



REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW
To the University of California, Los Angeles

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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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CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW TEAM REPORT

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Visit

Founded in 1919 as the second campus of the University of California (UC), the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is the largest campus by enrollment. Under the Carnegie classification it is a large public research university with very high research activity. Its core mission is based on education (undergraduate, graduate, and professional), research, and service. Under the California Master Plan for Higher Education, it selects its first year undergraduates from the top 12.5% of the graduating class of California high schools and admits highly qualified junior transfer students. In 2006, 41% of the entering undergraduate students were advanced standing transfer students, the highest percentage within the UC system. It grants Bachelors degrees in 127 fields, Masters degrees in 112 fields, 10 Professional degrees and 80 doctorates. It enrolls (Fall 2006) approximately 25,000 undergraduates, 5,000 Masters students, 4,500 research doctoral students, and 2,000 graduate professional students. Located on a campus in the Westwood area of Los Angeles, UCLA comprises a large College of Letters and Science (with five divisions into Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, and Undergraduate Education) and 11 professional Schools: Arts and Architecture, Education and Information Studies, Engineering and Applied Science, Law, Management, Public Affairs, Theater Film and Television, Public Health, Nursing, Medicine, and Dentistry.

The WASC commission last reaffirmed UCLA's accreditation in November 1998, after a review conducted under a then "experimental design," which anticipated the current review process: a two stage visit based upon a self-study organized by themes (reform of general education, diversity, and performance indicators). The current review began with the institutional proposal submitted in May 2006, with the Preparatory Review originally scheduled for Spring 2008 and the Educational Effectiveness Review scheduled for Spring 2009. Delays involved in WASC's assembling the visiting team entailed the postponement of the CPR visit until October 2008.

The campus chief executive officer, Chancellor Gene D. Block, took office in Fall 2007. The chief academic officer is Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost (hereafter EVC) Scott L. Waugh, who has served in an acting capacity since January 2007. A search for the position was underway at the time of the visit. The Chancellor announced on November 3, 2008 that Scott Waugh had been appointed as the new EVC and would assume the role beginning December 1.

The team visited the UCLA campus on October 6-8, 2008. It based its review on the report and supporting materials that were submitted for the originally scheduled review and a brief update provided by UCLA in the summer, after the visit was rescheduled. Members of the team met with various groups involved in the inquiry reported in the essays and had opportunities to meet with students, faculty, and staff in general meetings. The confidential e-mail account provided additional public input to the team's considerations. In all matters, UCLA was open and frank in its communication with the team and responsive to all requests. The team wishes to express our gratitude to

Vice Provost Judith L. Smith (ALO) and the UCLA staff for arranging such a pleasant and productive visit.

B. The Capacity and Preparatory Review Report: Alignment with the Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

UCLA's Proposal, approved in July 2006, set out three themes as the foundation of the self-review. Each theme engages the educational experience of both undergraduate and graduate students:

- Theme 1: Shaping undergraduate education via the capstone experience.
- Theme 2: Facilitating interdisciplinary education and research.
- Theme 3: Using educational technology to enhance the student academic experience.

The Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) report was effectively organized and well-aligned with the Proposal. It grounded the current themes in the context of the previous WASC review while focusing on issues of strategic value to UCLA's planning for the future. The report was organized into seven essays, each authored by a workgroup of faculty, administrative staff, and (in some cases) students.

Essays 1 and 2 on strategic planning and program review provided relevant institutional context and illustrate UCLA's approach to institutional self-reflection and improvement within its strong tradition of shared governance between the Academic Senate and administration. In addition, the CPR report updated the thread of inquiry on institutional indicators of performance from the previous review. Essay 3 updated the earlier theme of diversity and Essay 4 assessed ten years of experience with the General Education reform that was undertaken at the time of the last review.

The three themes of the current review were developed in individual essays, around which we have organized the body of this report. Essay 5 reports on the on-going

effort to broaden the range of undergraduate majors that incorporate a formal capstone experience. Essay 6 reviews recent accomplishments and current challenges in advancing educational technology. Essay 7 is devoted to considering how UCLA can better organize to facilitate interdisciplinary education and research.

The essays were well supported by links to UCLA's official and working documents. The report included a record of the campus collaboration and the processes that led to its creation as well as an appendix explicitly mapping elements of the report to the Criteria for Review under the Standards. The team was impressed by the extensive and effective involvement of faculty and staff in the preparation of the report and the review. We found that the report was an accurate reflection of the institution and provided a sound basis for observing UCLA's core commitment to Institutional Capacity.

C. Response to Previous Commission Issues

In its action letter of November 11, 1998, the WASC Commission encouraged UCLA to continue the trajectory of the previous review and report on its results. The first four essays of the current report are responsive to this issue. In particular, the Commission urged that additional assessment of the General Education program be undertaken and that indicators and evidence beyond faculty and student surveys be developed to show that the intended educational goals are being achieved. Essay 4 responds to this issue and is discussed below. The Commission commended the attention given by senior leadership to issues of diversity and that theme was updated in this review (Essay 3) and pursued further during our visit. Finally, the commission encouraged attention to the development of performance indicators in undergraduate education of comparable quality to the impressive data on graduate education. The report

touches on this issue at several points and one meeting during the visit focused specifically on the infrastructure for institutional research and its deployment in support of strategic planning, which we discussed further in Section II.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. The Context of the Themes

The themes chosen for this review provide substantial case studies to illustrate UCLA's core commitments to capacity and educational effectiveness under the WASC Standards. We devote the main body of this section to our examination of those cases. Theme 1 (the Capstone Theme), particularly in conjunction with the retrospective report on undergraduate General Education (GE) reform, bears fundamentally on the criteria for review under Standards 2 and 4. Theme 3 (Educational Technology) likewise illustrates recent and on-going efforts to improve infrastructure to support teaching and learning. Theme 2 (Interdisciplinarity) examines the issue in both the research and educational missions, and further illustrates UCLA's organizational structures and decision-making processes (CFR 3.8).

