

FINAL REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

To
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

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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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REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and Visit

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (hereafter CPP) boasts an interesting and rich heritage as one of two polytechnic universities in the California State System that is committed to applied student learning. The campus of 21,477¹ students sits on 1,438 acres less than 30 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. The campus began in 1938 as the Voorhis Unit of the California State Polytechnic College. In 1956, 508 students and 44 faculty and staff relocated from the Voorhis Unit to the Kellogg campus that had been donated in 1949 by cereal magnate W. K. Kellogg to the state of California. The Pomona campus separated from the San Luis Obispo campus in 1966 and became the California State Polytechnic College, Kellogg Campus. University status was granted in 1972.

A 25-member Board of Trustees provides oversight of all aspects of the CSU system, including CPP. As one of six polytechnic universities in the United States, CPP employs a learn-by-doing philosophy, which is expressed in the campus mission, *“To advance learning and knowledge by linking theory and practice in all disciplines, and to prepare students for lifelong learning, leadership, and careers in a changing, multicultural world.”*

CPP evolved from a rural campus with an agricultural focus and a few technical disciplines in 1938 to a large metropolitan campus with 99 programs across eight academic colleges and is supported by 592 full-time faculty; 85% of the tenured and tenure track (T/TT) faculty have a doctorate or other terminal degree. Of the 586 part-time faculty, 32% have a

doctorate or other terminal degree. The majority of full-time faculty are male (62%) and white, non-Hispanic (62%). Similarly, part-time faculty are male (65%) and white, non-Hispanic (67%). The Pomona Chapter of the California Faculty Association represents both full- and part-time faculty. CPP's fifth president, Michael Ortiz, joined the campus in 2003, the year of the WASC Special Visit. Provost Marten denBoer arrived in Fall 2008, the fourth chief academic officer, permanent or interim, since 2000.

B. The Institution's Capacity and Preparatory Report

CPP submitted its Capacity and Preparatory Review (C&PR) Report to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges July 2008. The WASC Accreditation Review Team's (hereafter Team) appraisal of the Report was to determine its alignment with the *Institutional Proposal* as well as the quality and rigor of the review and Report; effectively, to ascertain the extent with which CPP is prepared to demonstrate its educational effectiveness in its scheduled 2010 review.

Alignment with the Proposal

The C&PR report is consistent with the university's 2006 "*Institutional Proposal*" to develop a review process that would be guided by an overarching theme of "*Cultivating excellence: Building a learning-centered model of polytechnic education.*"

CPP envisions three outcomes from their review process: first, to establish an ongoing practice of inquiry and analysis; second, to integrate and align activities with the university mission and goals and with each other; and, finally, to develop the habits of ongoing reflection, improvement, and planning that are central to a learning organization.

CPP notes that the cornerstone of preparation for the C&PR is the Prioritization and Recovery Process (P&R). This process, launched by President Ortiz in 2005, was intended to set priorities for campus funding following a period of resource contraction. The process separated

reviews of academic programs and support areas. The Academic Program Committee consisted of appointees from the administration and the Academic Senate. The Support Programs committee was constituted of representatives of each of the administrative divisions. Following an initial success at coming to agreement on a shared vision for the campus, the Academic Program Committee collected data and established criteria for future investment in academic programs. Although there was widespread discussion of the committee's proposals, the Academic Senate asked that the process be delayed, presumably over the role of faculty governance in adoption of an allocation and reallocation plan for the campus. Although the Support Programs Committee completed its work, its recommendations were set aside because support activities were understood to be derivative on academic structures and functions. Because the P&R process was not completed, the campus does not yet have either an academic master plan or a campus strategic plan.

Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

In preparation for the C&PR process, and in response to the special visit, CPP invested a significant amount of time and energy to engage in dialogue establishing a common vision (in the P&R process) and identifying three institution-wide themes in preparation for the C&PR review. These are: Institutional Excellence, the Teacher-Scholar Model, and Student Success. This is a noteworthy exchange given the many dynamics that revolve around the teaching vs scholarship debate within universities. This reflective debate speaks to a faculty culture that does not shy away from challenges, even when the conversation touches on questions of institutional identity and shared vision for the future.

While engaged in intensive thematic discussion of the teacher-scholar model and its intersection with excellence and student success, CPP also invested in acquisition of the

PeopleSoft database to handle the volume of data and the data reports necessary to support a culture of evidence. This was done in the context of a succession of provosts.

