is committed to fostering a highly skilled and dedicated core faculty of teacher-scholars who are reflective teachers, active scholars, and strive to integrate these threads into their teaching to enhance their students' learning. [CFR 2.9]

In 2008 President Ortiz reiterated that the Teacher-Scholar (T-S) model is one of the University's core values. In response to this, and feedback from the WASC CPR visit which suggested the model was not widely understood, CPP established a T-S task force with broad faculty and administrative participation whose goals were two-fold: (1) develop an interpretation of the T-S model that is consistent with the mission and vision of CPP and (2) increase campus awareness and understanding of the CPP T-S model. With significant research and engagement

with the campus community and leadership, the T-S task force honed the CPP T-S definition to its current form:

Teacher-Scholars at Cal Poly Pomona are role models who actively promote life-long intentional learning to our students, are actively engaged in advancing their fields of inquiry, and are committed to blending teaching and scholarship into a single synergistic endeavor that results in a creative integration of the two roles.

The CPP T-S model acknowledges that differences in scholarship exist across disciplines, but affirms that Teacher-Scholars “[m]ake intellectual and/or creative contributions that extend and/or develop new knowledge or creative inquiry” and “[p]roduce work that is peer reviewed, critiqued [...] and/or] results in a publication, presentation, creative work or other product disseminated to a wider audience beyond the Cal Poly Pomona community”. Academic departments, working within the framework of this common vision, establish the standards to which their departmental colleagues are held in retention, tenure, and promotion (RTP) matters. This is due to the decentralized nature of the university, where criteria for RTP are determined at the department level.

A novel feature of the CPP T-S vision is their its emphasis on integration of one’s scholarship and teaching. CPP desires that their Teacher-Scholars are not simply scholars who teach or teachers who do scholarship. CPP seeks a model where such faculty work is integrated, each mutually reinforcing and informing the other and ultimately benefitting the students. This is particularly relevant for the polytechnic learn-by doing paradigm of CPP, where a significant fraction of the curriculum involves studio, laboratory, and field activities. [CFR 2.8]

Teacher-Scholar Data

CPP has several resources in place to directly support their T-S vision. [CFR 2.9] The Faculty Center for Professional Development regularly facilitates faculty workshops, reading circles, learning communities, and other events that support teaching, research, and integration at all levels (junior to senior faculty). The Faculty Center also dedicates resources to best practices for teaching and learning, particularly with regard to changing pedagogies such as the use of Blackboard (CPP's learning management system), clickers (real-time classroom response systems), and teaching online courses. [CFR 3.4] For example, in Spring 2009 CPP had 1,357 courses being taught using Blackboard (involving 19,290 students) which represents a 120% increase in the number of courses taught using Blackboard from 2008.

The Provost's Teacher-Scholar Program, initiated in 2007, is a competitive program that provides junior faculty (assistant or associate professors) with support towards their development as teacher-scholars. The program provides summer research funds for two consecutive summers and additional support for scholarship such as help with grant preparation and career planning. The number of Provost Scholars has been 14 (2007), 11 (2008), 13 (2009), and 11 (2010). The CSU Research Scholarship and Creative Activity Program (RSCA) annually distributes over \$2.5 million across the campuses to support RSCA. Due to the current budget crisis, the CSU did not fund this program in 2009-2010. However, President Ortiz committed to provide internal funding to continue the program at about 50% the previous level, demonstrating the importance of scholarship and creative activity at CPP and the commitment to the T-S model at all levels. [CFR 2.8] Although RSCA funding is projected to return in the 2010-2011 budget, President Ortiz is committed to continuing to use internal funds to increase support for a broad range of activities supporting the T-S model, including summer research support for students who engage in research opportunities with CPP faculty.

The number and size of external grants in support of scholarly activity at CPP has grown from 56 in 2002 (totaling approximately \$12 million dollars) to 83 in 2008 (totaling approximately \$13 million dollars). Although the impact of this level and distribution of external funding remains to be documented, CPP is clearly seeking increased external support to develop its teacher-scholars. The College of Science alone had 36 such grants worth \$6.5 million in 2007-2008, compared to 2001-2002 when it had four grants worth \$266,000. CPP has seen similar growth in peer-reviewed publications with 170 faculty publications in 2004-2005, compared to 529 in 2008-2009. Two key indicators, in addition to the Provost's Teacher-Scholar program, cited in support for these trends are competitive start-up funds (among the CSU campuses) and reassigned time (50% first year, and 50% second year for half of the science departments), which is above the median for the CSU system.

