THE HEART OF THE MATTER:
STUDENT LEARNING
AND
STUDENT SUCCESS

CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY
REVIEW REPORT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

DECEMBER 2006
CSU, Chico WASC Institutional Portfolio:

http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/wasc/

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The Capacity and Preparatory Review is designed to enable the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Commission to determine whether an institution fulfills the Core Commitment to Institutional Capacity: “The institution functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures and processes to fulfill its purposes.” In keeping with the Commission’s goal of a focused accreditation process that permits adaptation and responsiveness to institutional context and priorities, California State University, Chico (commonly referred to as “Chico State”) elected to conduct its Capacity and Preparatory Review as well as its Educational Effectiveness Review within the framework of Chico’s vision and mission statements and the priorities of its Strategic Plan for the Future.

Organizing the reaccreditation process around its strategic plan turned out to be fortuitous as the arrival of President Paul J. Zingg in February of 2004 heralded in a new era for CSU, Chico. Under the theme of “Fulfilling Our Mission; Choosing Our Future,” President Zingg launched an eighteen-month period of campus conversation and consultation to update Chico’s strategic plan and on June 30, 2006 posted the updated Strategic Plan for the Future on his presidential web page. In the introduction to the updated Plan, Dr. Zingg wrote:

“This document is the consequence of the listening and the asking I have been doing in order to learn about Chico State and the aspirations of its members and constituencies. This document is an important part of a broad, ongoing conversation on the matters of our identity, values, goals, and priorities. But this is not the final word on our future, as a strategic plan is an open and living document that balances change and continuity, direction and flexibility.

The reaccreditation process can now be leveraged to deepen campus engagement with the issues of educational and institutional effectiveness identified in the Plan. In particular, the themes of learning environments, faculty and staff development, use of academic technologies, connection to the North State and the marshalling and use of resources were selected for special emphasis in the capacity and preparatory review. These themes also form the basis for the projects selected for Chico’s educational effectiveness review.

Preparation of the Capacity and Preparatory Review

On April 27, 2001, President Manuel A. Esteban approved the formation of the Council for Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability to “coordinate the design and implementation of institutional effectiveness measurement and accountability management systems that support the CSU, Chico Strategic Plan.” The Council was subsequently charged with the project management of the WASC reaffirmation of accreditation effort. Under the designation of the WASC Steering Committee, its members lead the development of the Institutional Proposal that was approved by the Senior Commission on March 15, 2004.

On January 20, 2005, the WASC Steering Committee invited more than one hundred members of the campus community to share their expert judgments on how the campus should demonstrate its capacity to define and sustain learning and educational effectiveness. In particular, the campus experts were organized into 17 teams and asked to identify existing evidence and / or data that could be used to demonstrate that CSU, Chico met the broad statement of the new WASC Standards and its related Criteria for Review assigned to their respective team. Each team received a customized template on which to record its responses to five questions regarding the Criteria for Review assigned to the team:

- What evidence, data or documentation of processes currently exists that demonstrate our capacity regarding this criterion?
- What is the quality of this evidence, data or documentation? How reliable, valid, and directly related to the criterion are they?
- What improvements are needed in the quality of this evidence, data or documentation?

What evidence, data, documentation or processes do you recommend we develop in order to truly assess whether as an institution we meet this criterion?

Looking over all the evidence and data to be used to support CSU, Chico’s claim to institutional capacity in this area, please indicate what you see as areas of strength as well as areas that most need improvement and measurement development.

Once having identified the evidence or data, teams were asked to evaluate the quality of evidence or data identified and recommend whether improvements in existing data were needed and/or whether other data, documentation or processes needed to be developed. The seventeen evidence team reports were reviewed and summarized by members of the WASC Steering Committee using an Evidence Evaluation worksheet and an Evidence Report template. This review resulted in the identification of the materials to be included in the reflective essays for the CSU, Chico Capacity and Preparatory Review.
Essay I: High-Quality Learning Environments

Believing in the primacy of learning, we will continue to develop high-quality learning environments both inside and outside the classroom.

CSU, Chico sees its unique residential situation as an opportunity to create an intensive, high-quality learning environment both in and outside the classroom. In its mission statement, Chico proclaims “The University is committed to assist students in their search for knowledge and understanding and to prepare them with the attitudes, skills, and habits of lifelong learning in order to assume responsibility in a democratic community and to be useful members of a global society.” To meet this commitment, CSU, Chico has over many years developed structures, policies and practices geared towards affecting student learning and student success.

Recruit, Enroll, Support, and Graduate a Diverse High-Quality Student Population

Recruitment and Admission

CSU, Chico’s recruitment and outreach activities are designed to meet the California State University (CSU) objectives of access and quality as well as Chico’s goals of recruiting, enrolling, and graduating a high-quality and diverse student population. Efforts include both system and university level programs such as the How To Get to College Program, the Early Assessment Program, Educational Talent Search, America Reads/Counts, Summer Bridge, Upward Bound, MESA, and Community Service Learning. Over the past five years, CSU, Chico has further developed its electronic access opportunities and relationship building capabilities, enhanced its summer orientation programs, and expanded its commitment to regional colleges by partnering in four-year degree programs and joint enrollment programs.

First-time freshman applicants must meet CSU admission requirements and are encouraged to submit SAT-I or ACT scores, regardless of GPA. The latter factors are used to compute the eligibility index students must meet to be admitted to CSU, Chico. Transfer admission requirements and graduate admission requirements similarly govern the admission of transfer students and graduate students respectively. Prospective students may submit paper applications or on-line applications to be admitted to the University.

Preparing for Success

The California State University system (CSU) requires that students take the English Placement Test and the Entry Level Mathematics (EPT/ELM) exam after admission and prior to enrollment in the CSU unless they have been exempted by means of scores earned on other appropriate tests. The English Placement Test assesses students’ ability in reading and writing, while the Entry Level Mathematics exam assesses students’ ability in math through beginning and intermediate algebra, and plane geometry. CSU, Chico boasts a 97 percent success rate in both Math and English remediation within the first year.

Summer Orientation is the most widely recognized orientation program across campus, and the program in which the most new students (85-90% of first-time freshmen and 50% of transfer students) voluntarily participate. Advising, course selection, and registration are the primary activities during Summer Orientation. During 2005, a majority of students (85%) reported having met with a faculty advisor during orientation and approximately 97 percent agreed the advisor was helpful. Over 98 percent of participating students and over 95 percent of parents have indicated a high level of satisfaction with key program goals.

The week prior to the start of classes (for each semester), new students are invited to participate in a variety of activities and meetings that are designed to acknowledge and celebrate their presence as new members of the campus and the Chico
community, through the Getting Connected program. Getting Connected focuses on the actual physical and social transition to university life.

Diverse Student Population

Previous WASC teams have noted that diversity is a major issue for CSU, Chico. The 1996 Visiting Team concluded: “Historically, CSU, Chico has been a campus that has attracted mostly suburban, middle-class students from other parts of California. Those students are less numerous today and more the subject of intense recruitment competition.” The team recommended, “It will be incumbent upon CSU, Chico to recruit students from minority groups in order to maintain its share of total CSU enrollments. CSU, Chico should continue to build a strong marketing program that will reach out into minority communities and show minority students how it pays to go to CSU, Chico.” In his first convocation address in August of 2004, President Zingg stated that Chico would be setting ambitious goals to add diversity to its campus community, and to do more to engage the entire community in the challenging work of increasing awareness of, and respect for, diversity. To bring about the institutional change required to succeed in translating the diversity value into action, CSU, Chico has chosen to develop a Diversity Scorecard as a vehicle to mobilize institutional attention and action. The Scorecard project recognizes four interrelated dimensions of campus diversity: Access and Success, Campus Climate and Inter-group Relations, Education and Scholarship, and Institutional Viability and Vitality. The further development of a CSU, Chico Diversity Scorecard is the subject of one of the projects in CSU, Chico’s Educational Effectiveness Review.

Special outreach efforts have been mounted to address the “access” dimension of the scorecard so as to bring about an increase in the diversity of our student population. Encouraging successes have been recorded and serve to stimulate further action and commitment.

Figure 1.1
CSU, Chico Freshmen Student of Color Enrollments

Structuring and Nurturing the Total Education of Our Students

First Year Experience

In its Statement of Philosophy of the First Year Experience, CSU, Chico recognizes that “the first year of university life is critical to student learning and success.” It goes on to note that “we can intentionally help first-year students reach educational and growth goals and achieve success.” This campuswide commitment is intended to help students make a successful transition to, and establish their place in, university life – a life that finds support and encouragement both in the classroom and in all aspects of university and community experiences outside the classroom.

Course Link, a successful 10-year-old program, enrolls cohorts of students into blocks of general education and major courses. Students attend the three linked classes with the same group of students. By putting the same students together,
they get to form study groups faster, they develop camaraderie, and they feel part of a community, which is vital for transition to university life – and success. Each fall, more than 900 first-year students enroll in Course Link.

Other academic programs aimed at facilitating new students’ success include the Freshmen General Studies Thematic (FGST) program and the Honors programs. FGST molds standard general education requirements into an integrated distinctive program that presents students with a coherent, multi-dimensional picture of Western Civilization from pre-history to present. FGST students note the advantages of a sense of community and friendship that the program makes possible as well as the rich diversity of activities both inside and outside the classroom. To provide additional unique educational opportunities and keep students challenged, the University has Honors in General Education (HGE) and the Honors in the Major (HJM) programs. These programs offer students the opportunity to work closely with some of the University’s best professors in small, specially designed general education courses or on research projects. Successful completion of the program is prominently noted on the graduate’s diploma and transcripts.

Programs designed to support and encourage students outside the classroom are many and varied. Many first-year students take advantage of university housing. University Housing and Food Service (UHFS) operates residence halls for over 1900 students, mostly freshmen. UHFS has created many programs that “bring the classroom to the residence halls” through academic and non-academic thematic housing units, which provide students with intensive student environments and special contact with faculty. Programming throughout the residence halls is designed to help these young adults succeed not only as students, but as members of our society. The First-Year Survivor Workshop Series, for example, is presented in the residence halls during the first eight weeks of the semester. The workshops, often led by peer educators, focus on helping first-year students "survive" the transition to being college students living away from home and facing tough decisions daily. Workshop topics include eating disorders, time management, study skills, homesickness, sexual responsibility, and alcohol and high-risk drinking.

The University has made alcohol and drug education and prevention a priority for its student population. The Campus Alcohol & Drug Education Center (CADEC) is committed to providing educational programs and events that raise the awareness of the dangers of high-risk alcohol and drug use. The goal is to encourage students to make responsible choices and support students struggling with substance abuse issues. Starting in 2005–2006, all freshmen were required to complete AlcoholEdu for College as a prevention measure. Students who did not complete the program were not allowed to register for second semester classes. Over 75 percent of the participants reported feeling better prepared to make decisions and stated they had increased their knowledge about alcohol use and its risks. The Nature of Student Engagement at a Residential Campus is one of the themes for CSU, Chico’s Educational Effectiveness Review.

General Education

The CSU, Chico General Education program (GE) conforms to Title 5 of the State of California Code of Regulations and directive from the California State University (CSU). In addition, it reflects the values of the University. Core courses build the foundation for student success in both the GE program and the major by emphasizing fundamental skills: oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning. Breadth courses extend student engagement to a wide variety of disciplines selected from the natural sciences, the humanities and fine arts, and the behavioral and social sciences. Finally, Capstone Upper-Division Themes are designed to provide students the opportunity to integrate a variety of skill and content areas as they explore enduring questions about our complex world.

Assessment efforts, in general, and for general education (GEAC), in particular, are monitored, guided, and supported by our All University Responsibility for Assessment Committee (AURA). AURA provides campus leadership for ongoing campuswide conversations on the nature of student learning assessment and its relationship to effective teaching, learning, and advising. Progress is being made in defining student learning outcomes in core areas of GE as well as in creating the rubrics that are helpful in assessing and evaluating student work products. The collection of cross-sectional data on student performance in writing, oral communication, and quantitative reasoning in GE classes allows comparisons of first-year students versus seniors, across colleges and between native and transfer students. Assessment data are being shared widely on campus and are guiding efforts at curricular and pedagogical changes to enhance student learning. GE Assessment is one of the projects in CSU, Chico’s Educational Effectiveness Review.
CSU, Chico offers 66 undergraduate degree programs in the liberal arts and in professional and technical areas. Many of our majors are divided into areas of specialization either as options or patterns. In addition, students may choose from a wide variety of minors, teaching credentials, and certificates. Each program has developed a detailed, self-service guide known as Major Academic Plan or MAPS. Through MAPS, students can find the requirements for their major or explore other majors that may interest them. Advising methods are customized to fit each academic unit and its students. In some cases (e.g., College of Business), there is a centralized office staffed by professional academic advisors. In other departments, students receive personalized attention from individual faculty members. In addition to advising within the major, the University has a centralized academic advising service.

Since 1971, the CSU Trustees have required that regular, qualitative review of existing programs be conducted by campuses. General education programs as well as degree programs are subject to review. Accordingly, CSU, Chico has subjected its non-accredited degree programs to five-year program reviews. Over the past four years, Chico has experimented with outcomes-based program review in an effort to transform institutional decision making, especially regarding student learning and development. Five-year program review processes are to be refined as part of our Educational Effectiveness Review. The new review process is intended to refocus programs toward becoming more systematic and intentional about gathering data about the right things – performance and effectiveness – and on using the resulting information to continuously improve what the program does.