The completion of the C&PR report presents a process that was brought to closure by CPP's need to submit a report to WASC but may not reflect that the capacity review process was fully concluded. For example, the report does not describe steps taken, after submission of the Report, by the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) and Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies to develop University-level criteria to assess effectiveness of program-level reports and for instituting a broad campus-wide assessment of institutional excellence. Neither does it provide insight into the capacity of CPP to use data systematically to improve learning.

C. Response to Previous Commission Issues

In keeping with the Commission action letter of March 6, 2001, the special visit on October 22-24, 2003 was conducted to investigate progress in four areas: 1) shared vision and governance; 2) planning and institutional research; 3) assessment and learning-centeredness; and 4) general education. CPP's *Proposal* and C&P Report were organized around three categories: 1) assessment of student learning, 2) shared vision and governance, and 3) planning.

With respect to "Shared Vision and Governance," the Commission noted that CPP has made some progress, but stressed that "considerable work remains to be done." The Team recognized substantial progress on shared vision, as demonstrated by the articulation of its vision statement in the initial phase of the P&R process and as confirmed in the Team's discussions with campus constituents. However, the Team found that progress towards shared governance will best be demonstrated by completion of a campus strategic plan. In the area of "Planning and

Institutional Research” the Commission found that the campus made “significant strides,” particularly in the area of enrollment management. The Team found that CPP has developed the tools and the structures to conduct planning, but must still address issues related to the planning process, particularly the role of faculty governance and the role of campus-wide discussion in the review and ratification of the plan. Moreover, planning within the campus divisions is restrained and limited by the lack of a comprehensive strategic plan. At the time of the visit, CPP had not yet established an agreed upon charge to the planning committee and a process for vetting the committee’s work.

Regarding “Assessment and Learning-centeredness” the Commission found that CPP had made progress in a number of areas and that “a substantial infrastructure has begun to emerge.” The Team observed that “*Administrators worked with the Academic Senate to develop a General Education (GE) Assessment Policy, in which representative instructors from each of the 16 GE areas will develop five-year assessment plans.*” (*Proposal*, p. 3) While CPP noted that it has an assessment infrastructure in place and that all assessment plans would be completed by 2006-07 (*Proposal*, p. 3), the Team notes that CPP’s optimistic outlook (*CPR*, p. 25) was not realized at submission of the Report nor at the CP&R visit. Of the sixteen GE areas “four lower division GE areas have had assessment plans approved and learning outcomes have been developed for seven other lower division GE areas. Learning outcomes for the three upper-division synthesis courses were developed during the GE program revision process.” (*CPR*, p. 25) The Team found that this progress in assessment is currently somewhat uneven: highly developed in some areas, but in need of substantial work in others, particularly in general education assessment. That said, it is also apparent from interviews with students faculty and alumni, and from the review of posters

of student work, that CPP is a learning-centered institution with engaged students performing at a substantial level of quality.

Finally, in the area of “General Education” the Commission found that CPP “addressed the concerns expressed by the Commission about the status of the general education program.” Specifically, CPP had partially redesigned its general education program and established formal guidelines for courses. The Team found that while CPP has made significant progress in program design, its assessment plan, although approved by the academic senate, proved too complex and cumbersome to implement. Having a functioning general education assessment program in place remains one of the core issues resulting from the C&PR review.

Assessment is now underway at the program level and a plan is in place for upward reporting of program information. Assessment findings remain at the program level and cannot contribute to a university-wide integration of findings. Likewise, use of assessment results is also limited to each program. This finding also indicates absence of a strategic plan that is responsive to assessment findings and that informs budget decisions. (See *WASC Action Letter*, Issue 1-3) CPP has made progress to develop an emerging assessment system but the Team shares the concerns of the Special Visit Team. These concerns are addressed in detail in Section II of this Report.

SECTION II. EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY UNDER THE STANDARDS

CPP presented three themes in its *Proposal* and Capacity and Review Report. The CP&R Team focused its review on both the themes and the four WASC standards. The primary questions that guided the team were: 1) How did CPP respond to previous recommendations from WASC?” and 2) “Is there capacity evidence to support CPP’s report that it has resources to collect, analyze and use data to support educational effectiveness?”

