

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS  
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

**\*\*DRAFT\*\***

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

**PREFACE**

This self-study document is designed foremost for institutional reflection and educational improvement as viewed through the prism of student engagement and learning. Its pragmatic purpose is to evaluate the extent to which California State University, Stanislaus has fulfilled its “Core Commitment to Institutional Capacity,” defined by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) as demonstrating that the campus “functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures and processes to fulfill its purposes.” The self study, designed around the four WASC standards, provides a holistic perspective of the University’s capacity to achieve its educational aspirations.

In the last self study (1996-98), CSU Stanislaus identified directions and actions for continued development as a learning-centered institution. The WASC Commission (1999) endorsed the University’s commitment to “learning-centered” as a core value and drew attention to three areas for continued attention: effectiveness strategies, faculty roles, and the Library. A comprehensive overview of campus actions relating to these three areas identified by the Commission is included as Appendix One, *Response to Previous Commission Concerns*. Academic technology is an additional focus for reflection in this self study and is given enhanced attention in appropriate sections of this report.

As described in the *Institutional Proposal*, CSU Stanislaus maintains a theme-based focus and framework for both the Capacity and Preparatory Review and the Educational Effectiveness Review. The choice of dual themes – engagement and learning – for the current self study is a natural sequel to our last self study and reflects a campus culture that is centered on student engagement and student learning. Surveys conducted over the past decade indicate that CSU Stanislaus students are highly satisfied with the sense of community they feel on campus. They praise the campus atmosphere, small class size, camaraderie of fellow students, and interaction with their professors. Practices that promote engagement and learning formed the foundation of the major indicators of success identified by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AACSU) in its *Graduation Rates Outcomes Study* (2005). In this study, the AACSU placed CSU Stanislaus among twelve state-supported campuses nationwide that demonstrated exceptional performance in retaining and graduating students. The study affirmed a long-held campus perception that student success at CSU Stanislaus is the result of a campus culture that engages faculty with students by creating a sense of community among teachers and learners, complemented by a shared commitment to student success through strong academic support services and an emphasis on learning and personal development.

This introductory essay describes our community, our people, and our financial and physical capacity, and outlines the organization of the inquiry, the collection and presentation of data/evidence, and the structure of this report.

## THE COMMUNITY

Located in Turlock, CSU Stanislaus is in the heart of the Central Valley of California. The University's service region encompasses six counties, roughly the size of the state of Vermont. Historically rural, increasingly urban, the area contains one of the fastest growing and most diverse populations in the country. College attendance rates in the region have historically been among the lowest in the state. Thus, CSU Stanislaus serves a highly diverse student population that consists of many first-generation and adult reentry students, approximately 30% of whom are Hispanic. In 2007-08, 8,865 students (7,308 FTES) attended CSU Stanislaus, with approximately 80% from the three largest valley counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced). Enrollment at CSU Stanislaus has increased by two to six percent per year for more than two decades.

Since its inception, CSU Stanislaus has developed academic programs in service to the region. The University offers 40 undergraduate degree programs, 7 post-baccalaureate credential programs, and 23 master's degree programs. At the baccalaureate and graduate levels, new program development since the last review has focused on applied and professional programs such as Agricultural Studies (BA), Music (BM), Social Work (MSW), Nursing (MS), Criminal Justice (MA), Ecology and Sustainability (MS), and Genetic Counseling (MS/PSM). The University has recently developed a doctoral program in Educational Leadership, further evidence of its curricular maturation.

In order to extend access to students in the Stockton area, 45 miles to the north, the University has steadily expanded its Stockton campus since its establishment in 1974. The Stockton Center offers upper-division courses and selected degree programs to transfer and graduate students who reside primarily in San Joaquin County. In fall 2007, total headcount enrollment reached 1,108 (423 FTES), approximately 12% of total enrollment. The University's *Strategic Plan* (2007) calls for enhancing the Stockton Center by offering six to eight full degree programs responsive to community needs. On average, about 50% of Stockton students enroll in courses only in Stockton; the other 50% divide their class attendance between the Stockton and Turlock campuses. In addition to the Stockton Center, our distance-learning program extends access to students in the six-county service region through sites at Sonoma and Merced, and provides a limited offering of internet-based courses. The University currently does not offer full degree programs on-line.

As it has grown and matured, the campus community has maintained a dedication to its central mission as a learning-centered institution. The learning-centered theme, introduced in the 1998 self study, has become prominent in campus publications and has been adopted by many programs and departments as part of their core identities. The University's *Mission Statement* (1996), the Academic Senate's *Vision Statement* and *Values Statement* (2005), and the CSU Stanislaus *Strategic Plan* (2007) all embrace the idea of a "learning-centered university" and articulate a commitment to student "engagement" and "learning."

## CAPACITY OF OUR PEOPLE

In spite of constant growth in enrollment and ever-expanding facilities, faculty and staff at CSU Stanislaus have maintained a commitment to creating a sense of community among faculty, staff, and students. CSU Stanislaus consistently receives high marks from students for the quality of interaction and personal contact with faculty, a characteristic facilitated by a low student-faculty

ratio (approximately 19.7 to 1), and a large percentage of full-time faculty (approximately 74% as measured by full-time equivalent faculty; 302 headcount).

Since the last self study in 1999, full-time equivalent growth occurred in student enrollment by 36.2%, faculty by 31.3%, staff by 24.4%, and administration by 17.4% (as of Fall 2007). Turnover in faculty, staff, and administration has remained consistently low at CSU Stanislaus, primarily resulting from retirements. Recent transitions in administrative leadership include a new president in 2005-06, a new provost in 2006-07, and a reorganization of the colleges. While staff increases have not quite kept pace with student enrollment, the University is fortunate to have attained higher professional, educational, and experiential qualifications for our staff, most evident in the growth of the number of technical and professional staff positions. The University has the human resource capacity to achieve its educational mission.

#### **FINANCIAL CAPACITY**

CSU Stanislaus has established fiscal and financial planning processes in accord with requirements of the CSU System and State of California that are sufficient to support educational programs. Fiscal accountability, stability, and integrity are provided by annual independent audits of financial statements, supplemented by periodic studies as prescribed by system-wide policy. The results of these audits are publicly available on the University web site. The current operating budget from state-supported funds is approximately \$84 million, augmented by other funding sources such as the state lottery, extended education, grants and contracts, and donor gifts. Aggressive leadership continues for securing multiple sources of revenue and less dependency on state appropriations. Examples include strategies for University advancement through gifts, corporate and foundation funding, college-based initiatives for specialized fundraising, self-support programs that serve specialized audiences, and partnerships with local schools and community colleges.

Fiscal accountability measures and financial planning processes are designed to ensure that resources are expended prudently and in alignment with University priorities. The President provides fiscal leadership in consultation with the President's Executive Cabinet, the Faculty Budget Advisory Committee (FBAC) and the University Budget Advisory Committee. FBAC is an Academic Senate governance committee that advises administration on broad fiscal policy, planning and allocation issues, and annual budget priorities. Two members of FBAC, three staff members, the provost, and the vice president for Business and Finance all serve on the University Budget Advisory Committee, which advises the President on broad policy and priority issues related to the University's budget resources.

#### **PHYSICAL CAPACITY**

Since the last self study, campus facilities have doubled in size. New facilities include Demergasso-Bava Hall (Professional Schools Building), the Mary Stuart Rogers Educational Services Gateway Building, the John Stuart Rogers Faculty Development Center, the Bernell and Flora Snider music recital hall, the Nora and Hashem Naraghi Hall of Science, and the Residence Life Village, which was opened in 1994 for 200 students and has grown to a community of more than 650 students in 2007. This expanded residential space has increased campus capacity to house a freshmen class that has grown by 45% over the past decade. Currently under construction are a new campus bookstore and a student athletics and recreation complex. A library expansion will begin soon and the old science building will be renovated to meet the

pedagogical and laboratory requirements of the programs housed within the College of Human and Health Sciences. Complementing the expansion of facilities, landscaping projects – lakes, fountains, bridges, and a greatly expanded outdoor amphitheater – have enhanced the comfortable, park-like learning environment. The University has the physical capacity to deliver its academic programs; issues surrounding the more efficient utilization of pedagogical space are explored later in this report.

#### **ORGANIZATION OF THE INQUIRY**

As outlined in the *Institutional Proposal*, the heart of the self study consists of reflective essays organized around a set of “Inquiry Questions.” Four discrete “Inquiry Circles” were created to address these questions, each composed of approximately a dozen faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The Inquiry Circles met every few weeks starting in the 2006-2007 academic year. Figure One reveals this organization [text follows body of this essay], and the document *Overview of the Self-Study Structure* succinctly outlines its relationship to campus structures.

For the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the Circle members considered these Inquiry Questions from the perspective of the WASC Standards related to purposes, integrity, stability, resources, structures, processes, and policies. The Circles defined the parameters of their Inquiry Questions, aligned them with the WASC Criteria for Review, and divided the Inquiry Questions into smaller “researchable questions” to provide a systematic framework. The results of these inquiries are presented in the four thematic essays comprising the core of this report.

Led by senior faculty members, Inquiry Circle discussions were frank and open, with the results communicated to faculty governance, deans, upper administrators, and the Self-Study Team through established University procedures. Membership in the Circles was proscribed to senior administrators and academic deans. Through this process, the Inquiry Circles themselves have become learning communities, as described later in this report. The Inquiry Circle process has become a key element in the University’s ability to examine our capacity and educational effectiveness as an organization committed to learning and improvement.

#### **COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA/EVIDENCE**

The University regularly collects a wide variety of data in response to various external agencies and for its own internal processes. In many cases data elements overlap but are configured slightly differently. As the WASC review process requires specific data elements in its own configuration, common data sets were reorganized under the banner of the “Institutional Portfolio” to allow easier tracking and management. Each of the Inquiry Circles managed its own data requests, resulting in rather large evidentiary lists and supporting bibliographies. Complete lists and evidentiary data are organized by Inquiry Circle and posted online at the appropriate Inquiry Circle website. A comprehensive list of evidence used by the Inquiry Circles, and of the Criteria for Review and their location within this report, is found in the *Criteria for Review and Evidence Map*.

The appropriation of data from widely different sources to support the Inquiry Circles affirms University data collection and dissemination processes. With the exception of certain groups of indirect evidence not immediately derivable from other sources, such as perceptions and values, data were obtainable either from regular University data-gathering activities and reports or from national instruments periodically administered by the University, such as the National Survey of

Student Engagement, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, and the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA).

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This self study is organized into six essays: this introductory essay, one thematic essay for each of the four inquiry questions, and an integrative essay. Progress on the specific topics identified by the WASC Commission in 1999 is summarized in Appendix One, *Response to Previous Commission Concerns*. These topics are woven throughout the four thematic essays; however, the primary focus of these essays remains on engagement and learning. Essay One explores the relationship between *Engagement and Learning for a Diverse Student Body*. Essay Two addresses the *Infrastructure to Support Student Learning*. Essay Three describes the *Community of Teachers in Support of Learning*. Essay Four presents a comprehensive discussion of the *Role of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities*. The report concludes with an Integrative Essay that synthesizes the four inquiry themes, summarizes the findings for institutional capacity, cites achievement of each of the outcomes established for the Capacity and Preparatory Review, and describes campus preparation and readiness for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### CONCLUSION

As documented throughout this self study, the University has gone far beyond minimum compliance with WASC standards. This report demonstrates that the University has aligned its resources and values with clear educational objectives, and that the University has coordinated its student and organizational learning processes with widely shared institutional purposes. The University has made assessment and “continual improvement” cornerstones of everyday campus life. In sum, CSU Stanislaus has completed its work plan and has achieved the outcomes identified in the *Institutional Proposal*.

#### FIGURE ONE: COMMUNITIES AND INQUIRY QUESTIONS

COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING	
<i>Inquiry Question One:</i>	How effectively does the University engage a highly diverse student population in learning?
<i>Inquiry Question Two:</i>	How effectively does the University infrastructure support learning?
COMMUNITIES FOR TEACHING	
<i>Inquiry Question Three:</i>	How effectively does the University create and sustain a community of faculty dedicated to teaching and learning?
<i>Inquiry Question Four:</i>	How effectively does the University support research, scholarship, and creative activities (RSCA) appropriate to its mission?



**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS  
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW**

**THEMATIC ESSAY ONE  
ENGAGEMENT AND LEARNING FOR A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY**

*Inquiry Question One: How effectively does the University engage a highly diverse student population in learning?*

**INTRODUCTION**

This essay explores the capacity of CSU Stanislaus to support and assess a wide variety of activities and programs designed to encourage and assess engagement in learning and to foster diversity in campus life. The broad parameters of this topic encompasses attention to the ways in which the University collects and monitors data as well as to the strategies the University employs to motivate, engage, and measure student learning.

