REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

To California Lutheran University

March 21-23, 2007

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 according to Commission Standards and Core Commitments and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for action and to the institution for consideration.
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SECTION I: OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

IA. Description of Institution and Visit

California Lutheran University, one of 28 colleges and universities affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was incorporated in 1959 as California Lutheran College and opened its doors to students in 1961. It changed its name to California Lutheran University (CLU) in 1986 when it created its current academic structure: a College of Arts and Sciences, a School of Business, a School of Education, and an Adult Degree Evening Program (ADEP). Through these programs, CLU offers 36 majors and 28 minors for undergraduates, 11 master's degree programs and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership.

In addition to its 235-acre main campus in Thousand Oaks, California Lutheran University maintains graduate centers in Woodland Hills, Oxnard, Glendale and Los Angeles. In Fall 2006, it had 134 full-time and 149 part-time faculty. It enrolled 1,843 (1,810 FTE) traditional undergraduate students, 281 (176 FTE) Adult Degree Evening Program students and 1,174 (858 FTE) graduate students, for a total student population of 3,019 (2,844 FTE). Approximately 1,221 students live on campus.

CLU was first accredited by WASC in 1962. A comprehensive WASC visit was made in Fall 1995. The WASC Commission reaffirmed CLU's accreditation, requested a Fourth-Year Report in Spring 1999, and scheduled a comprehensive visit in Spring 2003. At the request of the WASC staff, the comprehensive visit was postponed from Spring 2003 to Spring 2005. In response to the Fourth-Year Report, the Commission's Interim Report Committee commended the University for its response and set expectations for the next comprehensive visit.

A site visit was made on March 15-17, 2005 for a Capacity and Preparatory Review. The WASC Commission received the report, continued accreditation and rescheduled the
Educational Effectiveness Review to Spring 2007. In its June 30, 2005 action letter, it encouraged the University to “incorporate its response to the issues raised in ...(the) action letter and the major recommendations of the Capacity Team Report in its Educational Effectiveness Report.”

On February 28, 2007, CLU joined in a conference call with a team of reviewers and WASC staff to discuss a Substantive Change proposal for an Ed.D. program the University offers at its Los Angeles site. The University was informed by WASC staff that the Substantive Change was approved, but the change required an on-site visit within six months by one of the team members (the visit will occur this summer), and further clarification will be needed of the workload of full-time faculty who teach in the Ed.D. program.

This visiting team report is based on the WASC Educational Effectiveness Review prepared by CLU and a site visit conducted on March 21-23, 2007. The team did not visit off-site programs; to do so would have required more time or additional team members. The team wishes to express its appreciation to CLU for the warm welcome it extended and for its spirit of cooperation in helping the team with its inquiry. Special thanks go to Dr. Leanne Neilson, Associate Provost, Graduate and Adult Programs and Accreditation, for organizing the visit so well and for responding so graciously and promptly to each of many requests made by team members.

IB. Quality of Educational Effectiveness Presentation and Alignment with the Proposal

CLU’s Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) report aligns well with the model accepted by the Proposal Review Committee. Chapter 1 describes the institution’s assessment system and the kinds of evidence it collects. Chapter 2 defines challenge and engagement and
provides illustrations of relevant programs and activities. Chapter 3 discusses the University's efforts to enhance diversity.

There was broad university involvement in writing the EER report. Twenty-five people contributed to its content. Drafts of the report were given to the provost, deans, president, vice-presidents, the WASC steering committee, the assessment committee and the faculty for review and feedback. A revised draft was posted on the CLU portal for review by all staff, students and members of the Board of Regents.

The Review used an appropriate methodology and addressed the relevant questions, providing evidence to support its statements. However, it was necessary in some cases for the team to probe more deeply in order to obtain a sense of how advanced the culture of evidence is at CLU and to clarify areas where data were insufficient or inconsistent or where analysis of the data were absent. As noted in Section II below, the report also could have been strengthened with more analysis and reflection about the evidence presented and the institutional learning that has taken place.

IC. Capacity & Preparatory Review Update

In its June 30, 2005 action letter, the WASC Commission received the University's Capacity and Preparatory Review Report, continued the University's accreditation and rescheduled the Educational Effectiveness Review to spring 2007. The Commission also noted that:

1. CLU did not provide a concluding essay with summative reflection on strengths and weaknesses or a plan for addressing areas of needed change. This is an important (and required) part of the institutional presentation and will need to be provided as part of the Educational Effectiveness Presentation.

2. ...Data Element 7.1 (Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators) was not included in the Capacity and Preparatory Review Report....[T]his form will need to be...submitted as part of the Educational Effectiveness Presentation.
In addition, the Commission urged attention to five highlighted areas:

1. Strategic Planning.... The University is encouraged to move forward with the goal to develop benchmarks and monitor key indicators. [Criterion for Review (CFR) 1.2] The Commission is concerned, however, that the overall discount rate at the institution is at an all-time high. Maintaining such discount levels is likely to impact significantly the University's revenue stream and may make the achievement of strategic goals more difficult. CLU will have to plan and budget carefully to balance two difficult goals: maintaining a discount rate that generates sufficient net tuition revenue...while...providing sufficient financial aid...to meet its enrollment targets.

2. Diversity.... Although there has been some increase in the number of students of color enrolled at CLU, there has been minimal success in hiring faculty of color. Efforts should continue to monitor and improve graduation rates of all students, especially those of color. It will be important for the University to continue its focus on diversity, with particular attention on how it will sustain...diversity initiatives after the Irvine grant concludes, and to address the need for greater faculty diversity.

3. Graduate Programs.... The Commission is concerned...about the heavy reliance on part-time faculty. Given that a significant number of faculty will be retiring, a faculty recruitment and hiring plan needs to be developed that acknowledges the need to provide an adequate core of full-time faculty with competitive salaries and support for their development, particularly in the area of scholarly and creative activity. The University also needs to assure attention to identification of learning outcomes and assessment at the graduate level, and provide part-time faculty with opportunities to participate in the learning-centered and assessment initiatives underway. [CFR 2.2, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4]

4. Assessment of Student Learning and Program Review.... Recent leadership changes might impede progress in meeting academic goals and slow efforts to regularize program reviews and institutionalize assessment of student learning. The University will need to ensure that leaders at all levels...sustain the new commitment to assessment [CFR 4.6 and 4.7] and continue efforts to build a systematic, institution-wide program of assessment and learning improvement.

A program review process and schedule was recently established, but only five programs have been reviewed....Much work remains...and part-time faculty need to be involved in these efforts. Performance indicators are needed in all programs.... As assessment plans are implemented, it is critical that the institution move beyond the use of student survey data to actual review of students' work...to determine if it is at the appropriate level and that actions are taken to improve learning. To ensure that assessment and program reviews are taken seriously at the University, the results of the processes need to be integrated into the academic planning and budget process. [CFR 2.2, 2.4, 2.6 and 2.7]

5. Preparing for the Educational Effectiveness Review.... Although the faculty has identified university goals and key indicators, the plan to assess them systematically and across the institution will need to be implemented....CLU is encouraged to continue its exploration of ways to enhance academic challenge and engagement on the campus.

CLU has presented evidence that serious efforts are underway to address the issues raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review. The comprehensiveness and success of these efforts is addressed below and in other sections of this report.

The University is currently developing a strategic plan. It will be presented to the Board of Regents Executive Committee in April and, if approved, to the full Board of Regents for final
approval in May. The focus of the plan is capital improvements to support enrollment growth and retention by building academic facilities, a campus center and a new student residence. The long-term goal of the strategic plan as articulated by the president is to create a nationally known, selective institution with distinctive academic programs that provide challenging intellectual experiences for students.

The provost is working with faculty to develop a list of comparative institutions in order to establish a set of benchmarks which will be used as part of efforts to monitor CLU’s Key Performance Indicators. This project should be finalized before the end of the 2006-07 academic year.

The leadership of the University is quite sensitive to the impact that a high discount rate can have on its goals. Currently, it is planning to reduce the rate by 2% next year and 1% each year thereafter with a goal of 35% for 2012. It has also engaged the services of Hardwick-Day to assist with predictive analysis so that enrollment goals are not compromised by unexpected shifts in the discount rate.