Coexisting with CPP's many successful efforts delineated later in this report is the serious disadvantage created by the absence of a functioning University strategic plan that guides decision-making and resource allocation. This foundational document is an essential guide to all other planning efforts. If productive and sustainable decisions are to be made—whether they be annual budget allocations/reductions, facility construction and space allocations, or the recruitment of faculty and staff positions—all decision-influencers and decision-makers must be directed by the same broad set of University objectives and priorities. The dilemma posed by the lack of an adopted and implemented Strategic Plan was a recurring theme in interviews. Most advisory groups find themselves in a position of not being able to fulfill their charge because they do not have a sufficiently defined context in which to conduct their deliberations or develop recommendations. Importantly, this situation directly affected discussions of two of the three basic themes of the University's Self Study: the teacher-scholar model and excellence. Whether articulated by administrators, department chairs, or faculty the same struggle revealed itself. Efforts to successfully define these concepts in CPP's specific context will be challenging until fundamental choices are made and priorities agreed to in a University Strategic Plan. Moreover, the absence of a Strategic Plan meant that budget decisions could not reflect agreed campus-wide priorities and objectives, as none to date have been developed. (CFRs 3.5, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2)

It is important to note that the need for a Strategic Plan was a recommendation of WASC's Special Visit Team Report in 2004, which stated:

A formal strategic planning process should be introduced that will guide the budgeting or resource allocation process. This process should involve all campus constituents and have a strong communication component. Specific reportable outcomes need to be developed and included and linkages between planning, budgeting and assessment must be included.

Responding to this recommendation is of utmost importance if the University is to progress towards the goals established in its Self Study. The development of a widely accepted Strategic

Plan should be viewed as the number one priority of the University as it proceeds toward the Educational Effectiveness review in 2010.

Another recommendation of the WASC's Special Visit Team Report in 2004 was that:

An Academic Master Plan and accompanying planning process should be put into place as soon as possible.... From this, clear academic goals, objectives, and tactics need to be developed and communicated to the entire academic community.

It should be noted that the development of this plan is a priority of the new provost. In interviews, it was clear that he understood and welcomed this effort as a faculty-driven process. The Provost, faculty, administrators, and staff all recognized this academic plan as central to all other campus planning efforts. In interviews, faculty stated confidence in the Provost's approach to these deliberations and embraced the opportunity to have a voice in establishing these key University priorities. (CFR 3.11) Completing both the Academic Master Plan and the Strategic Plan as soon as feasible is required if the University is to make the necessary progress towards its Educational Effectiveness goals.

Theme 1: Institutional Excellence

The most fundamental of CPP's three themes is institutional excellence (*Self Study*, p. 8). However, as stated by CPP, this is also an abstract concept. CPP chose to focus their inquiry of institutional excellence in three areas: Programs of Distinction, Sense of Community and Effectively Communicating Mission. The institution developed researchable questions for each of these foci. The first queried the identity of CPP's "programs of distinction" within the learning-centered context. The second concerns the institution's capacity to create a sense of community among all members of the university. The third related to the effectiveness of the University's communication in attracting targeted students, personnel and resources to the institution (*Self Study*, p. 9). With these researchable questions as a framework, the Team

focused its inquiries on the following: What is CPP doing to accomplish its goal? What capacities are in place to help CPP become a learning organization with respect to attainment of that goal? What capacities are not yet in place but necessary prior to the EE review?

CPP has a well-developed administrative infrastructure and financial system in place. From a purely operational perspective, the campus meets the basic standards for fiscal responsibility and accountability as evidenced by its ability to produce annual audited financial statements and to respond to frequent subject matter audits. (CFR 3.5) The campus also boasts a faculty and staff who are competent and dedicated to the mission of the University, including its mission of “learn by doing.” The centrality of this educational approach was cited frequently during interviews with various constituencies on campus, including both academic and administrative groups. A poster session provided examples of how this philosophy has also been integrated into the non-academic divisions.

With regards to the relationship between excellence and structures to facilitate such distinction, the University should contemplate the implications of its highly decentralized organizational structure on its efforts to move new initiatives and come to consensus in campus-wide deliberations. And as in any organizational structure, there are advantages and disadvantages. In a highly decentralized organization, all participants must realize that there will be trade-offs between autonomy and efficiency in consensus building and decision-making. Based upon interviews, it is clear that CPP is facing this trade off as it deals with defining for itself the meaning of the teacher-scholar and excellence concepts and implementing an effective assessment program. To implement its thematic vision described in the CP&R, CPP must develop institution-wide definitions for each of its three themes: institutional excellence, the teacher-scholar model, and student success. This is not to say that these thematic definitions

should be so restrictive so as not to accommodate differences among disciplines. It does mean, however, that these three definitions must provide a sufficient framework to assure comparability among the many eventual disciplinary implementations. To achieve this objective, CPP must resolve its fundamental struggle between centralized and decentralized decision-making. Without a robust process to reach conclusions and make decisions, with all the compromises that it requires, it is not likely that CPP will ever be able to implement its thematic vision.