Distinctive Graduate Programs

While CSU, Chico is an institution for excellence in undergraduate education, it also has many vital, high-quality graduate programs. Post-Baccalaureate students comprise about 9 percent of CSU, Chico’s students. The University offers 35 master’s degree programs ranging from professional degrees that meet the needs of the North State (e.g., Masters in Business Administration, Masters in Social Work, MS in Nursing, Masters in Public Administration, MA in Educational Leadership) through traditional liberal arts degrees such as English, History, Anthropology, and Political Science, to technical degrees that attract large numbers of international students, such as Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering. Proposals for new graduate programs are carefully documented and scrutinized.

New graduate students are provided assistance similar to that given to new undergraduates, to help them acclimate to the University and the community. The Graduate School offers a new-student orientation at the beginning of each semester. It is designed to give students an overview of the entire process of graduate study, including the various steps necessary to arrive at graduation and who is available to help them at each point. The Graduate School publishes A Guide to Graduate Studies: Policies, Procedures, & Format to help students navigate through the procedures required to earn a master’s degree.

To facilitate success through graduate school, each master’s program has a graduate coordinator who assists students throughout their graduate education, starting at the time of application. In addition, most students will work closely with one or two faculty mentors, especially when writing a thesis or project.

Deepening the Chico Experience

CSU, Chico seeks to offer a set of enriching educational experiences that deepen the sense of a distinctive Chico Experience for all our students. Through co-curricular programs and a vast array of other learning opportunities both on and beyond the campus, students can increase their levels of academic, intellectual, cultural, social and civic engagement, and personal development. Such learning opportunities include exposure to diversity, student organizations, student leadership programs, intercollegiate athletics and recreational sports programs, internships, civic and community service, international programs, and study abroad.

One of the opportunities for exposure to diversity is the Conversations on Diversity series. Hosted by a committee of faculty and staff, this series is a safe place for members of the campus community to discuss challenges faced by our diverse community as we grow and change as a campus. These forums are offered regularly and are very well attended. The University facilitates students’ learning of other cultures and countries via various international programs. The Study Abroad program is affiliated with over 50 institutions of higher learning in 18 countries and has been in continuous operation for over 40 years. In addition, many of the University’s colleges and departments offer their own international programs,
including the College of Humanities and Fine Arts’ London Semester and Travel Programs; Latin American Studies’ Cultural Immersion Program in Merida, Mexico; and Italian Studies’ Viareggio Summer Program.

A core value for the University is a commitment to promoting student success through civic engagement and service learning. Chico State houses many programs that support student success and contribution via service learning. These programs include Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) and the Community Legal Information Center (CLIC). Our campus is also supported by an Office of Community Service Learning at the CSU Chancellor’s Office. CSU, Chico further offers a variety of internship programs, coordinated by the Office of Experiential Education. More than 47 departments across our seven colleges incorporate internships into their programs, either as a degree requirement or an elective. Over the last 30 years, almost 2,000 students have interned each year.

Opportunities to participate in campus life, community service, and professional development are provided by university-recognized student organizations. The University recognizes and supports nearly 200 student organizations, including cultural, professional, religious, special interest, political, recreational, social, and service groups, with over 6,000 student participants. Support for these organizations comes from required advisors, the Student Activities Office services and leadership programs, and, in the case of professional and academic groups, college and department offices. The University actively partners with the independent Associated Students (AS) organization, whose mission it is “to enrich the quality of campus life” and “to complement the educational mission if the University.” This mission is pursued through various facets of the AS, including student governance, student union facilities, and a broad spectrum of programs and services and the success of these efforts are reported annually.

The Wildcat Activity Center (WAC) is currently being designed, with construction to start early 2007. Sasaki Architects is designing the two-story, 109,000-square-foot facility with a three-court gym, 15,000-square-foot fitness facility, climbing wall and bouldering area, indoor running track, four multi-purpose rooms, and a 10-lane recreational pool and spa. This exciting new facility will foster healthy behaviors among all members of the campus community.

Superior Support Systems

CSU, Chico is committed to maintaining superior support systems that promote student engagement and student success. Efforts are mounted to help students perform well academically, thrive socially, and cope effectively with nonacademic responsibilities.

Academic Support Systems

For over 20 years, the Student Learning Center (SLC) has demonstrated its capacity to promote student development and success. The motto of the SLC, “Promoting Independent Learning” reflects the center’s commitment to providing student guidance, skill development, information, training, and referrals to other campus resources.

There are three programs under the umbrella of the Student Learning Center: (1) Tutorial Assistance focuses on providing tutoring appointments in an individual or group setting for more than 70 academic subjects; (2) Supplemental Instruction workshops for eight to 11 courses each semester, integrating course content with learning skills; and (3) Study Skills Assistance with workshops offered in a range of subjects such as time management, test taking, note taking, memory techniques, and reading.

The University Writing Center’s mission is to (1) provide on-going training and development in the teaching and learning of writing to student tutors; and (2) offer writing assistance to students at every level, from first-year to graduate, in any discipline. The goal is to create a learning community that fosters student-faculty contact and encourages active learning and cooperation among students. Between January 1, 2005 and April 12, 2006, 2,033 students took advantage of the services provided by the center.

For the past decade, CSU, Chico has invested in academic technology to support high-quality learning environments both inside and outside the classroom. This investment includes not only direct instructional technology but also those administrative systems that enable students to come to the University and attend classes. Student support systems include access to the electronic resources that support curricula, a vibrant library that continues to serve as a virtual space for student research, study and reflection, information literacy programs, and a state-of-the-art electronic learning...
infrastructure.” The nature and scope of CSU, Chico’s information technology support for learning is detailed in Essay III: Superior Knowledge and Learning-Enabling Resources.

Student Support Systems

The University supports students as whole people, and therefore provides services for both the body and the mind. The Student Health Center, an outpatient primary care clinic, provides services such as the treatment of acute conditions, injuries, and illnesses. It also offers a family planning program. The Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) assists students with disabilities in achieving equal access to all our academic programs and facilities and ensures that they have an equal opportunity for physical, social, and intellectual growth. DSS provides a variety of services to university students with temporary or permanent disabilities at no charge. DSS advisors are available to assist students with individual accommodations. The Psychological Counseling, Wellness, and Testing Center (PCWT) promotes student success through direct and indirect services to students. Through individual and group counseling, PCWT helps students deal with the emotional issues that affect their academic lives. Campuswide workshops and forums addressing psychological wellness issues are also offered.

The University also invests resources in retention efforts by reaching out to “at-risk” students before they encounter serious academic difficulties. These efforts help the students develop proper study habits and time-management skills. “At-risk” students are students who are first-generation college students, have demonstrated signs of impending academic failure, have adapted poorly to college life, and/or students whose performance in high school indicates they would need extra support here at Chico. One of the bright spots in this effort is the Business Resource Center (BRC), a program started by the College of Business in 1998. The BRC not only reaches out to high schools and partners with them to attract minority students, but also sponsors thematic living and provides tutoring, mentoring, and social support for students once enrolled at Chico State. Along with the BRC, other campus programs such as the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), Upward Bound (an outreach program for regional high schools), Alliance for Minority Participation (AMP), and Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) work to facilitate the success of students from minority populations.

Effectiveness of Efforts to Promote Student Success

CSU, Chico is committed to student success, broadly defined in terms of high levels of learning, persistence, graduation, and satisfaction.

Chico’s persistence and graduation rates are among the highest in the California State University system. First-year retention rates for the past five years have averaged 82 percent for first-time freshmen and California community college (CCC) transfer students. Graduation rates for first-time freshmen for whom CSU, Chico is the campus of origin have averaged 57 percent over the past five years, while CCC transfers graduated at an average rate of 75 percent during the same time period. These rates are reflected in the number of degrees awarded annually.

**Figure 1.2**

Total Number of Degrees Awarded at CSU, Chico

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Baccalaureate Degrees Awarded</th>
<th>Master Degrees Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>2250</td>
<td>2250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>1750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall in 2005, 99 percent of both undergraduate and graduate students expressed satisfaction with CSU, Chico as a whole.

Figure 1.3
Satisfaction with CSU, Chico as a Whole

Summary

California State University, Chico, is committed to student learning and success and is organized to do so. This commitment is to be operationalized through the recruitment, retention, and graduation of a diverse and high-quality student population, the purposeful structuring and nurturing of the students’ total education, the maintenance of superior student support systems, and the systematic assessment and evaluation of efforts to promote student success.

Chico’s recruitment and outreach structures and activities are designed to meet system-level and campus-level goals and objectives. Programs at both these levels are targeted, far ranging, substantial, and mostly effective. Nevertheless, Chico continues to struggle with the diversification of its student population. Special outreach efforts and retention programs have been mounted and show some initial success. The campus intends to address this challenge further through its diversity scorecard project as part of its educational effectiveness review projects.

Chico sees its unique residential context as an opportunity to facilitate a broad scope of student engagement and personal growth. Academic and intellectual engagement is possible through Special Programs, the First Year Experience, for example, the General Education program, and an array of distinctive graduate and undergraduate programs. Cultural, social, personal growth, and civic engagement are further enabled by superior student support programs and enriching educational experiences. In recognition of these special efforts, Chico recently achieved the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement.

Progress is being recorded in the more systematic assessment of efforts to promote student success. While the Chico’s “culture of evidence” is described and analyzed in Essay V, evidence related to student success is being highlighted in this essay. Such measures as “number of degrees awarded” and “satisfaction with overall education” at Chico State are routinely reported. It is less clear how this evidence and related measures are being used to improve programs, however. Assessment is a major theme in the campus’s upcoming educational effectiveness review.
Essay II: Superior Faculty and Staff Resources

Believing in the importance of faculty and staff, and their role in student success, we will continue to invest in faculty and staff development.

In its vision statement, CSU, Chico recognizes “a well-respected and dedicated faculty” and “a superior staff” as important contributors to its being “a special place of people and ideas.” Most importantly, faculty and staff enable student success by creating learning and working environments that transmit knowledge, skills, habits that form the basis for life-long learning, civic engagement, and enlightened service in society. Accordingly, Chico invests in the currency and continuing professional development of its faculty and staff as a vital means of strengthening the capacity and quality of its programs and services.

Recruit a Diverse and Highly Qualified Faculty and Staff

From fall 2000 to fall 2005, CSU, Chico initiated 242 searches for tenured-track faculty and made 164 tenure-track appointments. As shown in Figure 2.1 below, the number of searches and appointments fell dramatically in 2003 and 2004 as CSU, Chico experienced significant budget reductions and a decline in its overall financial resources. As budget conditions improved and Chico started rebuilding its faculty and staff, searches and appointments have increased.

The rate of success – that is the ratio of faculty appointments made to searches initiated – varied from a low of 45 percent in 2004 to a high of 85 percent in 2000. The year 2005 saw the success rate return to a much higher rate of 77 percent. We have found that the success rate is a function of the degree of competition for faculty in particular disciplines, the relative attractiveness of the Chico campus, salaries and working conditions, and the local cost of living, especially of housing. The ethnic composition of the new tenure-track faculty is reflected in Figure 2.2.

Recognizing that further progress needed to be made, the Educational Policy and Programs Committee (EPPC) and the Faculty and Student Policies Committee (FASP), the two standing committees of the Academic Senate, during the fall 2003 semester, formed an Ad Hoc committee to examine the barriers to successful minority recruitment and retention among students, faculty, and staff and identify strategies to break down those barriers and improve diversity on campus. The committee presented its findings and recommendations for faculty and staff recruitment and retention strategies to the campus in fall 2004. Its overall recommendation for success: “… the Work Group strongly urges the campus to develop indicators that may be used to measure improvement of diversity among faculty and staff, and that may be used to measure improvement in the campus climate regarding inclusion and diversity” is being further addressed in Chico’s Educational Effectiveness Review project on the Diversity Scorecard.
Efforts are equally being mounted to recruit high-quality, diverse staff. In the same period of fall 2000 to fall 2005, 529 searches were conducted for staff positions and 530 appointments were made. Figure 2.3 shows the current ethnic composition of the staff and is largely a reflection of the local labor market.

Retain and Support High-Quality Faculty and Staff Resources

Recruitment is only the first step in weaving a tapestry of superior employee resources. Once on campus, faculty and staff resources must be developed, retained, promoted, and where appropriate, tenured or made permanent.

Retention of Faculty and Staff Resources

Faculty retention, tenure, and promotion decisions are governed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and CSU, Chico Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures (FPPP). Temporary faculty are evaluated periodically for teaching effectiveness and their engagement in professional activity, their performance on assigned duties, and their professional ethics and conduct (FPPP 17.0). Probationary faculty undergo both periodic evaluations and performance reviews (FPPP 17.3). Although the performance review is, by form and function, judgmental, it is also an important developmental tool for improving faculty teaching effectiveness (FPPP Definitions). While a performance review contains both developmental and evaluative components, the periodic evaluation is intended to be more developmental in nature (FPPP 17.3). For the purpose of maintaining and improving the effectiveness of tenured faculty members, tenure faculty undergo periodic
evaluations at intervals no greater than five years (FPPP 32.0). Such periodic evaluations also stress developmental issues and focus on plans for improving a faculty member’s effectiveness (FPPP Definitions). All faculty are assessed via Student Evaluations of Teaching at least once each year (FPPP 16 and 17). The feedback from these assessments “help faculty improve their teaching and assist in their general professional development.”