Many activities are underway regarding diversity. They are evaluated later in this report.

A plan is being developed to reallocate budget resources to allow for significant increases in faculty salaries. The launch date for the plan is the 2007-08 academic year. The administration projects that faculty salaries will be fully competitive within three years of the plan’s implementation.

In several discussions that the team had during its visit, the issue of heavy reliance on part-time faculty was raised. The University is encouraged to pursue its goal to achieve a 60:40 ratio of full-time to part-time faculty in its graduate programs by 2012 and to carefully monitor the ratio of full-time faculty to part-time faculty in its other programs.
Part-time faculty have been included in the discussion of student learning outcomes through meetings sponsored by individual schools of the University. CLU is aware that such efforts must be maintained and expanded.

Many projects have been initiated to assess student learning, and a schedule of program reviews is in place. These efforts are evaluated below.

Data Element 7.1 is provided in Appendix B of the Educational Effectiveness Review report. Appendix A presents additional responses to the recommendations of the Capacity and Preparatory Review Team. These recommendations encouraged the University to:

1. Continue the recent progress it has made in program review and the assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, making them an ongoing and integral part of the academic enterprise.

2. Ensure that the current diversity initiative is worked into the fabric and budget of the institution so that it is sustainable beyond the period of the current Irvine Foundation grant.

3. Continue its strong focus on increasing academic challenge and engagement.

4. Increase support for faculty development, particularly in the area of scholarly and creative activity.

5. Redouble its efforts to provide competitive faculty compensation and to assist faculty in securing affordable housing.

6. Reduce its high discount rate.

7. Increase on-line information resources to support academic programs, especially at the graduate level.

8. Clarify the role of the Provost in relation to the President and the other vice presidents.

9. Consider reducing the proliferation of small academic departments to see if the University can achieve greater synergies and efficiencies.

A revision of the program review process was completed and resulted in a new program review template, a Program Review Handbook, a clearer timetable for the process, a set of criteria and expectations for external reviewers and a redesigned schedule for future program reviews.

Regarding diversity, the University cites the appointment of Dr. Juanita Hall as Coordinator of the Campus Diversity Initiatives and chair of the newly reconstituted President’s
Diversity Council. A Center for Equality and Justice has been approved to expand and deepen the treatment of domestic and global diversity in the curriculum and co-curriculum. And CLU’s budget committee has been charged by the president to ensure that diversity initiatives receive operational funding.

The University’s Educational Effectiveness Review focuses on challenge and engagement in Chapter 2. An evaluation of the University’s strategies and programs is provided below.

Since the 2005 WASC visit, CLU has added several opportunities for faculty development. Among them are an addition to the budget of $1,000 per faculty member for faculty development, faculty workshops on scholarship and grant writing, and a new administrative position, the Assistant Director of Foundation Relations, to provide faculty with grant writing support.

To develop a plan to improve faculty compensation, a paper was prepared in May 2006 by the Dean’s Council. As mentioned above, the president and provost have identified funds to improve full-time faculty salaries significantly over the next few years. Adjunct salaries were increased by 12.5% in 2006, with an 11% increase planned for next year.

CLU’s efforts to address its discount rate are described above. They will be incorporated into the University’s strategic planning.

On-line information resources have been expanded significantly since March 2005, and a library collection development plan has been created for the Ed.D. program. Workshops for faculty and students have also been provided to assist them with accessing the additional resources.
The role of the provost has been clarified by President John Sladek. From the discussions the team had with the president, the provost and the faculty, it is evident that the provost is second in command and expected to define the institution’s strategic academic priorities.

CLU has not yet addressed the issue of proliferation of small academic departments. This issue is expected to be addressed primarily by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences who will be hired in the summer of 2007.

SECTION II: EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

IIA. Evaluation of the Institution’s Educational Effectiveness Inquiry

In its 2003 proposal to WASC, California Lutheran states that the educational effectiveness review will result in “a faculty driven and widely embraced understanding of excellence in teaching and learning that encompasses challenge, engagement, and diversity.” Specifically, the proposal sets forth the following two themes:

- Raising the level of expectations, challenge, and engagement in CLU’s academic and co-curricular programs and
- Enhancing engagement with diversity in the campus community and in the classroom

The proposal outlines a strategy for approaching these themes, indicating the need first to define challenge, engagement and diversity, and then to assess current performance, identify key strategies and assess the impact of these strategies. The proposal further expresses the expectation that CLU will determine the extent to which these two themes impact program content and pedagogy which, in turn, will result in improved student outcomes.
Theme 1: Raising the Level of Expectations, Challenge and Engagement

Prior to the Capacity and Preparatory visit, the institution sought to define its goals of challenge and engagement. The CLU faculty devoted time at its faculty retreat in 2002 to this challenge. Three additional groups provided thoughtful input into the debate. The Student Affairs division submitted work as did the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences, and the WASC Steering Committee in 2003 examined the question, “What will we look like three years from now if we become a more challenging and engaged learning community?” All of this work was considered by a faculty-based “Challenge and Engagement Task Group” which determined that challenge and engagement is “likely to occur in diverse intellectual and perceptual situations designed to expand the boundaries of students’ assumptions, creativity and reasoning.” The group went on to state that “Challenge involves being engaged in…” and “Engagement involves being challenged with....”

Although CLU had made progress in addressing what it meant by “enhancing challenge and engagement,” the 2005 WASC visiting team for the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) determined that California Lutheran had not yet fully defined “challenge, engagement and diversity.” As a consequence, the CPR visiting team strongly recommended that California Lutheran clearly and quickly define “challenge, engagement, and diversity” in order to maximize the benefits of the review process.

Since 2005, it is clear that the institution has devoted a great amount of energy to define “challenge and engagement.” Faculty, students and staff had the opportunity to provide input as to what they believe engagement and challenge represent. [CFR 2.4]. The primary method CLU used was student and faculty focus groups. Student focus groups were organized around the various student types: traditional undergraduates, graduate students and adult evening degree students. Eight student focus groups were asked to identify what “challenge/engagement means
to you,” and were also asked to provide examples of being challenged and engaged in classes and examples of when the student didn’t feel challenged or engaged. In addition, students were asked what they “expect from themselves and each other.”

Students responded by saying that students need to “seek challenge,” “be determined to succeed,” be “active learners,” and “engage with the CLU community.” In response to the question about what they “expect from their professors,” student responses varied from expecting course material to apply outside the classroom, to exhibiting passion, to setting high standards and expectations.

Nine faculty focus groups (four full-time who teach in traditional undergraduate programs, two who teach in graduate programs and three part-time faculty) were also asked what “challenge and engagement mean.” Initially, faculty responded by focusing on the responsibilities of students. This evolved to a more faculty-focused responsibility that included expressions such as “do not lower expectations,” “be more active,” “be enthusiastic,” and “establish specific goals for learning.” At a 2005 faculty retreat, the results of the focus groups were shared and discussed. Faculty then divided into groups to discuss what faculty action might result in greater challenge and engagement.

The team commends CLU for the collaborative and all-inclusive approach it has taken to define challenge and engagement. However, the broad definition of the terms has not yet generated a focused and cohesive strategy or plan to enhance challenge and engagement. Rather, the team read and heard about a multitude of strategies and tactics at the program and department level, all of which may be advancing CLU’s goals but which are not yet sufficiently coordinated [CFR 4.3, 4.5].

The team found, through discussions with various program directors, a passionate commitment to offer engaging and challenging courses. And currently, the method and success
of creating an engaging and challenging learning environment remains entirely at the course level and individual faculty member's determination as to what will most enhance a particular course's level of challenge and engagement. While these efforts are commendable, there remains no strategy institutionally or programmatically about how to enhance challenge and engagement, nor any consistent agreement as to what this actually is or how it can best be measured [CFR 1.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3]. When asked what such an environment might "look like," the team heard and read a wide variety of possible measurables: increased demand for tutorial assistance, greater use of primary texts, cross-disciplinary connections, learning to ask the right questions, more student study time. A frequently expressed vision by department chairs suggest that success in achieving student engagement and challenge will be realized when students in their senior year are able to produce quality research. Still others see enhanced engagement and challenge as critical thinking and skill acquisition.

