Conclusion

The university undertook a comprehensive examination of its institutional capacity through an extensive engagement process involving 12 Campus Outcome teams (COTs). This comprehensive examination documented that CSUH functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures and processes to fulfill its purposes necessary to meet the Core Commitment to Institutional Capacity. This examination also enabled us to take a critical look at our strengths and limitations as required by WASC and to organize for the educational effectiveness review in such a way as to address the major challenges we face.

SUMMARY OF CSUH’S COMMITMENT TO CAPACITY ~ REFLECTIVE VIEW OF STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

Strengths ~ Achievements
Through a widespread process of university consultation, the Mission COT led the university to the acceptance of new mission, vision, and values statements. As a result, we now have a set of guiding principles and commitments that particularize CSUH’s institutional purposes, essential values, character, and educational objectives. Our response to diversity is appropriate, multifaceted, and strong by many criteria. Based on the available data, our faculty diversity is higher than the CSU averages in all categories except Mexican American/Latino faculty. We offer a wide array of co-curricular learning experiences and activities that focus on multicultural awareness and ethnic-specific support. The General Education outcomes emphasize the understanding and respect for the knowledge and experiences of diverse populations and the ability to work well with those who are different. We enjoy a richly diverse student body, one of the most diverse in the CSU, which, when surveyed recently by the Princeton Review, felt so positive about the university that the Review awarded us “Best in the West” distinction. (Standard 1)

Our successful re-invention of the General Education Program has received national recognition. We moved from a cafeteria approach to one of mandatory freshman learning communities (clusters) with developmental English courses linked to the clusters. Student retention and achievement improved after the implementation of the GE program. All of our degree programs have identified student-learning outcomes; most have described indicators and developed assessment plans, and identified entry and exit measurement points. One of our strengths is that 17 of our degrees and credential programs have received professional accreditation. Our current Academic Review process for degree programs requires them to have demonstrated that they have developed an assessment plan. By 2006, almost half of the degree programs will have used collected assessment data to make recommendations for program improvement. Opportunities for advising are many and distributed throughout the university. This includes faculty advising, GE advising, and student service advising. A rich variety of programs and services exist on the campuses, offering students opportunities for academic, professional, personal, and leadership development outside the classroom. (Standard 2)

The university is fortunate to have a dedicated faculty who are committed to teaching a diverse student body, conducting ever-increasing amounts of scholarly research, participating
in service to the university, and engaging in community service, all while carrying the high
teaching load of 12 WTUs per quarter. Our Department Chairs assume onerous
responsibilities and their support is absolutely essential for systemic change in the university.
We enjoy high levels of collegiality among the colleges, and between the faculty and
administration. The university has a strong library that adheres to ACRL standards. It
provides information resources to the Hayward and Contra Costa campuses, and to
Continuing and International Education. (Standard 3)

CSUH has a strong instructional technology infrastructure with a wide variety of services available
to students, including Blackboard for every course at the university. A major upgrade of the
university network is nearing completion. We have an active Faculty Development Center for
Excellence in Teaching, which also supports the effective use of instructional technology.
(Standard 3)

The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) process, led by Enrollment Services, and the
fund-raising efforts of University Advancement illustrate that CSUH is capable of effective
planning, implementation, and assessment of results. The university has recently reorganized
and re-energized its institutional research capability. The Institutional Portfolio, required by
WASC, was purposely developed to act as the new system for managing information for the
university. As a result, the university has expanded its capacity to provide data to faculty,
adминистtrative, and staff decision-makers. (Standard 4)

Limitations—Challenges
The University confronts limitations and constraints that are both internally generated and
externally imposed. The multi-year budget cuts to the CSU, as a result of the state budget
crisis, is an external constraint that has impacted CSUH. We have fewer people and resources
to accomplish our mission. Our students are limited by the reduction in course offerings and
the increasing fees. Staff and resources in the library, instructional technology, student
services, and nearly every part of the university have been cut, resulting in reduced levels of
service (Standard 3). Within the university, this comprehensive examination has revealed the
need for greater integration and institutionalization of our accomplishments. This is most
noticeable in six areas: assessment of academic quality; campus climate; support for student
services; support for a faculty learning community; a culture of evidence; and coordinated,
university-wide planning.