In order to guide the examination of this topic, Inquiry Circle One developed three “researchable questions.”

1. *How does the University define diversity, engagement, and learning communities?*
2. *How does the University promote opportunities for the development of engagement in learning?*
3. *How does the University measure and evaluate diversity, engagement, and student learning?*

Evidence presented in this essay documents the capacity of the University to foster student/faculty engagement, to promote the vibrant diversity of the campus community, and to enhance opportunities for the academic success of all its students.

**1. DEFINING DIVERSITY, ENGAGEMENT, AND LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

Research suggests a strong correlation between the engagement of students in learning and students’ academic success. This relationship is both made more complex and more rewarding when the student population is highly diverse in terms of educational backgrounds, life experiences, learning styles, and academic skills.

**DIVERSITY**

Student diversity is a characteristic of everyday life at CSU Stanislaus, reflected in all our statistics and published documents. Far from a mere statistical issue, the faces, names, learning styles, and backgrounds of our students vividly testify to the diversity of campus, as do our increasingly diverse co-curricular organizations and cultural activities. Since at least the early 1990s, student diversity has been a source of pride, anticipation, preparation, and celebration on our campus.

The University is committed to bring the diversity of the faculty more in line with the diversity of the student body. Two recent initiatives are designed to address of the nature of campus diversity. One initiative is a faculty committee to promote awareness, understanding, and positive action in diversifying the professoriate, a topic discussed in more depth in Thematic Essay Three. Another initiative is the development of the Diversity Website, which combines input from students, staff, faculty, and the community to educate the various constituents of the

University community and to celebrate and promote the increasing diversity of the campus and the region. The successful engagement of students, faculty, staff, and administration in the diverse nature of the campus community is one of the key components in achieving the goal of a campus responsive to its highly diverse community.

#### ENGAGEMENT

The *Institutional Proposal* describes “engagement” as a set of values, behaviors, and strategies that attract and hold student attention through educational experiences and motivate students to become actively involved with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and the development of personal values. From another perspective, “engagement” can be viewed as a series of attractions: attracting students to the campus, attracting students to programs of study, attracting students to persevere and complete their degrees, attracting students to consider themselves as informed citizens capable of intellectual and ethical leadership in the community. The University has made a clear commitment to the concept of engagement, a commitment especially important considering our highly diverse student body and the relatively high number of underrepresented students we serve.

Statements published by CSU Stanislaus from the University’s *Mission Statement* (1996) to unit and department documents repeatedly invoke “student engagement” as a necessary and valuable component of the mission of the University. The *University Values Statement* (2005) highlights the concept of “engagement” at all levels, and similar language permeates the *University Strategic Plan* (2007), which begins with the topic, “Student Engagement, Development, and Achievement.” Such institutionalization of the lexicon of “student engagement” is testimony to a commitment in all sectors of the University from the classroom to the Office of the President.

#### LEARNING COMMUNITIES: ACADEMIC AND AFFINITY

Learning communities at CSU Stanislaus may be described in two ways: as “academic learning communities” and as “affinity groups.” These groups demonstrate a broad variety of individuals who join together with shared values and interests.

*Academic Learning Communities* are organized by the University to create learning cohorts or to address specific learning outcomes. The primary Academic Learning Community is the academic department. CSU Stanislaus consists of 29 departments, many of which organize specific activities aimed at engaging students in their majors and creating a learning community within the department itself. Departments encourage the development of community through organized study and social activities and through courses designed around engaging student-centered models, such as senior seminars and capstones.

The formal approach is observed most notably on the graduate level. The Master of Social Work program, for example, is designed as a cohort-based program emphasizing “a community of learners” within the cohort itself, and designating the “community” as the locus of research and learning. Other programs that function on this model are Curriculum and Instruction: Multilingual Education MA, the Executive MBA program, and the Interdisciplinary Studies MS/MA program. These cohort-based programs encourage graduate students to work as a learning community towards a common goal, learning from one another throughout their experience and taking valuable contacts with them into the field following graduation. The

development of Academic Learning Communities also occurs through eleven disciplinary honor societies and clubs, and the University is proud to host a chapter of the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

*Affinity Groups* are those that coalesce around cultural, professional, religious, political, recreational, social, and service dimensions. In 2006-07, the University sponsored seventy-one chartered Affinity Groups, as varied as the Hmong Students Club, the League of United Latin American Citizens, the Hunger Network, the Village Council, the World Student Organization, numerous academic sororities and fraternities, and discipline-based clubs. Student participation has averaged about 1,000 students annually over the past three years. How these organizations promote successful student engagement in learning will be assessed and discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

## **2. PROMOTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING**

Some of the programs that explicitly promote community building and student engagement in learning are inter-disciplinary and co-curricular such as the First-Year Experience, the Summit Program, Supplemental Instruction, Honors, the Faculty Mentor Program, Service Learning, and International Education. As part of support for teaching and learning, the latter two topics are addressed in Thematic Essay Three.

*The First-Year Experience Program* integrates two lower-division General Education courses and a special one-unit seminar within a specific theme, forming a community for first-time, first-year students. In 2006-07, students chose from thirteen learning communities: eleven designed for all students, one designed for student athletes, and one designed for Liberal Studies majors. First-Year Experience annual reports indicate that the program is especially effective in retaining first-generation students. In its first year (2004-05), more than 90% of the 84 participating students were first generation, and about 83% of these students were retained into the next year, as compared to an 81% overall retention rate for Freshmen. Subsequent reports have indicated similar results.

*The Summit Program* is a multiple-term learning community that fulfills upper-division General Education requirements. Ordinarily, students select one course from each of three areas: Mathematics/Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The Summit Program links two courses under a common theme across two terms. Summit students report higher than average satisfaction with the General Education program when compared to students in equivalent General Education courses. The Summit Program functions as a “first-year experience” for transfer students. These students remark on the particular benefits of the Summit Program in acclimating them to the University. The *Summit Pilot Assessment* indicates positive effects of the program in terms of retention and persistence rates. The Summit Program is scheduled for an Academic Program Review in 2008-09; results from this review will allow the University to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the program.

*Supplemental Instruction*, funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions Program, provides group study to students in historically difficult courses. Since 2004, CSU Stanislaus has provided Supplemental Instruction sessions in chemistry, economics, and mathematics. Approximately 38% of students enrolled in participating courses attend the designated Supplemental Instruction sessions. Campus assessment results mirror national



studies, which show that dropout rates decreased and grades increased relative to non-participants.

*The University Honors Program* is designed for students who seek active engagement in an academic learning community and a challenging program of study suited to the cultivation of strong intellectual curiosity. As a condition of admission to the program, students must express an interest in academic challenge and exhibit a successful track record of academic learning. Coursework is theme-based and linked across semesters. Considerable assessment of student learning is embedded throughout the program, including pre- and post-assessment in the first and fourth years of the program, course assignments requiring application of skills and aptitudes developed in earlier stages of Honors coursework, and a senior capstone thesis or research project. Senior projects are presented at a year-end Capstone Research Conference open to the entire campus community, and articles are featured in an annual journal.

*The Faculty Mentor Program* provides mentors and educational and recreational programs to first generation and educationally or economically disadvantaged students. Mentors receive training before they are matched with student “protégés.” Program staff and mentors teach a one-unit seminar of First-Year Experience specifically for Faculty Mentor Program students. The Faculty Mentor Program supports student learning through a combination of direct mentor interaction, guided support programs (including workshops and retreats), and a strong sense of community. The Program historically has a very high retention rate: over the past seven years, the rate for first-time, first-year students is over 85%. The program has trained nearly 100 faculty mentors in its 23-year history, serving over 1,400 protégés; currently, 34 mentors (including the provost) are actively working with 140 protégés. The Program was commended in a 2007 joint resolution of the California State Legislature.

#### **GRADUATE SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Three programs administered by the Graduate School promote undergraduate engagement, learning, and post-baccalaureate success. *The California Pre-Doctoral Program* is designed to increase the diversity of the pool from which the California State University draws its faculty by supporting the doctoral aspirations of undergraduate students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages. *The Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program* provides financial assistance and forgivable loans to graduate students who show promise of becoming strong candidates for CSU instructional faculty positions. The purpose of the program is to increase the pool of individuals with the qualifications, motivation, and skills to teach the diverse student body in the California State University. *The California Forum for Diversity in Graduate Education* is designed to introduce first-generation college students to the career opportunities and academic challenges associated with graduate-level study.

#### **GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES**

Our students experience engagement in the campus community through leadership in governance activities. The Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) is comprised of 16 Senators representing each college, graduate students, resident students, and Stockton Center students. Among the core goals expressed in the ASI Vision Statement is that “Student leadership... is actively involved in the creation of a learning community.” The ASI President represents students at numerous venues, including the University President’s Advisory Board. ASI names student representatives to campus governance committees, and they are well represented on all

major policy committees, including two voting seats on Academic Senate. Students named by ASI serve on the Self-Study Team and on all four of the Inquiry Circles for the self study.

### **3. MEASURING AND EVALUATING DIVERSITY, ENGAGEMENT, AND STUDENT LEARNING**

The University utilizes a variety of methods to track the diverse characteristics of its student body and to evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts to support student learning and engagement. The University has completed a systematic analysis of the responsibility for assessment-related functions. The results of this internal study may be found in the documents *Who's Responsible for What* and *Ten Methods to Examine Institutional Effectiveness*. The infrastructure that supports student learning, including its assessment, is explored in detail in Thematic Essay Two.

#### **ASSESSING DIVERSITY IN THE CURRICULUM**

Students engage with the diversity of the modern world in a variety of classroom settings provided chiefly through the General Education Program. Every general education course is expected to address learning goals that include Social Responsibility and Global or Multicultural Perspectives. In addition, the University in 1998 adopted a new multicultural requirement for general education, which has its own specific goals and objectives. More than fifty courses satisfy this requirement. A selection of measures demonstrating the range and depth of regular campus inquiry into diversity in the curriculum may be found in Figure Two [text follows the body of this essay]. Curricular development and assessment is addressed in more detail in Thematic Essay Three.

#### **ASSESSING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

In order to broaden University understanding of the relationship between student engagement in learning and student academic success, the University in 2006-07 participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), supplemented by the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). Several additional questions for faculty were developed as an addendum to the FSSE instruments. The findings of these surveys will inform University-wide discussions of this relationship through the Educational Effectiveness Review cycle. Other campus-wide activities that will stimulate continuing discussions of the meaning of "engagement" are planned for the 2008-2009 academic year, including workshops sponsored by Associated Students, Inc., the Village (student housing), and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. A selection of measures demonstrating the range and depth of regular campus inquiry into student engagement may be found in Figure Three [text follows the body of this essay].

#### **ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING**

The University assesses undergraduate and graduate student learning in a variety of ways in addition to the assessments conducted by faculty members in their specific courses. A selection of measures demonstrating the range and depth of regular campus inquiry into student learning may be found in Figure Four [text follows the body of this essay]. Four key initiatives demonstrate the enhancement of our institutional capacity in the assessment of undergraduate student learning over the past decade: 1) the creation of a Faculty Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning and the Program Assessment Coordinators, 2) the revision of the CSU-mandated Academic Program Review process, 3) implementation of the CSU-mandated

Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement, and 4) the General Education Assessment initiative. The first two of these topics are discussed in detail in Essay Two.

*The Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement* at CSU Stanislaus is a two-step process consisting of a Writing Proficiency Screening Test and a discipline-specified Writing Proficiency Course. The Writing Proficiency Screening Test is required of all students before they enroll in the upper-division courses, and the Writing Proficiency course is used to develop and to demonstrate student writing skill levels commensurate with upper-division work in the major. Each department designates a Writing Proficiency course; the University Writing Committee reviews all Writing Proficiency courses on a five-year cycle. Due to uneven implementation and administration, the Academic Senate in 2007 approved a more rigorous system for reporting results to instructors, greater control of enrollment in Writing Proficiency courses, and the creation of courses and tutorial programs to support students who fail.

*Assessment of General Education* has been the responsibility of the General Education Subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee. The subcommittee approves new and revised courses, using the General Education Program Learning Goals as criteria, and evaluates the Academic Program Reviews of General Education courses, making recommendations for improvement as necessary. By design, CSU Stanislaus has never adopted campus-wide baccalaureate learning goals; General Education Learning Goals and the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement achieve the equivalent. In spring 2008, the campus accelerated formal assessment of its General Education program performance through the establishment of a Faculty Director of General Education. A primary task of the director is the completion of the General Education Academic Program Review, through which the effectiveness of the program in supporting student learning will be analyzed. The Academic Program Review will suggest ways to understand and better prepare for differences in the academic preparation of diverse incoming students, be they freshmen or transfer students. To help in this review, the University has participated in the *Collegiate Learning Assessment* examination for the past two years and piloted *iSkills Assessment* the prior year. Data from these two endeavors will assist the Faculty Director and the General Education subcommittee in evaluating overall student performance assessment strategies and priorities and will contribute to the Educational Effectiveness Review.