Through this "bottoms-up" effort to define challenge and engagement, California Lutheran has achieved significant faculty buy-in, active dialogue and the generation of much innovative activity. The next step for the institution is to capture the outcome of this ongoing discussion and debate—including determining consensus about the definition of the concepts and fully assessing and analyzing results—in order to build upon initial successes and inform future strategy [CFR 1.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3].

The institution's educational effectiveness report reflects the challenges created by not yet having a clear common understanding of what the ultimate vision "looks like." This is most apparent when examining the measuresCLU used to evaluate progress toward "increasing challenge." The first such measure consists of national student survey data that show improvement of CLU students in the number of papers written, the length of the papers, coursework with an emphasis on critical thinking, and the hours spent studying. Yet it is not
clear from the material or discussions as to how these statistics fit with institutional or departmental goals of engagement and challenge [CFR1.2]. Greater focus could prove beneficial in prioritizing resources and energies.

The report discusses four separate “strategies” to increase challenge and engagement:

- The University Honors Program (started in 2003), which identifies students with the “highest academic abilities” and offers these students specially designed courses
- An intensified focus on student research
- Faculty development workshops on challenge and engagement
- Incorporating challenge and engagement into program reviews

The Honors Program is designed to focus efforts on enhancing challenge and engagement for students who have been identified as having the highest academic potential. Each year, the invitation-only honors students take a special honors course “designed to engage and stimulate the exceptional student beyond the level of mere comprehension.” In addition, the program offers to its students special out-of-classroom experiences such as field trips and outside speakers. In its assessment of the success of this program, CLU surveyed the first cohort of program participants as they exited the program. Students were asked to indicate whether the honors courses as compared to non-honors courses were more intellectually challenging, addressed more ideas, offered more co-curricular activities, and were more connected to diverse cultural settings and fields of knowledge. The survey responses indicated a substantial majority of the respondents (66%-89%) answered in the affirmative.

The team did not see during its visit any use of direct evidence by CLU in its assessment of the Honors Program, although the institution’s self study report indicates that a group is organized to develop clear program objectives. The team encourages CLU to continue this work
and identify evidence beyond student surveys that will enable CLU to assess the contribution of the Honors Program in accomplishing CLU's overall goals to enhance challenge, engagement and diversity. In this way, CLU can utilize the results from this program to inform the remainder of the University's student body [CFR 2.7].

The remaining "strategies" articulated by CLU for achieving enhanced challenge and engagement are less developed and have not yet resulted in articulated objectives, tactics and clearly connected measurables. For example, what does it mean to have a "more intensified focus on student research" and what would success look like for this strategy? This is not to say that the institution has not made progress in this strategy. Most impressive is the institution's "Festival of Scholars" in which roughly one hundred students, working with faculty, presented their scholarship to the University community over the course of a week that coincidentally overlapped with the team's visit. Team members spoke with several of the student and faculty participants and had the opportunity to review in more depth one class product – a very creative team multi-media presentation. The students were bursting with enthusiasm for what they learned and the process and environment in which they worked. They were able to articulate and post their personal learning evolution in three different stages of the project. The students' professor was equally animated, excited and proud about the student learning experience. The team found a similar level of passion about the subject of learning with nearly all the students and faculty it met. The team encourages CLU to consider moving beyond individual efforts and articulate at an institutional or programmatic level what it wishes to achieve in intensifying its focus on student research. It would be helpful for CLU to address such issues as: indicators of "success," a clear definition of "research" within the context of CLU, the level of expectation for student participation, and methods for measuring progress [CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7].
CLU’s third strategy focuses on faculty development. CLU holds regular faculty
development workshops every year: a day and a half faculty retreat every August and two half-
day workshops during each academic year. For the past several years, they have intentionally
focused many workshops on challenge and engagement (and diversity). Such workshops
include: “Assignments that Challenge and Engage,” “Challenge and Engagement in the Writing
Center,” “What Our Library Data Tells Us about the Realities of Student Challenge and
Engagement,” and “Challenge & Engagement—Making it Happen: Tips from the Trenches.”
The workshops have been designed to provide faculty with tools and techniques to enhance
challenge and engagement within their individual courses. Hence, CLU has demonstrated a clear
commitment to building faculty capacity in these two areas.

To strengthen its faculty development and ensure it serves articulated university
priorities, the team recommends that CLU design an explicit faculty development plan that:
identifies clear outcomes for its overall faculty development strategy; explicitly aligns its faculty
development plan with achievement of the institutional goals and student learning objectives;
articulates clear expectations for faculty participation; and develops a clear assessment
methodology and plan for measuring the impact of the faculty development efforts on CLU’s
goal to achieve excellence in teaching and learning that encompasses challenge, engagement, and
diversity [CFR 2.8, 2.9]. The team also recommends tighter coordination between efforts to
enhance challenge and engagement, academic assessment processes, and the Center for Teaching
and Learning (focused on using technology to enhance the classroom experience) in order to
maximize synergy among all university efforts dedicated to improving teaching and learning.

CLU has also made progress in its efforts around its fourth strategy of incorporating the
goal of challenge and engagement into its program review process [CFR 2.7]. Its program review
template specifically contains a section enabling the program to discuss methods and progress in
enhancing engagement and challenge. The team found that most often this portion of the review reported data from survey results with respect to student perceptions, numbers of papers written and hours studied, but did not go much beyond this reporting to define what engagement and challenge means in the context of the program nor to analyze the relation between the survey evidence and the goal of challenge and engagement. As the discussion of challenge and engagement continues, it will be helpful for faculty to engage in a more reflective discussion of the programmatic implications and expectations of these two goals.

The institution's educational effectiveness report indicates that another objective of the institution is to enhance engagement beyond the classroom [CFR 2.11]. CLU describes this as consisting of two types of activities -- service learning and study abroad. CLU in its EE Report explains that the focus on service learning "enhances academic learning by enabling students to apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real work problem solving, and to appreciate the connections between their academic work and real world activities." CLU indicates that "one of the ways that we have increased student engagement in educationally related experiences beyond the classroom is through study abroad." The team was not able to find a shared vision as to the objectives behind these two strategies [CFR 2.11]. It would be helpful to specify the particular types of service learning and study abroad activities that effectively challenge and engage students, as well as determine levels of student and faculty participation needed to meet the engagement and challenge outcomes.

The team found that CLU has made an initial attempt to measure service learning through analysis of internship opportunities, which have increased. This report took more the form of data description than of reflection and analysis about challenge and engagement and a possible connection with internship postings and actual student participation. Likewise, the data indicated there may be an increased opportunity to study abroad, and discussions with
undergraduate students definitely reflected this. The team recommends that CLU assess the impact of these activities on the University’s student learning outcomes and on its objectives to raise the level of expectations, challenge, and engagement in CLU’s academic and co-curricular programs [CFR 1.2, 2.7].

In summary, the visiting team was impressed with the wide array of creative efforts and ideas around the goals of engagement and challenge. However, particularly in times of serious financial constraints and ambitious growth plans, it is critical that the institution define its vision with a clarity that will enable institutional leadership to assess results on an ongoing basis and to guide decisions and energies in a more focused framework. With leadership now stabilized, the team believes California Lutheran is well positioned to take this next step.