The first four essays in the campus report provide evidence that bears on criteria under the Standards. We address major points from these before turning to the case studies upon which the Educational Effectiveness Review will be focused.

Academic Planning

UCLA has a long tradition of academic planning. The planning efforts are vested in two parallel processes: budget planning, which is driven by the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Finance, Budget and Capital Programs down through the deans and department heads; as well as strategic planning, which has

been focused at the School/College and the unit level. As a result, the campus has not operated under a campus-wide strategic plan but, rather, worked from a set of college and unit strategic plans that are responsive to initiatives and goals articulated by the Chancellor.

In the fall of 2007, shortly after his arrival at UCLA, Chancellor Block initiated a campus wide strategic planning effort. The Chancellor has indicated that this plan would articulate the major themes that the campus will focus on in the coming years. The effort to develop this plan is being led by the EVC. A draft plan now under review by the deans, unit heads, and the Academic Senate was shared with the team. Once a campus-wide plan is in place, the expectation is that—over the next three years—the Schools and the College and their units would reshape their strategic plans to align with the campus plan. The team views this as a very positive development, especially given the current fiscal circumstances where the availability of resources will be more uncertain and their allocation will of necessity need to be more strategic.

The campus strategic planning efforts will be supported by a set of “key academic performance indicators,” which have been under development for some time but have not yet been finalized. These performance indicators include data on course credit hours taught, work loads, degree productivity, and quality measures. To date, these indicators are not used in budget decision but the campus is moving in this direction (CFR 3.5, 4.2). To support the development of the academic indicators, the university recently increased staffing in its institutional research office from 2 FTE to 6 FTE and changed the reporting line of the office to the Vice Chancellor level. The team was impressed with the depth and breadth of the commitment to building capacity in institutional research across both

in support of fiscal and academic planning and of the student experience and learning at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (CFR 4.3, 4.5)

In the past few years, the campus has undertaken several targeted strategic planning efforts with considerable success (CFR 4.1, 4.6), which were well documented in Essay 1 and through links in other essays. The first was in response to a directive to increase undergraduate enrollment by 4000 FTE. Through a carefully thought out strategy of converting part-time students to full-time students and expanding the institution's summer program, the university was able to reduce the number of additional students and met the enrollment goal without diminishing the quality of its undergraduate programs. The institution feels it has now reached its maximum capacity and is not looking to grow enrollment further.

A second major planning effort involved the management of significant budget reductions to protect the quality of the faculty. Faced with a \$140 million loss of state funding, through staff hiring freezes and increased workloads, the campus shifted much of the burden of the cuts away from the offering of academic programs by making cuts to staff and non-academic administrative units. The sense is that these efforts were successful in avoiding a diminution in the quality of the faculty or academic programs.

Two new planning activities are now underway. The first is on succession planning. The average age of senior academic leadership is over 55, with close to 20 years of service. Efforts have begun to prepare a new generation of leadership for the institution. A second planning effort involves increasing support for graduate fellowships. The report notes (p. 7) that "the major problem UCLA faces in Ph.D. student recruitment is its ability to offer competitive support packages." In some

departments, graduate enrollments have exceeded the availability of competitive stipend support. Through a combination of reduced enrollments and targeted additional support, the university aspires to ensure that all of its graduate programs remain competitive for the very best students.

UCLA has a tradition of highly decentralized and successful academic planning. A large proportion of its programs are ranked as among the very best in the nation and world.

The campus also has a strong record of identifying and addressing important strategic issues facing the institution through what can only be described as a model of shared governance. Major decisions are made methodically and with broad consultation and, once made, enjoy a wide base of support. The effective participation of the faculty through the Academic Senate in these processes was clear and impressive.

The campus budget allocation process has not focused on differentiating “winners and losers” but, instead, has tried to provide incentives for engagement in campus wide priorities. Under the new chancellor, the campus is moving toward a more campus wide strategic planning process, drawing upon strategic indicators of performance. The team applauds this new approach to planning.

Program Review

UCLA has a well-established process of periodic program review that is characterized by a high degree of faculty ownership. The program review cycle is eight years. Reviews are focused on the evaluation of degree granting academic programs, both at the graduate and undergraduate level (Essay 2; CFR 2.7, 3.2, 3.11, 4.4-4.7). However the process is also used effectively for other aspects of the academic program,

such as components of the General Education program (Essay 4), the College Honors Program, and the Office of Instructional Development (Essay 6; CFR 3.4, 4.7). Reviews are initiated and jointly managed by the Academic Senate's Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. Each review encompasses a year of self-study, using data supplied by institutional research, followed by a site visit by a team consisting of UCLA faculty and external reviewers, and a well-structured follow-up process (response, progress review, and closure). Illustrative reviews were shared with the team, which indicated that the outcomes of the reviews are substantive (including sanctions) and engage faculty judgments on elements of curriculum design and revision as well as resources and productivity. One of its particular strengths is the capacity for Academic Senate to make the recommendation of receivership which speaks to the fact that the oversight process is a genuine and respected one, and not simply one in which an institution "goes through the motions" with little real meaning or consequence.