Programs of Distinction

CPP has engaged in substantial efforts to identify its programs of distinction. The original notion of Programs of Distinction was to help CPP make strategic decisions with respect to resource investments. A Prioritization and Recovery committee (P&R) was established to develop a set of criteria and plans for prioritizing programs (CFR 4.1). The P& R committee involved both the administration and faculty appointed by the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate. The campus gathered data, established evaluative criteria and made some far-reaching recommendations, which were met with resistance by various constituents of the Committee. Currently the University, under the guidance of the new Provost, is attempting to establish a new strategic planning group that will undertake an examination of the previously collected data and updated annual reports to examine the strengths and weaknesses of programs (CFR 4.3) and to help the campus establish priorities and come to some agreement on Programs of Distinction. At the time of the visit CPP did not have a strategic planning committee nor an articulated committee charge. The Provost told the team that he definitely wanted faculty involvement and that faculty would be involved in writing the committee charge. The University (both administration and faculty) while optimistic about the new committee's prospects for developing criteria for excellence and priorities appears to be guarded in its confidence that this committee

will develop a strategic plan in alignment with its mission (CFR 4.2) that will be accepted by both the administration and faculty within the required timeline of 2010.

The sense of community among the constituencies is also identified by CPP as a focus of Excellence. The difficulty of this aspect of excellence is in determining the appropriate measurements to determine the effectiveness of reaching the goal community. The Team learned that a campus climate study was conducted eight years ago in which one focus was the assessment of campus climate for minorities. The Team was told that the results of that study indicated that some minorities did not feel a sense of belonging and that some gay and lesbian students felt it unsafe to express their sexual orientation. (CFRs 2.11, 3.2) To assist the underrepresented groups, the institution has established student support groups for women and minorities, some of which are associated with specific majors. There are a Native American Task Force and an African-American task force, which are designed to recruit critical mass to the campus and to assist with support to increase retention and graduation rates. (CFR 2.11) Groups such as these, along with other centers and clubs (*Self Study*, Appendix K, p. 31), are engaged in activities that are designed to bring a greater sense of community among a diverse group of students. (CFRs 2.11-2.13) The IPEDS Data (*Self Study*, Appendix E, Tables 1.4 and 2) show that the efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented students have met with some success. Anecdotal evidence from individual students, faculty and staff indicate that both African-Americans and American Indian students feel a much greater sense of community. However, the team was told that there has not been any recent assessment of campus climate with respect to diverse student groups, which could give credence to the diversity efforts.

The last team's visit to CPP noted among its recommendations, the following:

The challenges related to role clarification in shared governance will take a great deal of effort, time and the establishment of mutual respect and trust between the various

constituent groups. As the parties clarify their roles and develop a shared governance structure, they should do so with the best interests of the institution in mind rather than the specific personalities of the parties involved in the negotiations. (p. 18)

Moreover, the 2004 Commission letter said that “while the contentious relationships were not as evident during the team’s visit there remain challenges” Contrary to statements in the CPP Proposal (p. 3) and Self Study (Appendix D-1), at the time of the current team visit there was identifiable tension between the faculty and the administration, which is having a negative impact on the feeling of community. Although the campus could point to many examples of cooperation between administration and faculty, the team did not find that the specific issues of shared governance have been resolved. It appeared to the visiting team that there is still work to be done in this area. The unique roles of faculty versus administration in shared governance are not well understood and/or accepted by the parties (CFR 3.8). Students also reported being aware of this tension. The team was told by faculty that the administration does not demonstrate respect for faculty, nor for the Academic Senate. Interviewed faculty said they are overworked, under resourced, and unappreciated (CFR 3.2, 3.3). As resources and budgets become more constrained, there is concern that this tension may increase. One major hope voiced by both administration and faculty alike is that with the appointment of a new Provost, the academic leadership that has been missing at this administrative level will reduce some of the tension and bring a sense of clarity. (CFR 3.10) The Provost appears to have the support of both the faculty and the President. The faculty expressed the sentiment that if their voice is being heard and that their opinions are being respected this will go a long way toward building a sense of community. The sentiments expressed by the Special Visit team’s recommendations regarding shared governance are just as appropriate today as then.