In a similar fashion, staff employees undergo performance evaluations. The performance evaluation is a formal, structured communication between an employee and her or his supervisor. Typical evaluations include a review of seven categories of performance: work habits, quality of work, communication skills, flexibility in job, productivity, job interest and initiative, and overall performance. Where appropriate, temporary employees may be awarded permanent status following satisfactory performance reviews, typically for a three-year period. Supervisors receive periodic training in developing performance evaluations and giving feedback to employees.

Faculty and Staff Development Efforts

CSU, Chico is committed to providing development, renewal, and training opportunities that lead to professional growth and success for all employees. Chico has developed a Training Programs model that allows it to customize the training programs for each employee. The model defines certain core training as either (1) training required for every employee (such as basic occupational safety, sexual harassment training), (2) training required for some employees (e.g., specialized safety training for lab assistants, IT training customized depending on duties), or (3) general training available to any employee (such as stress control techniques and people skills). Important components of our internal training include Environmental Health, Supervisory Certificate Programs; extensive Information Technology Training at many levels, including Microsoft eLearning Library; Work/Life Program; Fitness Program; and Wellness Programs. The University Staff Development Web site also features a collection of audio, book, and video development resources available for faculty and staff to check out.

An extremely important development opportunity occurs through our Fee Waiver Benefit Program. The Faculty & Staff Fee Waiver Program provides tuition reduction and, sometimes, time to attend classes for faculty and staff under two categories: (a) career development – classes required for credit toward the attainment of an identified academic goal or taken for the attainment or enhancement of skills for the purpose of career advancement within the CSU system; and (b) job-related – classes taken for the purpose of improving the level of skills needed to perform existing employment (current job). The Fee Waiver Program is a substantial training benefit used by over a hundred employees each year.

Faculty development efforts are extensive and far ranging. They range from new faculty orientation to the granting of sabbaticals; from the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) to the opening of a Grant Writing Cafe; from Technology and Learning Program to Technology in Learning and Teaching; from faculty development grants to Research Foundation Summer Scholars; and from Assigned Weighted Teaching Units to reimbursed grants and contracts. Each of these efforts is designed to enable faculty to become more effective and more productive in their instructional, scholarly, creative, and service activities.

The faculty leaves program (FPPP 23.0) includes both leaves of absence with pay and leaves of absence without pay. Leaves of absence with pay include sabbatical leaves and “difference in pay” leaves. Leaves of absence without pay include personal leaves with pay and professional leaves without pay. The merits of proposed leaves are evaluated on the relevance of proposed activities to university-related professional development and the value of the proposed activity as a research or creative project, i.e., the improvement and updating of capabilities to enhance the applicant’s value to the University and its students during future employment. Figure 2.4 shows the number and types of leaves awarded for the past five years.

The “assigned weighted teaching units” process, funded internally or externally, is an alternative mechanism whereby faculty are awarded time for developmental scholarly and creative activities. “Assigned time” is used here to signify non-teaching assignments for such endeavors as research, scholarship, creative activities, and instructional development. Figure 2.5 presents data on the number of faculty who were awarded AWTUs for purposes of conducting scholarly and/or creative activities.

The value of the unreimbursed AWTLs using an average faculty salary at CSU, Chico of $80,000 would be equivalent to an average of $1,217,200 per year. The work products stemming from the granting of leaves and the awarding of assigned time are reviewed yearly at departmental and college levels.
Other development activities are more focused in their efforts. The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), established in the fall of 1994, is committed to promoting the ability of Chico faculty to teach well, to finding ways to improve the learning process, and to providing support, training, and mentoring. CELT sponsors an annual conference and workshops; conducts new faculty orientation; leads an active rewards/awards program for outstanding faculty; and directs several grant programs for instructional development, which include high-quality learning environment grants, instructional grants, and impact grants (see Figure 2.6).

In a similar fashion, the Technology and Learning Program (TLP) addresses faculty technology training needs through collaboration with instructors on integration of technology and pedagogy. Demonstration and training sessions are offered to groups and individuals. TLP has been largely responsible for the rapid deployment of tools in our Smart Classrooms and the development of our Learning Management Systems (WebCT Vista). Together with the Instructional Media Center (IMC), TLP sponsors the Technology In Learning and Teaching (TILT) consortium, which represents an informal research and interest group consisting of faculty, staff, and others with interests or experience in technology as it relates to learning and teaching. The building of this community of practice has enhanced our adoption of classroom and presentation technologies.
International Programs offers a number of opportunities for professional development and diversity experiences through international work/experiences, including Council on International Education Exchanges (CIEE), CSU International Programs (IP), Fulbright, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), Kansai Gaidai University Visiting Professor Program, Rotary, and University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC). Each semester International Programs offers a conversational Spanish class for CSU, Chico faculty and staff. The class, which usually meets three times a week, is taught by a native speaker. In addition, language software in Spanish is available to help participants expand and improve their Spanish while allowing those with busy schedules the opportunity to practice on their own. Faculty interested in developing skills in other languages can participate in our Self-Instruction Language Program.

Through its work with faculty researchers, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RESP) supports scholarship and creative activity across the University. RESP serves the campus community, especially faculty, with a high level of support and assistance in securing and managing externally funded research. The support for research, scholarship, and creative activities is channeled through four programs, CSU Research Scholarship and Creative Activity grants, faculty development grants, Research Foundation Summer Scholars and the Research Foundation Summer Scholars Explorer Award, to which faculty can apply. Grants are available for assigned time, operating expenses, travel funds, student assistance, and summer stipends. Faculty participation in funded research informs instruction, allows students to benefit from enriched learning environments, and contributes directly to the professional development of faculty. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs is also involved in the administration of university centers that promote scholarship, instructional innovation, and creative activity.
California State University Development Efforts

As part of much larger systems – the State of California and the California State University (CSU) system – CSU, Chico benefits from substantial state and systemwide efforts to develop our faculty and staff. The Academic Human Resources department of the Office of the Chancellor, in addition to its responsibilities for policies and programs related to faculty employment and providing systemwide advice and information on faculty HR issues, participates in providing Academic Personnel Development programs. The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL), including the Faculty Development Council, provides assistance and resources in support of the highest standards of university teaching excellence and provides support for faculty members to grow professionally. ITL sponsors the Teacher-Scholar Summer Institutes and publishes Exchanges: the On-Line Journal of Teaching and Learning in the CSU. Similarly, Systemwide Professional Development provides CSU employees options for job-related learning beyond campus offerings. The Source provides all employees with a wealth of opportunities to advance their professional capabilities.

Promote the Teacher-Scholar Model

In his seminal work titled, Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate, Ernest L. Boyer raised the question: “What is the balance to be struck between teaching and research?” His goal was to “break out of the tired old teaching versus research debate and define in more creative ways, what it means to be a scholar.” The California State University, in its Cornerstones Report, articulated as its fourth principle: “The California State University will reinvest in its faculty to maintain its primary mission as a teaching-centered comprehensive university. Faculty scholarship, research, and creative activity are essential components to that mission.” They are an essential element of a rich learning environment for our students. At CSU, Chico, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Scott G. McNall promoted the notion that teaching and scholarship can be practiced simultaneously and at very high levels at an institution dedicated primarily to teaching. He defined the teacher-scholar as one “who helps students succeed by maintaining an agenda of intellectual creativity, sharing ideas with colleagues, and communicating these ideas beyond the borders of the campus.” He translated this vision into reality by promoting the use of the Wingspread Journal’s Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (including the Faculty Inventory for the Seven Principles) and Boyer’s classification of scholarship in the evaluation of the teacher-scholar. Both of these frameworks are now routinely used in new faculty orientation, faculty development decisions, and in performance and periodic reviews.

Scholarly, Professional, and Creative Achievement of Our Faculty and Staff

Results registered in reports on the retention, tenure, and promotion processes, in reports on faculty leaves, in reports on the use of assigned times, in reports on academic program reviews, and in reports on grants and contracts activities suggest that CSU, Chico’s faculty and staff are vigorous in their scholarly and creative activities. Such results are routinely publicized in campus publications such as Excellence at CSU, Chico, Inside Chico, and Chico Statements.

Summary

A review of the materials submitted by the CPR Evidence Teams suggests that CSU, Chico offers many opportunities for staff and faculty professional development and that its employees take advantage of these opportunities. At the same time, the teams report the existence of some confusion, duplication, and insufficiency of focus in those opportunities. Coordination of opportunities and services was suggested. In particular, the faculty development team suggested “a cross-campus collation of faculty accomplishments, scholarly activities, creative activities, grant funding, etc, each year would make such accomplishments more visible not only to the campus but to external stakeholders.”

The recruitment of a diverse and highly qualified faculty and staff will remain a challenge for CSU, Chico in the near future. Efforts are now underway to implement the recommendations of the Faculty and Staff Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee. First, recent faculty and staff retirements coupled with growth opportunities in selected areas enable the University to more intentionally pursue diversity as a “community to form.” Second, the recommendation to “examine Bensimon’s model (2004), the Diversity Scorecard as a viable model for assessing diversity and promoting change on campus” is being implemented as one of the projects in CSU, Chico’s Educational Effectiveness Review.
Essay III: Superior Knowledge and Learning—Enabling Resources

Believing in the wise use of new technologies in learning and teaching, we will continue to provide the technology, the related training, and the support needed to create high-quality learning environments both inside and outside of the classroom.

The CSU Integrated Technology Strategy

During the last decade, the California State University has engaged in planning and implementing initiatives centered on an integrated technology strategy (ITS) illustrated in the pyramid below. The strategy framework is depicted as a pyramid with the four desired outcomes at the apex, five technology infrastructure pre-requisites at the base, and initiatives and projects linking them in the middle.

The overall goal of the ITS is to enable all CSU students, faculty, and staff to communicate to anyone, from any place, at any time, through access to the full range of national and international resources needed in the learning and teaching experience. First-wave initiatives included excellence in learning and teaching, quality of student experience, personal productivity, and administrative quality and productivity.

The CSU, Chico IT Planning

CSU, Chico’s information technology efforts have built upon the ITS program to deliver and further develop high-quality learning and administrative services in support of the campus strategic plan. The first campus Information Technology plan, Target 2000, identified five goal areas, including instructional support, curriculum development support, faculty/staff/student training as well as institutional support and communication systems. The high level of faculty involvement in developing this and subsequent technology plans proved to be essential to the success of the initiatives. In addition, the provost personally led a faculty Academic Technology Advisory Committee from 2000 to 2004, which directly addressed the mechanics of how to best integrate technology into the curriculum, and he repeatedly addressed issues related to technology and teaching in his communications with the faculty. In 2000, the new university technology plan, Beyond 2000, envisioned an enhanced technological environment that would make significant contributions to excellence in teaching and learning. It outlined specific tasks in the areas of teaching and learning, electronic resources, electronic learning infrastructure, and integrated administrative systems and timelines to effect implementation. This tradition of collaborative and detailed planning continued with the most recent campus technology plan, Aligning with the Future, accompanied by an Enterprise Technology Roadmap. This IT Strategic Plan establishes a comprehensive and dynamic planning process that further focuses our resources on achieving a vision of high-quality learning environments supported by effective business processes.
Access to Information and Instructional Technology

The effective use of technology requires a baseline infrastructure for work stations, network connectivity, training, and support. At CSU, Chico, capacities in each of these areas have been enhanced over time through a combination of CSU ITS program efforts and campus investments.

In 2005, even after several years of budget reductions, 85 percent of faculty workstations, 92 percent of staff workstations, and 75 percent of lab computers met or exceeded ITS baseline standards, i.e., had been purchased three years prior to the end of the reporting period (see Figure 3.1).

![Figure 3.1](image)

**Figure 3.1**
Percentage of Faculty/Staff/Student Workstations Exceeding or Meeting Standards

In 2005, 83 percent of the faculty and 92 percent of the staff indicated general satisfaction with their desktop workstations. Chico is confident that it can reach 95 percent satisfaction rates as it continues to invest in standard refresh cycles.

Appropriate access to informational and instructional technology also required digital media upgrades to all lecture spaces. Chico’s “Smart Classroom” program has upgraded classrooms with computers, Internet connections, visual presenters, projectors, screens, DVD, and sound systems since 2000. As shown in Figure 3.2, Chico is at a point where approximately 74 percent of classrooms are “smart.” The most recent smart classroom survey suggests that users are quite experienced and have a high degree of satisfaction with the hardware and software installed in the rooms.

![Figure 3.2](image)

**Figure 3.2**
Percent of Lecture Spaces that are “Smart” Classrooms
Over the last five years major strides were made in building a common learning infrastructure. A significant evolution in use of technology was the creation of a campus enterprise portal which brings together administrative and academic services in a common Web location. This integration of activities such as course enrollment and advising combined with a list of WebCT courses—all courses are in WebCT—has a dramatic effect on the use of a Learning Management System. By 2005, over 90 percent of the students have at least one course on WebCT and more than 60 percent of faculty are using WebCT for at least one course.