One measure of the integration of teaching and scholarship on the CPP campus is the number of student publications (co-authored or not) and student presentations at local, regional, and professional conferences. In 2007-2008 (the first year that colleges were asked to report the data) there were 143 student papers or presentations. In two of the last three years, CPP students comprised the largest number of participants in the Southern California Conference for Undergraduate Research, an annual conference highlighting research and creative activity carried out by students throughout the region, with over 50 institutions represented. The number of CPP undergraduates participating in the last three years has been 55 (2007, CSU-LA hosted), 147 (2008, CPP hosted), and 107 (2009, CSU-DH hosted). CPP also hosts several in house research celebration events such as the Campus Summer Research Symposium (with 31 student presentations) and the College of Science's Annual Research Symposium (with over 50 student presentations and/or posters). In 2008 CPP initiated the Undergraduate Research – Building a

Research Opportunity and Networking Community (UR-BRONCO) which is emerging as a central body for encouraging and networking student research across the colleges. One of the goals of the UR-BRONCO group is to create a campus-wide celebration of student research that would build upon the current models and bring the celebration of student research to all colleges within the University.

The shared TS vision has also led departments to reexamine and modify their RTP documents, in many cases as part of their current departmental strategic plan development. An analysis of the departmental RTP documents for the academic year 2009 indicated that of the 47 departments, 46 explicitly mention the teaching criteria appropriate for promotion and tenure, 44 explicitly mention the scholarship criteria, and 40 mention the integration criteria (14 making explicit mention, 26 making some mention). [CFR 2.8] One of the common citations of integration among the RTP documents is the mentoring or supervision of undergraduate research projects and/or senior thesis projects.

CPP also examined fifty of the job advertisement announcements from 2004 to 2009 and found that while all of the job descriptions mentioned teaching and scholarship, only twenty mentioned integration. CPP expects this number to increase with their new T-S vision statement. [CFR 3.3]

Overall, the Team found that there was enthusiastic and vibrant support for the T-S model throughout the faculty and administration at CPP. Moreover, the support at all levels was anchored in the common understanding of the importance and relevance of the integrated teacher-scholar to the mission of CPP.

The primary challenges cited by faculty were time and resources to support their scholarly activities. Common factors cited for impeding scholarly progress were the high

teaching load and limited opportunities for reassigned time (e.g, to write grants or develop scholarship or training in new areas). One factor worth examining is appropriate and equitable teaching credit assigned for supervision of senior theses, capstone projects, and other experiential learning opportunities such as service learning and supervision of student teaching. Finally, sustained allocation of resources, including RSCA and beyond, are important for maintaining the current momentum in the T-S vision.

The team observed that the University would benefit from a central office for gathering evidence of the various research experiences; organizing and sharing that data (tie into sustained funding/resource decision making); developing explicit outcomes/criteria to evaluate/assess research experiences (student learning); and communicating these outcomes explicitly to students. There should also be continued revisions of departmental RTP documents to reflect T-S vision and consideration of a College level alignment of standards in RTP process, working under this shared vision. Internal funding and enhanced support for scholarship and creative activities should continue, coordinated with UR-BRONCO.

Theme 3: Student Success

Cal Poly Pomona has embraced a goal of student success and has demonstrated a commitment to assess student progress toward that goal. CPP has made a conscious effort to understand the profile of its student body, using the CIRP Freshman Survey to identify its salient characteristics. [CFR 4.5]

A majority of CPP students share one or more of the following characteristics: are first generation in their families to attend college, receive financial aid, work while attending school and commute. The student population is very diverse, reflecting the community from which the

university draws its enrollment. The Team confirmed that academic preparation of first-time freshmen has increased over time; freshman preparation for college-level mathematics has improved most dramatically.

Student Success Data

In accordance with the expectations of WASC, CPP collects, analyzes and presents it data, disaggregating sub-groups, specifically by gender and ethnicity. [CFR 4.62.10] CPP compares its performance on key measures against other CSU institutions. CPP tracks retention rates, graduation rates, first-year persistence and community college transfers.