Closely linked to the necessity for a Strategic Plan is the need for stable and effective academic leadership, principally the role of the Provost, but also including the deans. A repeated

theme among faculty interviewed reflected the view that faculty and instructional needs have not been adequately represented to the President for the past number of years. The perception is that this lack of representation resulted in a loss of both funding and attention to faculty concerns. While this perception is clearly present among faculty, it runs counter to the fact that administrators interviewed recognized and supported the primacy of academic programs as the directing force on campus. These discordant views appear to be causing great uneasiness and unnecessary conflict. The absence of effective academic leadership appears to have been a major contributing factor to the lack of progress in strategic planning, as well as other academic initiatives such as those described in the Self Study. A further benefit of effective academic leadership is providing constructive conditions for faculty to participate in University deliberations and decision-making. Based upon repeated comments during interviews it is essential that concerns regarding the use of existing consultation processes be resolved before any progress will be made on substantive issues. The Provost is looked to as the critical missing player who can assure that the appropriate processes are followed and the required consultation occurs. (CFRs 3.8, 3.10, 3.11). However, it must also be recognized that CPP has developed a highly decentralized organization that may be an obstacle to how effectively the Provost can stimulate change and progress.

As intimated above, instability in the deans' ranks also appears to have contributed to the faculty's view that their concerns are not adequately represented. High turnover among the deans, with some positions filled on an interim basis for an extended period, has exacerbated the insecurity and neglect felt by many faculty. (CFR 3.8)

Effectively Communicating Mission

CPP has many excellent programs, some of which are rated among the best in the state and

nation; however, the sentiment expressed by some was that the institution's successes and strengths are not being effectively communicated to the external community. CPP is also not sure it is reaching its targeted audience with effective communication. The institution expressed the desire to "improve the ways ... the campus communicates the CPP mission in order to enhance the match between the essential campus characteristic and the expectations of new student, faculty, staff, and external partners" (*Self Study* p. 12). As referenced in the previous section, the University has long-established specific task forces, including Maximizing Engineering Potential (MEP) and Science Educational Enhancement Services Program (SEES), to recruit and support underrepresented groups and some of these are aligned with specific majors. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4) The directors of these groups reported on their efforts to recruit students that meet the profile of students who the programs wish to target. The team was told that in some cases this involves working with parents as well as counselors and community leaders. Faculty involved in these efforts, mentioned that one of the difficulties in recruiting underrepresented students was the small number of diverse faculty who could serve as role models. (CFR 3.2)

Communicating with prospective and current faculty members is also mentioned as an area of focus (*Self Study*, p. 14). The team was not shown samples of instruments for communicating with prospective faculty. Faculty and department chairs expressed concern that the University has not increased the diversity of its faculty as much as desired. (CFR 3.2) The team was told that recruiting is decentralized and in contrast to the statements in the *Self Study* (p. 14), some faculty did not see a University-wide concerted effort to recruit a more diverse faculty. (CFR 3.3)

Communication with the external community is in the planning stages for the upcoming comprehensive capital campaign. The members of the external community who spoke with the team (and are also donors) were aware of and supportive of the upcoming campaign. They expressed the opinion that individual one-on-one communication using community and business leaders would be most effective. They also said that bringing people to campus to see the many facets of the University would be key to mounting a successful campaign. The University appears on track with this effort.

Institutional Excellence is, as CPP states, fundamental. However, CPP is struggling to define exactly what Excellence means and unsure about the measurement tools it will use to determine if it is effective in reaching its excellence goals. The institution has chosen to focus on three aspects of excellence, programs of distinction, sense of community, and effectively communicating mission. Of the three, the last, effectively communicating mission, is the one that appears to have the greatest common understanding and the need to develop measurements of effectiveness is clearly recognized. CPP also needs to better define what it means by community and how it will be systematically measured. They have yet to clearly articulate or reach consensus on the meaning of programs of distinction. When asked what exactly makes a program one of distinction, there was no ready answer among any of the groups who met with the team. This area is the one where CPP will need to reach a clearly articulated operational definition before any measurement can be effective.

