Forward Planning for Educational Effectiveness:  
Standard Four

President Rees, in the Institutional Proposal, commits “to improve the campus planning process, and to re-energize and reorganize planning around educational effectiveness and on-going dialogue about learning.” As the university community reflected upon the call in Standard Four to “create an organization committed to learning and improvement,” several issues emerged.

Campus planning efforts have not been well coordinated and there has been a history of “start-and-stop planning.” The university has several units that have engaged in effective strategic planning but the connection of these unit plans to an overall university-wide plan is not clear. The university needs to look at how departmental and college planning and planning efforts in administrative units are tied together. Thus, a challenge for CSUH is to integrate and institutionalize university planning.

The last major university planning effort resulted in a set of University Goals and Objectives (the de facto university plan). These Goals and Objectives were to last until 2002. Because of the close proximity to the WASC accreditation process, the president decided that it would be better to use the current accreditation process with the 12 COTs as the foundation for a new university plan. The new University Mission, Vision, and Values statements have created an excellent opportunity for us to develop unit plans and an overall plan that is integrated with the new statements.

As mentioned throughout this Report, faculty and staff of color need to be heard. There needs to be an effective mechanism for including them in the planning process. One possible way of doing this would be to ensure that all university plans seriously address the commitment in the mission for the creation of an “academically-rich multicultural experience.”

It is also critically important to tie university planning to resources. Plans without the resources needed to make them effective are meaningless. The university’s Strategic Enrollment Management Plan included a Freshmen Initiative, the purpose of which was to increase the size of our freshmen class (one of the smallest in the CSU). We wanted to increase our entering freshmen class for numerous reasons, e.g. because freshmen generate more FTE over the course of their academic careers, are more active in campus life, take more General Education courses, and are more loyal alumni than transfer students. The Freshmen Initiative was accompanied by a commitment of resources, so the university has a successful experience tying resources to planning initiatives. The connection between plans and the resources to enact the plans needs to continue and expand.

**Brief History of University Planning Efforts**

During the past twelve years, CSUH has engaged in several planning efforts that, in their initial stages, involved faculty and the CSUH community. The goals in all of these efforts were essentially the same, namely to improve planning and assessment, a sense of campus community, student learning, and community service. This chronology illustrates the need for CSUH to focus on actualizing, integrating, and institutionalizing its planning initiatives.
1992/93. A university mission is revised by a campus-wide committee and accepted by President Rees.

1994/95. A “University-Wide Plan” is submitted to the Academic Senate by CAPR, setting forth planning principles and recommendations for improvement.

1994/95. The university participates in the PEW Roundtable Project, focusing on three planning themes related to a learning environment.

1995/96. President Rees proposes a process to develop planning priorities through the work of existing faculty governance and other university structures.

Spring 1995. CAPR presents a report, accepted by the Senate, to prioritize university academic programs for the purpose of allocating new faculty positions and other resources.

Spring 1995. The Futures Committee, a subcommittee of CAPR, addresses several questions related to planning, programs, and structures.

1997/98. Efforts and discussions culminate in the establishment of the Committee on University Goals and the publication of the University Goals and Objectives with seven goals and accompanying measurable objectives.

2000. WASC Five Year Interim Report details the progress towards accomplishing the University Goals and Objectives. [CSUH-WASC 2000 Five Year Report: volume 1 / volume 2]

2002/03: The president announces that instead of starting a separate planning process to revise the University Goals and Objectives, which expired in 2002, the WASC accreditation process should act as the starting point for a new university forward planning process.

Fall 2004. The president addresses the university, formally unveils the new mission, vision, and values statement and re-iterates her support to plan and implement changes in order to improve our multicultural learning environment. Various parts of the university begin strategic planning for their units, e.g., instructional colleges, the Contra Costa campus, the Oakland Center, student services, the library, and instructional technology. In addition, the interim provost has begun a visioning process for Academic Affairs. The first step in this process was the establishment of a task force to look into a reorganization of several units and functions in Academic Affairs to see if better services would be provided to faculty under an alternative organizational delivery system. [Academic Affairs Task Force (memo from Provost)]

Two recent initiatives illustrate that CSUH is capable of planning and assessing results: The Strategic Enrollment Management process led by Enrollment Services, and the fund raising efforts of University Advancement.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING: TWO CASE STUDIES (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)**

The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) process sets the plans, goals, and objectives for enrollment management at the university. Involving representation from all areas of the university, the process sets the example of having key personnel involved and responsible for meeting goals, setting measurable achievement indicators, and linking budget
allocations to implementation. A key accomplishment of the current plan is the Freshman Initiative (mentioned above) that resulted in a 25.9% increase in the size of the 2004 first time freshman class. Together, they demonstrate that CSUH can use evidence to identify CSUH’s strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and opportunities; focus on and respond to enrollment issues; design action plans; achieve and measure stated objectives in a timely and focused manner; and use results to inform future planning. University leadership also used data from the SEM planning process and studies by outside consultants to improve student advising and the university image. This resulted in the appointment of an Executive Director of Student Retention and Advisement and a new university marketing campaign, among other changes. [SEM Report]