The rise in learning management system usage has required an increase in the capacity of the learning management system to meet the campus’s growing technical and functional needs. A Strategic Review process, conducted in spring 2005, engaged the entire campus community in the decision-making process for this cornerstone of our learning technology infrastructure. After extensive faculty and staff input, WebCT VISTA was chosen and installed.

Teaching and Learning

Faculty training and development in technology has been based on a continuous partnership between the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the Technology and Learning Program (TLP). Two specific areas of collaboration are the Learning Productivity Grants and the Exemplary Online Instruction Awards. The Learning Productivity Grant program and other CELT grant programs are designed to provide faculty with the resources to try out new and innovative approaches to teaching. The grants are competitive and reviewed by the CELT director, Technology and Learning Program staff, and several faculty members. Another key partnership is the Exemplary Online Instruction Awards that are given each year at the CELT conference. These awards are based on an evaluation of online curriculum against the Rubric for Online Instruction, which is continually being revised by a committee of 13 faculty, four support staff, two administrators, and one student. The Rubric for Online Instruction has been recognized nationally and internationally as an assessment tool that enables faculty to review their courses against best practices in online instruction.

The synergy of an effective learning infrastructure and faculty development will be demonstrated in one of CSU, Chico’s educational effectiveness review projects. The project integrates technology into the redesign of large general education courses.

Meriam Library Resources

The Meriam Library supports the mission and strategic priorities of the campus. Services to students include a 24/7 real time online reference, email reference and traditional face-to-face reference. The Library ReSEARCH Station forms the gateway to information and guides, online tutorials, image collections, interlibrary loan services and the internet in addition to books, journals and other information resources. Library collections are increasingly electronic while still supporting text-based materials that are not available or easy to use electronically. The full-text electronic journals and databases are the most utilized library resource.

A major electronic resource initiative is to make our research collections accessible via the internet. The Library has an active digitizing program to convert historic maps, text and photographs so that these resources may be used by students, researchers and others. The Dorothy Hill California Native American Legacy and Tradition collection, for example, was given to the Meriam Library so that it could be preserved and made widely accessible to Native American tribes as well as researchers. The cultural sensitivity of some of the material was balanced with the desire for making Native American traditions and cultures more widely known and appreciated.

Information Literacy

The library coordinates the information literacy efforts of the University, reaching out to every college and department through tours, workshops, and course related instruction. Librarians offer more than 250 course related workshops to over 6,000 students annually and, in collaboration with department faculty, have made significant gains towards embedding information literacy into the curriculum of UNIV101, POLS330, CMST 131 & 132, and the School of Nursing. Realizing the importance of assessment, in 2004/2005 we participated in Phase I and Phase II of the ETS ICT Literacy Assessment, an assessment tool to measure students’ skills and abilities in applying technology to solve problems. In the spring of 2006 we participated in the LibQUAL library service quality survey to measure how our users perceived our services, including our
information literacy efforts. The data we have collected from both of these will be used to improve service and learning. We will continue efforts to integrate information literacy into department curriculums and assess our progress.

University-Wide Information and Knowledge Management Systems

The purpose of the administrative initiatives under ITS is to increase the accessibility and utility of major administrative information systems to students, faculty, and staff, while improving the efficiency and quality of administrative services. To achieve this, the goal of the Common Management System (CMS) is to have all campuses and the Chancellor’s Office use Oracle/PeopleSoft in full production mode, supported by a consolidated data center by 2007.

As of spring 2006, CSU, Chico is running all three modules for Human Resources, Financials, and Student Administration functions and has replaced its legacy administrative systems. Chico CMS functions are supported by campuswide planning and support teams. The keystone of our service delivery strategy is bringing together multiple functions within the campus portal. Our first portal was launched in 2002 (Campus Pipeline) and was replaced by our current open source (uPortal) system in 2005. This enterprise portal provides single sign-on capability for services such as student self-service access to PeopleSoft records and registration, WebCT learning management system, faculty self-service access to PeopleSoft for submission of grades and viewing real-time class rosters, faculty and staff self-service access to Human Resources employee data via the portal, faculty and staff access to campus announcements via the portal in cooperation with the Office of Public Affairs and Publications, and student in elections via the portal in cooperation with Associated Students.

In addition to our ERP administrative systems, other integrated campuswide initiatives, labeled “Enterprise” systems, were included as part of the campus implementation. These “Enterprise” systems included licensing the Oracle suite of software, development of a campus portal, licensing Brio Broadcast Server for reporting from financials databases, bringing the financials data warehouse and student administration data warehouse to campus to manage, and a pre-applicant tracking tool, Sequitor, for tracking prospective students.

Assess the Effects of Technology

By the mid-1990s, the leadership of CSU, Chico realized that emerging information technologies could offer significant opportunities for improved student and organizational learning. Our first wave of technology initiatives focused on building and assessing an information infrastructure that supports learning. The capacity to deliver electronic information was analyzed along with the effectiveness of specific e-learning strategies and tools (see Learning Productivity Projects). We also developed our first data warehouses for both student and financial information that provided both planning and operational data to support institutional effectiveness (e.g. Academic Planning Office, Enrollment Management). Now that first-wave initiatives have been accomplished, CSU, Chico is embarking on a second wave of initiatives under the general umbrella of “knowledge and information management systems.” The goal is to take a comprehensive, systematic approach to the information assets of the University by identifying, capturing, collecting, organizing, storing, retrieving, and sharing them. The vision is to make the collective knowledge, information, and experiences of the University available to all campus constituents for their use in planning and decision making and to motivate them to contribute their knowledge to the collective knowledge and information. A Knowledge Management project is underway to develop a new warehouse structure and associated business intelligence tools that will support continuous improvement in the assessment of educational and institutional effectiveness.

Summary

CSU, Chico has demonstrated an institutional commitment to support academic and administrative technology as part of its strategies to implement its vision, mission, and priorities. Indeed, Chico has a rich history of leadership in information and academic technology and will continue to strive for excellence in infrastructures and services that enhance its learning and working environments. The campus has consistently supported IT strategic planning because it is fully aligned with its strategic plan. This intentional alignment has resulted in effective planning, implementation, and use of technology in support of the purposes of the University.
**Essay IV: Serving the Needs of the North State**

Believing in the value of service to others, we will continue to serve the educational, cultural, and economic needs of Northern California.

CSU, Chico has articulated service as a fundamental tenet of identity and strategic plan. It emphasizes not only the obligation of service, but also the value of service to others in defining individual and institutional character. Embedding a regional orientation into its daily campus life and connecting its work to the needs and quality of a democratic society enacts a powerful affirmation: Chico is an American university, and it is the University of the North State.

The service area of CSU, Chico covers 32,200 square miles, or approximately 21 percent of the State of California, with a resident population of about 740,000, which is approximately 2 percent of the state’s total population. Addressing the needs and interests of a population spread across such a large rural segment of the state is a significant challenge. CSU, Chico has sought out opportunities for partnerships and alliances to focus on those needs and continues to provide programs and services to the citizens throughout the region. In so doing, the University has become the North State center for intellectual, cultural, and athletic activities as well as a center for life-long learning.

**Internships, Experiential, and Service Learning Programs and Student Organization Services Activities**

**Service Learning Programs**

Student engagement within the region takes many forms but few are rated as highly by students themselves as their participation in various forms of service learning. Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE), a student-run nonprofit agency has been a program of the Associated Students since 1966. More than 2,000 Chico State students each year find both meaning and learning opportunities while providing over 60,000 hours in more than 20 programs serving children, the elderly, special populations, adult non-readers, English as a Second Language learners, low-income residents in the Chico area, or in programs serving state parks and institutions throughout Northern California. Each semester, at least three dozen classes have a component of service learning built into them, and many students simply volunteer to provide services without a class requirement.

*Figure 4.1* shows the number of student placements through CAVE over the past five years. Student volunteering has a very positive economic impact on our region. Students have volunteered over 260,000 hours during the past five years with an economic impact estimated at $4.5 million.

California State University, Chico was one of 10 colleges or universities in the United States named recently as finalists to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Award for Excellence in General Community Service. More than 500 schools submitted entries to receive the award.

**Experiential Education and Internships**

Students seeking more formal opportunities to engage in experiential learning related to their major often choose an internship. The Office of Experiential Education (OEE) has formed partnerships with business and government that enable students to gain academically related work experience prior to graduation. Thus students can blend theory with practice while they also make a contribution to the organizations within the region. Internships are a subset of the larger Cooperative Education Program (co-op) administered by the OEE. Co-op positions are paid and can be full or part time. At the bachelor’s level the programs of Agricultural Business, Organizational Communication, Journalism, Nursing, Dietetics,
Political Science, and Recreation require internships for graduation. Most other programs encourage, but do not require, an internship. Each year 1,800-2,000 students are placed with nearly 450 companies or agencies, and many co-op students receive permanent job offers from the companies participating in the program.

As one example of the co-op program, senior-level nursing students, registered nurses, and re-entry professionals can participate in the Rural California Nursing Preceptorship (RCNP) program. This allows students to evaluate the benefits and career options in rural health, make a contribution to the people of the region, and gain clinical experience before graduating.

**Student Organizations Providing Service**

Some organizations are founded on the notion of service activities, such as Scour and Devour, a student group whose mission is campus and community cleanup projects. The Campus Legal Information Center (CLIC) provides free advice and information to those who cannot afford to hire a lawyer, and the Safe Ride organization takes people home who should not drive. Many student organizations have service activities as an integral part of their mission. For example, fraternities and sororities provide a variety of services within the community. They regularly organize and donate countless gallons of blood to the local blood bank, collect and donate large amounts of food to local homeless shelters or food banks, donate formal dresses to high school students who cannot afford them for their prom dances, put on the annual major fundraiser for the Boys and Girls Club, and host booths in the Fun Without Alcohol Faire. The Society of Ag Managers donates many hours of time and energy to Farm City Week activities. In 2005–06 the Women’s Center presented or co-sponsored 28 educational events for over 15,000 women participants regarding personal safety, health, and socio-cultural concerns. These are but a few of the many ways that students contribute to the community and region through organized clubs.

**Serving as the North State Center for Intellectual, Cultural, Athletic, and Life-long Learning Activities**

**North State Center for Intellectual Activities**

The University supports a program of visiting professors from various parts of the nation and world who come to teach at Chico. A large and varied set of lecture series bring knowledge and experience to the region on a wide range of topics. The Anthropology Forum addresses issues in both cultural and physical aspects of the study of man. The Center for Applied and Professional Ethics (CAPE) sponsors public lectures and panel discussions on topics of ethical importance and serves as a link between the University and the professional community in Northern California. The On the Creek Lecture Series educates and facilitates discussion on vital ecological and stewardship issues for the North State and beyond. The Museum Without Walls is a series sponsored by the Northern California Natural History Museum at CSU, Chico, and the President’s Lecture Series has featured a number of Nobel Peace Prize winners in recent years. The Humanities Center sponsors several ongoing series, including the University Film Series, Symposia/Tertulias, and Gallery Exhibitions.
North State Center for Cultural Activities

The University is a focal point in the North State for artistic and cultural activities. Kaleidoscope, CSU, Chico’s Arts Magazine annually illustrates the rich calendar of events that bring people to campus. Chico Performances sponsors professional performers ranging from local to international in origin and features prominent speakers, singers, musicians, dancers, actors, and other artistic performances. In 2005–2006 fifty two evening performances drew a combined audience of over 40,000. Twenty-six separate performances featuring many of the same artists enriched the lives of over 25,000 children from Chico and surrounding communities. The Chico World Music Festival was attended by another 6,000 people and provided two dozen master classes, lecture demonstrations, and workshops experienced by 500 people.

Figure 4.2

CSU, Chico Event Attendance

The School of the Arts, within the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, sponsors performances by students and faculty which reflect the richness of the arts curriculum, including Choral Union, Jazz X-Press, the Off Broadways, Opera Workshop, Performance Ensembles, Chico State Bands, and Theatre Productions. The Schools also sponsors the North State Symphony and is home to the Court Theater and the Janet Turner Print Museum.

Another major contribution to North State culture is made by North State Public Radio which is housed and supported by the University. The radio station’s transmitters reach residents of Northern California across an area roughly the size of the state of Ohio with news, music, and a wonderful variety of programming meant to entertain and inform our community.

North State Center for Athletic Activities

Intercollegiate Athletics is a continuing source of entertainment, excitement, and pride for sports fans in the North State. Chico State fields 13 teams, including seven women’s teams (cross country, basketball, golf, soccer, softball, track and field, and volleyball) and six men’s teams (cross country, basketball, baseball, track and field, golf, and soccer). The University has been ranked in the top five of Division II schools in the nation for the past three years. The California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) in which Chico State competes is a scholarship conference whose teams have won more NCAA National Championships than any other Division II conference. Recent accomplishments by CSU, Chico can be seen at Wildcat Athletics.