CPP has set goals for each of these measures and developed a Graduation Initiative Plan to meet these goals. Relevant data are reviewed on a regular basis. [CFR 4.4] The Graduation Initiative Committee is reviewing and considering various approaches to improving the progress to graduation. The committee recognizes that to sustain this effort an individual needs to be appointed to coordinate the initiative. The individuals on the Graduation Initiative Committee are committed to the goal of improving the graduation rate of all students and addressing the achievement gap among the ethnic groups on campus. (Meeting with GIC, 10/21/10).

CPP has created a number of programs to support student success. These include a mandatory orientation program, including a structured entry program, BroncoFusion. These programs are assessed and improved based on student comments. [CFR 2.13, 2.14]

Academic advising is also a central component of CPP's student success effort. Advising is supported by an Advising Task Force, charged to offer professional development workshops, identify issues that can be addressed through advising and improve the advising process, as

appropriate. Faculty commitment to the advising process is demonstrated by the Academic Senate's institution of the mandatory advising requirement for students with GPAs below 2.2. [CFR 4.7] Administrative commitment is demonstrated through support of on-line tools for advising, including a Degree Progress Report and BroncoDirect, a common management system. [CFR 4.6, 2.12]

CPP also offers entering students a First Year Experience program, responsibility for which resides at the college level. The programs vary by college and are not mandatory. At the time of this report, 40% of first-time freshmen had taken the program. Preliminary results suggest that program participants demonstrated better grade performance than the eligible students who did not take First Year Experience. [CFR 4.7] Given the documented successes of the program in the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences and the College of Engineering, CPP may wish to extend knowledge of best practices to the other colleges.

A variety of other programs across the university support student success. These include: University Wide Tutorial Services, Science Educational Enhancement Services, Maximizing Engineering Potential, a Faculty Student Mentoring Program, Academic Excellence Workshop, and Maximizing Engineering Potential. All of these programs maintain student success statistics and demonstrate value to participants. One of the strengths of CPP's decentralized approach to student success support structures is that these programs are tailored to majors and address issues that may be particular to students in a specific field of study. [CFR 4.4]

Student Learning Outcomes

Critical to improving student success is the articulation of student learning outcomes and the institutionalization of a process of assessment of student learning. CPP articulated University Learning Outcomes in 2005 and keeps them in front of the faculty through a variety of forums.

[CFR 2.3, 2.4] Students are also informed of the learning outcomes through various marketing materials and marketing strategies. CPP assesses student learning through a variety of nationally validated standardized assessment instruments, including: Collegiate Learning Assessment, the Graduation Writing Test and the National Survey of Student Engagement. [CFR 4.4, 4.5] CPP analyzes the results and has developed strategies to address shortcomings in student learning. For example, CPP has a high initial pass rate on the Graduation Writing Test, but a falling rate for those who do not pass on the first try. In response, CPP developed a writing proficiency course as an alternative method for students to demonstrate writing competence.

Student learning is supported by co-curricular programs made available to students through the Division of Student Affairs. [CFR 2.13]. Each of the 20 units in the division is reviewed in accordance with criteria based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. Seven of the units had completed external review at the time of the EER report. The remainder of the programs are either under review or scheduled for review prior to 2015. Typically reviews are constructive and provide advice for program improvement. [CFR 2.11]

Academic Program Review

Academic Program Review is an important element in the assurance of student success. CPP uses the program review process to collect data on student learning outcomes, to reflect on those outcomes and to use them as the basis of program improvement. The integration of assessment of student learning outcomes into the program review has occurred progressively over the past ten years. [CFR 2.7] Most undergraduate programs now have assessment plans that are incorporated into the program review process. Program assessment also includes an external review to help assure that programs are up-to-date and of appropriate quality with regard to the

standards of the field of study. Programs that are accredited by discipline-specific accreditation bodies must also meet the criteria of assessment of student learning established by those accrediting bodies. Many graduate programs, however, have not yet adopted plans for the assessment of student learning. This will become a priority for CPP as graduate programs prepare for program review with their associated undergraduate programs.

General Education

At the time of the CPR Review in October 2008, the review team observed that CPP needed to make more progress on the assessment of general education.

General Education assessment is the least developed assessment program at CPP. Although a campus committee has been working for some time to identify the assessment tools for each element of general education none of these tools have been fully deployed. The Team urges CPP to identify key learning outcomes for general education and to begin to implement basic measure of effectiveness. (CPR Report page 25.)