*Assessment of Graduate Student Learning* occurs primarily through departmental efforts under policies approved by the Graduate Council. The Council has identified six student-learning goals for graduate students, published in the Graduate School Catalog. In 1997, the Graduate Council established an assessment plan and now conducts periodic reviews of three interrelated categories of assessment: student learning outcomes, faculty quality, and program quality. The Graduate Council continually assesses the achievement of these goals using a combination of student exit, alumni, and employer surveys, graduate student course evaluations, external evaluations by accrediting agencies, graduate enrollment information (e.g., admissions, time to degree), Academic Program Reviews, and analyses of student academic performance. Lastly, every master's degree candidate must complete a culminating experience. Graduate theses, projects, and/or comprehensive examinations are highly individualized assessments in which graduate students must demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, critical and independent thinking, research skills, and rhetorical sophistication.

## CONCLUSIONS

Over the last decade, CSU Stanislaus has greatly expanded its capacity to create and sustain communities of learners, to engage and support student learning, and to assess student-learning outcomes. Affinity groups, academic communities, and numerous co-curricular support systems in Student Affairs, such as support systems for diverse underrepresented students, all help sustain student engagement with campus life and promote academic success.

Successful engagement is often serendipitous in that individual instructors create activities and programs to meet special needs as they arise. One suggested method to enhance an “engaged campus community” is to identify, recognize, and promote those activities and programs that lead to successful engagement and learning. The effectiveness of this method will be discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

In this essay we have described numerous mechanisms for assessing diversity, engagement, and student learning. We have described the University’s considerable capacity for promoting opportunities for development of student engagement via curricular and co-curricular programs. These programs will be evaluated during the next phase of the self study to assess how they contribute to educational effectiveness. In the next Thematic Essay, we discuss the ways the University has developed and funded infrastructures to support and assess student learning.

**FIGURE TWO: STUDENT DIVERSITY MEASURES**

MEASUREMENT	SOURCE
Diversity of student population in comparison to the region	Diversity Profile
Retention and graduation rates of diverse student body	Graduation and retention reports
Students pursuing advanced degrees	Alumni Surveys
Level of involvement of Student Affairs in diversity related efforts	Student Affairs Support Unit Reviews
Student perceptions of campus climate related to diversity	National Survey of Student Engagement; Writing Proficiency Screening Test prompt; Graduating Senior Survey
Student perceptions of their own learning regarding diversity	Writing Proficiency Screening Test prompt; Graduating Senior Survey
Diversity of campus organizations	List of Chartered Organizations (Affinity Groups)
Degree to which diversity is included in curriculum	Goals and Objectives for General Education and Academic Programs; General Education multicultural courses

**FIGURE THREE: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT MEASURES**

MEASUREMENT	SOURCE
Amount of scholarly work	Honors Theses and Projects; Student Research Competition; Capstone Courses; Master's Theses and Projects; Master's Comprehensive Examinations
Amount of student/faculty interaction outside of the classroom	National Survey of Student Engagement; Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
Level of supportive campus environment	Graduate Exit Survey; Graduating Senior Survey; National Survey of Student Engagement; Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
Recognition and affirmation of group differences and affiliations	National Survey of Student Engagement
Membership in diversity campus organizations	Chartered Organizations (Affinity Groups)
Level of student engagement	National Survey of Student Engagement
Number of students receiving Library instruction	Library Support Unit Review
Number of students using Library services/collections	Library Support Unit Review
Overall retention and graduation rates	Graduation and retention reports

**FIGURE FOUR: STUDENT LEARNING MEASURES**

MEASUREMENT	SOURCE
Student ratings on twelve IDEA learning objectives	IDEA – Student Course Evaluations
Student ratings of learning objectives identified by faculty as “essential”	IDEA– Student Course Evaluations
Student ratings of learning objectives linked to primary teaching approach	IDEA– Student Course Evaluations
Strategic Planning priorities linked to educational quality	Strategic Plan
Perception of active/collaborative learning	National Survey of Student Engagement; Faculty Survey of Student Engagement; Graduating Senior Survey
Perception of academic challenge and rigor	National Survey of Student Engagement; Faculty Survey of Student Engagement; Graduating Senior Survey; Graduate Exit Survey
Student progress over time	Collegiate Learning Assessment
Student success and achievement	Writing Proficiency Screening Test; Honors; Awards; Honor Societies; Educational Opportunity Program and Student Support services achievement rates
Measurement and evaluation of student learning	Direct measures defined at program level



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**THEMATIC ESSAY TWO  
INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING**

*Inquiry Question Two: How effectively does the University infrastructure support learning?*

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the last decade, CSU Stanislaus has created new infrastructure to support student learning and has expanded and reconstituted existing programs, facilities, and services. "Infrastructure" is used here in an inclusive sense to indicate physical structures and campus environment, support staff, technological and material resources for learning, and policies and procedures that guide the efforts of the University in these areas.

In order to examine this theme, the Infrastructural Support Inquiry Circle organized its investigation around four "researchable questions":

1. *How well does the University Library support learning and engagement?*
2. *How well do the University's technological resources support learning and student engagement?*
3. *How effectively do the University's support services meet the needs of its students?*
4. *Does the University have well-established policies and procedures for gathering and analyzing information about our students' engagement and learning, and does this analysis lead to systematic and continuous improvement of our programs and student services?*

Evidence presented in this essay affirms the capacity of the Library and the Office of Information Technology to support student engagement in learning and of CSU Stanislaus to assess the needs of its students, and to gather and process data regarding effectiveness strategies employed by the institution.

**1. THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN SUPPORT OF LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT**

The University Library supports learning and engagement through its collections, by providing remote access to online resources, through an active instructional program that fosters information literacy, and as a gathering space for study and collaboration. The Library Strategic Plan developed during the Library's recent Support Unit Review guides the process of enhancing its services and capacities. This essay addresses the capacity of the University Library to support student learning; the specific aspects of University Library support for teaching and for research are described in greater detail in Thematic Essays Three and Four.

**PHYSICAL COLLECTION**

The Library *Collection Development Policy* establishes clear priorities and principles for the acquisition of books, print periodicals, videocassettes and DVDs, audio CDs, maps, music scores, government (federal, state and local) documents, student theses, University archives, special collections, and electronic forms of books, periodical articles, and music. Appointed members of discipline-based faculty and library liaisons share responsibility for library collections and the selection of materials for active programs. The Library's Support Unit Review includes an

analysis of holdings by discipline, revealing that the collection reflects and supports subjects actively being taught.

The current holdings include 372,231 volumes. The Library has seen modest but steady growth of physical (print) collections over the last decade. Benchmark data for CSU libraries show CSU Stanislaus to have the fifth smallest print collection overall (the second smallest compared with CSU campuses similar to Stanislaus in enrollment or FTES). Print periodical subscriptions are the exception to this modest growth, having declined from a high of 2,130 subscriptions in 1996-97 to 1,238 in 2006-07. This decline reflects a trend towards the cancellation of print periodicals when they are available in electronic form. As a way of strategically addressing budgetary shortfalls and changing patterns of use, the Library now offers access to more than 112 on-line databases, of which approximately 75% are full text.

#### **LIBRARY USER SERVICES**

Currently, the University Library is open 81 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters, 69 hours during winter, and 48 hours during summer. The Library provides open tables for study, carrels, and small rooms for group work. An expansion of the University Library, is planned within the next five years (subject to funding), will augment the capacity of the University Library to serve all its many users.

The Library offers several programs to increase student awareness and knowledge of library collections and services, including multiple sections of a two-credit course focused on library research methods, an instruction program comprised of bibliographic instruction sessions tailored to specific course needs, drop-in workshops, and one-on-one instruction at the Reference Desk and by appointment. While many libraries allow students and/or staff to handle first-line reference questions, CSU Stanislaus has maintained the practice of staffing the reference desk exclusively by library faculty members. Highly qualified, service-oriented library faculty members staff the reference desk 69 hours per week. Such expertise provides an excellent opportunity to make students aware of available resources. Recent data show a decline in the number of reference questions, likely reflecting the increased use of web-based resources.

Moreover, library faculty members continue to investigate alternative service models and look for the best way to optimize library faculty resources, in many cases strategically designing and offering services with the aim of helping users help themselves. In 2007-08 the University Library upgraded to a state of the art integrated library system, greatly improving access and functionality. The University Library website was redesigned with similar expectations. An increase in the number of computers available to students, from 18 internet-only computers to 48 computers equipped with the same suite of software as those in the student computer laboratories, also increases user confidence and capability.

Whether the user arrives in person or is working outside the physical library, the University Library seeks to serve students, faculty and staff by expeditiously obtaining non-owned items from other libraries. This interlibrary loan service, which provides access to over 40 million titles, filled 5,312 requests for library patrons in 2006-07, greatly expanding and enhancing access beyond the Library's print collection.

The Library Access Center at the Stockton Center is designed to serve the research needs of the 1,200 students, faculty, and staff at the Stockton Center. In addition to a select collection of reference and reserve materials, patrons of the Library Access Center and those who use distance learning opportunities have access to the resources available at the main campus in Turlock through document delivery, courier service, and online access. Interlibrary Loan is also available to Stockton and distance learners. While there are no physical library facilities at off-campus locations other than Stockton, document delivery, courier service, and online access as well as Interlibrary Loan are available to students at other distance-learning sites. Surveys of Stockton Center faculty and students reveal varying degrees of agreement that Library Access Center services are adequate. Among students, 61.4% found the Library Access Center adequate; among faculty only 50%. Ways of improving this satisfaction index will be pursued through the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### **BUDGET AND STAFF**

While enrollments have steadily increased, the Library budget has fluctuated, increasing from \$1.8 million in 1997-98 (4.0% of the University's total budget) to \$2.6 million in 2003-04 (4.7%). Decreases in base budgets that occurred due to the severe statewide budget crises in 2004-05 and 2005-06 were offset by one-time budget augmentations. Currently, the 2007-08 library budget of \$2.6 million represents 3.1% of the total budget.

Analysis of library positions since 1998 shows a slight net increase, from eight faculty (librarian) members in 1996-97 to nine in 2007-08, which includes staffing for the Stockton Library Access Center. The same ten-year trend also shows an increase from 13 staff positions in 1996-97 to 16 in 2006-07 (including Library Access Center staff). Among staffing categories, the greatest fluctuation is in student assistant positions, which reflects both wage increases and fluctuations in funding. The Library could not function as well as it does without the help of student assistants, and ways of improving this area will be pursued through the self study.

## **2. TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN SUPPORT OF LEARNING AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

A perennial source of campus interest due to its infrastructural centrality to the work of the University, the state of academic technology has undergone significant transformation in the past ten years. For this reason, the University elected to provide an especial focus on the topic throughout the self study. Figure Five [text follows the body this essay] presents a list of highlights in the enhancement of University technological services.

The University provides technological resources and support through the Office of Information Technology (OIT). The responsibilities of OIT include academic and administrative computing, campus telephone and information networks, and distance learning. The Technology and Learning Subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee provides important policy development and implementation oversight functions. A campus-wide OIT Advisory Council provides guidance at the policy level for the spectrum of strategic technology issues, and an OIT Technology Forum serves at the operational level with technical staff as a communication channel for operations-oriented procedures and concerns.

In 1996, the CSU Board of Trustees approved the system-wide Integrated Technology Strategy-Technology Infrastructure Initiative framework for leveraging technology as a tool to achieve

CSU academic and administrative goals. This framework continues to guide the CSU's system-wide investments in technology and provides common parameters, target baselines, and funding for campus technological services. The annual *Measures of Success* publication, first issued in 1999, is the vehicle through which the CSU informs the state legislature about the progress and benefits of the Integrated Technology Strategy. These annual reports measure progress in the following outcome categories: Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Quality of the Student Experience, Administrative Productivity and Quality, and Personal Productivity.

#### THE ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Over several years and with broad constituent engagement, the University developed a comprehensive *Academic Technology Plan* (2003) to guide development and establish priorities. The Plan places emphasis on making learning accessible to students and establishes a set of principles by which technology should enhance teaching and learning. The Plan identifies several recurring areas of need, including specialty laboratories (such as geographic information systems, computer information systems, languages, and music), distance learning, assistive technology, information competency, proficiency expectations for students, accreditation, and technical support. OIT is responsible for implementing the Plan, with monitoring and review by the Technology and Learning Subcommittee and the OIT Advisory Council.

The Academic Technology Plan prioritizes the computing needs of full-time faculty, replacing computers on a three-year cycle. The University has increased computer workstations for use by part-time faculty and is continuing to bring the University to the distribution baselines and hardware standards recommended by the Integrated Technology Strategy-Technology Infrastructure Initiative.