Also contributing to physical health and a spirit of fun are the recreational opportunities available through the University’s Recreational Sports program. Through the intramural program roughly 3,700 students take part on about 360 teams in various sports each year. In addition, there are twenty-eight sports clubs, from badminton to waterskiing, in which one can participate in competitive venues or recreational sports. Chico State athletic facilities are also made available for the two local high schools to use for some of their sporting events.
North State Center for Life-long Learning Activities

The Center for Regional and Continuing Education (RCE) has long been a vital resource for life-long learning in the North State. As the anchor institution in Northern California, Chico State serves a 12-county service area, largest in the CSU system. RCE is dedicated to providing higher education access to this widely distributed population. Through regional programs, Open University, and the delivery of accredited degrees via distance education, RCE makes a significant difference in the availability of educational opportunities across the North State. Regional programs support the University’s mission by extending educational programming and services throughout Northern California. Through the extension program a wide variety of non-credit courses are offered encompassing personal enrichment and professional development topics, classroom-based and online computer training, financial planning, and test preparation. This program also develops contract education and training solutions for small businesses, corporations, and government agencies. Total new revenue provided to the University by Regional Continuing Education operations from both credit and non-credit activities exceeded $1 million in 2005–06.

In addition to the distance education programs the University has offered since the mid-1970s, RCE programs have also served the needs of federal, state, county, and nonprofit community agencies. For nearly 30 years CSU, Chico’s Leadership Institute has provided professional education for public service managers in areas such as leadership, strategic planning, and ethics. In 1999 the University established programming to provide professional development opportunities for those who work with Family Court Services to address the needs of psychologists, attorneys, and law enforcement professionals.

The Open University provides an opportunity for residents of CSU, Chico’s service area to have access to regularly scheduled university classes where there is excess capacity on a limited basis, without formal admission to the University.

In 1988, Prime Timers (an organization dedicated to learning in retirement) was formed. Since that time Prime Timers’ classes have afforded participants an opportunity for academic reflection in a peer environment with no pressure to perform. Currently participants range in age from 60 to 90. In 2004, CSU, Chico applied for and received a $100,000 Osher grant to form an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). The Prime Timers organization was the beneficiary of funds, and, as a lifelong learning program, the emphasis remains on academics, affordable membership fees, and the volunteer nature of the instructors (often retired faculty). OLLI membership now exceeds 500 Northstate residents.

Establishing Partnerships and Alliances to Address Critical Regional Needs

The University continues to actively seek opportunities to make a positive impact on the needs of the North State in such areas as diversity, economic development, and education. For example, after getting calls from nurses and teachers in communities all around the North State a few years ago, a professor in the Nutrition and Food Sciences Program, tapped into California Nutrition Network dollars to create a children’s nutrition and activity program, Sierra Cascade Nutrition and Activity Consortium (SCNAC), which now serves six counties and eventually may cover the University’s entire 12-county service area. Similarly, CSU, Chico’s Tourism and Communication Design Partnership has also helped graduates receive the training they need to begin their careers in the North State, such as environmental scientist Adam Henderson, who works for the California Department of Water Resources in Red Bluff. This unique partnership has also helped government agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and local entities such as the city of Oroville promote the beauty and culture of some of the lesser-known parts of Northern California. The College of Agriculture has made good use of Ag Partnerships to enhance the instructional program while at the same time improving its ability to serve the North State.

Faculty/Staff Engagement in the Region

Chico Distance and Online Education. Beginning with the first external degree programs in the State of California in 1972, CSU, Chico has evolved into a state, national, and international leader in the offering of degree programs in a wide variety of distance education formats using live and interactive technologies. Programs available include bachelor’s degrees in liberal studies, social science, nursing (for registered nurses); minors in family relations, political science, psychology, sociology; the concentration in career planning and development; alternative dispute resolution; Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) certification; paralegal certificates; and coursework leading to a teaching credential.

Many faculty and staff have taken part in grants and contracts that benefit the North State, and the University maintains a Faculty Expert Database, a list of CSU, Chico faculty who have volunteered to give lectures and be available to answer questions about their fields of expertise. Faculty and staff serve on many community and North State school boards, planning
boards, other public agency committees and organizations, as well as the boards of private charitable organizations. They have served on City Councils and served as mayor thereby profoundly influencing our community.

The connections of our faculty and staff to the local educational community are so substantial that they almost defy summary. CSU, Chico has nine subject-matter projects, for example, which provide in-service training to K–12 teachers. Overall, the campus currently has more than 100 funded K–12 projects. University Public Events brings more than 25,000 grade school children to campus each year for performances. Thousands more come to visit campus museums, the planetarium, and events such as Ag Day and Fun Without Alcohol.

**Responding to Diverse Communities**

CSU, Chico’s 12-county service region is an incredibly diverse region, rich in history, natural resources and beauty, vibrant and varied communities—and promise. Chico wants to strengthen the region’s social fabric through establishing partnerships with the diverse communities of the North State to address their needs and stimulate college attendance among their members. One such partnership agreement was concluded on October 28, 2005 with the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria. The agreement is a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Guiding Principles for CSU, Chico Consultation with the Tribe on actions taken to protect, preserve, and manage cultural resources that may be identified on campus lands. CSU, Chico is unique among the CSU campuses in possessing many cultural resources that relate to Mechoopda tribal prehistory and history. In fact, campus grounds include property that was held in Mechoopda tribal trust as recently as the early 1950s.

**Support of K-12 Education**

CSU, Chico, as the primary university serving the North State, strives to provide an excellent collection of resources for K-12 education. The School of Education’s extensive Teacher Preparation programs have a far reaching impact on regional schools. The hundreds of candidates in the Teacher Credential program – and aligned programs such as Pupil Personnel Service, Counseling, and Audiology – provide the region tens of thousands of hours of participation, practicing and aiding in local K-12 classrooms.

Meriam Library maintains a Web site containing links to vast amounts of information into which educators from around the region can tap for knowledge and support. Some of the areas available include California and National Standards for areas such as physical education, social studies, science, mathematics, and more. A large section on special education is also available as well as information on benchmarks for literacy in various subjects, school directories, newsletters, and additional topics.

**The North State History-Social Science Project** serves K-12 students, teachers, schools, and school districts throughout the northern Sacramento Valley and the inter-mountain region of northeastern California by enhancing the development of curriculum, creating partnerships with schools and school districts, offering workshops, conducting summer institutes, and providing relevant materials. In the process, the project builds a sense of community among teachers and university faculty.

The Center for Mathematics and Science Education (CMSE) is part of the College of Natural Sciences at California State University, Chico. The center’s focus is to create and coordinate programs dedicated to mathematics and science education. In particular, it works with all units within the University to provide the most current and effective programs to prepare future teachers to teach mathematics and science.

The Northeastern California Teacher Education Collaborative – Improving Teacher Quality’s (NECTEC ITQ) goal is to have Institutes of Higher Education faculty, school district personnel, and mentor teachers work together to establish a seamless process by which pre-service teacher candidates move from teacher training to induction into the teaching profession in northeastern California K-12 schools. In 2006, NECTEC ITQ project participants include 844 teachers from...
across the 12-county region, and the number of students impacted by this program through Regional Continuing Education is estimated at 28,250.

**Fostering Community Leadership Development and Entrepreneurship**

**Economic Development**

The Center for Economic Development (CED) at CSU, Chico Research Foundation was founded in 1986 through a technical assistance grant administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce. There was clearly a need for targeted technical assistance, particularly in Northern California. In 2003, the CED became the lead Small Business Development Center, overseeing six of the centers at local community colleges, through a grant from the Small Business Administration. The organization has since become known as the Northeastern California Small Business Development Center (NECSBDC). Service is provided in such areas as technical assistance and training, small business and entrepreneurial development and support, applied research and economic analysis, information dissemination, economic gardening, and more. The NECSBDC mission is to enhance the well being of the region's citizens by facilitating sustained, long-term, and coordinated economic development strategies.

The College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management works with cities and counties to pursue new businesses, linking them with the research strengths of the University. Congressional funds, totaling $1 million, were obtained to develop a plastics program and laboratory, which also has industrial support. A new partnership between the concrete industry and the College will offer students a unique blend of technical and management preparation in a new discipline – Concrete Industry Management – and help meet industry employment demands.

The state-funded Agricultural Research Initiative matches funds from industry partners. College of Agriculture projects have benefited the entire community, offering solutions to rice straw burning, agricultural waste management, and the improvement of water quality. In addition, the college has many creative partnerships, such as one with Sierra Nevada Brewery, which is testing the use of brewing by-products in cattle feed.

**Summary**

CSU, Chico has boldly declared its inclination to serve and has demonstrated the capacity to do so for more than 100 years. The programs and efforts cited above provide glimpses of the ways in which Chico works to serve the educational, cultural, and economic needs of the Northern California and make a difference in the lives of many in the North State. Through the range and spirit of these services, CSU, Chico affirms that regional stewardship is not just a task or a stand-alone project. It is an orientation. As a result, Chico has a powerful impact on its service region and a long and proud history of serving the community. Its message continues to be “We are the university of the North State; we are here to help; let us know how we can do so.”
Essay V: Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability

Believing that we are accountable to the people of the State of California, we will continue to diversify our sources of revenue and strategically manage the resources entrusted to us.

CSU, Chico builds its resource based on the four-pillar platform of state support, fair student fees, private support, and effective and wise stewardship of all our resources. It allocates resources in terms of its mission, vision, and strategic priorities and holds the leadership at all levels accountable for effective alignment of resources with strategic priorities.

Ensure Strategic Alignment

After a period of consultation and feedback lasting about a year and a half, President Paul J. Zingg unveiled an update of the Strategic Plan for the Future for California State University. He noted that the Plan

challenges us to demonstrate a real and clear determination to allocate resources in terms of articulated priorities. For even in the best of circumstances, we cannot be all things to all people. Rather, in a world of flattened revenue streams, great pressures to hold down fees, rising infrastructure and benefits costs, increased competition for faculty staff and students, and fewer dollars for new investments, we must make choices.

To encourage intentionality and alignment at all levels of deliberation and decision making, President Zingg suggested a framework for visualizing the connections among all levels of efforts. He proposed that the campus strategic paradigm be compared to a hexagon. “The six elements, the six vertices, of this hexagon are the University Strategic Plan, the Master Plan, our enrollment plan, our academic plan, our advancement plan, and our budget. They connect to each other through the University’s Mission Statement, which provides a fundamental articulation of our identity and purpose.”

The Strategic Plan gives definition to Chico’s mission and values and proposes a set of actions that will ensure accomplishment of mission and vision within the stated values that now guide action at CSU, Chico. CSU, Chico’s Master Plan, recently approved by the CSU Board of Trustees, defines physical aspects that create Chico’s sense of place—historic brick, archways, and bridges entwined with a natural creek-side environment. The plan provides for a built environment that harmonizes with our natural environment while providing access to our community of learning. The plan constitutes a comprehensive long-term strategy for addressing learning and working spaces to meet the vision and mission of the campus. Together with the Enrollment Plan, it accommodates our enrollment growth while remaining a residential campus. The Academic Plan is not so much a single plan per se, as much as it is an academic action agenda to build on past achievements and to align new efforts with the values and priorities of the university Strategic Plan.

The Advancement Plan outlines plans for fostering of philanthropic culture. Advancement efforts are now connected to our vision, mission, values, and strategic priorities and are becoming a critical element of an integrated, multifaceted approach to resource acquisition and stewardship. The investment of resources to establish a high-performance advancement operation that serves the entire university community is already beginning to bear fruit. Finally, the Budget Plan is developed annually by the Financial Administration Committee (FAC) in collaboration with the University Budget Committee (UBC). The plan defines the sources and uses of, primarily, state or general fund support and fee revenues and is approved by Cabinet.
Each of the University’s four divisions uses the campus Strategic Plan to guide their own planning for and reporting of achievements. Annual goals are developed and provided to the president for review, and achievements for the previous year are reviewed. Each division submits accomplishments and goals to the president every July. Though variations on the implementation of the division goals and status updates occur, each is consistent with the president’s hexagon and the university Strategic Plan. Academic Affairs, for example, holds semester retreats with executive and academic leadership during which time a division Action Plan is drafted for the year against which accomplishments are then assessed. Business and Finance historically used a Balance Scorecard approach and is currently transforming their goals and measures into a strategic plan format. Student Affairs has historically tracked measures of quality and performance. Each major area within the division submits a mission statement and goals translated into outcomes and measures. University Advancement is strengthening its infrastructure and culture as we take the initial steps towards a major fund-raising campaign in conjunction with the University’s 125th anniversary, which we will celebrate in 2012.

**Strengthen Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability**

CSU, Chico faces a more intense accountability environment that requires it to allocate resources in terms of well-articulated priorities, to show how these priorities are clearly tied to serving the public good, and demonstrate that its house is in order, both financially and administratively, so that it provides wise and effective stewardship of the resources entrusted to it.

**Wise Stewardship of Fiscal Resources**

CSU, Chico marshals fiscal resources from a number of sources: state support, self support, student fees, grants and contracts, philanthropy, and auxiliary activities. Total fiscal resources are over $250 million. State appropriations are allocated on a per-student basis. For each additional student the California State University enrolls, the state provides funding at a marginal cost to support instruction and educational and instructional support services. This marginal cost funding for enrollment growth includes an amount of fee revenues to fund financial aid for students.