This observation was supported in the WASC Action Letter that followed:

The Commission heard that the Academic Senate has now implemented a revision of its general education assessment process, but program review is not yet sufficiently developed. Many of these issues have been long standing, dating back to previous WASC reviews. (Commission Letter, March 6, 2009)

Since that time CPP has taken a number of steps to revise its general education assessment plan, developing a set of four general criteria and three (of 13) rubrics to evaluate each general education goal. CPP has also taken initial steps to put a process in place that they believe will assure the continuing assessment and evaluation of general education. At the time of the visit, however, the four rubrics had not been pilot tested and the time line for doing so was not clear to the Team.

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

CPP has many systems in place for enhancing educational effectiveness and student learning. Assessment has become part of the culture of CPP and the Team was introduced to

many examples across the colleges where assessment activities had led to positive changes that were designed to enhance student learning. For example, representatives from Engineering, Hospitality Management, Landscape Architecture and others communicated how their programs have used assessment data to change curriculum, restructure programs, or design new methods to enhance student learning. (Academic Affairs Assessment Implementation Task Force meeting 10/20/10). The view was also expressed that perhaps the budget difficulties of the past few years have in some ways forced programs to use assessment data from their programs to determine the best ways to operate with reduced funds.

While different assessment tools are utilized most programs use some forms of embedded assessment, which review and evaluate actual student work. In some cases this is done by the instructor, in others it may be done by outside reviewers. When Human Nutrition & Food Science found that students were not performing well on an exit exam, they are reevaluating the exam as well as their program.

C. Program Review

The WASC Visiting Team expressed concern in their October 2008 CPR Report that the “[a]cademic program assessment has been slower to develop.” (CPR Report p. 27) The Team was assured at that time that an assessment component would be integrated into the template for the regular departmental program review report. The program reviews, including a self evaluation and an examination by a two-person external team, are critiqued by the College Dean, the Provost and a standing committee of the Academic Senate. Comments on the student assessment component of the program review are now part of the appraisal in the administrative reply that is returned to the department. [CFR 2.7]

The actual program review “template” is not as rigid as the previous paragraph would suggest. The senior administration of CPP encourages all of the professional programs to be accredited by the appropriate professional organization; e.g., the College of Engineering has programs accredited by ABET. The accreditation review is accepted in lieu of a separate CPP program review. As far as our team is aware, the accrediting organizations require student assessment as part of the departmental self-study. But some organizations seem to require more analysis and depth of student assessment than others.

In the past, this process was institutionalized and appears to be working well. The reviews are done on a five to seven year cycle. For some departments the official program review was a new requirement. These departments were allowed to do a program “assessment [in lieu of a program review] in order to incorporate a more developed assessment plan into the next review cycle. [CFR 2.3, 2.7]

As stated in the EER report, “The institution is well aware of the importance of assessment of learning outcomes as a part of an evidence-based program review. The analysis during the program review should include an examination of the learning outcomes, the tools used to assess demonstration of the outcomes, the results obtained, and the changes suggested by an evaluation of the results. ... Today, nearly all of the undergraduate programs have developed assessments plans, most have had the plans externally reviewed, and all are looking towards their next program review.” (EER Report, p. 36)

The Team was able to meet with representatives from the Department of Music and the Department of Computer Science. Both completed their self study in 2008 and met with the external committee at that time. The CS Department was and continues to be accredited by ABET. Their accreditation was renewed, and they feel that this review cycle is complete. The

review of Music is still in process. The Music Department is under the impression that the Provost's office has the current program review file. The plan has been forwarded to the Academic Senate for review, and, consequently, is not yet complete.

Over time the Music Department hopes to receive accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). If this is achieved, the program review for CPP will be replaced with an accreditation review by the NASM.

Based on a review of a selection of Program Reviews and meetings with the Music Department and Computer Science departments, the Team evaluates CPPs review process as meeting the assessment needs of the institution. [CFR 2.3, 2.7, 4.4] Because some of the reviews are prepared for outside organizations using slightly different templates, there are different levels of response to queries of different types. Regardless of the template used, the Team was impressed with the focus on student learning displayed by the faculty in those program reviews consulted.