Learning management systems such as Blackboard, eCollege, and Moodle are used both in distance applications and to supplement classroom activities. In fall 2007, 427 courses offered some form of learning management system. As of spring 2008, all Turlock classrooms are equipped to accommodate computer-based, multimedia presentations, and technological upgrades for the Stockton Center are underway. Training is available for faculty in both classroom management tools and learning management systems through the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, described in Thematic Essay Three.

Wireless access will be available throughout 100% of the Turlock campus indoor and outdoor areas by December 2008. The Stockton Center and distance learning sites in Merced and Sonora currently receive classes transmitted by traditional broadcast interactive instructional television, and the University has developed a plan to migrate to Internet protocol-based transmission technology during 2008. A substantial increase in communication bandwidth supporting the Stockton Center will be implemented in 2008, along with reliability improvements to enable Stockton to communicate more effectively with the rest of the University and to aid in the transition to the Internet protocol.

While progress has been made in some areas of the Plan, the campus has identified items for further work. These include the development of additional capacity for supporting faculty in the use of learning management systems, instructional design, production, and training. The last Support Unit Review identified a priority to create a sustainable model for funding for technological support, especially for increasing the numbers and providing support for

professional development opportunities for Office of Information Technology staff, and to increase outreach to students with regard to security issues, copyright, and information competence skills. Procedures and policies for campus information security are being developed, as are formal policies defining “baseline” end-user training for user groups (faculty, staff, administration, students), and a mechanism for assessing the baseline technology training needs for each user group. System-wide technology initiatives in areas such as security awareness and controls, accessible technology, learning management systems, and infrastructure enhancements support CSU Stanislaus in refining its technology capacities. These measures will be monitored through the Educational Effectiveness Review.

### **3. SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

The Division of Student Affairs provides a broad variety of student services in support of academic success, personal well-being, and lifelong learning. Student Affairs has developed assessment rubrics and strategic planning processes that identify and prioritize the values surrounding student development, learning outcomes, and the division mission and actions. While the University supports student learning in a myriad of ways, the areas of student advising, support for under-prepared students, and disability resource services best demonstrate the wide range of services and actions taken by the campus to improve further the quality of our support.

#### **STUDENT ADVISING**

Student advising, a crucial component of the infrastructure that supports student learning, is addressed at both the institutional and departmental levels. The Advising Resource Center provides infrastructural support for academic advising as well as services that reduce obstacles to student success and assist students with the adjustments to college life. During the summer, the Advising Resource Center offers a mandatory New Student Orientation providing first-contact advising to both first-year and transfer students. Ten one-day sessions were offered in summer 2007, eight in Turlock and two in Stockton, with approximately 2,000 students attending. Once students declare a major they are assigned an advisor from within their major department; until that time they are advised by the Advising Resource Center.

In order to assure that advising meets the needs of our student population, a task force was convened in 2006 to review current policies and make recommendations for improvement. For example, Associated Students, Inc. members cited the unevenness of advising across departments and individual faculty members as a current concern. Several additional concerns were identified in the report emerging from the task force, which recommended revisions to our academic advising policies and procedures, including broad advising principles. These revisions, including faculty training and departmental-level systems, will be implemented in 2008 and tracked through the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR UNDER-PREPARED STUDENTS**

The University provides a wide variety of programs and services to support the engagement and academic success of its students. Improving instruction for students requiring remediation is an example of a cross-campus effort with a significant positive impact in the classroom. On average over the past decade, 65% of entering freshmen require some form of remediation in either English or mathematics (or both) to meet CSU standards. The Successful Remediation Committee, a cross-divisional committee formed in 2000, analyzed the needs of students moving



through remedial course work, in particular those students who were granted Time-Limit Contracts in order to continue enrollment after their first full year. The University responded with increased workshops and personal advising to assist students in completing their remediation coursework. As a result of these and other efforts, CSU Stanislaus increased the level of proficiency of sophomore at-risk students in one year from 77% in 1999 to 96% in 2007, consistent with the state average.

*The Tutoring Center* is one of the most successful of our learning-support services. CSU Stanislaus offers one-on-one or group tutoring support to all students free of charge. Data indicate a steady increase in the number of students served: over the last four years, an average of 33.4% of the student population has taken advantage of these services. In 2006-07, the Center employed 118 tutors logging 20,470 hours with students. The Center is developing formal policies and procedures and a process for continuous review to respond to needs as they are identified.

*The English for Speakers of Other Languages Program* serves a wide range of students: freshmen coming from other language backgrounds who scored low on the English Placement Test, upper-division students who did not pass the Writing Proficiency Screening Test, graduate students working to pass graduate examinations, and newly arrived lower-division international students. The strengths of these courses are low class size (approximately 15 students), individualized diagnostic profiles of language problems, and one-on-one tutoring by trained tutors who are closely supervised by the instructors.

*Student Support Services* and the *Educational Opportunity Program* are two grant-funded services specializing in support for students who qualify for the CSU but who may not be prepared to take full advantage of the University due to their educational or economic background. Student Support Services annually offers special intensive academic retention services for 250 participants, recruited from low income, first generation, and/or disabled students with academic support needs. The Educational Opportunity Program offers financial assistance and advising from the admissions process through graduation, and also offers the Summer Bridge Program to strengthen math, reading, and writing skills in anticipation of entering the University. In 2006, 606 students were supported through the Educational Opportunity Program, and 42 students participated in Bridge 2007.

#### **DISABILITY RESOURCE SERVICES**

The Office of Disability Resource Services provides accommodations and support services to assist students with special needs to participate actively in all aspects of the University's programs and services and to obtain their educational goals. Special needs students receive priority registration for courses, and Disability Resource Services provides assistance with this process. The Stockton Center receives periodic visits from Disability Resource Services personnel.

Campus entities such as computer laboratories and the University Library provide supplemental access for special needs students through assistive technology. The CSU *Accessible Technology Initiative* sets parameters and procedures for guaranteeing access for all faculty, students, and staff through assistive technology. This issue is especially crucial for users of our many open computer laboratories, and the initiative addresses the issue by establishing policies to ensure

that laboratories are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, that equipment and software are kept current, and that training is provided on the use of assistive technology.

The Support Unit Review found that the roughly 40 students annually registered with Disability Resource Services receive a wide and robust range of services. Students self-identify and register with the program. Some students have voiced concern about the physical location of Disability Resource Services. It is viewed as an advantage from the perspective of confidentiality, but as a disadvantage from the perspective of access, both in terms of hours of operation and its second-floor location, which is problematic for students with mobility issues. Disability Resource Services does not provide testing services for learning disabilities, referring students to outside providers.

The University Educational Policy Committee continues its deliberations regarding the best methods for ensuring the highest level of student learning for students with disabilities. Included in their recommendations are a process for early identification of students with disabilities, increasing use of learning management systems for delivering technology-enabled hybrid courses, incorporation of accessibility requirements in purchasing digital instructional materials, and institutional infrastructure support for faculty in creating accessible course content.

#### **4. POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

The University coordinates campus-wide assessment efforts through a robust structure. The *Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee* of the University Educational Policies Committee coordinates the faculty-driven process for making recommendations regarding assessment policies, plans, resources and programmatic needs, an excellent example of a faculty governance structure directly supporting student learning. The *Assessment Leadership Team* is a University-wide group whose purpose is to encourage and facilitate good assessment practices throughout each of the campus divisions by engaging the campus community in on-going discussions and actions regarding student learning and continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness. Finally, the *Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance* coordinates university-wide efforts for improving student learning and enhancing institutional effectiveness.

The University has significantly increased its capacity to promote and support assessment throughout the institution, but especially in the assessment of student learning, through investment in two support offices — the Office of Institutional Research, and the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance. Both offices represent significant campus capacity for evaluating student demographic data, engagement, performance, and retention. Institutional Research is the central data collection and data management entity on campus, and informs all institutional and systemic evaluations. Assessment and Quality Assurance serves a leadership function and provides operational resources for assessment initiatives. Clearly defined written policies and procedures guide these structures and organizations; the most important is the *Principles of Assessment of Student Learning* (2004).

The University uses a variety of methods for evaluating data derived from direct and indirect assessment measures at the classroom, program, and University levels (see Figure Six for examples) [text follows body of this essay]. Classroom level assessment is the exclusive province

of individual faculty for improving instruction and student learning. Program evaluation occurs internally by departments/colleges and externally by specialized accreditation processes for programmatic improvement. A full list of departmental methods is available in *Program-Level Assessment Methods* (2007). At the university level, evaluation of assessment results occurs by governance committees and administrative groups through formal academic program and support unit reviews. A selection of university-wide measures is available in *Inventory of University-Wide Measures* (2007). Complementing the internal evaluation systems for student learning and institutional effectiveness is external accountability reporting, such as those for WASC, the CSU system, and the state legislature.

#### **FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENT**

*The Faculty Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning* was established in 1999 to help guide campus discussions on student learning assessment. The Faculty Coordinator works to enhance student success, classroom teaching innovation, and formal and informal assessments that demonstrate student academic achievement. Additionally, the Faculty Coordinator encourages professional development and provides leadership for faculty assessment of student-learning outcomes.

Campus momentum accelerated in 2005 with the establishment of *Program Assessment Coordinators* (PACs), faculty members in each department who receive assigned time (or the equivalent) provided by the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance. The PACs work with department or program faculty to facilitate program-level assessment. Coordinated by the PAC representative, each academic program develops a *Program Assessment Plan* that reflects the methods faculty have determined will assess student learning most effectively for each of the program's student learning objectives. *Assessment Updates* are completed annually and provide a summary and evaluation of the methods used to assess student learning and specify what actions will be taken as a result. A comprehensive listing of assessment methods can be found in *Program-Level Assessment Methods* (2007).

The PACs also serve as members of the *Assessment Council*. The Assessment Council is an interdisciplinary group, comprised of Program Assessment Coordinators and the Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning, which meets monthly to review new information in assessment and share ideas and best practices. Members share strategies and assist one another in the development, coordination, and successful application of departmental assessments of student learning. Having the Assessment Council as a resource for the PACs has greatly increased the level and intensity of assessment-related discussions at both program and University levels, a fact prominently noted by Dr. Mary Allen in her external review conducted in fall 2007.

#### **ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND SUPPORT UNIT REVIEWS**

Assessment of student learning occurs through the mandated comprehensive periodic reviews of each academic program and each administrative support unit on campus. These reviews are overseen by the Office of the Provost, and units receive assistance in completing them from the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance.

*The Academic Program Review* (APR) process is the principal vehicle for assessing and improving the quality of academic programs. The review is mandated by the CSU Chancellor's Office and is

required of all academic departments and programs. The Academic Program Review policy was substantially revised and strengthened in 2004, and now cites “the identification and evaluation of student learning goals as a key indicator of program effectiveness.” Through the Academic Program Review, each academic program undergoes a substantial self study every seven years (or as prescribed by disciplinary accreditation procedures). The results of the Review guide planning and resource allocation within the department. Eleven programs on campus – including two colleges (Business Administration and Education) and nine departments (Art, Music, Theatre, Chemistry, Genetic Counseling, Public Administration, Nursing, Psychology, and Social Work) – conduct comprehensive assessment processes in order to maintain national accreditation.

*The Support Unit Review*, initiated in 2004, was developed to ensure the continuous improvement of University administrative processes. Every five years, each unit completes a Support Unit Review, consisting of a self-study report and an external review. This process gathers comprehensive data (including evaluation processes), measures management and efficiency, determines if resources are allocated and used effectively, and draws conclusions about the effectiveness of the unit’s support for the University’s mission, values, and goals. One of the special areas addressed by this review is how the unit contributes to and/or supports student learning. Methods vary by unit and include the Balanced Scorecard used by the division of Business and Finance, and standards developed by the Council of Assessment Standards used by the division of Student Affairs. Based on the conclusions, a strategic implementation plan is developed that includes future goals, strategies, and expected outcomes.

## CONCLUSIONS

The University Library demonstrates the capacity to support student learning through comprehensive analysis and continuous improvement. A Library Strategic Plan identifies issues for additional attention and prioritizes actions taken to address them. As they arise, new issues are addressed through a regular process. Since 1999, the University has substantially increased its capacity to provide technological resources to support student learning and engagement. A comprehensive Academic Technology Plan identifies priorities implemented by a central administrative office whose work is monitored by a faculty oversight committee. While there are recurring challenges, these challenges often are inherent to the use of technology, and are addressed regularly. The effectiveness of the Library Strategic Plan and the Academic Technology Plan will be discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The University demonstrates the capacity to support student learning through comprehensive analysis and continuous improvement. The revised Academic Program Review process has enhanced capacities to assess student learning at both the baccalaureate and graduate levels. The Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance provides vigorous leadership through a myriad of support and guidance activities. The Office of Institutional Research has expanded its capacity to evaluate student performance across a number of variables. Issues identified for additional attention are addressed through a regular process, with clearly defined policies, procedures, and practices.