Theme 2: Enhancing Diversity

The third theme organizing CLU’s self-study is its goal to enhance “engagement with diversity in the classroom and in the campus community as a whole.” The University describes its diversity goals as ambitious, seeking “to transform the very nature of the campus: the composition of the students, faculty and staff; the nature of relationships between people; the priorities in strategic planning, the content of courses and cocurricular offerings; and the interrelationships with external communities.” The University’s efforts to enhance diversity focused on three objectives:

1. Increase the diversity of the student body, faculty, staff and governing board;
2. Strengthen the understanding and appreciation of diversity, and strengthen global awareness in the campus environment and community.
3. Expand and deepen the treatment of domestic and global diversity in the curriculum.
With assistance of a $400,000 three-year grant from the James Irvine Foundation in 2003, the President’s Diversity Council (PDC) developed a suite of strategies to carry out their diversity goals and was responsible for their implementation. They have stretched the money a fourth year to cover the current 2006-07 academic year. As a participant in the Foundation’s California Diversity Initiative (CDI), CLU had clear evaluation and reporting requirements, which included an outcomes-based diversity plan with a detailed assessment plan for collection of data, development of clear indicators of success, and annual analysis and reporting of results to CDI evaluators and participant institutions. CLU’s initiatives to enhance diversity also included activities extending beyond the scope of this CDI diversity assessment plan.

CLU has invested considerable energy and resources to meet each of the three objectives. Ownership of diversity initiatives has successfully spread beyond the PDC, and diversity-related activities are generated throughout campus. The team found evidence of clear successes among the spectrum of strategies used to achieve the three main objectives, although some results remain unclear in the absence of exhibited evidence or sufficient analysis.

_Diversity Objective 1: Diversity of student body, faculty, staff and governing board_

_Student Recruitment:_ CLU reports an increase in the percentage of underrepresented students (African American, Latino, Asian-American/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Multiracial) in all of its programs (traditional undergraduate, Adult Degree Evening Program (ADEP), and graduate) from 22% in 2003 to 31% 2006. It increased its first-time freshmen from underrepresented groups from 23% in 2003 to 31% in 2006, an historically high level for CLU.

The institution attributes these recruitment successes to a number of strategies: increased outreach to Latino students in Ventura County through a regional consortium of college
counselors (UNOS); a Multicultural Overnight (MCO) Program to bring students of color to campus for three days in an effort to recruit them; targeting financial aid resources to increase matriculation rates of underrepresented groups; a College Summit that brings predominantly African American and Latino high school students to the CLU campus for several days to assist with navigating the college application process; hiring a coordinator for multicultural admissions; and hosting high school counselors from area high schools with large ethnic minority populations to highlight the benefits of a CLU education.

The star of these recruitment efforts appears to be the MCO program, which focuses on students of color admitted but not yet enrolled at CLU. The program funds students' travel and lodging to enjoy several days on campus to showcase CLU’s strengths. MCO has an average yield rate of 62% across the three years of the program in comparison to a 31.5% yield rate for students of color who did not participate in the program. During discussions with student services staff, as well as the President’s Council on Diversity, the program was widely considered one of the great successes of the past few years (the others being the SOAR and SSS programs discussed in retention section below).

The team could not find documented results of the other recruitment efforts described here, so we could not ascertain their effectiveness. This network of student recruitment activities merits sustained analysis and reflection to determine which programs are achieving desired results and to coordinate efforts to maximize synergy. Moreover, successful endeavors such as MCO could be shared broadly throughout the University, both to publicize successes for the sake of sustaining diversity efforts and to inform relevant stakeholders who can learn from such success.

**Student Retention:** CLU initiated a number of activities to increase its retention and graduation rates for underrepresented students: two programs to support Black students, a
mentoring program, and a summer orientation program. The two programs directed at retention of Black students (BEST and TAPPS) are pilot programs, and no impact data is available yet.

The FOCUS program pairs faculty and administrators with students of color to provide mentoring to improve retention rates. It aims at improving student academic and social success to improve first-to-second year retention. In 2004, 94% of student participants enrolled the following fall, and 88% of 2005 participants (representing a new cohort of first-year students) enrolled the following fall. CLU reports that the number of participants in each year’s cohort has declined from 2004 to 2006 (48, 41, and 36, respectively). The program has reported successful results for participants, and the decline in participation merits investigation to determine the sustainability of the program.

The summer orientation program (SOAR) reports promising results in student retention, academic success, and student leadership. Student Support Services sponsors this week-long program for first generation/low income freshmen to have opportunities to interact and access resources prior to the university-wide Freshmen Orientation. Fourteen of the original 17 SOAR participants (2002) graduated within four years (2006). Altogether, the SOAR program reports retention of 87 of the 99 SOAR participants (since 2002). Staff involved with the program also anecdotally report a high correlation between student participation in SOAR and subsequent student leadership at CLU. This program was funded by the CDI grant, but is now fully funded by CLU. The success rate for SOAR students is higher than the general undergraduate student body; staff have recently shared these successes with other sectors of the University in a broader effort to improve retention and success of academically underprepared and at-risk students.

A recent retention study has revealed lower retention and slower graduation rates for students of color overall in comparison to white students. It found that 18% of “underrepresented seniors retained to the fourth year do not graduate by the end of six years”
compared to 3% at CLU overall. CLU also reports a larger attrition rate for sophomores than for students in other years. Four years ago, it developed a sophomore-year experience, but no one has reviewed the data to assess its effectiveness. Both of these findings merit further study.

**Diversification of Faculty:** CLU conducted three initiatives to recruit a more diverse faculty: updating HR academic search policies and procedures; workshops for deans and department chairs conducting searches; and $5000 incentive development grants to faculty of color who had applied for faculty positions. All five faculty offered the development grants accepted CLU’s offer. While the EE self-study reports an increase in the number of Latino, African-American and Asian-American full-time faculty (from 14% in 2002 to 18% in 2006), the only clear correlation addressed is the faculty development grant program. The impact of the other two strategies is not addressed. CLU may want to review the newly modified HR policy in order to address diversity earlier in the hiring process. Right now, search committees are encouraged to emphasize recruitment from diverse groups only at the point that the finalists are chosen. By this point, the faculty pool is already assembled, thereby missing earlier opportunities to generate a more diverse pool from which to recruit.

Diversification of the faculty pool has targeted recruitment to this point, and attention now needs to be expanded to address successful retention of a more diverse faculty. In campus discussions, current faculty from underrepresented groups point to several challenges of working at a predominantly white institution: subtle stereotyping by students and colleagues (e.g., not expecting them to speak fluent or understandable English); having no clear faculty ombudsman or other point person for addressing discrimination; absence of follow-through after being recruited; being burdened with expectations to solve or teach about discrimination just because they have experience with discrimination (as opposed to bringing in experts in this content area); and institutional and cultural constraints that limit diversity prospects (e.g., location, church-
affiliation). While this group of faculty acknowledged CLU’s desire to enhance diversity and acknowledged the considerable progress that has been made over the years, they described implementation as slow. They were also somewhat skeptical about the depth and breadth of the University’s commitment to diversity (including uncertainty about top-down commitment to diversity from the new administration), and described the history of CLU diversity initiatives as a response to external mandates (WASC) or incentives (James Irvine Foundation), rather than something that emerges from CLU’s core identity. Consequently, they are not optimistic about CLU’s capacity to sustain the diversity initiatives because of an absence of internally-generated incentives and processes [CFR 1.5].

**Diversification of Staff, Administration and Board:** Strategies for recruiting more staff, administration and board members from underrepresented groups appears to have had minimal success. Limited data were available to assess the impact of the strategies. While CLU reports progress in diversifying Board membership (86% improvement) across the past eight years, the difference in real numbers is only one body from 1999-00 (2) to 2006-07 (3). From the documents reviewed, minimal attention seems to have been directed to this portion of CLU’s diversification strategy, while faculty of color explicitly noted the lack of diversity in senior administration and its impact on institutional climate.

The team commends CLU for its web of strategies designed to improve recruitment, retention and success of a more diverse group of students. The suite of strategies aimed at diversifying CLU’s faculty, staff, administration and board is less well-developed than that directed at students. While some of these recruitment and retention initiatives are being assessed on a regular basis, the results of others remain unexamined. Systematic assessment can help to streamline efforts and reallocate resources to those initiatives producing the best results. As
well, all of these efforts will profit from tighter coordination between them, as was widely recognized by those involved in implementing the strategies.

Diversity Objective 2: Strengthen Understanding and Appreciation of Diversity, and Strengthen Global Awareness in the Campus Environment and Community

CLU has pursued a variety of strategies to achieve this objective: a student training program on Ambassadors for a Peaceful Multicultural World; mini-grants for diversity co-curricular programming; university-wide campus diversity retreat; workshops for faculty and staff; and faculty-staff focus groups on diversity.