Currently the Senate is working to incorporate the formulation of student learning outcomes and, more importantly, the process of assessing those outcomes, into this robust framework for program review. (CFR 2.3-2.7) The team believes that this is an appropriate way for UCLA to support inquiry into student learning. The reviews that were initiated in 2006-07 requested that programs provide program educational goals and assessment. The responses provided by the cohort of 10 programs indicated that faculty saw themselves as drawing on multiple sources of evidence on how students were meeting expectations for learning (Essay 2, p. 14). Some of the responses also indicated that further assistance was needed in clarifying program goals in terms of learning outcomes, and that is being provided. Our understanding is that a revised program

review process incorporating the requirement of learning objectives and assessments is nearing final approval by the Senate. We expect to see the results as part of the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). Using this existing academic process affords UCLA a means to address the WASC requirements for the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators in a way that will be of assistance to the faculty in the self-study of programs and can be the basis of a sustainable process of assessing student learning. We think that this strategy will enable faculty to view assessment as a tool for use in answering already existing questions about the quality and results of their efforts and will help assessment become a natural extension of “business as usual” and not a stand-alone effort with little to tie it to existing practice.

During the EER we will wish to explore in more detail how future faculty self-studies and review committee reports will incorporate the program’s formative assessment processes into the review. What will be “acceptable” and under what conditions will follow-up be required? What will the committee do to insure that when a department returns after eight years for another review that substantial progress will have been made in assessment?

We discuss UCLA’s strategy further under Theme 1 below. But we found that the existing program reviews already provide means for evidence-based faculty reflection on their programs.

General Education

The 1998 team report from the last WASC review noted that UCLA had made significant progress in framing a more coherent program of undergraduate General Education (GE) requirements and instituting an improved governance structure for the

program. The team report noted that there was much to be done to elicit faculty approval and support for the new proposal and the Commission encouraged attention to its assessment. UCLA's current report provides (Essay 4) a report of the successful conclusion of GE reform. In brief, UCLA successfully adopted a uniform framework for GE requirements across the Schools and the College. A faculty GE Governance Committee has guided the development of the program over the last decade and is now having its relationship to the Undergraduate Council of the Academic Senate formally clarified.

A signature component of the GE program is the Freshman Cluster Program, which mounts interdisciplinary year-long groups of courses organized around general themes or topics of timely importance. In these clusters, first-year students share a common two-term experience in a lecture/discussion course with the third term focused on a seminar experience that "caps" the first year. In addition to the general GE objectives associated with three foundational breadth areas (Scientific Inquiry, Arts and Humanities, and Society and Culture) and the development of writing skill, the clusters have the additional objective of appreciating interdisciplinary inquiry-based learning. Since inception, about 45% of the first year class has begun their GE study in a freshman cluster.

Both the cluster program and the GE program as a whole have been assessed through self-study and incorporation into the UCLA system of program review discussed above.

The team reviewed the 2003 *Self Review of the Cluster Pilot Program* and the 2007 report *Four Years Later: Reflections on Freshman Cluster Experiences*. These

report on the steps taken to assess the cluster program during its first five years through year-end student surveys (92% response rate), individual interviews and focus groups with students, cluster faculty, and graduate student instructors. The reports also analyze demographic and academic outcome data for students who participate in the cluster program. (No systematic comparison has been made between cluster participants and students who satisfy their GE requirements without participation in a cluster.) The report also addresses the resource requirements and sustainability of the program. The cluster program was formally reviewed in June 2004 as part of the regular Academic Senate program review process. The review team consisted of both internal members drawn from the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils and two external reviewers. The review was a favorable one, with recommendations to expand topics and faculty participation in the program and to support the preparation and work of graduate student instructors.

The three foundational components of the GE program have been incorporated into the regular program review process. A review of the Scientific Inquiry component took place in 2005-07, with a November 2006 self-study and a spring 2007 report from a team of one internal and one external reviewer. The Society and Culture review is scheduled for 2007-09 and the Arts and Humanities review for 2009-11. The self-study for the Society and Culture review should presumably be available for review by the team as part of the Educational Effectiveness Review.

In sum, the team found that UCLA has been very successful in creating a coherent GE program with an impressive interdisciplinary cluster component and that it is being maintained under periodic self-study and regular program review. (CFRs 2.2, 2.5, 2.7)

Diversity

The preliminary report offers a high level view of UCLA's commitment to diversity, particularly in the areas of race, ethnicity, and gender. Despite the effects of Proposition 209, UCLA has managed to maintain diversity as one of its major priorities (CFR 1.5). Since the 1998 WASC review, UCLA has created administrative structures that provide oversight and guidance to fostering new horizons for diversity at all levels. Chancellor Block has recently played an important role through his publicly expressed commitment to diversity.

UCLA has made remarkable and commendable progress building an institutionally based infrastructure for diversity oversight (Essay 3). Many of the nationally recognized "best practices" are now a part of the university's culture and practice. University leaders have created administrative positions and established advisory councils, including a broad based advisory group that reports directly to the Chancellor. In addition, the academic community has set goals that intend to invigorate campus attention. It is commendable that administrators at the vice provost and associate vice provost levels are now in place to further enhance institutional efforts in the areas of faculty and student diversity and community partnerships.