Assessment of Academic Quality. Progress on collecting assessment data and using the data to
improve learning in degree programs and in GE has been slow due to initial doubts about the
need for assessment, the view that assessment is one of a number of unfunded tasks faculty
are being asked to assume, and inadequate funding for assessment efforts. In the past, the 5-
year review process only required assessment plans. The review process itself needs to be
communicated to others vis-à-vis its relationship to university and college level planning.
There are many hopeful signs on the horizon that both assessment of degree programs and GE
will now move forward, and recommendations will be sent to the Senate to align the program
review process with forward planning (Standard 2). While CSUH documents its technology
resources, services, and levels of use by faculty and students, we do not know the extent to
which faculty are using appropriate technologies effectively for the course objectives and
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overall design of their courses. Another area needing attention is now highlighted in our new mission statement, which commits us to prepare students to be socially responsible contributors to their communities. Many faculty work toward that outcome; however, we have not yet begun to assess our effectiveness in this area.

**Campus Climate.** CSUH has not done a comprehensive campus climate study that includes faculty, students, and staff since 1994. The results of that study were not used in the planning or implementation of new programs. We have a Faculty Diversity and Equity Committee (FDEC) and a Faculty Affirmative Action Liaison Officer (AALO), but the record shows little discussion or follow-through on their annual recommendations to the Academic Senate. We regularly collect student data, as part of other studies that impact campus climate, but the results are not effectively shared with the faculty nor is there an institutionalized process for due consideration of the results by faculty, staff, and students. Campus Climate has, by and large, been considered the responsibility of student services. CSUH recognizes the need to institutionalize a comprehensive campus climate study in order to assess our progress towards becoming a "multicultural learning environment" and to implement strategies for improvement based on those data. (Standard 1, 4)

**Support for Student Success.** The university’s distributed advising infrastructure needs a comprehensive evaluation to determine its current levels of effectiveness. We do not know which advising opportunities are effective, nor at what level of effectiveness, nor for which populations. While we keep good retention data and disaggregate it by ethnicity, discipline, gender and other factors, it’s not easily available. Also, we are still in the early stages of learning how best to coordinate efforts between student services and academic affairs in order to improve retention for all of our students, especially those at risk, e.g. African American, Hispanic, and transfer students. (Standard 2)

**Faculty Learning Community.** The percent of tenure/tenure track faculty at the university has been declining, which has placed an added burden on the permanent full-time faculty to advise students, engage in scholarship, and participate in university governance and university and/or community initiatives. The administration is moving forward to re-balance the tenure-track/lecturer ratio. The PTR document has not received a substantive review for decades. All COTs endorsed the need to investigate how faculty experience the PTR process and to study ways to better align the criteria for PTR with CSUH priorities, especially in light of the new mission, vision, and values statements. Without valid quantitative and qualitative evidence, we do not know what changes are needed to create and retain a “...faculty from vastly different backgrounds who collaborate, creating and sustaining a vibrant learning community.”

We also have policies and procedures in place to attract a diverse faculty applicant pool; however, we have not identified the best practices for CSUH in this regard, nor do we know which departments might be engaged in those best practices. We have faculty of color and women faculty, but we do not know our best practices for retention or which departments are doing the best job of implementing ways of retaining faculty, and making them feel an integral part of their departments. (Standard 3)
**CONCLUSION**

*Culture of Evidence.* We struggle to integrate innovations, plans, or best practices in one part of the university with plans or practices in other university units and to institutionalize these practices in ways that will ensure their success over the long haul. Without a strong culture of evidence, we cannot track the impact of budget cuts on services or best practices, and we cannot assess the effectiveness of plans across the university. (Standard 4)

*Coordinated University-Wide Planning.* We have not institutionalized an infrastructure nor dedicated resource allocations for on-going university-wide planning, implementation and assessment. In spite of significant efforts on the part of several units in the university, a coordinated university-wide planning effort has yet to be solidified. Our biggest challenge is to develop a plan that will allow us to come together on an agreed set of priorities linked to our mission and student learning and to implement those priorities, assign responsibility and resources, track results, and assess those results for future improvements. (Standard 4)

**APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP STEPS: ORGANIZING FOR EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Based upon the analysis of our strengths and limitations, CSUH has identified six priorities for its educational effectiveness review. Each outcome is elemental to fulfilling the commitments in our new mission, vision, and values statements.

1. **Academic Quality** “CSUH strives to be known for its outstanding academic programs, recognized for their excellence.” By May 2006, CSUH will demonstrate the effectiveness of its academic programs in the following ways:
   a. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes.
      1) In the five-year reviews of 21 of 52 graduate and undergraduate programs, we will demonstrate that we have collected, analyzed, and used the results to improve student learning. [Programs Under Review]
      2) We will assess the majority of Lower Division General Education outcomes and use the results to determine improvements.
      3) We will assess student-learning outcomes in the cultural groups and women’s GE requirement. We will also assess a GE outcome that addresses socially responsible contributions to the community.
      4) We will undertake a comprehensive assessment of student learning in the First Year Information Literacy General Education program, with the results reported and used to determine improvements.
   b. The Academic Senate will consider overall recommendations to improve the process for the 5-Year Review of Academic Programs.
   c. A guide will be developed, based on best practices and research, to assist in the selection of appropriate technologies for course objectives. Faculty in selected programs will pilot the guide and assess its effectiveness.