The self-study identified three student learning outcomes for this objective: students will understand and express a) the social importance of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality, class and religion; b) an awareness of similarities and differences among groups and individuals; and c) an increased understanding and respect for people of different cultures.

Indirect evidence indicates progress on this objective. Discussions with student groups on campus (traditional undergraduates and graduates, as well as students in the adult learning program) revealed that students engage diversity issues in many of their classes. An evaluation of the 2006 Diversity Leadership Retreat by 27 student leaders who participated in the event indicates that the retreat positively enhanced students’ interest, willingness and confidence in interacting with others culturally different from themselves, although—as the report illuminates—more so for students from underrepresented groups on campus (ethnicity and religion) than for those from numerically dominant groups.

The EE Report also presented NSSE data as supporting evidence for this objective. Three NSSE questions addressing diversity indicate notable progress at CLU from 2001-2005 on students’ interactions with and understanding of those from a different ethnicity than their own
and on students' perceptions of the campus climate promoting such interactions. Disaggregated NSSE data on majority and minority student satisfaction with the level of academic support indicate both groups thought CLU "provided 'quite a bit' of academic support." However, NSSE data on student satisfaction with their relationship with faculty indicate majority students have a slightly higher level of satisfaction. At the same time, the team's discussion with a group of students of color revealed unanimous enthusiasm and appreciation for their faculty whom many described as their "family away from home."

CLU designed a robust series of events to address this objective and now needs to conduct a more systematic analysis of its achievement [CFRs 2.6, 4.4]. Where the team found evidence in support of this objective, it did not find corresponding analysis. For example, the self-study includes a compilation of student reflections on the Ambassadors program, but offers no discussion of this evidence nor analysis of the relationship between the evidence and the overall objective of enhancing appreciation/understanding of diversity or strengthening global awareness. The Campus Diversity Initiative Retreat also obtained feedback from participants with no attendant analysis of the evidence or discussion of results. A distinct exception is the report on the 2006 Diversity Leadership Retreat funded by the CDI project. A post-event report contained a complex analysis of the indirect evidence used to assess the retreat. This report serves as a good model to educate others about effective analysis of evidence to determine effectiveness and inform future planning and design of events.

The visiting team encourages the University to engage in tighter alignment between activities and intended outcomes. The alignment issue is illustrated in the overall framing of this objective: it contains two distinct claims—strengthening understanding and appreciation of diversity, and strengthening global awareness in the campus environment and community—yet the self-study does not distinguish between the two either in its description of activities or in its
brief description of results. The two-part objective and the attendant activities appear to be
directed to the entire CLU community, but the three intended learning outcomes articulated for
this objective are directed exclusively to student learning. At the same time, most of the
supporting documentation provided to the team does not address achievement of the three
student learning outcomes (e.g., the EER self-study offers no discussion of whether the NSSE
data correspond with the intended student learning outcomes or with the overall objective).

The team commends CLU for its ambitious slate of activities designed to strengthen
understanding and appreciation of diversity. Indirect evidence demonstrates progress throughout
the CLU community. The team now encourages the University to devote greater attention to the
analysis of evidence for ongoing monitoring of effectiveness of diversity efforts [CFRs 4.4, 4.7].
Also, as is discussed in more detail in the next section, the team encourages CLU to incorporate
more direct evidence and analysis of diversity-related student learning to assess achievement of
this objective [CFRs 2.4, 2.6].

**Diversity Objective 3: Expand and Deepen the Treatment of Domestic and Global Diversity in the Curriculum**

CLU has identified five student learning outcomes and pursued a variety of strategies to
develop its students’ “cultural competency,” one of the University-wide SLOs. In 2004, at the
recommendation of the President’s Diversity Council, the Educational Policies and Planning
Committee revamped the general studies domestic and global diversity requirements, clarifying
the content guidelines for each and updating course eligibility for meeting these requirements.
Other curricular and co-curricular efforts include: developing faculty working groups and
university-wide learning communities to study domestic and global diversity issues; obtaining
grant monies to initiate a service learning partnership with the neighboring community of
Oxnard; faculty development on “cultural proficiency” in the School of Education; and the submission of a grant application in Spring 2007 to provide a broad network of support services and academic development opportunities to first generation, low income students and students with disabilities.

The School of Education, in particular, has made demonstrable progress in integrating diversity issues throughout its curriculum. One survey of students’ supervisors indicates that the Multiple Subject program is effectively preparing its students “to meet the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds when compared with the other institutions who participated in the survey.” The Single Subject program did not fare as well overall but indicated some strengths in a couple of areas related to cultural competency preparedness.

As part of its efforts to integrate diversity into all academic programs, CLU requires programs to address diversity issues in their self-studies. Consequently, the program review self-study process has created an infrastructure for collecting and reflecting on direct evidence of student learning about diversity. A sampling of self-study reports, however, revealed only NSSE data populated by IR and no accompanying analysis of the relation to diversity learning outcomes, so programs were not yet taking advantage of the opportunity for direct assessment of diversity learning.

The team commends CLU for developing multiple curricular and co-curricular strategies to expand and deepen the treatment of domestic and global diversity (programmatic output). Attention now needs to be directed to collecting appropriate evidence and analyzing the evidence to determine programmatic effectiveness. Assessment practices also need to include more direct evidence of student work to evaluate achievement of intended learning outcomes. The team had difficulty ascertaining the university-wide impact of the many activities devoted to this objective. For instance, one set of data presented to illustrate the results of these diversity activities comes
from NSSE questions on cognitive complexity and on inclusion of diverse perspectives in class discussions or writing assignments. No analysis is offered to connect the NSSE data to the output activities or to address how these data demonstrate achievement of the five cultural competency learning outcomes. Additionally, the data are not disaggregated to determine if all demographic subsets share the same perceptions.

Most of the efforts undertaken specifically for the CDI project had accompanying assessment structures to measure effectiveness. The team discovered that many of the additional activities undertaken (beyond the CDI activities) to achieve the three objectives in this theme have not yet benefited from a formalized assessment structure. Systematic processes still need to be developed to ensure identification of appropriate evidence and ongoing collection, reflection and use of results [CFR 4.4]. The abbreviated attention to results in the EE Report reflects this need for more intentional collection of evidence of the impact of activities, as well as analysis and communication of results.

The annual reports of the President’s Diversity Council—a requirement of the CDI participants but not originally included as an exhibit with the EE Report—provide a wealth of information about the design and impact of diversity initiatives on campus. The analyses threaded throughout these reports provide good models for informing the reflection and evaluation process of future diversity activities. Broad dissemination of such a report (perhaps an abridged version) throughout the University can be used to promote a common conceptual framework for diversity initiatives and broader understanding of the relationships between the various activities taking place across the campus. Widespread sharing of results, especially successes, is essential to sustaining the diversity initiatives—to deepen common understanding of institutional goals for diversity, to inspire people to continue their considerable efforts, to
encourage key decision-makers to continue to fund successful projects, and to be available as models for others to replicate in other parts of the institution [CFR 4.6].

In summary, the visiting team was impressed with the wide spectrum of efforts organized to enhance diversity at CLU. CLU has taken on diversity as one of its chief goals, and it has made concerted progress on integrating diversity into its policies, curricular and co-curricular programs [CFR 1.5]. The support of the CDI grant enabled CLU to carry out an ambitious slate of strategies to diversify its community and cultivate cultural competence. As stated in the 2005 Commission Action Letter, the WASC Commission noted that “It will be important for the University to continue its focus on diversity, with particular attention on how it will sustain these positive diversity initiatives after the Irvine grant concludes.” Both the final report of the CDI evaluation site team in 2005 and the President’s Diversity Council Report 2005-2006 underscore this concern.