The University’s major sources of operating funds include state appropriations, student fees, government grants and contracts, private grants and contracts, sales and service of auxiliary enterprises, sales and services of university educational activities, investment income, and other income (see Figure 5.1). State appropriations make up approximately 76 percent of the University’s financial resources, and student fees provide another 22 percent (average).

The University then spends the majority of its resources on instruction and academic support (56%), and the remaining funds on student grants and scholarships (13%), institutional support (11%), student services (10%), operation and maintenance of facilities (9%), and public service (.07%). Chico State spends approximately $4,912 on instruction per student FTE (excluding academic support expenses).

**Financial performance measures** are used to review the use of operating funds. Specifically, Key Financial Indicators and Composite Financial Index Analysis are used to provide a broad picture of how the University has expended its funding and examining our alignment of priorities with current and future budget planning.

*Figure 5.1*

**Total Operating Funds**

(in millions of dollars)
Foster a Philanthropic Culture

The creation of a separate division of University Advancement and the intentional strengthening of the advancement infrastructure with the hiring of a vice president for University Advancement and college advancement officers have been major steps in advancing the University. Advancement efforts are becoming a critical element of an integrated, multifaceted approach to Chico’s resource acquisition. General Fund allocations and University Fee Revenues leave us with a funding gap, not only to support activities that add distinction and a margin of excellence, but even to provide some basic needs.

Chico State aspires to a values-based philanthropy in which development uncovers shared values and fundraising enables the campus to act upon its stated values. Accordingly, University Advancement strives for broad private support from individuals, corporations, and private foundations.

Encourage Greater Grant and Contract Activity

In addition to philanthropic support, CSU, Chico marshals funds in the form of operating grant and contract revenues to help make up funding gaps and support excellence and distinction. CSU, Chico’s number of submitted grants and contracts has more than doubled over the last 10 years, nearing 722 annually, with an average funding success rate of 80 percent and awards totaling more than $25 million in 2005–06 (see Figure 5.3).

Grant and contract activities allow students to gain exciting, first-hand experience in the search for knowledge and allow faculty and staff to be at the cutting edge of their disciplines and maintain partnerships with scholars around the world.
Foster a Culture of Evidence and Accountability

National conversations about higher education continue to emphasize the importance of providing evidence of student learning and student success. Recently the Spellings Commission suggested that “colleges and universities must become more transparent about cost, price, and student success outcomes, and willingly share this information with students and families.” “Student achievement,” they suggest, “must be measured by institutions on a ‘value-added’ basis that takes into the account students’ academic baseline when assessing their results.”

The CSU has been committed to accounting for its performance by providing periodic reports to the public through the CSU Accountability Process. The CSU Cornerstones Report (1998) first called for such a system: “The California State University will account for its performance in facilitating the development of its students, in serving the communities in which we reside, and in the continued contribution to the California economy and society, through regular assessment of student achievement and through periodic reports to the public regarding our broader performance.” In 1999, the CSU implemented an Accountability Process to analyze educational effectiveness and to provide regular reports on systemwide and campus performances. Such reports have been submitted to the Legislature and the citizens of California.

In 1993 the CSU started a systemwide Quality Improvement effort based on best practices, benchmarking, and communities of practitioners. Much of this work has focused on administrative operations (e.g., Facilities and Parking), but much of it is germane to academic outcomes as well (e.g., Library and Financial Aid Services). In 2006 alone, more than half the CSUs participated in as many as 16 surveys. This work follows national standards of best practice developed by the Academic Quality Improvement Program. Units within Academic Affairs, Business Affairs, and Student Affairs have all participated in QI surveys and analyses.

CSU, Chico has been a participant in both the Quality Improvement Symposium and the CSU Accountability Process as part of its efforts to establish a culture of evidence and accountability. Indeed, as stated in its Institutional Proposal, Chico views the WASC re-accreditation process as an aid “…in further institutionalizing a ‘culture of evidence’ in which performance indicators inform and drive institutional improvement and decision making.” As noted earlier, each of the University’s divisions aligns its plans and actions with the University’s Strategic Plan and is responsible for the development of processes for collecting and disseminating data and information to highlight respective progress and achievement.

Information Acquisition and Dissemination

Examples of information acquisition and dissemination efforts by division include:

**Academic Affairs**: The provost conducts an annual operationalization of the Strategic Plan via an Academic Affairs Strategic Action Plan. Assessment of the prior plan’s achievement and setting new goals are conducted in annual retreats. Institutional Research (IR) provides reports via the Web on admissions, enrollments, degrees, and persistence/graduation rates. IR maintains a large historical database. IR also handles external reporting (e.g., IPEDS, CPEC, CSU, Common Dataset) and provides expert consulting on assessments – particularly surveys – for all units. Enrollment Management’s Technical Group maintains a large operational datastore to handle real-time reporting and current analysis issues. The Academic Publications, Facilities, and Database Services Office provides a datastore providing enrollment, course and facilities information used every day by academic departments in their course/faculty management. There are many more data operations – some large such as the Library and Personnel, some small such as Credentials and the Farm’s Beef Unit animal tracking system – but all are consequential. Our Technology and Learning Program office provides assistance in course design and assessment. They conduct Learning Productivity Projects, and their Rubric for Online Instruction has become widely used. We have introduced a new Learning Management System (LMS)—Vista (after 8 years with WebCT); the LMS both uses and produces data on learning, which we have yet to fully employ. Regional and Continuing Education uses Google analytics to assess what populations access University websites and the nature of their connections.

**Student Affairs**: Testing and Research acquires/maintains standardized test data on CSU, Chico students, supervises the acquisition and reporting of Student Evaluations of Teaching, provides expert psychometric and test scoring services to faculty and is the lead office in conducting assessments within this division. Financial Aid has extensive data systems, as do Housing and the Student Health Service offices. Smaller, but no less mission critical, datasets include the Educational Opportunity Program, Campus Alcohol and Drug Education Center, and Disability Support Services.
**Business & Finance:** The division collects assorted data and conducts analyses regarding the financial management of the University as well as business processes and customer satisfaction. Budget Analysis and Research provides assistance in the preparation, analysis, and management of the financial resources of the University in support of the University’s strategic priorities. Financial Accounting and Reporting prepares campus financial statements. B&F Technologies provides analytic and user support to Financial Services and the general campus users of Business Financial data systems (using both real-time and warehoused data.) Full accounting and purchasing operations are maintained. There are also, for example, facilities management data systems, inventory systems, and an environmental health database. The division is developing a strategic planning function that will specialize in tracking and publishing division results from quality improvement initiatives, performance measurement, customer satisfaction and other strategic initiatives.

**University Advancement & Development:** Large alumni and donor data systems are maintained, and data-mining analytic techniques are used to better understand our donors.

**Assessment**

CSU, Chico has a long and distinguished documented history in assessment going back to 1974 when it used a “new view” – a self study and MIS approach – to receive WASC accreditation. Recent assessment efforts related to educational attainment are monitored, guided, and supported by our All University Responsibility for Assessment Committee (AURA). AURA provides campus leadership for ongoing campuswide conversations on the nature of student learning assessment and its relationship to effective teaching, learning, and advising. All major programs have or are in the process of developing or further refining program missions, program goals, student learning outcomes, course alignment matrices, and assessment plans. Members of AURA serve as individual coaches to the individuals within their respective colleges.

Continuous improvement is also being recorded in the assessment of general education (GE). Good progress is being made in terms of defining student learning outcomes in core areas of GE as well as in creating the rubrics that are helpful in assessing and evaluating student work products. The collection of cross-sectional data on student performance in writing, oral communication, and quantitative reasoning in GE classes allowed comparisons of first-year students versus seniors, across colleges, and between native and transfer students. Assessment data are being shared widely on campus and are guiding efforts at curricular and pedagogical changes to enhance student learning.

The institutionalization of these assessment and evaluation efforts is further stimulated by an academic program review project designed to refocus programs toward becoming more systematic and intentional about gathering data about the right things – performance and effectiveness – and on using the resulting information to continuously improve what the program does. While program reviews have been conducted since the early 1970s, elements of this new framework will align under the strategic priorities of the University, the 10 principles of Cornerstones, the principles of the CSU Accountability Process, and the core commitments to institutional capacity and educational effectiveness that are embodied in the new WASC accreditation standards.

**Use of Data**

While CSU, Chico demonstrates substantial capacity to collect and disseminate evidence, it demonstrates far less well the use of the results of assessments and evaluations to revise and improve structures, processes, curricula, and pedagogy. Evidence teams report strong communities of practice in some areas as well as the capacity to further develop such communities. At the same time, the teams reported a great deal of variability in the quality of Chico learning information and learning outcomes assessment; poor organization and accessibility of available data and evidence; and the need for better knowledge accumulation, retention, and dissemination. (Chico has been a victim of its own data decentralization, at a modest level, making integration of its data and evidentiary information more difficult.) CSU, Chico, it was further concluded, needs both better assessment of learning outcomes and better faculty training on the development and assessment of learning outcomes. Continued administrative focus upon, and support for, assessment is necessary.

**Summary**

CSU, Chico’s Strategic Plan for the Future, operationalized in the hexagon diagram, gives definition to its mission and values and provides the framework for effective alignment of resources with strategic priorities. Each of the University’s divisions has developed divisional plans that are anchored in the Strategic Plan, which in turn inform their decision making and performance measurement.
The University draws its fiscal resources from four major sources: state support, student fees, private support, and wise stewardship. As a state-supported institution, CSU, Chico receives a substantial amount of public funding. That level of funding has decreased over the years, and alternative sources must be increased to maintain distinctiveness and margins of excellence. The two major alternative sources are grants and contracts and university advancement, i.e., fund-raising. Chico is actively pursuing these, and there are signs of success that instill confidence for the future.

CSU, Chico has shown its commitment to strengthening its institutional effectiveness by installing a decentralized performance-based budget system that links resource allocation to the accomplishment of university priorities and by fostering a culture of evidence and accountability. While major strides have been made, Chico has not developed a true culture of evidence through a university-wide strategic management system. It does report a commitment to achieving the goal of enterprise knowledge and information management systems and has included related efforts in the bullet items of its Strategic Plan.
Essay VI: An Environmentally-Engaged Campus

Believing that each generation owes something to those who follow, we will create environmentally literate citizens, who embrace sustainability as a way of living. We will be wise stewards of scarce resources and, in seeking to develop the whole person, be aware that our individual and collective actions have economic, social, and environmental consequences locally, regionally, and globally.

The update of The Strategic Plan for the Future added a new, sixth strategic priority on sustainability, stewardship, and environmental awareness. This priority was added after extensive campus conversation with faculty, staff, and students about how California State University, Chico could build on its strengths to create institutional distinctiveness. For Chico State, sustainability is both a goal and a means to help engage students in democratic controversies. Chico State understands it has a significant role to play in helping students become democratic citizens. Engaging students in discussions about the stewardship of public lands, conservation and sustainable economic development is one way to achieve this goal. To meet these complex objectives, CSU, Chico has over the last decade developed structures, academic programs, and expanded community outreach activities.

Strengthen Reputation for Environmental Stewardship

In November 2006, the University sponsored a conference, “This Way to Sustainability: Connecting to the Community,” that drew over 900 registrants. The conference grew out of the American Democracy Project and a partnership with Butte Community College. A planning community from Butte Community College, the Associated Students groups from Butte Community College and California State University, Chico, and members of the community developed the conference. This conference will be held annually as a continuing partnership between the university, the college, and the community. It is one of the ways in which we are raising our profile and capitalizing on existing strengths.

Structures for Support

A comprehensive organization, The Bidwell Environmental Institute, (BEI) was created in 1999 to support environmental research and education, and to make use of newly acquired land that forms the heart of a system of preserves (now totaling over 4,500 acres). The BEI is a joint partnership of the Colleges of Agriculture, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Engineering, and Natural Sciences. Its mandate has been expanded, under the most recent update of the Strategic Plan, to be the University’s comprehensive center for sustainability, stewardship of public lands, sustainable business practices, outreach to the community, and environmental studies. More than 60 faculty members are already involved in BEI teams and projects. It also has a responsibility to raise funds from private and public partners to support the work of the center.

The first sustainability assessment of CSU, Chico was completed in spring 2005. The assessment specified six sustainability indicators: energy, water, transportation/planning, materials/waste, purchasing, and learning & governance for sustainability. The assessment specified how we are doing and what we could learn from others, and it gave direction for future efforts.

This campus was recently recognized as among the top one percent of all universities in the country for its commitment to civic engagement, service, and service learning. We have systematically built capacity to achieve these goals. Our Associated Students (AS) have several programs focused on the environment. The AS has a recycling coordinator that serves both the campus and the local community. The AS recently hired a sustainability director to oversee business practices within their corporation. They fund the Environmental Affairs Resource Council, and last year the students passed a fee to fund sustainable practices campuswide. The University recently hired a director of sustainability to coordinate student projects and connect them to the academic programs. In addition, Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) is a student-supported group that has deepened their connection to environmental organizations throughout the North State and is working to develop placements for our students. The Internship Program is working to develop internships in businesses focused on sustainability.
Academic Programs

All of the seven colleges that make up the University have one or more courses focused on sustainability. In total we have 147 courses spread throughout the curriculum, which allow students to complete their GE requirements with a focus on sustainability. The College of Business has developed a Minor in Sustainable Business Practices, which will be launched in the spring of 2007.