In sum, the University is proud of the development of policies and procedures since the last self study and is encouraged by its review processes for continual improvement. The University clearly demonstrates its capacity in each of the areas under consideration. While the current

review notes areas for continued improvement, the University has developed policies and procedures to allow these improvements to occur. The effectiveness of this process of improvement will be a part of the Educational Effectiveness Review.

DRAFT



**FIGURE FIVE: ENHANCEMENT OF TECHNOLOGICAL SERVICES SINCE 1998**

YEAR	ACTIVITY
1999	Established the Merced TriCollege Center
	Evaluated and consolidated instructional television delivery at all off-campus sites
2000	Increased access, number, and software sophistication of Library computers
	Increased access to campus computer laboratories
2001	Initiated use of Blackboard and WebCT platforms
2002	Established Blackboard as campus e-learning management platform
	Provided OIT staff members with an opportunity for professional development and training
	Completion of eight smart classrooms (one in Stockton)
	Provided major contributions to the Integrated Planning System
2003	Worked with the Academic Technology Subcommittee to revise the campus Academic Technology Plan.
	Supported the doubling of the number of courses on Blackboard from previous year
	Completed Phase 1 of the PeopleSoft Human Resources system
	Completed the construction phase of the TII project and migrated three buildings to the new network
	Developed process for upgrading faculty computers on three-year cycle
2004	Worked with the Academic Technology subcommittee to implement the Blackboard Enterprise LMS
	Established regular communications with faculty leadership regarding technological issues
	Implemented enhanced version of the Integrated Course, Enrollment, Workload, and Budget Planning
2005	Reviewed and implemented the Academic Technology Plan
	Allocated increased staff resources with addition funding provided to OIT
	Worked with University Extended Education to develop pilot programs to meet excess student demand for academic programs
	Implemented Finance modules for Common Management Systems
	Upgraded ten smart classrooms in Demergasso-Bava Hall with a new projector and control system
	Installed new anti-spam/anti-virus software to campus Exchange email server, reducing the number of reported viruses
	Received grant to develop a portal with a single sign-on feature
	Developed and implemented assessment of information technology in support of teaching and learning through Support Unit Review
2006	Conducted eCollege pilot program for fully on-line courses
	Updated University websites using DataTel
	Initiated Blackboard course creation automation process
2007	Began implementation of the Web Accessibility Implementation Plan

**FIGURE SIX: EXAMPLES OF UNIVERSITY-WIDE DIRECT AND INDIRECT ASSESSMENT MEASURES**

DIRECT
<p><i>Collegiate Learning Assessment</i> is a direct assessment of critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills. Two administrations occurred in 2006-07 and 2007-08 and a third is scheduled for 2008-09. Future administrations will occur every 3 years or as directed by the Chancellor's Office.</p>
<p><i>iSkills Assessment</i> (formerly Information and Communication Technology Literacy Assessment) is a direct assessment of students' abilities to use digital technology and communication tools. It assesses students' understanding of ethical/legal issues of access and use of information. A pilot administration will occur in fall 2008 and will be administered every three years, beginning fall 2008.</p>
<p><i>Writing Proficiency Screening Test (WPST)</i> is a direct assessment used to measure the writing ability and competence of juniors prior to enrolling in a Writing Proficiency course. Administration occurs three or four times annually.</p>
INDIRECT
<p><i>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)</i> is an indirect assessment used to measure the degree of student engagement. Administrations have occurred during the spring semesters of 2003, 2004, and 2006. The next administration is scheduled for spring 2009 with future administration occurring every three years.</p>
<p><i>Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)</i> is an indirect assessment used to measure faculty expectations of student engagement. The first administration occurred in spring 2007 and a second scheduled for spring 2009.</p>
<p><i>Exit Surveys</i> and <i>Alumni Surveys</i> are indirect assessments used to measure undergraduate and graduate student satisfaction with academic and co-curricular programs. They are administered annually in all departments.</p>
<p><i>Quality Indicators Survey.</i> This survey, provided by the CSU System, is used by a number of administrative units as part of the Support Unit Review. In spring 2008, the Library will use the Quality Indicators Survey to measure user satisfaction with collections and services. This replaces the LibQUAL+ survey administered spring 2005 and 2007.</p>
<p>A staff and administrator survey, developed in-house by the Office of Institutional Research, was administered in fall 2007, designed to measure staff contributions to student learning and success.</p>

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS  
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

THEMATIC ESSAY THREE  
A COMMUNITY OF TEACHERS IN SUPPORT OF LEARNING

*Inquiry Question Three: How effectively does the University create and sustain a community of faculty committed to teaching and learning?*

**INTRODUCTION**

This essay explores the capacity of the University to support a community of teacher-scholars, create a learning-centered environment that fosters interdisciplinary communities among faculty members, and provide support for faculty professional development and the continuous improvement of student learning. In order to address this topic, the Teaching and Learning Inquiry Circle created the following four “researchable questions.”

1. *How well does the University create a sense of a “teacher-scholar” community?*
2. *How effectively do we support teaching in terms of curriculum, infrastructure, scheduling, funding, access to materials, the library, and technological support?*
3. *How well do we attract, recruit, retain, as well as develop and reward a diverse, qualified faculty dedicated to working within our learning-centered mission?*
4. *How well does our teaching support student learning? (What is the role of the scholarship of teaching and learning?)*

Evidence presented in this essay affirms the capacity of the University to create a deep sense of community through a myriad of supports and programs. The University has the capacity to support teaching and learning, and to support the development of a diverse faculty as teacher-scholars.

**1. “TEACHER-SCHOLAR” COMMUNITIES**

Since a forum held on campus more than a decade ago to discuss Boyer’s *Scholarship Revisited* (1990), faculty at CSU Stanislaus have frequently used the term “teacher-scholar” to describe themselves. The “teacher-scholar” has a thorough understanding of student learning styles and constructs assignments, activities, and content presentation accordingly. Teacher-scholars serve as both mentors and models of lifelong learning for students, introducing them to controversial topics within the field, developing interdisciplinary connections, and creating opportunities for self-reflection as well as student scholarship.

**A CAMPUS COMMUNITY OF TEACHER-SCHOLARS**

The University values the distinct identities of the 29 departments and six colleges, and recognizes and rewards faculty participation in countless committees at both department and college levels. The University also promotes interdisciplinary connections and a sense of community among all faculty members. Service on campus governance committees is one way that faculty members are able to participate across departments and colleges in a teacher-scholar community, by bringing their academic expertise and research acumen to bear on governance issues. Broad campus involvement is evidenced by attendance at semi-annual General Faculty

meetings and faculty membership on the fourteen committees and sub-committees of the Academic Senate and General Faculty.

Prior to 2006, there were three colleges at CSU Stanislaus: Education, Business Administration, and a sprawling Arts, Letters, and Sciences. After years of discussion between administration and faculty governance, the College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences was restructured into four colleges: the Arts, Human and Health Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, each with a new dean. The development of sites of distinction within each of the colleges also contributes to the broad sense of community.

Changes in communication technology over the past decade have created new “e-communities” for campus faculty to connect with colleagues across disciplines. Campus list-serves provide lively forums for topical discussions of broad campus interest and these non-moderated electronic discussions help governance identify key issues and build consensus. At CSU Stanislaus, conversations are taking place among faculty on a daily basis and range from topics related to contract negotiations to curricular issues and classroom pedagogy.

Other activities that help to maintain a sense of a community of teacher-scholars include elaborate welcoming and orientation activities for new hires, convocations and commencements, lecture series, a summer arts festival, a Stanislaus Leadership Forum, annual gatherings of faculty and staff to honor retiring faculty and acknowledge “outstanding” faculty, and participation in the dozens of campus-wide activities held at the Faculty Development Center.

## **2. UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FOR TEACHER-SCHOLARS**

The University supports the faculty in a variety of ways, from infrastructural and material support to logistical and technological support. The wide range of activities encompassed by this topic includes curricular development, support for the development of faculty members as teachers – including access to materials, technology, and information resources – and support for faculty as scholars in their personal agendas for research, scholarship and creative activity.

### **SUPPORTING TEACHING THROUGH CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT**

Through governance structures at all levels, the faculty at CSU Stanislaus play a central role in the development and approval process for new programs. The constitution of the General Faculty and long-standing campus practice designate primary responsibility for issues related to curriculum and instruction to the faculty. Faculty members serving on the University Educational Policies Committee (UEPC) formulate, review, and recommend curricular policy and review and evaluate proposals for new undergraduate programs and courses based on approved criteria and procedures. Through the UEPC and its four standing subcommittees – General Education, University Writing, Assessment of Student Learning, and Technology and Learning – faculty members actively work to develop programs that respond to the needs of our student population. For graduate programs, faculty curricular leadership and program approval are accomplished through the Graduate Council.

Commitment to supporting faculty in the teaching of a diverse student body is evidenced through constant development and modification of curricula to meet the needs of our student population. The *Strategic Plan* (2007) identifies a campus goal to “prepare students to be leaders in their field who are globally aware and responsive to environmental and sustainability issues.”

Reflecting this goal, notable curricular changes over the last decade include a broader integration of elements related to service learning and global education.

*The Office of Service Learning* supports approximately 50 different course sections and annually offers an estimated 1,965 students the opportunity to participate in service-based courses. CSU Stanislaus promotes service learning as a valued part of the educational process that deepens the academic experience and expands the civic engagement of students. Integrating service learning into their courses provides faculty opportunities for increased faculty/student contact as well a venue for students to challenge their assumptions and develop critical thinking skills. In 2005, Campus Compact (a national coalition of 950 colleges and universities) recognized California State University, Stanislaus as a national model of civic and community engagement, and featured student work in the publication, *One with the Community: Indicators of Engagement at Minority-Serving Institutions*. Student surveys indicate that service learning enhances student engagement in learning; these data will be reported and discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

*The Office of International Education* recruits international students to campus and supports opportunities for CSU Stanislaus students and faculty to participate in programs abroad. Students can participate in yearlong programs offered by the CSU International Program and variable-term programs offered through the University Study Abroad Consortium, which together offer programs in 25 host countries. In addition, CSU Stanislaus offers Bilateral Exchange opportunities in Mexico, Denmark, the Netherlands, Taiwan, and a popular winter term in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Approximately 80 Stanislaus students participate in study abroad per year.

The Office of International Education supports faculty in the internationalization of the curriculum through a wide variety of initiatives, including incentives for syllabus revision, professional development opportunities to increase international and linguistic expertise through overseas scholarships and on-campus language study, and financial resources for faculty projects on the departmental and college levels. In 2003, the American Council on Education selected CSU Stanislaus as one of eight higher education institutions in the U.S. for participation in its "Global Learning for All" project. CSU Stanislaus earned its selection by demonstrating campus efforts to ensure that international/global learning is embedded within the curriculum. The project encouraged the linking of goals to course requirements and to close the circle by articulating what steps can be taken to improve student learning of international/global content. The 2005 Site Review Report of the American Council on Education states that this assessment project is "groundbreaking work" in the field of international education assessment.

#### **PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT FOR TEACHING**

Physical space at CSU Stanislaus has increased substantially in square footage over the past decade, primarily adding instructional space designed for distinct disciplines and their unique pedagogy. New space includes classrooms, computer laboratories, and a new building to house nearly all administration and student support services. New instructional facilities have been built for the unique pedagogy of professional programs, laboratory sciences, and performing arts. Specialized laboratories for music, languages, psychology, and geographic information systems have been created. Demergasso-Bava Hall houses facilities for teaching in professional programs such as Education, Business Administration, and Nursing, and televised distance-learning

classrooms. The Bernell and Flora Snider Music Recital Hall supports the teaching and learning of music and the arts. The Nora and Hashem Naraghi Hall of Science (2007) provides additional classrooms and laboratories for the College of Natural Sciences. The 10,000 square-foot John Stuart Rogers Faculty Development Center, opened in 2003, is the now the locus of faculty governance, housing the offices of the Academic Senate, and meeting rooms for the many campus committees. The Center also houses the offices of the California Faculty Association, Service Learning, Assessment of Student Learning, the Multimedia Laboratory, and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

#### **SCHEDULING IN SUPPORT OF TEACHING**

To meet the needs of increasing student enrollment, the campus has developed policies to support the effective use and scheduling of instructional space. In 2005, the University proposed policies designed to regularize course offerings, make more predictable classroom assignment procedures, and maximize use of instructional space. In developing this new policy, faculty governance worked with the Office of Enrollment Services and student representatives to develop new scheduling parameters; the new plan focuses particularly on the assignment of class space for evening classes and the best process for allocating space to accommodate student needs.