Theme 2: Evolution of the Teacher / Scholar

CPP is evolving from a primarily teaching-focused institution to an institution whose faculty are teacher-scholars, who maintain an advanced depth of understanding in the current research, professional practice, and creative activities of their disciplines. This knowledge informs and

enhances their teaching and classroom experience and creates students who are active learners with enhanced understandings of the professional experiences and opportunities in their discipline. The Teacher-Scholar (TS) thematic essay in the self-study provides a discussion of the foundational ideas for the appropriate TS model at CPP and three researchable questions guiding the development of the CPP TS model:

Question 1: Capacity to Promote the TS Model: How effective are professional development opportunities and campus infrastructures in promoting the TS model?

Question 2: Ensuring Impact: Are resources and procedures having an impact on the development of a TS model?

Question 3: Achieving and Ensuring Synergy: What challenges must we confront and overcome in order to achieve a sustainable TS model?

The institution seeks to create a TS model that integrates “traditional research, scholarship, and creative activities, engagement with students, and scholarly teaching that builds upon, but also transcends, the narrow teaching-based ideal that has long defined the role of CSU faculty” (*Self-Study*, p. 16).

The team commends the university for its efforts to move forward with the TS model. Institutional activities such as the Provost's Teacher-Scholar Program, the Faculty Center for Professional Development, improved start-up packages and increased allocation of assigned time for new faculty, Grant Writing workshops, and departmental incentives for scholarship are all contributing to a higher level of scholarship and engagement in the profession on campus and in many cases this is having a direct impact on student learning.

Overall, the team found campus engagement in the TS model to be uneven. While several faculty members and administrators embrace the TS model, others expressed confusion and/or

concern about the interpretation of the TS model. There were dissonant interpretations of the word scholarship; some felt that this word was synonymous with 'research' and meant the need for more published papers and external research grants, independent of classroom activities and/or student learning. This interpretation was welcome for some departments and threatening for others. There was also concern expressed that new faculty arriving on campus appeared to be designated as a teacher or a scholar, but not both. As the campus moves forward to develop a shared vision of the CPP TS model it will be important to more clearly articulate the synergistic nature of the teacher-scholar as well as the broad range of professional activities that constitute scholarship. (CFR 2.8)

Interviewed faculty were unanimous that the fundamental obstacles to producing more scholarship is the high teaching load, high student-faculty ratio, and lack of assigned time. Faculty expressed concern that it is challenging to integrate teaching and scholarship and that with such a high teaching load they simply have no time to develop scholarship; they did not suggest a lack of interest on the part of the faculty. Some departments are better positioned in this regard, with more resources, faculty, and space to carry out scholarship. Other departments suffer from a lack of resources and insufficient full time faculty to carry out the primary teaching responsibilities of the department given their current size. This concern over insufficient faculty in some programs is also mentioned in several concurrent accreditation reviews (*Self Study*, Table 8.1) and presents another obstacle for the university to develop a sustainable TS model. (CFR 3.2)

Of note is the challenge facing the University to provide adequate numbers of faculty resources required by the constant pressure of increasing student enrollment. Recent budget constraints accompanied by an increase in enrollment placed the University in the no-win

situation of trying to handle unfunded over-enrollment. An initial decision to reduce the number of lectures and so course offerings as a means of bringing the College of Science budget into balance was met with strong resistance. Eventually, this decision was reversed but there remained the problem of having to reduce the budget elsewhere. Responsibly, the University ultimately took serious steps to eliminate this over-enrollment in the subsequent academic year, relieving some of this budgetary pressure. Remaining focused on providing sufficient resources to assure sufficient course offerings seems to now be an accepted operational assumption. (CFR 3.2)

Another significant challenge for developing a TS model that will be embraced campus wide is the variation of expectations in the Reappointment-Tenure-Promotion (RTP) process. Faculty and administrators both expressed concerns that the expectations for scholarship vary widely across the different departments and colleges. Since junior faculty are largely motivated by these incentives and guidelines, the lack of consistent expectations creates an obstacle to developing a shared TS model. While one cannot expect uniform requirements for scholarship, the campus can develop a consistent quality mechanism for evaluating faculty with language that embraces the CPP TS model and provides incentives for all faculty to develop their scholarship within a common framework, particularly one that is tied to improved student learning. (CFR 3.3)