Research and Creative Activities

The grants and contracts office averages approximately $24–30 million a year, which, when factored for size, puts us among the leaders in the California State University System. Much of our research dollars come from work that focuses on the local watershed and bioregion. Over 10 years, research and laboratory capacity was expanded to support efforts in this area, e.g., hydrology, fire ecology, organic agriculture, range management, and riparian habitats. The deans of agriculture, behavioral and social sciences, engineering, and natural sciences collaborated to hire faculty who could support interdisciplinary programs and who would form the core of applied research teams that focused on environmental issues.

Sustainable Practices

California State University, Chico is not only in the community, it is of the community. We see ourselves as a citizen of the city, as well as of the region. In this capacity, we seek to model sustainable business practices, stewardship of the land, so that others might learn from us. We encourage students and community members to measure their ecological footprints, to learn how we are managing the campus using non-toxic and organic products, how we conserve energy, as well as how we manage campus waste. The campus recently installed a 364 kilowatt solar array, which can power the equivalent of 110 homes, both to save energy and to demonstrate how alternative energy sources can be employed.

Summary

CSU, Chico is excited about its new priority of being an environmentally-engaged campus. It aspires to become a leader in environmental education, environmental sciences and policy analyses, the building of environmentally-friendly facilities, the stewardship of public lands, and the practicing of sustainability principles. Chico will continue to build its institutional capacity in this area so that it can become the distinctive "sustainable" campus in California.
SECTION III: CONCLUDING ESSAY

On the afternoon of April 8, 1887 a telegram arrived in Chico announcing the selection of Chico as the site of the new state normal school. Then Governor Bartlett had overcome the lobbying effort of Red Bluff, Redding, and Colusa to produce a unanimous vote for Chico among members of the site selection committee. The Oroville Mercury commented, 'Chico’s condition is Normal … It will probably be abnormal on Friday.

A Precious Sense of Place: The Early Years of Chico State
W.H. Hutchinson and Clarence F. McIntosh

Since its beginnings in 1889, California State University, Chico has provided generations of students with unique educational experiences built upon an inclusive learning community of faculty, staff, and students who live, work, and study within a rural Northern California setting. Today, CSU, Chico is a comprehensive university serving not only the local region, but also the state, the nation, and the world, through instruction, research, and public service.

Reflective Essays

In its recently adopted Strategic Plan for the Future, California State University, Chico reiterates its commitment to student learning and student success. This commitment is expressed in its mission statement, its values statement, and its strategic priorities. Strategic Priority #1, the development of high-quality learning environments both inside and outside the classroom, operationalizes this commitment through the recruitment, retention, and graduation of a diverse and high-quality student population, a purposeful structuring and nurturing of the total education of students, the maintenance of superior student support systems, and a systematic assessment and evaluation of efforts to promote student success. **Essay I** describes the structures, programs, and policies that have evolved over time to support and enable student success. The First Year Experience, the Freshman General Studies Thematic, Honors, General Education, and distinctive undergraduate and graduate programs all provide opportunities for academic and intellectual engagement. Intentional efforts to deepen the Chico Experience provide further opportunities for cultural, social, and civic engagement. All these efforts combine to structure and nurture learning environments that facilitate a broad scope of student engagement and personal development. As a result, Chico demonstrates high persistence and graduation rates and receives high levels of student satisfaction with its programs, educational experience, and CSU, Chico as a whole.

Strategic Priority #2 recognizes the importance of faculty and staff in the success of students, and pledges to invest in faculty and staff currency and continuing professional development. **Essay II** highlights the recruitment, retention and support policies, procedures, and practices designed to ensure a diverse and high-quality faculty and staff. While many of these policies and procedures are governed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement and CSU, Chico’s Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures, the University has developed a number of targeted development programs. The latter address specific developmental needs such as training in learning styles, effective use of academic technology, use of learning management systems, developmental scholarly and creative activities, grants and contract activities, and international and diversity experiences.

CSU, Chico has a rich history of leadership in information and academic technology. As demonstrated in **Essay III**, Chico continues to strive for excellence in the delivery of services and infrastructures that enhance the effectiveness of its learning and working environments. Members of the campus community have access to appropriate workstations, network connectivity, training, and support. A significant evolution in the use of technology was the creation of a campus enterprise portal which brought together academic and administrative services in a common Web location.

CSU, Chico has articulated service as a fundamental tenet of its institutional character and as a goal to distinguish its students and alumni. Serving the needs of the North State has been a tradition for more than 100 years. **Essay IV** provides a glimpse of Chico’s record in this respect and includes references to such programs as Community Action Volunteers in Education, Community Legal Information Center, Center for Economic Development, the Rural California Nursing Preceptorships, service efforts by fraternities and sororities, Regional and Continuing Education, Open University, Chico Performances (celebrating 25 Years!), Chico State Athletics, School of the Arts, and Chico’s Northstate Public Radio KCHO/KFPR. Embedding a regional orientation into the daily life of the campus and connecting to the needs of the North State and beyond is becoming a motivating force for making a difference.

**Essay V** shows Chico’s organizational structures and decision-making processes to be consistent with its mission and priorities. Efforts at wise stewardship of resources, at fostering a philanthropic culture, and at increased grant and contract activities are in
alignment with strategic priorities. Progress is being reported on one of Chico’s major goals, that of further institutionalizing a culture of evidence in which performance indicators inform and drive institutional improvement and decision making.

Finally, Essay VI describes the exciting, new strategic priority of becoming an environmentally-engaged campus. The Bidwell Environmental Institute was created in 1999 to support environmental education and research, and serves as the University’s comprehensive center for environmental studies, sustainable development, sustainable practices, stewardship of public lands, and outreach to the community.

Challenges and Recommendations

While the reflective essays and the associated links to evidence reports clearly document CSU, Chico’s commitment to capacity, the review did reveal that Chico faced, and in some cases continues to face, significant challenges and opportunities for improvement.

The suggestions for improvement made by the evidence teams reveal a number of underlying themes. One major theme is that of improving campus diversity. Chico’s students, faculty, staff, and administrators are still not as diverse as those of its sister campuses and still do not match the growing diversity of the state of California. Recognizing this, President Paul J. Zingg proffered diversity as a community to form and set ambitious goals to do more to engage each other in the challenging work of increasing awareness of, and respect for, diversity. The campus has adopted the approach of using routine data disaggregated on the basis of diversity measures to bring to light areas of weakness in campus diversity. The premise is that in order to bring about change, individuals in the institution must be aware of inequities, analyze and interpret the inequities, and then act upon them. The development of a Diversity Scorecard is Chico’s way of bringing this about.

A second major theme that emerged was one of fostering what has been labeled a “culture of evidence.” The review identified a wide variety of assessment and evaluation efforts, i.e. “piles of evidence.” Less obvious at times was how the results of these assessment and evaluation efforts are being translated into improvement of those efforts. Evidence teams called for more systematic collection of information, more systematic reflection on data collected, and more data-driven, outcomes-based academic and co-curricular program development. Some evidence teams also called for better access to existing information and data. It was noted that the Web could be used more effectively to support user-friendly repositories for campus information, policies and procedures. The overarching recommendation in this respect is that the campus further develop an information architecture that would allow for more intentional organizational learning. Such action should be coordinated within the framework of the IT Strategic Plan. The use of a performance based measurement system (PBViews) as a reporting mechanism for this purpose should be further pursued.

A third theme that can best be characterized as an amalgamation of under currents involves the continuing implementation of the institution’s motto “Today Decides Tomorrow.” In a sense, the institution currently finds itself in a situation not unlike the one the Visiting Team found in 1996. The institution has adopted a new strategic plan that defines its future direction and will serve as an effective benchmark against which to measure progress. Its successful implementation will again be determined by internal and external constituents working together with conviction; this time, however, within the context of a changing landscape of higher education. This landscape is characterized at federal, state, and local levels by increased demands for fulfilling commitments to multiple stakeholders, for assuring access to excellence, for ensuring success in student learning, and for demonstrating evidence of and accountability for institutional performance. These challenges are likely to be magnified within an era of declining federal and state financial support and local limits to enrollment growth that traditionally have driven CSU campus allocations. This state makes it all the more essential that the leadership, at all levels of the institution, sticks to its core themes of values-based “intentionality” and “alignment.” As President Zingg noted in his 2005 Convocation Address. “…our ability to align our actions with our intentions, to make decisions and to allocate resources along the lines of clearly articulated priorities and values, will affect the integrity of our message, the delivery of our promise, and the faith of our friends.”

Preparedness for the Educational Effectiveness Review

While CSU, Chico identified a number of challenges to be addressed in the near and longer-term future, the core capacity of the University – clear purpose, high levels of integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures to fulfill its purposes – is evident, indeed quite strong. This demonstrated capacity provides and will continue to provide the basis for examining and improving CSU, Chico’s educational effectiveness. Indeed, the themes selected for the educational effectiveness review – student engagement at a residential campus (including diversity), refinement of the academic program review, and the innovative use of technology – will allow further efforts to address challenges identified in the capacity and preparatory review and make further progress toward the development of strategic plan–based performance indicators.
SECTION IV: APPENDICES

Appendix I: Required Data Elements
Appendix II: Stipulated Policies
Appendix III: Evidence Report
Appendix IV: Response to Previous WASC Accreditation
Appendix I: Required Data Elements

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges requires that institutions submit a prescribed set of exhibits and data displays as part of a larger portfolio of evidence that they submit as part of the Capacity and Preparatory Review. The intent of this requirement is to move the process of accreditation toward more visible reliance on concrete evidence and allow the accreditation decision to be a more informed decision.

CSU, Chico has reviewed the required data elements under seven substantive categories of data. Each ‘data element’ consists of a basic array of data about a distinct characteristic of the University and, in combination, these data elements portray a de facto “Fact Book” of Chico.

CSU, Chico data elements in support of its Capacity and Preparatory Review are:

1. Admissions and Student Preparation
2. Student Enrollments
3. Degrees Awarded
4. Faculty and Staff Composition
5. Information, Physical, and Fiscal Resources
6. Institutional and Operating Efficiency
7. Assessment Activities
8. Update of Basic Descriptive Data
Appendix II: Stipulated Policies

One of the required elements an institution must include in its Institutional Proposal is an Institutional Stipulation Statement signed by the chief executive officer. One of the stipulations is that “the institution has published and publicly available policies in force as identified by the Commission.”

CSU, Chico has such policies available for review on request throughout the period of accreditation at the CSU, Chico home page web site and / or the CSU, Chico WASC Accreditation web site. Those policies include:

Institutional Integrity

- A widely disseminated, written policy statement of commitment to integrity and academic freedom in teaching, learning, research, publication, and oral presentation
- Due process procedures that demonstrate faculty and students are protected in their quest for truth
- Written policies on due process and grievance procedures for faculty, staff and students
- A clear statement of institutional policies, requirements, and expectations to current and prospective employees
- Institutionally developed and published non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action policies, including individuals with Disabilities
- Clearly written policies on conflict of interest for board, administration, faculty, and staff, including appropriate limitations on the relations of business, industry, government, and private donors to research in the institution
- A clear statement that the institution agrees to abide by WASC Policy on Substantive Change and the Policy on Distance and Technology-Mediated Instruction

Research

- Policies covering human subjects and animals in research, classified research, patent provisions, cooperative research relations with industry, and other similar issues related to the integrity and independence of the research enterprise
- Institutions that support applied research having the potential for producing significant revenue have clear policies on how faculty responsible for such research share revenue from patents, licenses, and sales. Institutions supporting entrepreneurial activity of faculty of institutionally sponsored research parks have clear policies covering the involvement of faculty in such ventures, the protection of basic research, and the publication of research results

Educational Programs

- Precise, accurate, and current information in printed material regarding a) educational purposes, b) degrees, curricular programs, educational resources, and course offerings; c) student charges and other financial obligations, student financial aid, and fee refund policies and general refund information; d) requirements for admission and for achievement of degrees (MAPS); and e) the names of the President’s Senior Management Group, President’s Cabinet, President’s Advisory Board, administration, Academic Senate, and faculty and staff
- University Catalog makes clear the status (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) of each faculty member
- Clearly articulated policies for the transfer of credit to ensure that students who transfer in with general education course credits meet the institution’s own standards for the completion of the general education requirement
- Policies and procedures for additions and deletions of programs
- Requirements for continuation in, or termination from, academic programs, and a policy for readmission of students who are disqualified for academic reasons
- Clearly stated graduation requirements that are consistently applied in the degree certification process
Faculty

- Classification Standards and personnel policies governing employment of teaching fellows and assistants
- Sample policies designed to integrate part-time faculty appropriately into the life of the institution:
  - University level (under construction)
  - College of Business Adjunct Faculty Manual and Policies and Procedures Manual
  - Department of Education Faculty Handbook
  - Department of Communication Arts and Sciences Part-Time Lecturer Survival Manual
- Explicit and equitable faculty personnel policies and procedures (FPPP)
- Policies on salaries and benefits
- Policies for faculty and staff regarding privacy and accessibility of information

Library

- Written library collection development and weeding policies, including the bases for accepting gifts

Students

- Admission and retention policies and procedures, with particular attention to the application of sound admission and retention policies for athletes, international students, and other cases where unusual pressures may be anticipated
- Clearly defined admissions policies attentive to the special needs of international students
- Policies on student rights and responsibilities, including the rights of due process and redress of grievances
- Publications that include policies and rules defining inappropriate student conduct
- A policy regarding fee refunds that is uniformly administered, and consistent with customary standards

Finances

- Policies, guidelines, and processes for developing the budget
- Clearly defined and implemented policies with regard to cash management and investments, approved by the governing board
- Policies and a code of ethics for employees involved in buying, bidding, or providing purchase orders are governed by CSU policies 2006-07 and 2006-06 and internal campus procedures
- Policies on risk management, addressing loss by fire, burglary and defalcation; liability of the governing board and administration; and liability for personal injury and property damage
- Policies regarding fundraising activities that comply with sound ethical accounting and financial principles
Appendix III: Evidence Report

On January 20, 2005, the WASC Steering Committee invited more than one hundred members of the campus community to share their expert judgment on how the campus could / should demonstrate its capacity to define and sustain learning and educational effectiveness. In particular, the one hundred members were organized into seventeen teams and asked to identify what evidence and / or data currently existed that could / should be used to demonstrate that CSU, Chico met the broad statement of the new WASC Standard and its related Criteria for Review assigned to their respective team. Once having identified the evidence or data, teams were asked to evaluate the quality of evidence or data identified and recommend whether improvements in existing data were needed and / or whether other data, documentation or processes needed to be developed.