With consistent enrollment growth for more than two decades, campus discussions continue concerning the allocation of appropriate instructional classroom space. As reflected in the University's *Strategic Plan*, utilizing effective classroom scheduling and increasing classroom space are activities the campus has pledged to continue in order to ensure instructional quality for an increasing student population. Continued development of innovative learning formats, such as fully online, televised, and hybrid courses will alleviate some pressure for physical classroom space; however, the University recognizes the need for continual and proactive planning in order to ensure that instructional space aligned with the pedagogical needs of faculty is available.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT INFRASTRUCTURE**

The University maintains a strong administrative unit infrastructure, serving faculty in all six colleges. Administrative units are required to perform a Support Unit Review every five years, to include specific information concerning how the office or program supports student learning. Each of these offices has completed a Support Unit Review, and the data pertaining to their effectiveness in supporting student learning will be reviewed in the next phase. In addition to the administrative units, the college and academic departments support faculty in teaching by recognizing an organizational structure (dean, chair, faculty, and support staff) that fosters relevant decision-making and recommendations within the department or college concerning curriculum, scheduling, hiring, and assigned time.

#### **THE FACULTY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Contributing to the University's learning-centered focus, the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning plays a crucial role in enabling faculty to respond to a diverse student population through workshops, roundtables, lecture series, and presentations on topics related to improving and enriching the way faculty teach and assess student learning. This commitment to faculty development in support of student learning is evident in the Center's mission, "to provide support for faculty in their roles as teachers, learners, scholars, and members of the university and wider community as a means of enhancing student learning." In 2006-07, there



were 95 sessions related to the improvement of teaching strategies. See Figure Seven [text follows the body of this essay]. The Center also offers instructional technology workshops throughout the semester, including presentations on learning management systems and the use of graphic design in lecture materials. Since 2003, the center has hosted an average of 80 technology-related workshops and fairs with 200 attendees per year. The impact of these faculty development workshops on teaching effectiveness will be evaluated in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

The Faculty Development Center houses the Office for the Assessment of Student Learning and the Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning, described more fully in Thematic Essay Two. As highlighted in Dr. Mary Allen's 2007 evaluation of the University's assessment process, the Faculty Coordinator and Program Assessment Coordinator positions are an integral step in faculty members leading the design and execution of assessment of student learning on campus. Dr. Allen also noted the importance of faculty developing internal expertise in assessment and administration rewarding and recognizing faculty for their assessment efforts. Analysis of the role of assessment as scholarship and professional development will be explored in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### **FACULTY WORKLOAD AND UNIVERSITY SUPPORT**

Funding to support faculty "teacher-scholars" occurs at the University, college, and department levels. At the foundation of funding support lies the understanding that instructional responsibilities extend beyond the duties in the classroom, and include course preparation, evaluation of student performance, syllabus development and revision, and review of current literature and research, including instructional methodology in subject areas. As a result, the prescribed full-time faculty workload of thirty weighted teaching units (WTU) is divided into 24 WTU for instruction and six WTU for instructionally related responsibilities each academic year. Data indicate that the actual teaching load for tenured and tenure-track faculty averages 20.8 WTU (approximately seven courses) per year. Full-time lecturers teach an average of 24 WTU (eight courses) per year. Data indicate broad consensus among all faculty that this workload is unrealistic in terms of the demands made on faculty for teaching, scholarship, and service.

Specific terms of the employment contract governing faculty workload between the California Faculty Association and the California State University system are not negotiated at the campus level. The University's Faculty Workload Agreement, a campus strategy for implementing the terms of the system-wide contract, as renegotiated in 2007, is designed to allow faculty and departments to promote the strengths of individuals in addressing the needs of the University, and can help individual faculty tailor a workload that allows for maximum impact on their own career and the University.

A key value of the Faculty Workload Agreement is to provide faculty time for research and scholarly endeavors (discussed in detail in Thematic Essay Four), while not eroding the primacy of teaching and dedication to student success. The agreement distinguishes between the categories of direct instruction, indirect instruction, research, scholarship, and creative activity, and other professional activities, and allows faculty members to designate a given weighted amount of time to each category, within stipulated bounds.

The provost and deans currently are working with faculty to implement strategies for the reassignment of faculty workload, noting the differential application of this agreement for smaller departments, the specialized curricular demands of their degree programs, and the possible effects on lecturer workloads through increased class sizes. The Faculty Workload Agreement will be a topic for further investigation in the Educational Effectiveness Review as it affects both the teaching and research missions of the University.

#### **OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHING**

Since 2001, the Faculty Mini-grant Program has financially rewarded 52 faculty members for promoting innovative teaching and instructional materials, and 11 faculty members have traveled to teaching conferences. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, in conjunction with the Office of Service Learning, has awarded nine additional mini-grants to support travel and for innovative teaching and instructional materials.

To support teaching and scholarly activities, travel funding is provided by all of the colleges and departments as well as the support units. Travel funding provided by the colleges for conference participation affords faculty members the opportunity to present their research, network with other scholars, and to remain current by exposing them to new research in their fields. The level of funding for travel depends on the availability of funds at the college level and typically requires that the faculty member be a presenter. While part-time lecturers are currently not eligible for travel funding through the colleges and departments, full-time lecturers are eligible to receive travel grants through the Teaching Initiative Fund. For a decade, faculty members have expressed disappointment with the amount of funding available and the restrictions often imposed. This topic was one of many that were brought up at an open forum sponsored by the Academic Senate in fall 2007, attended by more than seventy faculty members from all six colleges. The topic was addressed in the 2007 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement and will be discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Classes at the Stockton Center are taught by Stockton-based faculty as well as by faculty from the Turlock campus, and are part of the normal workload for Stanislaus faculty. Each full-time or part-time University faculty member at the Stockton Center has working space available for the semester, access to a computer, photocopier, audio-visual/classroom equipment, Internet and email access, library, and computer lab access. Travel reimbursements are available for full-time CSU Stanislaus faculty traveling to and from the Stockton Center.

#### **ACCESS TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FOR SUPPORT OF TEACHING**

In addition to funding resources, faculty members at CSU Stanislaus have a range of services and resources available to support them in their teaching. Two of the most important services are the Library and the Office of Information Technology, as discussed in Thematic Essay Two. Library faculty members support their peer instructional faculty as a reference resource in teaching and research, with services offered at both the Turlock and Stockton campuses.

The University Library involves discipline-based faculty in library collection development in order to ensure the timeliness and viability of library resources. Appointed members of the departmental teaching faculty and library liaisons share responsibility for library collections and the selection of materials for active programs. When new programs are approved and funding is distributed to the colleges, the Library has not always been included to receive a portion of the

budget for new acquisitions to support the program. To address this oversight, efforts have been made to include the Library at the planning and implementation stages of new program development. For example, the new Ed. D. program, approved in 2008, included an external analysis of information needs and incorporated these data into the fee structure of this self-supporting program.

Support provided by the Office of Information Technology includes technical support for computer equipment used by faculty for their teaching and scholarship activities, University-wide televised and distance learning, instructional television service, examination scoring, on-line teaching, media equipment and materials, videotaping services, and the Faculty Multimedia Laboratory. In addition, the Faculty Multimedia Laboratory, located in the Faculty Development Center, assists faculty with the technological aspects in the systematic design, development, and application of multimedia, computing, and traditional media into curriculum and teaching.

### **3. SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A DIVERSE FACULTY**

The development and maintenance of a diverse faculty of teacher-scholars includes recruitment activities, the development of faculty members as professional scholars and teachers, and rewarding teacher-scholars for their achievements.

#### **RECRUITING FACULTY**

As expressed in the CSU Stanislaus *Faculty Recruitment and Appointment Manual* (2007), the recruitment of a well-qualified, diverse faculty is a strategic priority on campus. The University encourages applications and nominations of women, persons of color, persons with disabilities, and members of underrepresented groups. As noted in the Introductory Essay, efforts are underway to increase the number of underrepresented faculty over the next decade. Accordingly, the Office of Faculty Affairs has established procedures for search committees that inform committee members on issues of ethnic/gender underrepresentation, statistical comparisons with student demographics, and state/national demographics. An advisory panel established by the President in 2005 led in 2007 to the creation of a faculty diversity committee charged with developing recommendations and promoting processes that enhance the recruitment, retention, and promotion of faculty who support the University's mission and vision regarding diversity.

#### **RETAINING, DEVELOPING, AND REWARDING FACULTY**

Once new faculty members are recruited, they are welcomed to the campus by members of the Faculty Development Committee and the staff of the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning that hosts a two-day New Faculty Orientation to acclimate them to the campus. The Center also hosts a welcoming dinner for all first and second-year faculty and their families. The Center provides new faculty with the *Faculty Survival Guide*, in its eighth year of publication. This resource provides more than eighty pages of advice, policies, resources, and a plethora of valuable information for the new members of our campus community. A broadly practiced policy of assigning a reduced teaching load to first year faculty aids in recruitment and is much appreciated by new hires.

In addition to the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, there are numerous infrastructural entities that support and reward the professional development of the faculty. These offices include the offices of Faculty Affairs, Research and Sponsored Programs,

International Education, Service Learning, and committees such as the Research Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee, the Faculty Development Committee, and the Leaves and Awards Committee. In addition to external funding for research or teaching grants, campus and CSU-sponsored grants, travel funds, and sabbaticals are available. University-wide recognition includes two prestigious awards for teaching and awards for the Outstanding Research Professor and Outstanding Community Service Professor.

The overall primacy of teaching excellence is reflected in all policies and publications of the University, especially in the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process. For retention, promotion, and tenure at CSU Stanislaus, faculty members submit materials demonstrating excellence in four areas: 1) teaching; 2) research, scholarship, and creative activity; 3) appropriate professional development; and 4) service. As part of their RPT portfolio, faculty members often include teaching philosophies as a reflection of their commitment to the successful engagement of students and continual improvement of student learning; these statements are being collected for campus publication. Faculty are aided and supported in the RPT process by a series of workshops held at the Faculty Center and by specific guidelines provided by the University regarding expectations in teaching, scholarship, and service. While all departments require “elaborations” on research, scholarship, and creative activity (as discussed in Thematic Essay Four), not all require elaborations for teaching. The University RPT Committee has encouraged all departments to address the expectations in teaching in as much detail as they do for research, scholarship and creative activity.

The University relies on several well-established data-gathering activities to assess the quality of teaching and student learning. For the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process, the primary instrument for student evaluation of faculty performance is the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) form. Faculty members are required to administer this instrument in at least two courses annually and to discuss the results of these evaluations within the narrative of their retention, promotion, and tenure reports. Faculty members also use these data for improving teaching effectiveness. The full IDEA form includes data on teaching methods, pedagogical strategies, and learning goals. These data, when studied in the aggregate, yield valuable information for a broader understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning on our campus. Aggregate data from the IDEA process across campus will be analyzed in the next phase of the self study and discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Either as part of the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process or for interim evaluation of lecturers, many departments use peer observations of in-class teaching to evaluate teaching techniques and effectiveness. Some departments have created course evaluations that are administered on a voluntary basis by individual faculty members for the purpose of evaluating a particular course. Such evaluations are not published or used in the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process but are used solely by faculty to improve instruction. In addition to the above, campus exit and alumni surveys, as well as the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, provide valuable indirect measures for assessing effective teaching. The results of these evaluations will be presented and discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### 4. THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

In a learning-centered institution such as CSU Stanislaus, the role of scholarship is often related, either directly or indirectly, to student learning. Ernest Boyer (1990) memorably described the scholarship of teaching as one of four types of scholarship, along with those of discovery, of integration, and of application. At CSU Stanislaus, the scholarship of teaching and learning is demonstrated through systematic study of innovative teaching practices, course development, engaging students in active learning, reflection on teaching and assessment practices, and the impact on student learning. Such practices contribute to the high level of faculty/student engagement enjoyed by the University, as discussed in Thematic Essay One. The scholarship of Teaching at CSU Stanislaus is also achieved through joint faculty-student scholarship, the integration of research into classroom curricula, and faculty reflections on pedagogical approaches and best-practices forums.

Discussions of the relationship between scholarship and learning are ongoing, from informal lunchtime conversations among faculty to departmental meetings, formal workshops, and publications on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Since 2002, the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has sponsored a yearly publication, *Faculty Voices*, an anthology of faculty discussions of teaching and learning. These discussions are published after a year-long process of shared development and refinement. The process serves the dual purpose of engaging our community of teacher-scholars and contributing to on-going discussion of teaching and learning by the campus community.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Evidence provided in this essay demonstrates the University's capacity to recruit, support, and retain a community of teacher-scholars. The notion and practice of teacher-scholarship has begun to take root in the campus culture. A variety of support and administrative offices supports the work of faculty in meeting the teaching mission of the University. A wide range of activities supports the professional development and improvement of individual faculty members. Our campus processes identify areas in which improvement can be made, and several actions are under way to increase our capacity to assess our effectiveness. These actions will be evaluated and discussed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The evolving definitions and assessments of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity at CSU Stanislaus depend increasingly on the better understanding and application of the various definitions of scholarship, including that of teaching and learning. This self study affords an opportunity to explore issues related to Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity. The following essay focuses on the definitions and roles of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity on our campus and explores some of the topics relating to the interaction among teaching, research, scholarship, and student learning.