The CPP TS model should also consider the role that lecturers and part-time faculty can play. Students expressed appreciation for the industrial and/or corporate experience that many part time faculty bring into the classroom. Many lecturers and other part time faculty expressed a strong desire to develop their scholarship and an eagerness to bring this into their classrooms, but voiced frustration at the lack of support for such endeavors. Given the high proportion of part

time faculty and their role in teaching many introductory and general education courses, CPP should consider more pointed communication of opportunities for long-term part time faculty to grow in scholarship, especially if they can bring this knowledge and theory into their classrooms. (CFR 2.9, CFR 3.2)

While the Self Study indicates “a convergence of faculty and administrator perspectives on articulating and implementing a sustainable TS model with a focus on learn by doing,” the current lack of understanding of the appropriate CPP TS model will make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of current practices. For example, how will the assessment of the effectiveness of the CPP TS model incorporate student learning? What metrics will be used to test the question of “ensuring impact” and does this mean impact on the faculty, budget, student learning, or all of these? What efforts will be taken to assess the sustainability of these efforts (e.g., for junior faculty as their teaching and service loads increase)? The conclusion of the TS essay in the Self Study indicates, “[that] we expect to provide evidence of this impact on student learning and engagement by the 2010 Educational Effectiveness Review.” The progress apparent during the CPR visit appears to still be in the initial stages. The TS conversation is well underway at CPP, but a process needs to be in place so that the campus can move forward to a shared vision and, more importantly, an ability to study the effectiveness of these efforts.

Theme 3: Student Success

The Team found a high degree of educational commitment expressed by the faculty, administrative staff and students of the California State Polytechnic University at Pomona (CPP). Our interviews with students demonstrated an enthusiasm for the school that was most pervasive and this is supported, for example, by the high reputation of the school in many professional communities (engineering, business, agriculture, architecture, etc) in Southern California and

around the nation. (CFR 1.1)

University practice, as expressed in its written documents and policies and programs, and reinforced through interviews, supports the proposition that CPP delivers a high quality education to its students. For example, one of the things that the University is doing particularly well is the “Learning by Doing” approach. (CFR 2.3) All the students with whom we spoke talked in glowing terms of the “hands on” educational opportunities they had taken advantage of at the University. Moreover it appears that this is true not just of an elite few but also of virtually all of the students. This commitment, of course, requires “active spaces” for the doing to take place. To support these activities, an area of future improvement is investment in laboratory facilities. This need for better “doing space” was identified by students in the architecture program. (CFR 2.5, 2.13)

Guided learning through doing is typically the role of the teacher/scholar, and in this context the Team would like to observe that it would be constructive for CPP to forge stronger links between the Teacher/Scholar model and the Learning-by-Doing opportunities. (CFR 4.1) Given the special role of a polytechnic university in the California State University System, the kinds of scholarship that one might expect of a teacher scholar (applied research, technical problem-solving, results-oriented inquiry) are precisely those that support the active involvement of students in faculty work.

Another dimension of student success is support for student learning outside the classroom. We also found the Student Affairs staff, and the staff of student support programs in Academic Affairs, to be dedicated and well organized, particularly in the area of under-represented minority student services. (CFR 2.13) In our pre-visit examination of the graduation data we were particularly alarmed by the low 6-year graduation rate for African-American students.

While this statistic is still of concern to us, we were convinced that Student Affairs was doing all that it can to understand and ameliorate this issue through the recently formed African-American Task force and other means. We found these efforts to be serious and systematic. (CFR 1.5) In this regard we were also impressed by some of the other campus efforts, for example the most commendable Renaissance Scholar Program, and the full array of student support programs are made available to students with the intent of increasing student retention and success rates. In this general area we would suggest continued University support for these efforts. (CFR 1.5) As stated in the charge to the Enrollment Management Advisory Council (EMAC) its role is to “provide for the development and integration of strategies, infrastructure, programs and resources that contribute to the successful recruitment, persistence and graduation of students.” Various programs and initiatives have been generated by EMAC, including First Year Experience programs, an Early Start Summer Remedial program, academic advising workshops, and mandatory orientation for all entering students. (CFR 2.10-14) Two possible next steps might be (1) to carry out another Campus Climate study similar to those conducted in the past in order to gauge improvement in this respect and (2) to consider closer links between the international student support services and those for under-represented students since these students face many of the same types of problems. (CFR 1.5)

In summary CPP can be justly proud of the success and quality of its educational achievements and environment. Facilities such as the library are state of the art. However, the team found that both students and faculty feel that some of the other physical facilities for learning, in particular, the laboratories and architecture facilities are inadequate and have been neglected for too long. In light of the role of active learning in the CPP curriculum, the University may need to consider a special effort to upgrade these learning facilities. (CFR 2.10)

CPP has also made a significant effort to direct faculty development efforts toward improving student success. For example resources allocated to the “Faculty Center for Professional Development” provide teachers with the opportunity to improve their effectiveness (CFR 2.8) CPP appears to be making headway, both in the curriculum and in support services toward improving students success.