Accordingly, the next major challenges still revolve around institutionalizing diversity initiatives after the remaining grant monies are expended this year. This includes integrating diversity more thoroughly into the institutional core identity and operations, including through strategic planning and budgeting [CFRs 4.4, 4.6]. The team concurs with the CDI site team final report that this will likely require a central coordinator, such as a chief diversity officer, as well as a clear accountability structure to ensure the myriad strategies and activities are well-coordinated and systematically assessed for effectiveness in advancing the University’s priorities. The team also recommends that the University integrate its diversity goals with its aspirations for excellence (per AAC&U’s notion of “inclusive excellence”), including the development of clear indicators of achievement that incorporate diversity priorities.

The change in leadership is a crucial factor in future successes. The President has already articulated a clear commitment to diversity (“Presidential Statement on CLU’s Commitment to
Diversity”) and earmarked monies in the FY2007-2008 budget to continue diversity initiatives. Institutionalizing this commitment is important for long-term success in creating a more diverse community, climate and curriculum. As the CDI evaluators note, “leadership at all levels of the institution is important to sustain a diversity initiative.”

IIB. Evaluation of Systems for Enhancing Educational Effectiveness

CLU has made significant progress since its Capacity and Preparatory Review in building and strengthening its system of quality assurance and improvement.

The infrastructure for quality assurance includes an Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness. The new director of this office, who reports to the Associate Provost for Graduate & Adult Programs and Accreditation, chairs an Assessment Committee composed of faculty and representatives from service and business units of the University. This committee was elevated from an ad hoc committee to a standing committee in 2006-07, allowing faculty members on the committee to count it as part of their normal service obligation rather than as a service overload. The Assessment Committee has developed an assessment model designed to link data collection, data analysis, communication of results, and decision-making and planning. The Committee appears to have a broad mandate encompassing oversight of student learning outcomes assessment, review of survey data related to various aspects of the student experience, facilitation of a new administrative continuous improvement processes, and sponsorship of an annual Assessment Symposium.

Since the Capacity and Preparatory Review, CLU has also created an assessment website, which should be a very useful resource when it is more fully populated. This website includes a “Data Warehouse” (a place to store assessment reports) and “Survey Central” (a place to provide survey assistance and an inventory of surveys conducted), but includes only one report based on
direct assessment of student learning, the 2005 Writing and Critical Thinking Assessment Report. CLU has also developed other tools to assist faculty in program review and assessment which are discussed below.

CLU has incorporated assessment into its program review process, making assessment the central feature of program reviews. Another positive development since the CPR visit is the active involvement of the library in the program reviews conducted by academic departments.

This infrastructure provides an excellent foundation for quality assurance. How well it is working is a question that will be addressed by using the rubric WASC has drafted for evaluating educational effectiveness along four stages of development: initial, emerging, developed, and highly developed. This framework provides a heuristic for examining CLU’s system of quality assurance and improvement. The discussion below addresses the elements of the WASC rubric-

IIB.1. Learning Outcomes

A. Identification and dissemination of learning outcomes [CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4]

This dimension of the WASC rubric calls for institutions to establish, publicize, and use student learning outcomes to design curricula, assignments, and assessment.

CLU has a set of 14 institution-wide Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) adopted in 2003-04. These SLOs are very congruent with the University’s mission statement. Indeed, if the mission statement is parsed, each SLO falls neatly under one of the six key words or phrases in the statement. Each SLO is also operationalized into between one and five measurable objectives, for a total of 45 measurable objectives.

The entire framework of educational objectives is published in an attractive, easily understandable, and widely distributed flier. It also appears in the general catalog and on the
assessment website, but not on the websites for academic programs, where it might be more helpful to students. The institutional SLOs were introduced to freshmen as part of the 2006 Freshman Seminar class. Most academic programs have used the SLOs to review their curricula and many have also used them to make program improvements. The self-study provides evidence that the SLOs have also influenced planning and program development in several areas beyond academic departments, including Student Affairs, the library, and the faculty evaluation system.

CORE 21, the University’s core curriculum program which was adopted nearly 20 years ago, has developed separate learning outcomes for each general education requirement. Based on these outcomes, every CORE 21 course had to be recertified based on evidence of how it would fulfill a CORE 21 requirement. Three features of the core curriculum call for attention.

First, even with the recertification process, a very large number of courses meet the CORE 21 requirements. It is difficult to determine a precise total number of such courses, but CORE 21 requirements are currently met by 86 visual and performing arts courses, 53 literature courses, 49 gender and ethnic studies courses, 41 social science courses, 34 natural science courses, and 37 global perspectives courses, in addition to numerous courses for other requirements. This curricular proliferation places an emphasis on departmental representation rather than core learning outcomes.

Second, only some of the CORE 21 requirements (notably the writing intensive courses) are aligned directly with the institution-wide SLOs, a disjunction that is less than ideal. The lack of fuller alignment poses a potential for curricular incoherence, student confusion over what their learning goals should be, and additional burdens on faculty to undertake more assessment projects than necessary.
Third, CORE 21 has been in place for two decades, an unusually long period of time during which higher education and the world have undergone profound changes. CLU acknowledges in its self-study that the core curriculum needs review and revision, which will allow it “to design the curriculum based on the foundation of our established Student Learning Outcomes.” This should be a priority before the next accreditation cycle begins.

As the key undergraduate curricular program for realizing the institutional SLOs, the core curriculum should be based directly and clearly on these learning objectives. CORE 21 has been retrofitted to realize outcomes that have been updated but not fully integrated with the institution’s more recent educational vision. CLU acknowledges this anomaly and the need to develop a new core curriculum based on the institutional SLOs.

Moving to the level of individual units and programs, the visiting team found significant progress since its last visit. It was difficult for the team to ascertain from the self-study itself the extent to which individual units and programs have developed program-based SLOs. One institutional SLO—“Demonstrate field-specific knowledge and experience”—suggests the need for program-level development of outcomes to concretize these three specific objectives: “Demonstrate comprehension of field-specific content. Analyze issues, problems, and/or questions based on disciplinary knowledge and experience, which may include real world or laboratory situations. Integrate knowledge and experience.” The self-study mentions that learning outcomes have been established for the Ed.D., the Mathematics Single Subject program, and the Business School, which also has an exemplary website on its undergraduate curriculum. On this website, the School presents 12 SLOs, eight of them related to field-specific knowledge and four to other institutional SLOs. Each SLO is linked to a short essay about the intended outcome, which describes three “levels of assessment” for that outcome based on Bloom’s taxonomy. The website also lists the current courses for all three business programs, indicating
for every course which level of the Bloom taxonomy is to be realized and linking directly to the course syllabus. Almost all of the syllabi incorporate institutional or Business School SLOs, or list objectives unique to the content area of the course. Although more consistency and clarity in addressing specific Business School SLOs would be desirable, the overall approach the Business School has taken is an excellent model that other programs might follow. The Education School has also done a commendable job of nesting program-level SLOs within broader school-level learning goals, which in turn are nested within the institutional SLOs. The College of Arts and Sciences does not have college-level SLOs, no doubt due in part to the fact that it houses such a diversity of disciplines. The status of SLOs at the department level varies widely within the College of Arts and Sciences, with some departments having well articulated field-specific SLOs and others linking more vaguely to the institutional SLOs.

At the course level, faculty in general have been responsive to incorporating institutional SLOs into their syllabi. They have been assisted in this process by guidelines from the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness, although these guidelines somewhat oddly state: “Please note that this process will not require any changes to your courses.” The purpose of SLOs that do not lead to changes in courses is not apparent.

In terms of identifying and communicating learning outcomes, CLU's quality assurance system for educational effectiveness appears to be just entering the developed stage. Learning outcomes are well established and disseminated at the institutional level, but are not yet well integrated into general education requirements. Most departments have incorporated the institutional SLOs into their own assessment efforts, but these efforts vary widely in their sophistication. Some, but not all, programs and units have established their own field-specific learning outcomes.
B. Assessment of learning outcomes [CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.7]

This dimension calls for institutions to move beyond establishing learning outcomes to using multiple methods of assessment of those outcomes, including direct assessment of student work in addition to surveys and self-reports.