D. Other Issues Arising from the Standards and CFRs

1) The financial context of the CPP Educational Effectiveness Review

CPP undertook preparation for its Educational Effectiveness Review in the context of significant financial uncertainties facing the State of California and the CSU. According to Chancellor Reed, the CSU experienced a budget reduction of \$565 million in 2009-10. For the campuses, this translated into fee increases for the students, salary reductions through furloughs for faculty and staff, some loss of positions and general reductions in operating budgets. This loss of funds also resulted in reductions in campus enrollment targets, part of which were subsequently restored with "one-time" federal funds. The budget for 2010-11 was somewhat improved, ending the need for furloughs and increasing enrollment capacity by raising enrollment targets. At CPP,

funds for enrollment increases, allocated too late for the beginning of the fall quarter, are to be expended on enrollment growth in the winter and spring terms. Enrollment increases for winter and spring 2011 were initially funded with one-time allocations, with the hope of more permanent funding to support them to follow at a later time. The CSU goal of expanded access, while consistent with its mission, creates planning challenges for CPP and other CSU campuses.

The uncertainties of funding have had a complex effect on educational effectiveness at CPP. On the one hand, the initial enrollment reduction permitted CPP to admit a higher percentage of better prepared students, thus improving the likelihood of higher retention and graduation rates, a CSU and campus goal. Because of its location and its reputation, CPP was able to accomplish this while maintaining and increasing the diversity of its student body. On the other hand, rapid and unexpected changes in funding, have resulted in “last minute” enrollment decisions (first down, then up), requiring further degradation of the campus faculty/student ratio. The future availability of funds to support these enrollment commitments remains uncertain.

This volatile environment for funding and enrollment takes a toll on educational effectiveness. Faculty and staff furloughs reduce the amount of time that can be devoted to building the assessment systems called for in the CPR. Nevertheless, both the quality improvement systems and the accreditation report were addressed at a high level of quality over the past two years since the CPR. It is a credit to the commitment, dedication and enthusiasm of the campus community that CPP accomplished most of what was expected of it in the recommendations following the CPR. The Team found very few faculty or staff who wanted to dwell on the burdens imposed by these financial circumstances. Rather, those who are responsible for building systems of educational effectiveness appear to have undertaken their tasks with a commitment to thoroughness and with the interests of students at heart. For

example, the Academic Affairs Assessment Implementation Committee meets regularly to support the expansion of program assessment beyond the departments that need it for discipline-specific accreditation. The “programs of distinction” designation was established through a call to departments to apply a common template to their work. Many departments, both academic and support, answered the call to demonstrate that they meet the criteria. Adding a residential component to mandatory orientation is a third example of instituting a student centered change in practice in order to promote educational effectiveness over financial exigencies. Academic and strategic planning documents were also developed and adopted over this very difficult two year period. The Team agreed that any one of these projects would be considered an important accomplishment during a period of financial turmoil. That CPP strengthened the capacities identified in the 2008 review and initiated the implementation of its major planning and assessment systems is highly praiseworthy. With the exception of general education assessment, CPP thoroughly addressed the issues raised by the Commission in the CPR review.

Admissions and Recruiting

Although not required, the committee perused CPP’s recruiting materials and reviewed admission processes. The team found the materials accurately described the University, its programs and campus and the admission process to be appropriate for a CSU campus.

SECTION III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

CPP has been responsive to each of the issues that were salient in the 2008 CPR Report, the Commission’s letters in response to the CPR Report and the 2009 Interim Report. Specifically,

- WASC commended CPP on its progress and asked for clarifications of responsibilities. The EER Team echoes the acknowledgement of progress and notes that the responsibilities have been designated.
- CPP has produced a strategic plan, built on its academic strategic plan. Division, College and Department strategic plans are in the process of aligning with the university strategic plan.
- CPP has taken the first steps toward development of a general education assessment plan. Learning objectives and some evaluation rubrics have been developed. However, a general education assessment has yet to be conducted and, of course, no results are available to inform program improvement.
- CPP has forged working relationships between campus administration and faculty governance that has resulted in an approved campus academic strategic plan that provided the basis for development of a university strategic plan. The university plan is being used to guide programmatic and resource decisions. Shared governance roles have been clarified to a great extent, and mutual respect is evident.
- CPP has articulated and developed its teacher-scholar model of faculty work in ways that result in common understanding of its core elements across academic departments and colleges.
- CPP has re-conceptualized its goals for general education and started to develop an elaborated assessment format that has the potential to provide information for program improvement and to be sustainable over multiple cycles of review.
- The review team notes that CPP has accomplished this work in the context of financial turmoil and uncertainties. The effort CPP has put into preparation for the Educational

Effectiveness Review would have been commendable in the best of times. Under current circumstances it has been remarkable.

