

Reaffirmation of WASC Accreditation for California State University, Chico



"The team is here from what accrediting agency?"

Capacity and Preparatory Review 2006 / 2007



WASC Institutional Presentation

Institutional Proposal

The Institutional Proposal is the first element of the Institutional Presentation and the first stage in the accreditation review cycle. Its purpose is to guide the entire accreditation review process.

The CSU, Chico Institutional Proposal describes its institutional contexts, its desired goals and outcomes for the accreditation review cycle and the staging of the Preparatory Review and Educational Effectiveness Review. It may be found at: <http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/vppra/wasc/instProposal.html>

Capacity and Preparatory Review

The Preparatory Review is designed to enable the 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.*

To support the Preparatory Review, each institution is responsible for developing a Preparatory Review Report. The Report is intended to be primarily evidentiary, consisting of a carefully-chosen set of exhibits (the Institutional Portfolio) that support the institutional claim that it meets the Core Commitment to Capacity, supported by limited text essays that explain or reflect on the Portfolio's contents.

Educational Effectiveness Review

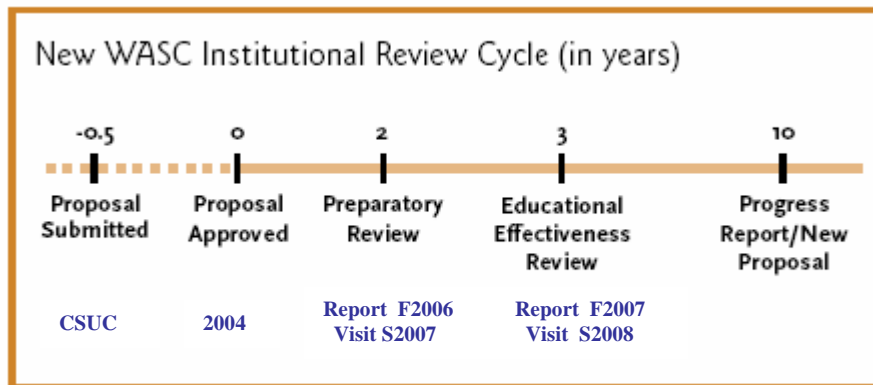
The Educational Effectiveness Review is designed to enable the Commission to assess the extent to which the institution fulfills its Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness: *The institution evidences clear and appropriate educational objectives and designs, and employs processes of review, including the collection and use of data, that assure the delivery of programs and learner accomplishments at a high level of performance.*

The Educational Effectiveness Review Report is to include a description of the CSUC educational effectiveness approach; a deep engagement and analysis of selected issues of educational effectiveness; supporting evidence that builds on the Institutional Portfolio; and an integrative component that synthesizes and integrates the discrete elements of the Educational Effectiveness Self Review and the impact of the entire sequential accreditation review process.

WASC: The Review Process

The new WASC Review Process includes:

- Institutional Proposal
- The Capacity and Preparatory Review
- The Educational Effectiveness Review



The Commission has identified the following outcomes as important for the accreditation review process to serve institutions:

- The development of and more effective use of indicators of institutional performance and educational effectiveness to support institutional planning and decision making;
- Greater clarity about the institution's educational objectives and criteria for defining and evaluating those objectives;
- Improvement of the institution's capacity for self review and of its systems of quality assurance;
- A deeper understanding of student learning, the development of more varied and effective methods of assessing learning, and the use of the results of this process to improve programs and institutional practices on a continuing basis; and
- Systematic engagement of the faculty with issues of assessing and improving teaching and learning processes within the institution, and with aligning support systems for faculty more effectively towards this end.

(WASC Handbook for Accreditation 2001, p.36)

WASC: Organizing Around Core Commitments

To become and remain accredited, each institution is expected to demonstrate that it is committed to developing and sustaining Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness.

Core Commitment to Institutional Capacity:

The institution functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures to fulfill its purposes.

The Core Commitment to Institutional Capacity enables the institution to consider resource issues from a holistic perspective, and to consider capacity as an institutional attribute beyond minimum compliance and a review of assets. Looking at itself through a “lens” of institutional capacity enables the institution to reexamine what it *is* in terms of its capacity to fulfill its aspirations, and to integrate and synthesize findings and recommendations for improvement gained through its self review under Commission Standards. While the Standards provide an opportunity to review institutional performance within a defined area, the framework of institutional capacity allows an institution to explore cross-cutting issues such as whether resources, structures and processes are aligned with the institution’s mission and priorities, and whether there is good evidence of effectiveness in their actual deployment. An important dimension of institutional capacity reflected in the Institutional Review cycle is the institution’s potential to define and sustain educational effectiveness.

Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness:

The institution evidences clear and appropriate educational objectives and design at the institutional and program level. The institution employs processes of review, including the collection and use of data, that assure delivery of programs and learner accomplishments at a level of performance appropriate for the degree or certificate awarded.

The Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness provides an opportunity for the institution to explore holistically its approaches to educational effectiveness and assess whether institutional systems, such as course and program design, faculty support, and program review are effectively linked to evidence of student learning and are consistent with the educational goals and academic standards of the institution. By design, elements of educational effectiveness were incorporated into all four Commission Standards, so that institutions would explore the relationships between capacity and educational quality and effectiveness. The Accreditation Standards identify key elements of educational effectiveness.