In terms of actual assessment, the self-study deals specifically with only five of the 14 institutional SLO's. Of these five, it provides the most assessment data for what it calls WIC: written communication, information literacy, and critical thinking. The assessment of the first and third of these objectives has been going on since 2001, and the second since 2006. The self-study and accompanying web links describe the scoring rubrics, data collection, and campus communication, but do not provide a great deal of analysis or reflection linked to curricular or pedagogical change.

While it discusses a fourth institutional SLO, field-specific knowledge and experience, the self-study report lacks evidence based on direct assessment of student work products. The evidence offered is entirely in the form of data about internships (postings, employer contacts, logins, and employer ratings) and two other Career Services programs. While the evidence provided is impressive, it is not based on direct assessment of student learning.

A fifth SLO, understanding and appreciating diversity, is included as one of the objectives in the diversity theme discussed in II.A above. For this SLO, the self-study describes a number of campus activities and initiatives, provides some indirect assessment data based on two iterations of NSSE (2001 and 2005), and offers two sentences on focus group comments. No direct evidence of student learning related to diversity, based on a review of student work, is offered in the self-study and none was discovered during the visit.

CLU would benefit from developing an assessment plan at the university level that describes both how and when each institutional SLO will be assessed—something it now
requires of departments as part of the program review process. It is important for the University to have such a plan in place, since direct assessment of all 14 SLOs will need to be carefully implemented, shepherded, and monitored over a number of years.

Moving from the institutional to the program or unit level, the self-study is unclear on the overall status of direct assessment of student learning outcomes. While referring to several assessments, the report does not provide much information about the results, the reflection process, or resulting improvements. However, when the visiting team asked for additional evidence related to assessment of field-specific knowledge, it discovered that a number of such assessments have actually been conducted by various academic departments.

Most assessments, both completed and planned, appear to be embedded in existing courses. From the perspective of both efficiency and diffusion of learning outcomes throughout the curriculum, this is a very good approach. One potential drawback deserves some consideration: this approach currently relies heavily on having individual course instructors review the performance of their own students and then aggregating the results across courses to arrive at a program-level picture. Such an approach lacks the rigor offered by blind review and inter-coder reliability.

A commendable feature of CLU’s assessment system is the Annual Assessment Symposium in which faculty and staff share their assessment and continuous improvement activities with other members of the campus community. Along with a variety of workshops and retreats on assessment and continuous improvement, the Annual Assessment Symposium is an excellent way to share experiences and foster a broad understanding and commitment to a culture of evidence and improvement.

To summarize this section on outcomes assessment, CLU has made progress on the assessment of learning outcomes and established good ways to share approaches, results, and
improvements. Accompanying this progress, there still appears to be some confusion between the assessment of actual student learning and the description of organizational structures and processes—a confusion previously noted in the visiting team report for the Capacity and Preparatory Review. Another area of apparent confusion noted in the previous visiting team report is the difference between direct assessment of student learning and indirect measures such as surveys and focus group comments. While CLU has put excellent structures and processes in place, it needs to move beyond descriptions and indirect measures to more direct measures at both the institutional and the unit level. More progress in this direction could form the basis for richer campus discussions about student learning. To facilitate such progress, the University might consider being more selective in the terminology it uses, using assessment to refer only to the study of student learning outcomes, differentiating more strongly between direct and indirect forms of assessment, and using other words (such as evaluation or review) to refer to the study of other aspects of educational effectiveness such as structures and processes.

At this point, CLU’s quality assurance system appears to be at the beginning of the developed stage, periodically assessing learning outcomes and in WASC’s words “sometimes using authentic and performance-based methods.”

C. Achievement of outcomes [CFRs 2.4, 2.6]

On this dimension, the WASC framework encourages institutions to provide evidence based on assessment that students actually achieve learning outcomes at or above the levels set by the institution.

While doing a good job of identifying institutional SLOs, CLU has not yet set specific levels of attainment or gathered data to determine what the level of attainment is for each
outcome. The University appears to be at an *emerging* stage in demonstrating that students meet the learning outcomes it has set.

### IIB.2. Teaching and Learning Processes

#### A. Curricular alignment [CFR 4.7]

This dimension of the WASC framework for evaluating educational effectiveness calls for institutions to align curricula and pedagogy with learning outcomes.

CLU has done an excellent job of mapping courses to the institutional SLOs in most programs. In many cases, programs have also mapped courses to their field-specific outcomes as well. This curricular mapping has led some programs to discover areas of the curriculum that need revision and to make the appropriate changes. Aligning pedagogy with SLOs is a more complicated matter. In response to the theme of challenge and engagement, many faculty have experimented with new approaches to teaching, but some also expressed concerns to the visiting team about the risk of failure (and poor course evaluations) when they do this the first time.

There may be good opportunities for the Center for Teaching and Learning to collaborate with the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness to design faculty development workshops aimed at helping faculty respond creatively to SLOs through different approaches to pedagogy. Deans and department chairs could also remove some apprehension about teaching innovation by assuring faculty that such creativity will be encouraged and not be punished.

On this dimension, CLU appears to be at the *emerging* stage of the WASC framework and moving toward the *developed* stage.

#### B. Good learning practice [CFRs 4.6, 4.7]
This dimension calls for curricular processes to be informed by good learning practices. The visiting team did not have time to explore this dimension in depth, but the evidence presented in the self-study report and during the visit suggests that CLU is at the beginning of the developed stage, in which curricular processes are “informed in many cases by good learning practice; reviewed and improved by relevant faculty; [and] often based on evidence of student learning.”

IIB.3. Organizational Learning

A. Indicators of educational effectiveness [CFRs 1.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6]

Beyond the assessment of student learning outcomes, WASC encourages the development of performance indicators for all aspects of institutional performance. This dimension of the WASC framework calls for the development of multiple indicators of educational effectiveness, regular data collection, dissemination of results, and use of benchmarks for comparison.

CLU has developed, benchmarked, and gathered data for 26 key performance indicators relating to reputation, quality, and resources. It has selected and reviewed indicators of educational effectiveness from NSSE, BCSSE, and the Noel-Levitz survey. It has also used other indicators to inform its Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), in which one or more processes are to be selected each year for review. To date, CLU has conducted CIP reviews of undergraduate retention, lecturer loads and course schedules, and study abroad. Results of these reviews have been reported at the Annual Assessment Symposium.

On this dimension, CLU is clearly at the developed stage as a learning organization.
B. Program review [CFRs 2.7, 4.4]

This dimension of the WASC framework calls for regular program review, with results being used to reflect on and improve effectiveness.

CLU has established a program review system in which every academic program is expected to conduct a self-study every seven years. The guidelines for the self-study now emphasize assessment of student learning. As part of the self-study, each program is expected to design a six-year assessment plan in which some learning outcomes or other aspects of student learning are studied each year and which culminates in the next program review. Program reviews now also require an external reviewer or team.

Since the CPR visit, CLU has developed a very useful Program Review Handbook, which provides information about how to conduct a program review, including an exemplary Program Review Template with detailed information about what is included in a self-study. Another recent improvement is that the Institutional Research Office populates parts of the report electronically with required data. Still another is that programs are given greater financial support for conducting reviews.

These and other improvements are appreciated by the faculty. The visiting team heard much praise for these improvements and the support provided by the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness and the Institutional Research Office. Reflecting a widely shared sentiment, one department chair said, "program review was a bit of a mystery early on, but now we have a nice roadmap to follow," and another said the Handbook "is a godsend, it's really great." The visiting team met separately with chairs of departments that have completed program reviews and those that have not. It was pleasantly surprised by how positive both groups were about program review—in fact more positive than any other faculty group of similar size with which it has ever interacted. One chair who has not yet participated in a program
review described the prospect with "optimism" and "excitement," while another approached it with "anxiety" but saw it as a "growth opportunity." Another saw the process as becoming "streamlined in terms of getting what you need, learning how to do it, and getting something useful out of it." Most chairs of departments that have completed reviews said that program review would be worth doing even if it were not required by WASC.