CPP presented its educational effectiveness through a theme based report. Consistent with the Proposal and CPR Report, the three themes were Institutional Excellence, the Teacher-Scholar Model and Student Success. The CPP mission and vision is polytechnic and learning centered. The commitment to a polytechnic curriculum and a “learn by doing” philosophy is broad and deep. Academic programs are imaginative in their pedagogy and committed to continuous improvement. CPP’s conception of “programs of distinction” that support engaged and effective learning is original and invitational to all programs. It is supportive of the campus vision and mission.

Since the CPR visit, CPP has successfully built a university-wide strategic plan on the foundation on its Academic Strategic Plan. There is evidence that departmental, college and division plans are constructed to be congruent with the university plan. There is also evidence that the strategic plan is being used to align programmatic and resource decisions.

CPP has developed a teacher-scholar model of faculty work that is appropriate for a polytechnic university and that advocates the integration of teaching and scholarship. The core conception of the teacher-scholar is widely accepted by the academic programs and there is evidence that it is being used in personnel decisions. Acceptance of the common conception of the teacher-scholar has grown since the CPR visit.

CPP values student success as strategic goal of the CSU and as a commitment to its students. As a highly diverse campus, CPP carefully tracks success disaggregated by ethnicity and gender. A multitude of programs that support and encourage student success are offered and evaluated. Much of this work is organized as a graduation initiative. CPP is quite successful relative to its

peers in persistence, retention and graduation of its students. In the spirit of continuous improvement, CPP has set a graduation initiative goal to increase graduation and retention rates of underrepresented students.

Academic program review that includes review of student learning outcomes is broadly accepted at CPP. Most departments have initiated the cycle of review and improvement, although some have not fully implemented this process cycle.

The assessment of general education remains a challenge for CPP. Since the CPR review, the campus has revised and simplified its assessment criteria and evaluation rubrics. Although the review team acknowledges this progress, substantial work remains to be accomplished before a complete assessment can be implemented.

Recommendations:

1. ***CPP should continue to work on its general education assessment and complete a cycle of data collection, reflection and program improvement.***[CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7]

The team found that although CPP put tremendous efforts into developing its general education assessment, there is still much that needs to be done before the assessments can be administered and the results can be used to make decisions regarding the program. There also needs to be more focus on the integration of assessment across the entire general education program.

Resources will need to be allocated to this effort if it is to be completed in a timely and effective manner.

2. ***In light of resource constraints, CPP should act to assure that its progress in the development of assessment of student learning and the use of the teacher-scholar model in personnel and program decisions is sustained.***[CFR 2.8, 2.9 3.8 3.11],

The team found the work of CPP on assessment of student learning and the use of the teacher-scholar model is beneficial to students and the entire institution. These activities are core and

need to be sustained into the future. The teacher-scholar model should be incorporated into the promotion and tenure criteria of the academic departments, thereby establishing a baseline level of expectations regarding the teacher-scholar concept.

3. *CPP should focus the work of the graduation initiative to help assure progress on improved retention and graduation rates as well as progress on closing the gaps in the graduation and retention rates of underrepresented students.* [CFR2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.10, 2.12, 2.13]

The initial work on the graduation initiative has substantial potential to increase graduation rates of all students and to close the achievement gap of underrepresented students. This new initiative requires the continued commitment of the university community to achieve its goals.