Achieving a critical mass of underrepresented minorities in the student body is one of UCLA's major concerns. The report focuses on the various strategies used to reverse the downturn in various student populations; it outlines a comprehensive approach to inclusion by providing information on a wide range of programs that address diversity in the workforce, socio-economic diversity, gender diversity, diversity in the curriculum and co-curriculum, and issues surrounding campus climate (CFR 2.3).

UCLA recently moved from a *comprehensive* to a *holistic* review of admissions applications. This change proved effective, and the number of African American students, in particular, rose in subsequent years. While still dealing with relatively small percentages of African American students, UCLA's efforts to affect positive change in recruitment are commendable.

The intellectual and philosophical foundation for diversity at UCLA is found in its many instructional and research programs (CFR 2.8). Beyond individual and team research conducted by faculty, units such as Chicana and Chicano Studies, Women's Studies, and Afro-American Studies have grown to become a part of the bedrock of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary teaching and research (CFR 2.2). In addition, the hiring programs mounted by these units have contributed immensely to faculty diversity at UCLA (CFR 3.2).

Curricular expansions that include diversity as a major component are readily apparent and continue to evolve in the more traditional disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. The infusion of diversity into these areas of study provides students with a more balanced approach to subject matter that was heretofore perhaps not available to them (CFR 2.8).

The mission to improve and enhance faculty diversity is apparent throughout the report. However concerns were raised during a session with faculty members from the ethnic studies units regarding the recruitment and retention of under-represented instructors and scholars. The participants believe a greater resource outlay for faculty appointments will be required in order to maintain the viability of the research and instruction these units provide.

Data tables provide admissions and enrollment profiles by Gender, Ethnicity, and measures of preparation, with separate reports for entering freshman, transfer students, and graduate students. In Fall 2006, a typical entering freshman classes, was majority female (59%), with those identifying as Asian constituting 44%, 31% as Non-Hispanic White, and 15% in groups classified as Underrepresented Minorities (African American, American Indian, and Hispanic). The undergraduate transfer profile is 25%, 37%, and 20% respectively. The graduate student profile is 20%, 46%, and 14% respectively.

UCLA's undergraduate graduation rates are very high, indicating an impressive record of success overall. Average overall 6-year graduate rates are 89% for both freshman and transfer students. Freshman rates disaggregated by gender and ethnicity vary between 76% (African American) and 91% (Asian/Pacific Islander and Female).

We turn now to the three themes around which UCLA has chosen to organize its inquiry into educational effectiveness.

B. Theme 1: Shaping Undergraduate Education via the Capstone Experience

The 1998 Boyer Commission report (*Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*) recommended that undergraduate programs culminate in a "capstone experience", an inquiry-based experience that would broaden, deepen, and integrate the disciplinary learning in the major with faculty guidance and the potential for collaborative learning. UCLA has a long and commendable record of engaging undergraduates in research and other types of active learning experiences as revealed in the supporting materials. Essay 5 reports on the decision to comprehensively review existing capstone experiences and investigate whether such experiences could be included in most undergraduate majors. Both the

essay and the conversations that the team had during its visit show that this has been an effective way of stimulating productive discussion among faculty about the curricula and educational goals of the major programs.

As a means by which students can “demonstrate mastery and integration of knowledge and learned abilities in an active context with a discipline” (Essay 5, p. 23), capstones do indeed provide a “sound mechanism for defining and evaluating learning outcomes” that broadly span the whole major. As such, the individual products of the capstones—the theses, reports, projects, etc.—would also provide direct evidence of student learning for use by faculty in self-studies for program reviews. (CFR 2.4-2.6)

The development of the capstone initiative has been a very thoughtful process that has engaged faculty from across the divisions and Schools. By beginning with existing academic processes (i.e. senior seminars and honors theses) and respecting their roles in individual programs as well as the variation that exists across broad disciplinary approaches, UCLA has developed standards for capstone experiences that are substantive, broadly applicable and consistent with high faculty ownership across the diversity of undergraduate programs. Clearly this is an ambitious goal for an institution with a student body the size of UCLA’s. To date 38 undergraduate majors have applied for designation as a “Capstone Major”.

Members of the team met with a large group of faculty and staff actively engaged in the project. The engagement and the substantive issues with which the workgroup is contending impressed the team. A matter of great concern is how programs with very large numbers of students could sustain access to capstone experiences for all (or even the majority) of their major students. The workgroup appreciates the tension between

reaching for universality by instituting capstone major requirements and maintaining the high standards set for such learning experiences. The workgroup's study has also revealed that programs differ in the position of such experiences in the course of a student's career. While in many cases it is a true culminating experience at the end of the major (and hence a potential summative reflection of the student's learning) in other cases this type of experience may be positioned in the program at an earlier stage in order to achieve other program learning goals. (The team understood that this inquiry has spawned a parallel consideration of the varying role and structure of the dissertation in PhD programs across the College and Schools.)

The team saw two distinguishable threads being pursued in parallel: the generalization of capstone experiences to all UCLA undergraduate programs and the potential that capstone experiences have to clarify learning goals and provide evidence for use in assessing student learning outcomes that are representative of the whole program. It was clear during our visit that this has been a productive strategy in both areas, both in encouraging more programs to structure major requirements to culminate in capstone experiences and to stimulate faculty to articulate program level learning objectives. This duality of inquiry interacts with the tensions described above. While the products of culminating capstone experiences can provide the basis for faculty inquiry into program level student learning outcomes, to make this the primary way of doing so runs the risk of compromising the value of the educational experience in some cases or pushing the program toward an unsustainable standard in others.