**FIGURE SEVEN: SAMPLE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FORUMS**

TOPICS
Instructional Technology: Best Practices
Effective Writing: Finding Connections
Clickers – Student Response Systems in the Classroom
Self and Teaching Writing Circle
Information Literacy
Get DUMB- Get Smart: A Campus Dialogue on the Intersection of Popular Culture and Higher Education
Stress Contagion: The Dynamics of Mood Convergence on Learning
Why I Stopped Lecturing
Active Learning and Enhancing Engagement



**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS  
CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW**

**THEMATIC ESSAY FOUR  
THE ROLE OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY (RSCA)**

*Inquiry Question Four: How effectively does the University support Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA), appropriate to its mission?*

**INTRODUCTION**

Excellence in teaching remains preeminent in the University's mission. At the same time, faculty vitality and pedagogical advances are dependent upon the University's ability to support faculty scholarly endeavors, defined at CSU Stanislaus as inclusive of research, scholarship, and creative activity (henceforth RSCA). This essay examines evidence of the capacity of CSU Stanislaus to support RSCA appropriate to its mission of "promoting academic excellence in the teaching and scholarly activities of our faculty."

To guide the inquiry, the RSCA Inquiry Circle developed four researchable questions.

1. *How clearly does the University define research, scholarship, and creative activities within the mission of the University as a learning-centered institution?*
2. *How effectively does the University value, recognize, and reward RSCA?*
3. *How effectively does the University support RSCA in terms of infrastructure, scheduling, funding, access to materials, the library, and technological support?*
4. *How does RSCA inform and improve the teaching and learning process?*

Institutional capacity for RSCA was evaluated in terms of the development of policies, practices, infrastructural support, and fiscal investment over the last decade.

**1. DEFINING RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

The definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity at CSU Stanislaus is based upon three general rubrics: 1) the University Mission, 2) the departmental "elaborations" that specify criteria for retention, promotion, and tenure decision-making, and 3) campus compliance with national standards.

**RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY DEFINED WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION**

To fulfill the mission of the University "to encourage all members of the campus community to expand their intellectual, creative, and social horizons," CSU Stanislaus promotes academic excellence in teaching as well as the scholarly activities of our faculty. Creating clear definitions of the terms *research*, *scholarship*, and *creative activity* has been a priority for faculty and administrators for two decades. In the mid-nineties, the Academic Senate formed an *ad hoc* research, scholarship, and creative activity task force that produced recommendations concerning definitions and actions to enhance support for RSCA, addressing retention, promotion, and tenure processes, institutional funding, and infrastructural support. As a result of those deliberations, the Academic Senate approved a broad definition, and placed the responsibility of defining and interpreting RSCA on the individual academic departments (see Figure Eight). [text follows the body of this essay]

#### **RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY DEFINED BY DEPARTMENTS**

As the University-wide definition of research, scholarship, and creative activity is very broad, each department is charged with elaborating the broad definition and describing specific expectations relevant to the academic discipline. These “elaborations,” as they have come to be termed, are designed to recognize and honor the diversity and richness of academic disciplines in teaching and scholarly inquiry and activities. Once approved by the University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, departmental elaborations guide personnel decisions and remain in effect until amended or replaced by the department. The elaborations guide the decisions made by all levels of review: the department retention, promotion and tenure committees, the deans, the University-wide committee, the provost, and the president.

Data reflect that faculty in all 29 departments, the library, and counseling units have created elaborations for scholarship that reflect unique disciplinary perspectives; of these, 88% link scholarly elaborations to teaching effectiveness; often the two overlap, reflecting the inextricable link between scholarship and instruction. Elaborations across the disciplines follow the traditions of the academy: research resulting in publications and public exhibitions, performances, grants, and presentations of professional papers. Many elaborations illustrate advances in scholarship in emerging fields of inquiry such as academic technology, service learning, innovative pedagogy, global and international learning, cross-cultural diversity, and interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary research.

The system that places the definitions and evaluations of RSCA within the domain of individual departments, rather than in college deans or University administration, is highly valued by the faculty. The elaborations serve as the primary guidelines for prospective, new, and continuing faculty. The goal of the elaborations is to minimize confusion and ambiguity related to expectations in vital personnel decisions. The elaborations are aimed at identifying the specific kinds of scholarship and other activities that the department expects for tenure and promotion (for example, the value of “quantitative” versus “qualitative” approaches, or of pedagogical, applied, or basic research). A benefit of the elaborations within the broader context of the University is the opportunity they provide for faculty and administrators to better understand and discuss diverse perspectives on scholarship within and across disciplines. In November of 2007, for example, the provost and Academic Senate co-sponsored an open forum on the topic in which more than 70 faculty members participated.

#### **RESEARCH DEFINED THROUGH CAMPUS COMPLIANCE POLICIES**

While departmental elaborations reflect the diverse definitions of research and scholarship pertaining to faculty retention, promotion and tenure, faculty committees remain sensitive and responsive to maintaining a consistent definition of “research” throughout the University’s compliance-based policies. At CSU Stanislaus, research activities that undermine the integrity of scholarly activity are viewed as serious infractions of the academy’s values. Over the past several years, the University has updated the definition of research and its policies related to Human Subjects Research, Research Misconduct, Conflict of Interest, and Intellectual Property Rights.

## 2. VALUING, RECOGNIZING, AND REWARDING RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

The retention, promotion, and tenure process is the primary vehicle for the recognition and reward of research, scholarship, and creative activity. However, several additional University mechanisms value, recognize, and reward faculty RSCA. One of these is an annual award for “Outstanding RSCA Professor of the Year.” Others include *The Research Compendium*, *The Journal of Research*, Honor Societies, and RSCA Grants.

### THE RESEARCH COMPENDIUM

Although lists of faculty RSCA have been collected by college deans since 1998, a comprehensive list communicated campus-wide began only in 2006 with the publication of an annual *Research Compendium*, a consolidation of the RSCA conducted in each college and the Library. This publication provides a vehicle for the public recognition of faculty accomplishments and is used in fundraising, grants, and accreditation efforts. The *Compendium* is organized into twenty-seven categories consistent with the broad, inclusive definitions of research across the disciplines, including student research categories. This data source will be analyzed and evaluated in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

### JOURNAL OF RESEARCH

From 1996 to 2003, the *CSU Stanislaus Journal of Research* was published as a means to showcase outstanding research across the disciplines. This journal was discontinued because of severe state budget reductions. The provost has provided seed funding for a new RSCA publication to celebrate the research and creative accomplishments of both our faculty and students and to highlight the variety of academic activities that enrich the learning environment in the University. It will also showcase those activities that provide important services to the region and state through applied research and community engagement. This publication will draw from the diverse range of research and sponsored projects supported by internal and external sources across CSU Stanislaus and will hopefully serve as a catalyst for a culture of dynamic interaction among teaching, research, and service.

### HONOR SOCIETIES

Another important vehicle for recognizing RSCA is the campus chapter of the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, an international interdisciplinary society devoted to faculty and student scholarly achievements. In 1998, CSU Stanislaus sought membership in this national society as a means to elevate its scholarly culture and to honor outstanding disciplinary and interdisciplinary RSCA. The process for a campus-based chapter is highly competitive, analogous to a comprehensive reaccreditation self study and site visit. Of sixty-one campus applications in 1999, CSU Stanislaus was the only chapter to be approved, testimony to the quality of its commitment to fostering, supporting, and honoring research of its faculty and students. Since its installation in 1999, approximately 400 students and 70 faculty members have been inducted in or have transferred their memberships to the local chapter. CSU Stanislaus also holds membership in 11 disciplinary-based honor societies that collectively honor outstanding faculty and student scholarly achievement.

### FACULTY RSCA GRANTS

The Faculty RSCA Grants program offers “mini-grants” to faculty, frequently for projects involving students and related to curricular improvement. All faculty members are eligible, including part-time and full-time lecturers, thus promoting their inclusion and integration into the campus life. RSCA grant funding for 2007-08 was approximately \$125,000, awarded to more than fifty-one faculty recipients, with awards ranging from \$640 to \$5,000. More than a third of these grants were awarded to faculty with

fewer than four years on campus, 66% to assistant and associate professors, recognizing that new, often junior, faculty members are to be supported as much as possible in the RSCA process. For 2007-08, all lecturer applicants for RSCA grants were awarded: evidence of attempts to recognize the RSCA achievements of non-tenure-track faculty.

### **3. INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

The University supports the research, scholarship, and creative activities of its faculty through the efforts of a variety of offices and governance committees.

#### **FACULTY GOVERNANCE: RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee (RSCAPC), formed in 1999, is composed of 13 faculty and administrators. It recommends research, scholarship, and creative activity policy to the Academic Senate, coordinates the promotion and support of research, scholarship, and creative activity for undergraduate and graduate students, and recommends mechanisms for recognizing research, scholarship, and creative activities. Within the past several years, the committee has revised several policies to ensure support to faculty, students, staff and administrators in effectively securing and conducting research with internal and external funding sources. The committee establishes standards, guidelines, and procedures to protect students and faculty involved in research that allows for RSCA to be conducted within the established compliance parameters. The committee is currently working with the administration to take steps to improve the process by which financial services are provided to grants and contracts.

#### **FACULTY GOVERNANCE: UNIVERSITY RETENTION, PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE**

The University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (URPTC), a permanent committee of the General Faculty, is charged with reviewing departmental recommendations concerning retention, promotion, and tenure of faculty and is responsible for the review and approval of departmental elaborations. The committee, made up of seven senior faculty members from across the disciplines, has been proactive in the last few years in urging departments to revise and update their elaborations in regards to RSCA. In spring 2007, the committee chair requested departments to review their elaborations, emphasizing the importance of addressing RSCA opportunities that might not currently be addressed such as efforts toward globalizing the curriculum, publications related to accreditation, service learning and outreach, and development of courses for online delivery. In 2007, the URPTC requested that Academic Senate establish an *ad hoc* committee to examine practices at other universities and recommend ways to streamline and improve the RPT process. That committee will be formed in 2008 and work under the guidance of the Faculty Affairs Committee.

#### **FACULTY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning sponsors an Instructional Institute Day, annual faculty development mini-grants, and hosts a biennial *Empire and Imperial Cultures Conference* that brings together CSU Stanislaus faculty, students, and scholars from around the world to share research and further enhance the teaching and learning experience of our students. For the past three years, the Faculty Center has sponsored a writing group to strengthen faculty research endeavors by providing bi-weekly sessions in which drafts of scholarly work are shared and feedback is provided.

#### **OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS**

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) works in close cooperation with faculty governance and the Divisions of University Advancement and Business and Finance to support faculty

research sponsored by external granting agencies. The University has increased its support for ORSP leadership and staff by creating an Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, currently supported by four full-time professional staff and a part-time office support staff. Additionally, the University has retained a full-time campus compliance officer, who has assumed the compliance responsibilities previously held within ORSP. The hiring of a compliance officer has provided additional support, as this allowed ORSP staff to focus on faculty development and expanded extramural funding rather than research compliance monitoring and reporting. ORSP support for faculty includes locating, writing, submitting, and monitoring awarded research grants, often resulting in research assigned-time for the faculty member involved. This office is at the forefront of addressing regional and national educational diversity issues through federal grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As a result of the investment of increased personnel and staffing capacity, external grants have increased from under \$5 million to \$18 million in fewer than eight years. Another measure of increased capacity is the ratio of awarded to submitted grants. Over the past ten years, an average of 26% of the faculty has been engaged in extramural funding, with an average of 64% of the grants receiving funding from national, state, and regional agencies, foundations, and corporations.

When awarded grants allow for indirect cost recovery, established campus policy and procedures govern the allocation of indirect costs revenue. This policy was revised in 1999 to reflect a more generous distribution of funding (65%) to the faculty principal investigators, their departments, and their colleges. Prior to this policy, only 10% was distributed to Academic Affairs for this purpose. Over the past decade, this allocation formula has substantially increased the capacity of faculty for scholarly research and professional development and has allowed for ORSP to continue building an infrastructure in support of faculty in their grant development. Progress on issues and concerns with grant funding will be addressed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

#### **CENTERS AND INSTITUTES**

The University's centers and institutes are organizational units that support faculty and student research. These units increase the University's capacity in terms of competitiveness of extra-mural proposals for securing external funding. For example, subject matter institutes for P-12 teachers are offered by faculty from education, arts, foreign languages, English, mathematics, and sciences. Other examples include the Centers for Direct Instruction, Public Policy Studies, Behavior Intervention Services, Economic Education, the Child Development Center, and the Institute for Cultural Resources. Through the Office of International Education, the University supports RSCA through its Study Abroad Programs, by hosting Fulbright Scholars in Residence within various academic departments, and by offering faculty development scholarships for winter and summer study in other countries. The Office also supports faculty in pursuing the development of global learning as part of their retention, promotion, and tenure process.