APPENDICIES

Appendix A

The panel of the Interim Report Committee that reviewed the CPP Interim Report on August 25, 2009, urged CPP to identify individuals or committees responsible for various initiatives associated with the Academic Strategic Plan, the University Strategic Plan, and the Assessment of General Education. Specifically, the letter to CPP asked for identification of responsible parties associated with the following:

- *Clearly identify who is responsible for ensuring that the Strategic Planning Process is completed and continuous cycles begun.* –The Provost
- *Clearly identify who is responsible for ensuring that the assessment of General Education is completed and continuous cycles begun* – Associate Vice President for Academic Programs.
- *Identify specific individuals and/or specific committees who are responsible for receiving and analyzing data and ensuring the data and analysis are used in the process of Strategic Planning* – Academic Affairs Planning Evaluation Committee, University Strategic Planning Committee with support from Institutional Research.
- *Identify specific individuals and/or specific committees who are responsible for receiving and analyzing data and ensuring the data and analysis are used in the process of Assessment of General Education* - General Education Assessment Committee
- *Ensure that the faculty who teach the majority of General Education courses are involved in the process of structuring the General Education Assessment Plan and in the implementation of the recommendations that follow the assessment* – Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and the Academic Senate.

Appendix B

OFF-CAMPUS SITE SUMMARY

[Summary form for off-campus site reviewers. A completed copy of this form for each off-campus site visited should be appended to the team report. Evidence based on the information collected may be integrated into the body of the team report as appropriate.]

1. INSTITUTION: Cal Poly, Pomona (CPP)

2. SITE LOCATION:
Grant Learning Center
4011 14th Avenue
Riverside, CA 92516.

3. TEAM MEMBER: Jon Jacobsen

4. CONTEXT: The site is the classroom for the off-campus “Teaching American History Program” a 3-year DOE grant funded program for 15 students who are teaching at the Middle or High School level in the Riverside area. The instructors are regular CPP History faculty, with the lead teaching by Dr. John Lloyd.

5. DATE VISITED and LENGTH OF VISIT: Monday, October 18, 2010, 30 minutes on site.

6. VISITED IN CONJUNCTION WITH: CPP’s EER visit.

7. DESCRIPTION OF ON SITE INTERACTIONS: I met with Prof. John Lloyd, the primary professor for the program.

8. OTHER MATERIALS REVIEWED: NA

Suggested Lines of Inquiry: Please address each of the following. Representative CFRs are noted in each cell below.	Observations and Findings	Check (X) here if follow-up is needed.
<i>Quality of the Learning Site.</i> Is the physical environment and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to the fostering of learning and dialogue between faculty and students? (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, 3.5)	Yes. The classroom has a seminar style format, wireless internet, computer projector display, and so on. The Riverside location is particularly beneficial for the students to not have to travel all the way to Pomona (in terrible traffic).	
<i>Student Support Services.</i> What is the site's capacity for providing advisement, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? (CFRs 2.13, 3.6)	The students are regular CPP students with ID cards, emails, access to library facilities, and so on. The instructor works closely with the students and it is clear they can obtain advising as needed without a problem.	

<p><i>Connection of Students and Faculty to the Institution.</i> How visible and deep is the presence of the home campus (or broader institution) at the off-campus site? (CFR 2.10)</p>	<p>The site is chosen for its convenience for the students who teach in the urban schools in the Riverside area. However, the students know it is a CPP course and feel connected to CPP in every way. Moreover, the “learn by doing” mantra is clearly embedded in their educational experience including several course visits to famous historical sites throughout the country.</p>	
<p><i>Relationship of institution's goals for CPR/EER Reviews to off-campus activities.</i> In what ways, if any, do the institution's efforts to build capacity and enhance educational effectiveness through the reaffirmation process on the home campus carry over to activities at this site? (CFRs 4.1, 4.8)</p>	<p>The instructors who teach in the M.A. program are regular CPP faculty, and as such, are involved in the usual full slate of campus activities surrounding WASC and the institutions educational effectiveness (e.g. program review, department strategic plan). For teaching off-campus the instructor gets one credit of reassigned time.</p>	
<p><i>Context of this site in the broader institution.</i> How does the institution conceive of this site relative to its mission, other current and potential remote sites, and administrative structure? How is this operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.8)</p>	<p>The program is part of the History department in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS) and functions under that structure. The M.A. the students obtain falls under the same requirements as the on campus course.</p>	
<p><i>Educational Effectiveness Preparedness.</i> How has the institution organized itself to address student learning and educational effectiveness at this site? What are the quality and nature of institutional data analysis systems, quality improvement systems and systems to evaluate student learning at this site? (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)</p>	<p>As the program falls directly under the CPP curriculum, all such activities on campus apply. Furthermore, there is a substantial amount of additional effort put into the program through the grant funding. The students I met with were enthusiastic about the program and the educational benefits.</p>	