In reviewing the samples that have already been provide for the WASC Inventory of Educational Effectiveness, it is clear much time and effort has gone into the

development of a systematic way to address issues of student learning in the capstone. It is unclear, however, how the learning that is demonstrated in the capstone will be used in a systematic way in program assessment. It appears that some departments will be reviewing student work in an aggregated fashion every three years; other departments have yet to determine how they will use the evidence.

Capstone experiences are valuable for assessing learning within a discipline but they also can serve as a mechanism for assessing more general institutional goals for student learning—those things an institution expects all students to know and be able to do regardless of major. We strongly encourage the institution to consider addressing not only discipline-based knowledge in the capstone, but also such attributes as analytical thinking, synthesis, integration of knowledge, the use of multiple perspectives—outcomes that are shared expectations of undergraduate programs.

In accomplishing this, UCLA will have developed not only a disciplinary based capstone, but will have also created a mechanism that will allow them to look across the institution for development of learning in important areas regardless of major. UCLA has conceived the capstone as being a “bookend” to the General Education experience. This suggests that it might usefully reflect general education outcomes as well. Given UCLA’s success in GE, the results of the work on capstones could well become a national model.

Capstone experiences are valuable learning experiences for their own sake. The student work produced in capstones provides important evidence about the achievement of program learning outcomes. But capstones are not the only acceptable way to measure such outcomes. The institution recognizes that not all majors will develop a capstone—

that some programs will choose to measure student learning in different ways. UCLA will need to consider, however, how it will assist faculty in the programs that ultimately do not incorporate a capstone to understand and develop learning outcomes, measure those outcomes, and use the data in meaningful ways. This should be addressed in the EER.

We find that UCLA is engaged in a very productive faculty inquiry on the role that capstone experiences currently play in undergraduate programs and their potential for shaping and assessing how students learn in program curricula. It has also shown itself to be an effective strategy for spreading the articulation of program level learning outcomes. Learning outcomes have been defined and some processes for implementation are in place. It was clear that the UCLA faculty has learned a great deal from the process of having departments identify learning goals. However the capacity and preparation for assessing learning outcomes is widely variable by department. In programs in professional schools, objectives are well developed and in a wide range of programs, due to this project, the objectives and planning for assessment are emerging.

However, there remains work to do for the remaining programs to understand how published learning outcomes differ from a description of a major or a list of requirements. Further, how does UCLA plan to assist departments in learning how to relate instruction in the curriculum to the outcomes and assess the results? This is particularly important if the Capstone Program becomes a primary means of assessing student learning in a program.

In preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review the institution needs to consider:

Whether or not the Capstone Program will be the primary means of assessing student learning in an undergraduate program.

How the institution will assist programs without capstones in articulating learning outcomes and assessing student learning in ways that are of value to the faculty.

How the institution will structure assessment processes in ways that include direct evidence of student learning?

How will the assessment of student learning be formally incorporated into the program review process?

C. Theme 2: Facilitating Interdisciplinary Education and Research

The report demonstrates the strategic importance of interdisciplinary education and research at UCLA. As a national leader in the development of institutionalized interdisciplinary programs, Essay 7 lays out the current status and potential growth of UCLA's many programs and initiatives that seek to cross the boundaries of the traditional disciplines. These advancements, as it is clearly stated, are not intended to diminish the important roles of the "traditional" disciplines, but to take advantage of the strengths of these disciplines by seeking ways for the sharing and intermingling of the concepts, ideas, and values that take education and research to the cutting edge. Through this process, which is energized by the intellectual curiosities of both faculty and students, UCLA has successfully establish a broad range of programs that map to the institution in a variety of ways.

UCLA sees facilitating interdisciplinary activities, defined as efforts that span two or more departments or schools, as a strategic goal for the campus. The focus of this inquiry is how to sustain and grow these activities, both in education and research,

removing unnecessary institutional barriers to success while ensuring that the activities that are sustained are assessed as important and productive (CFR 4.2).

Essay 7 provides an overview of five categories of interdisciplinary education and research, while pointing out that the distinctions between these categories have become blurred in recent years: Interdepartmental Degree Programs (IDPs), Centers for Interdisciplinary Instruction (CIIs), Organized Research Units (ORUs), Multi-Campus Research Units (MRUs), and Other Research Centers and Units.

Interdisciplinary education and research can work in ways that are contrary to present-day institutional structures, which tend to relegate faculty (and students) to a single department or program. In order to build successfully a culture in which interdisciplinarity can thrive, flexibility must be exercised and adjustments must be made in the customary ways faculty work is rendered. The UCLA faculty and administration are aware of these challenges and have mounted an effort that clearly defines the route programs should take from incubation status to fully-fledged research units.

The University of California System's longstanding organized research unit (ORUs) approach to interdisciplinary research has its merits. However, it is not a structure that fits the needs of nascent approaches to interdisciplinary research efforts. By citing the transition of Women's Studies from IDP status to an academic department, the team grasps the basic mechanics needed to provide a solid institutional place for interdisciplinary programs. We take this to be a model for the process of negotiations that must ensue between departments regarding faculty workload and the meticulous manner in which faculty lines are divided between academic units to meet teaching demands. The team encourages on-going work in this area.

The team recommends ongoing discussion in the Multidisciplinary Studies Taskforce and the Academic Senate to resolve existing administrative and curricular challenges associated with the Centers for Interdisciplinary Instruction. It is further encouraged to craft curricula whose learning goals are easily understood by students.