(WASC Handbook for Accreditation 2001, p. 5-6)

WASC Institutional Review Process

The Capacity and Preparatory Review Report

WASC recently announced that the name of the “Preparatory Review” has been changed to the “Capacity and Preparatory Review” in order to clarify the process.

The **Core Commitment** to Institutional Capacity:

“The institution functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures to fulfill its purposes.” (WASC Handbook for Accreditation 2001, p. 5)

To WASC:

- Capacity is an institutional attribute that emerges from alignment of resources, organizational structures and values around educational objectives;
- Capacity for sustaining student and organizational learning is intentional, holistic, and aligned with institutional purposes;
- Capacity is to be used for improvement and transformation within institutional context.

Organizational structures to fulfill their purposes:

- Structures/systems are in place to assess programs;
- Results from program assessment are used to improve programs and institutional practices;
- Decisions are made by people through structures/systems using indicators of institutional performance and educational effectiveness;
- Allocation of resources is aligned with the vision, mission, and educational objectives of the institution and its programs (the team will look at how things are aligned to shape learning outcomes).

WASC envisions a CPR that:

- Gets the institution to think differently about capacity: *integrated, data-driven*.
- Shifts from “affirm and assert” to an *evidence-based* review of capacity.
- Builds a Standing Portfolio base for *longer term review of effectiveness*.

WASC advances five principles of **Good Evidence**¹:

1. Relevant
2. Verifiable
3. Representative
4. Cumulative
5. Actionable.

¹ For details see WASC Evidence Guide, January 2002 at <http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/vppra/wasc/resources.html>

WASC Institutional Review Process

The Capacity and Preparatory Review Report

The Capacity and Preparatory Review is intended to be primarily evidentiary, consisting of a carefully-chosen set of exhibits (the Institutional Portfolio) that support the institution's claim that it meets the Core Commitment to Capacity; supported by limited text essays that explain or reflect on the Portfolio's contents.

**THE PREPARATORY REVIEW REPORT –
Focuses on Core Commitment 1
To Institutional Capacity—
INCLUDES**

- ✓ Introduction, including changes in context since the Proposal

- ✓ Institutional Portfolio
 - Basic Descriptive Data
 - Set of Stipulated Policies (Appendix 1)
 - Set of exhibits and data displays

- ✓ Reflective Essays indicating what the Portfolio exhibits mean to the institution

- ✓ Concluding Essay

- ✓ Appendix with institution's response to previous team and Commission concerns

Exclusive of exhibits and appendices, the Preparatory Review Report should not exceed **35 pages** in length. (Further details may be found in Handbook 2001, pages 42-43).

CSUC Promises for its Capacity and Preparatory Review

Staging of Preparatory and Educational Effectiveness Reviews

In the Institutional Proposal, CSU, Chico outlined the following:

The Preparatory and Educational Effectiveness Reviews will be conducted within the framework of Chico's vision and mission statements and its strategic plan. Accordingly, we will review in-depth selected aspects of the five strategic priorities identified in Chico's *Strategic Plan for the Future*. (p. 5).

In the Institutional Proposal, CSU, Chico specified the following tasks for the CPR²:

Since the Commission's 1996 letter, significant work has been conducted to assemble relevant information to demonstrate CSU, Chico's long-standing commitment to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness. As described in our 2000 Fourth-Year Report, "campus administrators are experimenting with the Balanced Scorecard Framework ... as the cornerstone of a new strategic management system for accomplishing its vision and mission and for addressing accountability and responsiveness issues."³ We propose to use the Preparatory Review as a vehicle to formalize the results of these experimental efforts and move towards the development of an electronic, web-based performance measurement system.

More specifically, we plan to:

- Review / reaffirm the critical success factors for each of the strategic priorities in the *Strategic Plan*.
- Build on the foundation provided by the CSU Accountability Process by augmenting system-defined accountability performance indicators with campus-defined performance indicators that address our unique goals and priorities.
- Assemble workgroups to identify and/or further refine campus-defined performance indicators and develop reporting strategies for each of the content areas within the strategic priorities.
- Develop the infrastructure to use PBViews as the reporting system for the performance measurement system.

² CSU, Chico's Institutional Proposal may be found at <http://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/vppra/wasc/instProposal.html>

³ California State University, Chico, *Progress toward Reaffirmation in the New Century*, The California State University, Chico 2000 Fourth-Year Report, March 2, 2000, p. 17.



CSUC CAPACITY AND PREPARTORY REVIEW

Project Management Schedule

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|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fall 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ CIE&A: Organize CPR effort◆ Develop pbViews infrastructure |
| Spring 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Group Task: Review of CFRs and evidence (April 1, 2005)◆ Group Task: Develop measures organized by the Strategic Priorities◆ Report data via pbViews on existing measures |
| Summer 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Collect data on newly developed measures◆ Report data via pbViews on all measures◆ Determine areas for reflective essays |
| Fall 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Refine performance measures◆ Write reflective essays |
| Spring 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Write integrative essay◆ Write CPR Report◆ Share draft CPR Report with campus |
| Summer 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Revise CPR Report as needed◆ Prepare electronic version of CPR component |
| Fall 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Finalize CPR Report◆ Share Final CPR Report with campus◆ Submit CPR Report |