2. **Campus Climate:** CSUH values “Learning in an academic environment that is inclusive and student-centered and where students, faculty, and staff from vastly different backgrounds collaborate-creating and sustaining a vibrant learning community that is responsive to the unique needs of its campus community”. By May 2006, CSUH will demonstrate that it knows the current qualities of its campus climate
through a comprehensive study that includes faculty, students, and staff. The study will use both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data. The Seven Principles for Good Undergraduate Education will be a factor in the framework for the analysis and development of key questions used in the study. Data analysis with recommendations for improvement based on the evidence will be presented to all constituencies in the university.

3. **Support for Student Success.** CSUH strives to be known for its “High academic standards along with services and support that ensure each student the opportunity for success.” By May 2006, CSUH will demonstrate the effectiveness of its services and support to ensure student success in the following ways:
   a. CSUH will engage in a comprehensive assessment of its current advising infrastructure and the effectiveness of advising by faculty and staff to meet the needs and expectations of an ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse student population. The outcome will be recommendations, priorities for improvement, and plans for implementation with a focus on coordination of services, clarity for students, and the reward structure for faculty.
   b. CSUH will conduct a comprehensive assessment of student retention and disaggregate the data, e.g. by discipline, gateway courses, class standing, ethnicity, gender, and financial aid status. Factors impacting the retention of all students, particularly students at risk, e.g. African American students, Latino male students and transfer students, will be identified. This process will include university-wide dialogue and the resulting recommendations for improvement and implementation plans will be made widely available across the university.

4. **Faculty Learning Community.** CSUH strives to be known for “... faculty from vastly different backgrounds [who] collaborate—creating and sustaining a vibrant learning community.” By May 2006, CSUH will demonstrate the current characteristics of its faculty learning community in the following ways:
   a. A faculty committee will conduct quantitative and qualitative research to investigate faculty experiences with the PTR process and to determine its ability to reflect the new university commitments. A report summarizing the research will be presented to faculty governance for deliberation and action.
   b. The Seven Principles for Good Undergraduate Education and the proposed mission for a faculty learning community will be presented to faculty governance for deliberation and action.
   c. Based upon the thirty (30) new tenure track searches (2004/05), CSUH will identify the departments most successful in securing diverse applicant pools. We will then analyze and promote the practices used to achieve that goal.
   d. Using the results of the new campus climate study and other data yet to be determined, CSUH will identify departments that engage in best practices for retaining faculty.

5. **Culture of Evidence.** CSUH strives to know and use evidence in order to actualize more fully its mission, vision, and values. By May 2006, CSUH will demonstrate the effectiveness of its culture of evidence through a comprehensive institutional research
portfolio that will be created to meet the needs of the faculty, administrators, students, staff, and the public.

6. **Coordinated University-wide Planning.** CSUH wants to be fully engaged in an ongoing strategic planning process. By May 2006, CSUH will seek to achieve that in the following ways:
   a. We will study the best practices at other universities (CSU and non-CSU institutions).
   b. We will recommend to the president a university-wide planning infrastructure that is aligned with resources.
   c. We will collect and analyze current university unit plans, recommending ways to integrate these plans and link them to resources.

**COMMENTARY ON THE INSTITUTION’S PREPAREDNESS FOR UNDERTAKING THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

CSUH is poised and committed to the six aforementioned outcomes for the Educational Effectiveness Review. The indicators for Academic Quality, Support for Student Success, and Culture of Evidence are underway. The Campus Climate Study and the Faculty Learning Community Outcomes will draw upon the capabilities of the new IRA office. Responsibility for the six outcomes will depend upon the expertise of the faculty and staff from the 12 COTS, and will involve the collective will of the faculty and the university administration.

We feel confident that we can meet our outcomes in an 18-month period. Therefore we are requesting an extension, as suggested by the Commission Advisory for 2004-2005 Visits.¹ Twelve months between reviews is insufficient time to meet the expectations for educational effectiveness, especially given the quarter system. Faculty are not paid during the summer which would leave essentially Winter and Spring quarter of 2005 for the bulk of the work to be done, with Fall of 2005 being a combination of work and report preparation.

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