UCLA sets the stage for all areas of education and research to incubate and prosper in the programmatic context of interdisciplinarity, abetted perhaps by its geographical compactness. For years, the physical and life sciences and the social sciences have reaped tremendous benefit from disciplinary boundary crossings. In many colleges and universities, disciplines in the arts and humanities have not reached this level of interdisciplinary maturity. Such is not the case at UCLA. For several decades, UCLA has been at the forefront of pioneering interdisciplinary work in the arts and humanities. World Arts and Cultures, Ethnomusicology, as well as Folklore and Mythology, are nationally known programs that reach high levels of interdisciplinary education and research.

Research opportunities for faculty and students abound at UCLA. It is important to note that more than one hundred research centers form around faculty research interests, and operate outside of an ORU structure. Many of these efforts are supported through seed support from deans and the chancellor for faculty members to explore the ways that the disciplinary boundaries of research can be expanded and crossed. The academic leadership has modified promotion and tenure processes and policies to address interdisciplinary work. The chancellor's involvement, in particular, signals that interdisciplinary research is supported from the highest level of the university, thus indicating its importance.

The 100-plus centers and institutes provide nearly endless opportunities for faculty from cognate and disparate disciplines to explore in an interdisciplinary manner a problem consonant within their disciplines. The report cites several examples that cut across many areas of inquiry. These are centers of excellence and the team encourages ongoing support for these opportunities.

As these opportunities expand, the team encourages additional work to add clarity to their institutional places. There is a need to devise policies to evaluate when to sunset a program, merge it with another, or extend its breadth and reach within the larger institutional context. As these programs gain additional traction, tensions will inevitably rise between them and the ever-important disciplines. These tensions are likely to occur along faculty, space, and resource fronts.

The team understands that the original intention was to do a series of case studies, but early in the process realized that with ‘the WASC wind in their sails’ the work group could be more effective by taking on analysis of the larger challenges and opportunities to build a roadmap to set a standard for their future in interdisciplinary work. The essay does contain two instructive case studies to explain how UCLA has handled the tensions that often exist between traditional departments and interdisciplinary units and between the professional schools and the College in both graduate and undergraduate instruction as well as faculty research. The team recommends a similar use of policies and procedures highlighted in the development of the undergraduate program in Society and Genetics and the graduate research training program to launch other interdisciplinary research training programs. (We consider the fact that UCLA currently had five active IGERT (NSF’s Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship program)

grants, two of which are active and two others currently under review as an indicator of the institution's success in this regard.)

As the university ponders its next step in the richly rewarding enterprise of interdisciplinarity, the team recommends attention to a few issues: 1) the evaluation of interdisciplinary education and research for faculty advancement, 2) course development and pedagogical support for faculty anticipating teaching interdisciplinary and team-taught courses, and 3) assessing student learning in interdisciplinary programs. (In this latter area, UCLA's success in institutionalizing interdisciplinary clusters in the General Education program and regularizing their review is instructive.)

In the EER we look forward to seeing the road map and an implementation plan that results from this process and the criteria by which UCLA will judge its success.

D. Theme 3: Using Educational Technology to Enhance the Student Academic Experience (SEM)

As clearly articulated in Essay 6 and in meetings held during the C&PR visit, UCLA clearly understands that information technology offers tremendous promise for enhancing the academic experience and improving student learning. Students, faculty, and staff come to UCLA with the expectation that technology will support and enhance their work and their play. Unlike many institutions that perceive educational technology as merely a utility or a suite of tools, UCLA is forward thinking and leverages educational technology to support active learning, scholarly interaction, and intellectual pursuit—enabling its graduates to be informed and discerning global citizens and contributing working professionals.

UCLA's longstanding culture of shared governance and productive consensus building is commendable. Numerous groups comprising faculty, staff, and students from

across campus contribute to decisions on information and educational technology vision, planning, policies, and investment. Participants from both central units and the academic disciplines come together to form committees, task forces, and boards to work on what the panel members termed “trickle up planning.” Decision-making and responsibility for strategic investment is shared among key stakeholders through active, robust governance processes.

Most institutions of UCLA’s size and stature have a separate, centrally supported unit dedicated to advancing the use of educational technology within the academic community. A unit of this kind usually reports to the Chief Information Officer (CIO), the Dean of Libraries, or the Provost’s office. UCLA, on the other hand, adheres to a self-professed model of “Coordinated Autonomy” in which information technology (IT) infrastructure and services are neither centralized nor decentralized but “layered,” meaning that local components are on top of shared, co-owned, institutional components. This aligns with UCLA’s culture of distributed innovation in which resources are placed as close as possible to the point where support and services for students and faculty are needed.

In the case of educational technology, much progress has been made over the last seven years in transitioning UCLA from a collection of some seventy vertically integrated operating environments, comprising individual academic units providing infrastructure and support exclusively to their constituents, to a consortium of distributed professionals and advisory boards, working together for the greater good. There is a small staff of educational technologists that report centrally to the Office of Instructional

Development (OID), but they serve more as coordinators for the distributed services than service providers themselves.

While this ground-up, decentralized approach seems to work and aligns with the culture of shared governance and consensus-driven decision making that characterizes UCLA, there are drawbacks. Connecting and leveraging local and institutional efforts is a challenge. While UCLA provides educational technology support through a mix of distributed and centralized services, the mix is often unbalanced and support uneven across the academic units. The IT professionals in both central and distributed units face challenges in coordinating support, determining best practices, developing policies, and identifying resources. There is duplication of services, unresolved user complexity, and operational inefficiencies. Although there is consistent support for undergraduates, support is lacking for the graduate population. This type of decentralized support model also exacerbates financial issues. UCLA has established an Instructional Enhancement Initiative (IEI), that is both a program and a funding mechanism for providing educational technology support resources and infrastructure to the College of Letters and Science. Engineering has levied a similar assessment for undergraduate education. However, there is not a central funding mechanism to support the other academic units on campus, so the level and quality of services tend to be uneven.