SECTION III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CPP undertook an extensive Prioritization and Recovery planning process that was intended to be a precursor to strategic planning. Had the campus completed the P&R process, it would, no doubt, be further along in its effort to complete and adopt a strategic plan. However, the P&R process was derailed over a process conflict that resulted in faculty governance suspending its participation. Although CPP has lost valuable time in its effort to have a strategic plan in place by the EER, the Team believes that with full campus cooperation, and the strong leadership of the Provost, CPP will be able to adopt and begin to implement a strategic plan by the EER.

WASC accreditation Standards require that participating institutions of higher education have functioning systems of assessment. CPP’s efforts in this regard are highly variable. Student support programs in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs have generally adopted and implemented strong assessment mechanisms. Student orientation, residence life, academic support programs and remediation programs all track student outcomes and use assessment data for program improvement.

Academic program assessment has been slower to develop. However, Academic Affairs has adopted an assessment component in the academic program annual reporting process that is

now in place. Program reports address assessment via a standard reporting template that is reviewed by the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies who provides reflective comments back to the academic areas. The campus is likely to have completed this cycle of academic program assessment prior to the Educational Effectiveness review.

General Education assessment is the least developed assessment program at CPP. Although a campus committee has been working for some time to identify the assessment tools for each element of general education, none of these tools have been fully deployed. The Team believes that CPP may be attempting an assessment program that is more complex than necessary. The Team urges CPP to identify key learning outcomes for general education and to begin to implement basic measures of effectiveness. While it is unlikely that CPP will be able to complete general education assessment cycles in the time remaining before the EE review, the campus should have its assessment outcomes and process defined in the special report.

Specific Findings

Commendations

- CPP has established a shared vision that is appropriate to its mission and that appropriately addresses the needs of its students and its community.

The campus revised vision and core values statements, as presented in the C&PR document, and as articulated to the Team during the visit, indicate a campus-wide understanding of the polytechnic mission, the primacy of student learning, and the importance of the campus in meeting the needs of its region.

- CPP has adopted “learn by doing” as a core value and has integrated it widely and deeply throughout its curriculum.

Students understand, and are able to explain, the value of “practice” as it is integrated into a CPP education. This understanding appears to span the entire range of academic programs.

Recommendations

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

The Team found that although CPP has committed to the development of the Teacher/Scholar model of faculty work in its vision and values, that model is not yet consistently understood across the university and is not yet well integrated in retention, promotion and tenure standards.

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

The Team found that although the administration and the faculty have made some progress toward shared governance since the special visit, there is not yet clear agreement about how to implement critical planning processes.

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

CPP has not made significant progress toward adopting either an Academic Master Plan or a campus strategic plan, as was strongly recommended in the 2003 Special Visit.

CPP undertook an extensive Prioritization and Recovery planning process that was intended to be a precursor to strategic planning. Had the campus completed the P&R process, it would, no doubt, be further along in its effort to complete and adopt a strategic plan. However, the P&R process was derailed over a process conflict that resulted in faculty governance deferring its participation. The Team found that campus constituencies appear to be ready to complete this process under the leadership of the new Provost.

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

The Team found that CPP has not made significant progress toward implementing general education assessment, as was strongly recommended in the 2003 Special Visit. The campus GE Assessment Policy, established in 2004, is overly complex and has proven difficult to implement. CPP's stated intention is to revise and simplify its general education assessment plan.

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begin to implement basic measures of effectiveness. While it is unlikely that CPP will be able to complete general education assessment cycles in the time remaining before the EE review, the campus should have its assessment outcomes and process defined in the special report.

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

The Team found that CPP is on a very tight schedule to be ready for its Educational Effectiveness review. Because postponing the review is no longer an option, the Team urges CPP to focus its attention on bringing the strategic planning process to completion and on building a general education assessment system that can be implemented across all five General Education areas in time to produce baseline data for the EE review.

ⁱ Source: Table 2.1, October 6, 2008. California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Department of Institutional Research, Assessment & Planning.