University Advancement recently developed a fund-raising plan using a university-wide participatory process to set fund-raising priorities. University Advancement solicited fund raising proposals from all segments of the university community including the WASC COTs. They received 117 proposals. These proposals were reviewed by a committee of faculty and staff and then by the CSU Educational Foundation, the board that advised the university on its fund-raising plans. The proposals, along with the reviews, were sent to the president who organized them into the following four priorities: scholarships, math and science education and research, upgrades in technology and facilities, and the University’s Leadership Fund. The fund raising plan includes measurable objectives and assessment of results [University Advancement Plan]. It is significant to note that the university just successfully completed its first capital building campaign, which exceeded its $10 million goal.

The success of these two efforts demonstrates that the university is capable of engaging in successful strategic planning and follow-through. (4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

**STRATEGIC CHANGES IN OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT (CFR 4.5)**

CSUH recently reorganized its institutional research capacity. This function was moved to Academic Affairs and integrated with assessment to create the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA). A new Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research and Assessment, who also serves as the university’s Quality Improvement (QI) Coordinator, was hired. She is reorganizing the university’s institutional research capacity based upon feedback from the Institutional Portfolio COT, which suggested that the Institutional Portfolio not only serve the purpose of WASC accreditation, but also it would be the new institutional research site for the university. These improvements are now underway and will be completed by the time of the Educational Effectiveness review. Although many units experienced budget cuts this past year, the university added resources to IRA because of its commitment to improve capacity in this area.

Currently, IRA has sufficient staff and the capability to meet CSU and IPEDS reporting requirements and complete special analytical reports as requested. It will begin publishing a printed “Fact Book” in 2005. IRA is converting to a SAS database to make data inquiries more efficient. This office works with all units in the university to gather and analyze data, identify needs and preferences of students, and provide the appropriate programs and
services related to admissions, financial aid, registration, advising, career counseling, technology, and library and information services.

**Capacity to Integrate and Institutionalize Improved Planning (CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8)**

Each of the 12 COTs has studied their respective areas and made specific recommendations that provide valuable insight into what must be done to know that we are accomplishing our educational purposes and to identify how we can improve.

CSUH has the capacity to know the quality of its academic programs through the assessment of student learning outcomes and refined integration throughout the curriculum and program review process. As developed in chapter two, the university has a detailed process for curriculum and program approval, periodic review, on-going evaluation, and data collection. CSUH is moving into the use of evidence to improve programs. As with all other CSU campuses, CSUH participates in and meets the expectations of the Chancellor’s Office Accountability Reporting requirements, which include an update of the assessment of student learning outcomes and physical plant utilization. (CFR 4.5) [Appendix III – CFR 4.5].

As discussed earlier, most degree programs have indicators for their student learning outcomes and specified points in the program where these indicators will be measured. The faculty is beginning to accept that they will be required to use the results of the measurement of these indicators for program improvement (CFR 4.6, 4.7.)

The university involves stakeholders in the assessment of the effectiveness of educational programs, primarily through advisory boards. Sixteen of the university’s degree programs have advisory boards comprised of industry and community leaders (often alumni) who provide input on what graduates need to know to succeed in the field, curriculum design, and feedback on the quality of CSUH graduates. A recent CSU survey of CSUH-educated teachers, which asked principals to rate the quality of those with a CSUH teacher credential, provided useful assessment data. [CSU Special Report – Teacher Presentation] (CFR 4.8)

CSUH has the capacity to know the level of effectiveness of its support for student learning and to make improvements based on those data. As noted earlier, the Student Affairs Division, the Library, and Instructional Technology have successfully developed strategic plans. The Contra Costa Campus is currently in a strategic planning process. In addition, many COTs (Student Services, Instructional Technology, Campus Climate, and Faculty) found that direct support for student learning and retention is distributed throughout the university, including advising from faculty, departmental staff, student services staff, DegreeWorks, student life, the lower division general education classes and more. Some members of these COTs, however, feel that this distributed, multi-point model is uncoordinated, making priorities and indicators difficult to establish and measure reliably. Assessment of the effectiveness of CSUH’s advising model is needed.

In summary, CSUH has the capacity to use its research and data collection to establish priorities for student and organizational learning; to implement actions at different levels of
the institution; and to evaluate the evidence and revise its purposes, structures, and approaches to improve learning. What is needed now is to connect and integrate the processes in place. The concluding essay presents the goals and organization for the educational effectiveness review, detailing how CSUH intends to improve student learning by more effective use of its institutional capacity, and to move forward with a coordinated and integrated university-wide plan that includes all units and campuses.