Over the next few years, UCLA's IT group plans to revisit its Coordinated Autonomy support model and update a 2001 IT Strategic Plan that not only will align with the University's current strategic planning efforts, but will take into account WASC standards and initiatives developed by the University of California's system office. To

that end, UCLA has identified (Essay 6, p. 30) three educational technology projects that will form the basis of the educational technology essay for the EER report.

Project 1. Common Collaborative Learning Environment (CCLE)

After a long and inclusive review process, UCLA has invested in a centrally administered course management system, powered by the open source application Moodle. Its purpose is to deliver a centralized platform for interdisciplinary research and collaboration. This project, with close to unanimous acceptance by the Deans, serves as a catalyst for bringing the campus together to develop more effective governance and service delivery. The project's outcomes include a formal assessment component of a blended Communication Studies course using the CCLE. The team also requests a sustainable model and organizational plan for depicting the roles, responsibilities, and relationships between centralized and distributed groups overseeing the operational and pedagogical support for the CCLE.

Project 2. Information Literacy

A point of pride for UCLA is the College Library's information literacy instruction to develop basic research skills for all undergraduates, with customized resources and associated courses. Another case study for the EER will assess the partnership between the librarians and the Freshman Cluster Program as a model for extending the program to other general education and lower-division courses.

Project 3. Assessment of Technology-enhanced Learning

A third case study will be based on a three year effort to assess student learning in a redesigned introductory statistics class (Statistics 10) in which students, faculty, and support staff use educational technology to improve teaching and learning.

The quality of data already collected suggests that the assessment team will be able to provide meaningful and measurable learning outcomes. Our concern resides in the scalability of this project and the limited resources that the library has available to commit to this labor-intensive project.

Essay 6 describes four other initiatives that are important facets of student learning and course design. The team believes that the institution would benefit from an assessment plan as part of the EER.

1. UCLA has a plan to install a digital projection system in each of its 200 general assignment classrooms. Currently, only 50% of general assignment classrooms are outfitted to the standard that the Office of Instructional Development defines as “media” classrooms (this lags other UC campuses). UCLA’s 2007 Classroom Technology Plan, proposed by OID, projected the need for an additional \$800,000 in permanent annual funds to ensure that all general assignment classrooms were equipped or refreshed over the next five years (2008-11). The Chancellor agreed to allocate these funds over a two-year period. Without these additional funds, OID would accumulate a \$4 million deficit of need over the next five years. The team would like a progress report on UCLA’s effort to implement these technology-enhanced upgrades and refreshment schedules for general assignment classrooms as part of the EER report.
2. Wireless connectivity is uneven across campus with distributed management of overlapping subnets and gaps in coverage. The team believes that the campus should consider the provision of seamless, contiguous coverage across academic buildings. The team also is interested in how the educational technology professionals will assist instructors with instructional strategies to incorporate this technology into their teaching practice and research interests.
3. The team is interested in how the academic community, from undergraduates to researchers, are able to access digital resources through the libraries. Plans for

- expansion of access and the priorities for further acquisitions should be clarified.
4. Distance learning is at odds with UCLA image of itself as a residential campus in which students enjoy the “UCLA Experience.” The team is interested in how campus constituents might learn from UCLA’s successful extension program and begin strategic discussions about credit-bearing distance learning opportunities given the interest of UCLA’s administration in attracting more graduate students and in expanding UCLA’s global reach.

Based on the strategy outlined in the C&PR Report and the meetings held during the campus visit, the Review Team anticipates that the following points will be addressed in the EER Report:

- A case study introducing the formal assessment of student learning in an undergraduate Communication Studies course using the CCLE. In addition, the team would like to see a sustainable model and organizational plan for depicting the roles, responsibilities, and relationships between centralized and distributed groups overseeing the operational and pedagogical support for the CCLE (Project 1).
- A case study to assess student learning in the Freshman Cluster Program. The College librarians are piloting this project that weaves information literacy into the undergraduate curricula. The case study should track demonstrated progress towards extending the program to other general education and lower-division courses (Project 2).
- A case study to assess student learning in an introductory statistics course in which students, faculty, and support staff are piloting the CCLE (Project 3).

In addition, the team suggests that the following be addressed:

- A statement about ways to support graduate students’ use of educational technology, including the CCLE.
- A statement clarifying how UCLA plans to accomplish technology-enhanced upgrades and sustainable refresh for all learning spaces across campus. The discussion should include prioritization and assessment plans.
- A statement clarifying how UCLA plans to improve its wireless network to provide seamless, contiguous coverage across academic buildings. The discussion should include ways that the educational technology professionals will prepare faculty with instructional strategies to incorporate this technology into teaching practice and research efforts.

- A statement clarifying how UCLA plans to acquire digital resources for the library. The plan should include how the academic community will coordinate efforts and prioritize choices.
- A statement clarifying UCLA's stand on credit-bearing distance learning opportunities given the interest of UCLA's administration in attracting more graduate students and in expanding UCLA's global reach.
- A draft of the revised 2001 IT Strategic Plan including examples of UCLA's Coordinated Autonomy support model.