CLU is making steady progress in moving through its new seven-year review cycle. At the time of the CPR visit two years ago, the University had completed five program reviews in this cycle. Since then it has completed seven more reviews, with another five completed except for the required visit by an external reviewer. Four reviews are currently in process. The program review cycle is scheduled to be completed in 2009-10, with 20 out of a total of 47 reviews still to be initiated. Some of the completed reviews have been very substantive and have led to significant program improvements, and the quality of reports in general is improving. Despite the late start and large number of reviews yet to be started, program review appears to be well embedded in the institution by this time.

Although CLU has created an excellent framework and process for program review, the visiting team has several concerns and recommendations.

First, the process could be improved by including in the Program Review Template a section requiring programs to report on actual assessment results. The template currently includes broad sections on Setting Measurable Goals, Planning to Reach Goals, Data Collection, and Data Analysis and Reporting, but even the last section does not clearly require programs to report on actual assessments they have conducted on their own relevant SLOs, along with any resulting program changes or improvements.

Second, the process would benefit from greater clarity about accountability. Who is accountable besides the program itself for ensuring that program review is completed on
schedule and according to the guidelines? Who is accountable for ensuring that findings and recommendations lead to actual improvements? How will decisions requiring additional resources be made? What is the role of the academic deans in a process overseen by an associate provost?

Third, the accountability questions above are closely related to a need for follow-up to the program review process. No procedure exists to ensure that findings and recommendations are acted upon by the program itself (when possible) or by the administration (when its approval for changes or resources is necessary). Some chairs commented that they had never received any comment on their self-studies from the administration. An important improvement in the process would be to link it more clearly and tightly with institutional planning and budgeting processes.

Despite these concerns, it is clear that CLU is at the *developed* stage on this dimension and would probably be at the *highly developed* stage were it further along in the current review cycle.

C. **Institutional commitment** [CFRs 2.4, 4.6, 4.7]

This dimension of the WASC framework calls for faculty, staff, and institutional leaders to support and sustain a culture of evidence. CLU is at the *developed* stage on this dimension. The level of faculty support is uncommonly high. It will be important for the new President and Provost, as well as the deans, to continue to affirm and demonstrate the support they have already indicated.

D. **Performance data** [CFR 4.3]

This dimension calls for performance data to be used by decision-making bodies at all levels. CLU has demonstrated a commitment to do this and appears to be at the *developed* stage as a learning organization in this regard.
E. Responsiveness to WASC Commission [CFR 1.9]

As discussed in an earlier section, CLU has been responsive to Commission actions. It is at the developed stage on this dimension.

F. Summary of Educational Effectiveness Systems

Overall, CLU is at an early developed stage as a learning organization, with "mostly well-established commitments to Educational Effectiveness" and "some areas for improvement." The visiting team completed its visit with great respect for the commitment CLU has shown and the progress it has made in creating a culture of evidence and improvement related to educational effectiveness. The progress it has made during the two years since the Capacity and Preparatory Review is all the more remarkable considering the continued administrative turnover during much of that period. With the appointment of the new President and Provost, greater stability and a greater sense of direction should help CLU make further progress in the years to come.

IIC. Other Issues Arising from the Standards and the CFRs

The visiting team did not discover any new issues arising from the standards and the CFRs other than those identified in its CPR report and elsewhere in this EE report.

SECTION III
SUMMARY OF TEAM CONCLUSIONS AND MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The WASC teams for the Capacity and Preparatory Review and the Educational Effectiveness Review conclude that CLU has successfully created a structure to support a culture of evidence at all levels of the University, including an assessment system that is beginning to gather systematic evidence of educational effectiveness at institutional and program levels, well-
defined university-level student learning outcomes, and strategies to increase diversity and the levels of challenge and engagement in the University's academic and co-curricular programs.

California Lutheran University has made impressive progress since the WASC visit in March 2005. This progress, a continuation of progress since the Fourth-Year Report to WASC in 1999, speaks to the fundamental strength of CLU. That so much could be accomplished while multiple changes were occurring at the very highest levels of institutional leadership (since 2002, CLU has had three presidents, three provosts, three directors of assessment and eight new deans) is indicative of a broad-based commitment to building a system of quality assurance and continuous improvement.

CLU has created a good infrastructure for quality assurance. Particularly impressive is the increasing quality of program reviews and the unusually high level of faculty commitment to meaningful program reviews and quality assurance. Institutional student learning outcomes are clearly articulated, and there is ample evidence of students' enthusiasm and deep engagement in their learning processes. CLU is confident and optimistic about its ability to move forward with its assessment plans and improvement in student learning.

CLU is aware that there is still much to do and that there will be challenges ahead. There is a need for more effective integration of the University's planning for enrollment and retention, academic excellence, recruitment and retention of a more diverse faculty and staff, facilities and technology, and budgeting and fundraising. Especially important will be the leadership of the provost in creating an academic plan with a clear statement of academic priorities to drive the rest of the University's planning. As part of the academic plan, program reviews should be linked formally to institutional planning and the budget process. Systematic methods of incorporating more empirical evidence into strengthening the planning process are needed. Evaluations of student learning would be enriched by a greater focus on direct measures of
learning outcomes rather than indirect measures. And the University’s short and long-term goals require an expansion of economic and other resources. All that said, the progress CLU has made in the past two years strongly suggests that it will be successful in future efforts to address these needs.

Based on documentation reviewed and the site visit, the EER team found that CLU is achieving the intended outcomes stated in its 2002 Proposal to WASC:

- better alignment and integration of structures, processes, and resources to support educational effectiveness—particularly the planning and budget process, faculty development and evaluation, program review, and assessment of student outcomes
- a faculty-driven and widely embraced understanding of excellence in teaching and learning that encompasses challenge, engagement and diversity.

The team commends CLU on its progress in creating an infrastructure to support educational effectiveness and in generating wide faculty involvement in enhancing challenge, engagement and diversity at the institution. However, the team recommends a tighter focus within current assessment structures—from the program up to institution-wide levels—on systematic review, analysis, and communication of results in order to make assessment and evaluation results available for use in University planning and budgeting processes.

From the review of institutional documents and the evidence presented during two site visits, the WASC team believes that CLU is currently in general compliance with the spirit and intent of the four WASC standards and the Criteria for Review.

Major recommendations from the Capacity and Preparatory Review that should continue to receive attention or follow-up before the next accreditation cycle are that California Lutheran University:

1. Continue the recent progress it has made in program review and the assessment of student learning outcomes, making them an ongoing and integral part of the academic enterprise [CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7].
2. Ensure that the current diversity initiative is worked into the fabric and budget of the institution so that it is sustainable [CFRs 1.5, 2.2, 3.2].

3. Continue its strong focus on increasing academic challenge and engagement. [CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5]

4. Increase support for faculty development, particularly in the area of scholarly and creative activity [CFR 2.8, 3.4].

5. Continue its efforts to provide competitive faculty compensation and to assist faculty in securing affordable housing [CFRs 3.1, 3.5].

6. Continue to reduce its high discount rate [CFR 3.5].

7. Consider reducing the proliferation of small academic departments to see if the University can achieve greater synergies and efficiencies [CFR 3.8].

Major recommendations growing out of the Educational Effectiveness Review are that California Lutheran University:

1. Develop an institutional Assessment Plan that clarifies when and how each institutional Student Learning Outcome will be assessed at the institutional level, identifies required levels of achievement for graduation, and incorporates systematic analysis for use in academic planning [CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7].

2. Increase the focus on direct assessment of student work [CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7].

3. Clarify accountability in the program review process and link it to other institutional planning and budgeting processes [CFRs 2.7, 4.4].

4. Revise the core curriculum to base general education requirements on the institutional Student Learning Objectives [CFRs 2.2, 2.3].
5. Develop an academic plan that integrates academic priorities across units (curricular and co-curricular), coordinates and utilizes university-wide assessment and evaluation processes, and drives other strategic and operational planning [CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3].

6. More fully integrate planning for enrollment and retention, academic excellence, diversity, faculty recruitment and retention, facilities and technology, and budgeting and fundraising [CFRs 1.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3].

7. Reduce the reliance on adjunct faculty [CFRs 3.1, 3.2].

8. Develop a recruitment and retention plan for continued diversification of students, faculty, staff, administration, and board [CFRs 1.5, 3.2].