This report presents a summary of the work products of the seventeen teams. For each criterion for review under each of the WASC Standards, it highlights the links to evidence and related topics. The resulting presentation demonstrates that there is a strong commitment to Institutional Capacity at CSU, Chico and that it is engaged in addressing the key issues and challenges that the review process has identified.

- CSU, Chico Evidence Report
Appendix IV: Response to Previous WASC Accreditation

The previous WASC accreditation effort for California State University, Chico was conducted under a modified self-study and visit format. In his June 27, 1996 letter to then-President Manuel A. Esteban, Executive Director Ralph A. Wolff wrote:

"The Commission first wishes to commend the institution and the evaluation team for entering into this modified self-study and visit format so successfully. The self-study process involved a remarkable number of faculty and others throughout the institution, and led to two important volumes. The Commission found Volume 1 to be a very useful, and readable, summary and a model for other self studies. The evaluation team also invested significantly in an effort to make the visit process focus on strategic issues that would be of value to the improvement and further development of the University."

The Commission’s letter further stated that the strategic plan developed by the University provided a foundation for charting the future course of the University and could serve as an effective benchmark against which to measure progress. In its major conclusion, the Executive Director wrote: “… the Commission encourages and supports the University’s efforts to move forward in the directions it has established.”

A. Move in Directions Established

In subsequent years, the University did indeed use its Strategic Plan to guide its decision making at all levels. In his 2001 convocation speech, after highlighting the accomplishments within each of the institution’s strategic priorities, President Esteban concluded that "… this plan has served us very well," and noted that it "… represented then and it represents today a collective vision, which still animates our present and serves as a valuable guide to our future." When President Paul J. Zingg introduced his updated Strategic Plan for the Future he noted that “This document preserves the format and basic structure of our current strategic plan, because they are sound … There are two new elements … First, it includes a ‘Values’ section that gives greater focus to our shared purposes and beliefs. Second, it adds a sixth strategic priority on sustainability and environmental awareness. Both additions reflect a strong sense with our University community that we should be clearer and more intentional in our values and more fully engaged as stewards of our inherited and created assets for the campus, the North State, and beyond.” Thus, CSU, Chico has lived up to the Visiting Teams reported optimism “about CSU, Chico’s ability to realize the goals that have been identified.”

B. Address Challenges Likely to Be Faced

The Commission also endorsed the comments and recommendations set forth in the Visiting Team report, while noting that the recommendations "are not intended to serve as mandates, but as important recommendations and ideas arising from peer review.” Several themes were identified as worthy by both the Commission and the Visiting Team and received further attention by the University over the past ten years.

Learning-Centered Campus

“The major assumption of planning at CSU, Chico is that the campus should be learning-centered. The Visiting Team agrees that this is the key to CSU, Chico’s future." The team at the same time suggested that Chico would face challenges in becoming more learning-centered, including cultivating a sense that CSU, Chico is in control of its own destiny and orchestrating efforts to focus on learning.

Since 1996 CSU, Chico has continued to make progress in its shift from the “instruction paradigm” to the “learning paradigm.” In its new Values statement, the University writes: “We seek the purposeful integration of liberal and applied learning…” It further highlights learning by stating “We promote active learning, curiosity, and the recognition that learning occurs in our classrooms, studios and laboratories, and beyond through the co-curricular experience, service engagements, social interactions, and other expressions of a full and healthy student environment.” Its strategic priority # 1 reads: “Believing in the primacy of learning, we will continue to develop high-quality learning environments both inside and outside the classroom,” suggesting an emphasis on holistic student learning. Similarly, campus conversations and campus documents increasingly use language such as learning environments, learning experiences, learning-enabling resources, learning productivity, student learning, quality of learning, and active and life-long learning.
As Essay I describes, CSU, Chico has developed and implemented structures, policies, and practices designed to enhance student learning and student success. Programs are in place to bring about student engagement and personal growth. Faculty and staff value undergraduates and their learning, experiment with engaging pedagogies, and make time for students. As noted in the 1996 Commission letter, “The University has … created a remarkably supportive environment for students.” That tradition has continued. Programs are in place that equip undergraduates with good MAPs (Major Academic Plans) and guides for their learning journey. Pathways to student success include such programs as Getting Connected, University 101, First-Year Experience, Course Link, General Studies Thematic, Honors, AlcoholEdu, distinctive academic programs, Study Abroad, and CAVE. Programs sponsored by the Psychological Counseling, Wellness and Testing Center further promote student success through direct and indirect services to students. Finally, as highlighted in Essay II, Chico provides resources and nurtures practices that renew faculty commitment to undergraduate education and student learning.

The challenge of developing a “culture of evidence” that would guide institutional transformation, selection of next steps, and difficult resource allocation / reallocation decisions was also suggested by the Team.

With respect to “culture of evidence”, while some progress was made through major efforts by AURA (All University Responsibility for Assessment) and CELT (Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching), the University falls short of presenting a true “culture” of evidence. At the present time, team evidence reports seem to indicate three states of affairs in identifying and assessing student learning: a) a wide variety of assessment activities are occurring at the level of the individual course, the program, and the institution as a whole; b) the more comprehensive and successful assessment activities are in the professional fields, especially those accredited by external agencies; and c) more progress has been made in assessing student learning outcomes in academic programs than in general education. Accordingly, CSU, Chico made program assessment and general education assessment two major projects in its Educational Effectiveness Review.

As suggested by the Visiting Team, Chico is also attempting to use assessment data more systematically in its decision making. The diversity scorecard initiative is a clear example of an attempt to use institutional data to mobilize institutional attention and action. In addition, the University continues its work on developing a web-based electronic performance measurement system, using PBViews as the reporting system.

Information and Technology

“Information and technology will be critical to CSU, Chico’s progress and may be the distinct advantage CSU, Chico has in competition with other institutions.” Challenges identified by the Team included ensuring that technology is a change agent, ensuring adequate staffing, and dealing with rapid obsolescence. One member of the Team posed the question: “Is CSU, Chico of 1996 a ‘Frog in Hot Water’?”

CSU, Chico is pleased to report that the intervening ten years have demonstrated that it jumped out of the pot of boiling water, took over the kitchen, set its own water temperature and is now basking in a hot tub of its own making to the envy of its peers. As highlighted in Essay III, CSU, Chico’s information technology efforts have built upon the California State University’s Integrated Technology Strategy (ITS) program to deliver and further develop high-quality learning environments and administrative services in support of the campus strategic plan.

Student Issues and Residentiality

The Visiting Team took some time to understand the nature of Chico’s residentiality and concluded that it involved a blending and merging of the University campus and the larger Chico community without clear boundaries, a campus ecology that permits students to socialize and ‘hang out,’ a faculty and staff that is accessible to and supportive of students, a larger community friendly to students, and cultural and social opportunities offered by the larger community.”

CSU, Chico has continued to refine its understanding of the concept of “residentiality.” The updated vision statement states: “California State University, Chico sees its distinctive residential context as an opportunity to create an active, diverse, healthy, caring, innovative, and green learning and working environment.” The past ten years has seen a number of developments to foster the benefits of residentiality. First, the University has become more intentional about leveraging residentiality in student learning both inside and outside the classroom. Programs ranging from First Year Experience to AlcoholEdu, fully described in Essay I, stress an orientation to values and expectations of the University. The ability to ‘live’ these values is at the core of the campus residential community. The CSU, Chico Master Plan has identified student housing as a significant priority not only to meet anticipated enrollment growth, but also as a vehicle to provide, especially first year, students with housing arrangement that support their
transitions and adaptations to living independently, developing interpersonal relationships, nurturing emotional well-being and promoting life-long learning and personal growth.

Further, the University communicates high expectations to its students and promotes active learning in its classrooms, studios, laboratories and beyond through co-curricular experiences emphasizing civic engagement, community services and sustainability. These programs, along with student services and support systems, facilitate the broad scope of student engagement and personal growth. In support of these efforts, the campus has started the construction of the Wildcat Activity Center and a new Student Services Center. The Wildcat Activity Center is a 109,000 square foot state-of-the-art student recreation facility that features a three-court gym, climbing wall and bouldering area, indoor running track, four multi-purpose exercise rooms, a 15,000 square foot fitness facility, and a ten lane recreational pool and spa. The Student Services Center is a 120,000 square foot, four-level, LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), one-stop service center for prospective and current students services, including admissions, academic advising, student records, financial aid, student organizations and counseling.

Focus groups with minority students conducted by the Team in 1996 suggested that the community may be less friendly and less open to such students. “Finally, the recruitment of students will be affected by racial and ethnic demographic phenomena. This highlights CSU, Chico’s challenge in making its student body more diverse …”

As noted in both Essay I and Essay II, recruiting a high-quality, diverse student population remains a strategic priority for the University. In his first convocation address in August of 2004, President Zingg stated that Chico would be setting ambitious goals to add diversity to its campus community, and to do more to engage the entire community in the challenging work of increasing awareness of and respect for diversity. Accordingly, CSU, Chico has made diversity a major project for its Educational Effectiveness Review.

Planning and Resources

“Key to the University’s success in realizing the goals of its strategic vision, however, will be the capacity of the campus to ‘take hold of its own destiny,’ rather than rely on the external forces to determine the University’s future.”

The recent adoption of The Strategic Plan for the Future serves as yet another indicator that Chico is taking “hold of its own destiny.” In the Plan, Chico clearly positions itself as a place of public purpose and of public service. It aspires to be a place of values and of value-added experiences. It defines service as an individual and institutional characteristic. It embeds a regional orientation into its daily campus life and connects its work to the needs of the North State.

As noted in Essay V, CSU, Chico is attempting to diversify its major sources of fiscal resources as the level of state support has decreased over time. At the time of the 1996 WASC visit Chico and the CSU system in general experienced a budget crisis. This was followed by some recovery only to be hit with a state budget crisis beginning in 2002-2003. The CSU Compact concluded with the Governor appears to provide some stability for the upcoming years. Current attempts to pursue alternative sources of funding are not only appropriate, but also necessary. The challenge of the need for increased state support and its inextricable link to enrollment, identified by the Visiting Team in 1996, while having been addressed in the past ten years, continues to command attention in 2006.

The Visiting Team further noted that “Enrollments will be a key to the future since there will be direct resource implications associated with a continuing decrease or a renewed increase in enrollments. The competition for students will be increasingly challenging, and CSU, Chico will have to continue the analysis of its niche in the market.”

To address both the short- and longer term enrollment challenges more systematically, CSU, Chico hired a Vice Provost for Enrollment Management in 1996 to reverse the underperformance in enrollment experienced in 1994-95 and 1995-96. The enrollment performance since 1996 can be described as highly successful; with only the exception of 2002-2003 when actual FTES was 96.5% of target. In all other years, Chico was close to or exceeded its FTES target. This performance was made possible by a wide array of special enrollment efforts including market research and assessment, targeted recruiting, Chico Preview Day, Presidential Scholarship program, performance scholarships, need-based scholarships, increased outreach efforts to high school counselors, increased outreach efforts to community colleges, participation in college fairs, increased cooperation with MESA, Upward Bound, and Education Talent, purchase of target lists, increase e-communication capacity, use of multimedia video clip / flash messaging, and the building of “electronic relationships’ with prospects and applicants via Liquid Matrix and other software.
In Summary

In concluding its Executive Summary, the Visitation Team noted that “Change will be necessary, but the sense of direction, faculty commitment to the institution, and the openness to new possibilities witnessed by the visiting team suggest a readiness to meet these challenges head-on.” We are pleased to have established that CSU, Chico has lived up to the perceived readiness. We have good reason – in fact, many of them – to be confident and optimistic about our future and our role in the lives of our students, region, state, and nation.