UCLA acknowledges in the C&PR report that there is not a comprehensive plan in place for achieving clearly articulated learning outcomes across the board. Currently, benefits gleaned from existing innovative uses of technology within the individual units are generally not realized beyond individual classes to the broader campus community. There are few systematic processes for assessing impact beyond standard course evaluation forms. However, the panel responsible for assessing learning outcomes for the projects proposed in Essay 6 has presented assessment plans that meet the EER requirements, reflecting a culture of evidence under the WASC standards.

In Summary

In summary, the team was impressed with the institutional commitment and capacity revealed in all the materials we reviewed and the interviews that we conducted. UCLA is an institution of remarkable scale and scope, educating very large student populations at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in a full spectrum of academic, research, and professional programs. Despite its size, UCLA has a clear sense of itself and its role in California public education and as a national and world leader in higher education. The faculty has a strong culture of shared governance and commitment to maintaining program quality and a commitment to continuous institutional research,

strategic planning, assessment and improvement. Every indirect indicator (e.g. undergraduate retention and graduate rates, student satisfaction surveys) shows that UCLA effectively supports student success. This review has necessarily focused on only a few aspects of this complex institution, but the themes and retrospective essays were wisely chosen to reveal the strength of UCLA's core commitment to capacity. As such, it can serve the Commission well as an example of how WASC's standards and the aims of review for re-accreditation can be utilized well by such an institution.

SECTION III – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The team found throughout its review numerous indicators of UCLA's high quality and commitment in education, research, and service. We commend them for:

- The effective choice of themes and the clear organization of the materials and the visit, which created a coherent intellectual structure for the review.
- The strong faculty and staff engagement with the preparation for and participation in the WASC review process and the depth, breadth and nuance of UCLA's inquiry in the areas under review.
- The strong tradition of effective shared governance between the Academic Senate and the administration, particularly in regards to the program review.
- The infrastructure in support of diversity goals and the culture and courage in pursuing those goals for the faculty, staff, and the student body.
- The intentional investment in institutional research, including its capacity for the support of teaching and learning.

The team found that UCLA has succeeded in creating a coherent GE program with an impressive interdisciplinary cluster component and that it is being maintained under periodic self-study and regular program review.

We found that UCLA's impressive success in interdisciplinary teaching and research has created a challenge for managing and sustaining support. The workgroup is developing a road map for responding to these challenges, which should be part of the

EER. The team recommends attention to the evaluation of interdisciplinary education and research for faculty advancement, course development and pedagogical support for faculty, and assessing student learning in interdisciplinary programs

We found that UCLA has made progress in reducing redundancy and improving the previously uneven support for educational technology in adopting a Common Collaborative Learning Environment. After the full implementation of the CCLE, we recommend that UCLA review the organizational structure again to ensure adequate resources, central leadership, and coordinated support of teaching and learning. We recommend including an assessment plan in the EER.

We found that the inquiry into the role of capstone experiences in undergraduate programs has been a fruitful investigation that has advanced the faculty's attention to student learning. We look forward to seeing how the emerging program learning outcomes will be published and used by faculty and formally incorporated into the robust program review process in order to support further inquiry and assessment. The EER should address how student learning will be assessed in undergraduate programs that do not incorporate some sort of capstone experience.

We found that strategic planning has previously been largely at the unit level and applaud the Chancellor's call for the development of a plan for UCLA as a whole. We recommend that this be addressed in an open and transparent environment to ensure broad commitment within and across all UCLA constituencies.

SECTION IV – PREPARATIONS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

The team has been mindful that UCLA had originally planned for a C&PR review visit in spring 2008, with the EER to follow one year later (spring 2009). Our visit therefore came at a point when the working groups had been able to make more progress toward the results on which the EER report will be based. We did not find that this created any difficulties in our assessment of UCLA's capacity under the standards. The materials originally submitted for the review were sufficient evidence of UCLA's ability to pose, address, and respond to important educational and strategic issues. Everything we saw during our visit confirmed that and showed that the institution was effectively advancing all of UCLA's lines of inquiry toward a successful EER.

However the team is concerned that the workgroups will have a daunting task to finish drafting the essays and vet them fully through the campus governance process in time for submission for a spring 2009 EER visit. This concern is founded more on our respect for the robustness of those processes than on any concern about the commitment or engagement of the teams. We are very confident in UCLA's ability to ultimately complete the EER and show the institution's ability to plan strategically and deploy evidence in support of advancing institutional effectiveness.

But our understanding of the WASC process is that at this stage of the review we have been focused on UCLA's commitment to capacity for effectiveness under the Standards. While our overall assessment is very positive in this regard, we are concerned that UCLA's infrastructure for assessing student learning is still emerging. What we saw during our visit indicates that UCLA has made concrete progress and understands the

goals. We expect to see the approved revisions of the program review guidelines that incorporate assessment of program learning outcomes as part of the EER.

Our understanding of the Educational Effectiveness Review is that it will focus on how the institution is actually using the institution's measures of educational achievement at the program level and the results of UCLA's review processes. We are concerned that UCLA is not yet prepared to fully meet the expectations of the WASC Commission with regard to formally approved and published learning outcomes for all academic programs (even those without existing plans for implementing capstones) and explicit assessment plans. As we noted above, we believe that the quality of the faculty engagement and substantial character of the institution's inquiry, taken in the context of UCLA's scale and the complexity of its mission, merits advice from the Commission in this regard to frame the EER.