#### **SPACE FOR RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

Given state regulations, CSU funding processes do not provide for specialized or dedicated research space. For the sciences and the arts in particular, laboratory and performance space and specialized equipment is required for the conduct of faculty's scholarship. This is an area that the University has begun to explore through University Advancement. Nonetheless, faculty has continued to engage in such activities by the creative use of instructional space at those times courses are not in session.



### **FACULTY SABBATICALS**

Over the past decade, 152 faculty members applied for a one-semester sabbatical and 117 (77%) were granted. An average of nine funded sabbaticals have been awarded per year over the past decade; others have received sabbaticals that were not funded but supported by teaching overloads in the departments. Data indicate that in some years there have been fewer applications than potentially funded sabbaticals. This disparity may result from the general perception that smaller departments are unable to award sabbaticals to faculty because they do not have sufficient faculty to cover required courses, and part-time faculty with sufficient qualifications are not available. The current collective bargaining agreement requires the availability of a minimum of 17 funded sabbatical awards. Faculty Affairs, working with the RSCAPC and the provost, is currently addressing this new policy.

### **COLLEGE AND DEPARTMENT SUPPORT**

Each of the colleges offers research start-up funding for new faculty, normally a two-course teaching load reduction for the first year (one course each semester), a new desktop or laptop computer (sometimes both), and partial reimbursement for moving expenses. One example of a successful model for RSCA support among the University, college, and department levels is through the new faculty research grants offered in the Department of Biological Sciences. Funding for these research start-up grants is generated from the University's indirect costs received from external research grants. The Department of Biological Sciences has implemented a start-up research package of up to \$10,000 for each new faculty member with its portion of indirect costs received.

### **ACCESS TO MATERIALS THROUGH THE LIBRARY AND TECHNOLOGY**

Faculty members are supported in research, scholarship, and creative activities through access to library acquisitions and collections, Interlibrary Loan, and the Library faculty. Each librarian at CSU Stanislaus serves as a collection development liaison to one or more of the academic departments. Through research and reference services, including Interlibrary Loan, they are able to note the strengths, quality, and balance of collections, a necessity for faculty and student research.

Technology has accelerated research and writing processes, enabling scholars to conduct research in ways unimaginable a decade ago. Technological interfaces to discipline-specific databases are frequently updated, and online journal and research collection acquisition is expanding. Web-based Library resources are accessible on- and off-campus. This off-campus service is crucial for faculty and student research conducted outside of the academic year or during a sabbatical. Investing in an expansion of technologies, especially fully researchable digital journals, is a capacity investment currently underway within fiscal constraints. The strategy to improve library support for RSCA is twofold: augmenting library collections and developing technological capabilities. The CSU Council of Library Directors has agreed in principle to leverage system-wide buying power in order to augment local collections with electronic information resources that would be available to faculty and students on all 23 campuses. The library will also participate in consortia that expand access to research collections in other academic libraries. At the same time, library faculty members work directly with their colleagues in the academic departments and programs to identify information needs related to their RSCA and facilitate locating and acquiring needed resources. Library faculty work to develop sophisticated finding tools that enable researchers to effectively navigate the expanding realm of electronic information resources to take full advantage of the evolving CSU Virtual Library.



#### **CSU PROVOSTS' SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

The CSU system is committed to valuing, recognizing, and rewarding research, scholarship, and creative activity. In April 2007, the CSU Academic Council adopted the "Provosts' Role in Research in the CSU," affirming the role of research, scholarship, and creative activities as "integral to the mission of each university within the system." This statement notes that over the last decade these activities have increased throughout the CSU system, "not at the expense of its educational mission, but in support of it." CSU provosts found that faculty research enhances student learning, that students have greater success if actively involved in research, that research brings external support, that support for research helps the CSU to compete for quality faculty, and that the growth in applied research serves industry and government. Among the recommendations the provosts made were to expand resources and infrastructure to support research, to examine RSCA expectations in light of the teacher-scholar model, to articulate the benefits of RSCA to stakeholders, and to develop effective incentives for student involvement in RSCA.

#### **4. INFORMING AND IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

Faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity directly impact the quality of teaching and learning. First and foremost, the quality of a student's educational experience directly correlates to the currency and depth of faculty knowledge, regardless of whether the individual course is the topic of their specialization or current research project.

The quantity and quality of RSCA at CSU Stanislaus have increased dramatically over the last decade, with a noticeable trend in many departments toward the encouragement and support of pedagogically related research, in addition to more traditional basic and applied research. On a recent (2007) campus-wide faculty survey, over 60% of faculty respondents stated that they consistently or frequently incorporate their research into classroom instruction. Examples include the use of personal presentations or projects as course materials or examples of field research, use of authored textbooks in the classroom, use of research materials for course bibliography, and involvement of students in research. Recognizing the linkage among faculty research, faculty use of research in their courses, and faculty expectations for students' research, and analyses of student research were undertaken as part of surveys conducted in 2006-07, including the NSSE and FSSE. Also, a new category of the 2006-07 *Research Compendium* addresses faculty and student collaborative research. Results of these efforts will inform the evaluations made in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

As a "Hispanic-Serving Institution," designated by the U.S. Department of Education, CSU Stanislaus qualifies for special federal programs aimed at increasing participation in RSCA by traditionally underrepresented students, especially those in the sciences and professions. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs has placed a top priority on securing HSI funding for collaborative student and faculty research.

#### **STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION**

Capacity to support joint student and faculty research is evidenced through the campus and system-wide annual Student Research Competition. Funding for student cash awards is supported at both levels, and over a five-year period, student and faculty mentor participation has increased 400% and nearly doubled the number of CSU Stanislaus students advancing to the system-wide competition. Travel-related expenses are provided for students and their faculty mentors who advance to the system-wide event. This successful collaborative program between students and faculty links directly to the classroom:

evidence of improved teaching and learning through the RSCA process. Several baccalaureate programs, such as the Honors Program, emphasize collaborative research between faculty and students as an important component of their programs.

#### **GRADUATE RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

Graduate education at CSU Stanislaus prepares students for career advancement, entry into professions, and possible doctoral study. In 2007, about 22% of the University's students were graduate and post-baccalaureate students, and 174 faculty members taught graduate courses. Graduate Council serves as the governance committee that provides leadership for ensuring the quality of graduate education. With regard to the preeminent role of RSCA in graduate education, the Graduate Council has recommended policy and procedures that have increased fiscal support incrementally over the past few years. This growth is shown primarily through graduate fee waivers, continuing enrollment fee reductions, graduate teaching assistantships funded by private donors, distribution of grants and indirect cost recovery, and University open-enrollment fees.

An analysis of the student learning goals of each of the 23 master's programs verifies that each has at least one learning outcome related to the demonstration of research, scholarship, and creative activity and has multiple methods in place for the assessment of these learning outcomes. Eighty-six percent of the graduate programs require either a research thesis or graduate project. During the past two years, original research was evidenced by 583 theses produced by graduate students. The Graduate Council continues to work with the University's administration to increase fiscal support for research through increased funding for graduate and research assistantships.

An example of increasing capacity for research through funded grants that impacts the quality of instruction for diverse students through pedagogical research is the U.S. Department of Education's "Improving Teacher Quality" grant. Awarded to the College of Education, teacher education faculty partner with researchers at the UC Berkeley's Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE). The grant creates a collaborative mechanism for college faculty and local teachers to develop a research-based approach to the education of student teachers. This research has a direct impact on improving the classroom teaching and learning process for CSU Stanislaus students.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Data indicate that over the past decade, CSU Stanislaus has significantly improved its definitions and policies regarding RSCA, has created processes for recognizing and rewarding RSCA, has expanded infrastructural support, has increased fiscal support, and has encouraged student and faculty research in order to enhance the teaching and learning process.

Overall, RSCA capacity can be considered high for the infrastructural criterion; however, fiscal investment is not at the level desired by the faculty or the administration. Even though RSCA is clearly embedded in the values, mission, culture, policies, and infrastructure at CSU Stanislaus, the amount of time faculty members are able to devote to RSCA, given the constraints of the faculty contract, remains an issue. As was apparent in the 2007 open forum on RSCA, broad consensus exists that teaching loads of seven or eight classes per year inhibit the faculty's ability to devote adequate time to RSCA and other professional development responsibilities. Multiple faculty governance and administrative entities are currently addressing this topic.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity are an integral part of the institutional identity of CSU Stanislaus and a major component of the professional lives of our community of teacher-scholars. The recently approved *Strategic Plan* (2007), which guides campus actions for the next five years, focuses on supporting RSCA seed funding, promoting and publicizing accomplishments and achievements, and implementing the faculty workload agreement. These activities are integrally related to faculty professional development, the enhancement of teaching and, ultimately, the enhancement of the quality of student learning. In order to sustain an increase in capacity for support and innovation in RSCA, the University community will have to think and act in collaborative and strategic ways, given the prognosis that the CSU will face a difficult budgetary future of increased needs with diminishing resources.

**FIGURE EIGHT: RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

**DEFINITION**

"Research, scholarship, and creative activity are considered to be those activities of an intellectual or professional nature which extend knowledge, understanding, or appreciation of work within one's own discipline or across disciplines, which include basic and applied investigation, as well as production or creative works." Academic Senate, 18/AS/00/RSCAPC (2000).

## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

### INTEGRATIVE (CONCLUDING) ESSAY

This Integrative Essay reviews progress made by the University since the 1998 review on major recommendations made by the WASC Commission. It details the progress made by the Self-Study Team on the outcomes enumerated by the *Institutional Proposal* for the Capacity and Preparatory Review phase of the self study. Finally, it reviews progress already made for the next stage and reflects at this mid-point of the re-affirmation of accreditation cycle on the process itself and its implications for the future.

#### PROGRESS SINCE THE 1998 REVIEW

Major recommendations observed by the WASC Commission as a result of its review of the 1998 self study are typical of institutions of this size and stage of development. Indeed, CSU Stanislaus had identified these concerns well before the 1998 study and consistently has improved its ability to address and implement improvements to each of them, as we demonstrate throughout this report. Specifically, the University has taken action to refine and institutionalize effectiveness strategies, including the management of data, the use of data for strategic planning, and the use of appropriate forms of assessment to improve and enhance student learning. The University has taken action to define research, scholarship, and creative activity, and to enhance the Library as a learning resource. A detailed enumeration of these actions may be found in Appendix One: *Response to Previous Commission Concerns*.

#### OUTCOMES OF THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

Our *Institutional Proposal* focuses the work of the self study through the prism of engagement and learning, and identifies six major outcomes for the Capacity and Preparatory Review. Our intended outcomes were met as detailed throughout this report and demonstrated below.

1. Demonstration of institutional core commitment to capacity and preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review.
  - a. Improvements made in response to concerns raised by the WASC Commission in 1999 are discussed in Thematic Essays Two and Four and enumerated in Appendix One: *Response to Previous Commission Concerns*.
  - b. A formal review of the four WASC Standards and Criteria for Review was conducted in 2005-06, with the results informing the *Institutional Proposal* and subsequent work of the Inquiry Circles.
  - c. Special capacity issues resulting from the review and actions taken to address these issues are detailed and summarized in the Thematic Essays, as appropriate.
2. Refinement of a sustainable institutional research infrastructure and service delivery.
  - a. The Support Unit Review for the Office of Institutional Research was conducted as part of an environmental scan of internal data needs and external report requirements.
  - b. The Office of Institutional Research refined its methods for responding to multiple campus priorities, added key staff capable of conducting research analysis and communicating findings appropriate to varied audiences, organized its electronic data portfolio for ease of navigation and readability, and established procedures and timelines for reporting institutional data.

3. Refinement of institutional capacity and organizational structures and systems for quality assurance.
  - a. The effectiveness of the functions of the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance was affirmed through a Support Unit Review. Key outcomes include substantial progress toward the institutionalization of assessment, including the development of the Program Assessment Coordinators, the increased use of direct methods of the assessment of student learning, and a widespread campus commitment to improving quality through assessment.
  - b. Results of the Support Unit Review of the Office of Academic Programs affirmed the effectiveness, efficiency, and reliability of operations, especially with regard to new and revised programs, accreditation, educational policy, and governance support. The review also prompted changes for improvement of curricular processing, including technological advances for the submission of electronic program proposals, course processing, and catalog updates.
  - c. An evaluation of the Support Unit Review process prompted changes to clarify procedural elements that caused confusion and redundancy, to focus the process more sharply on ways in which the administrative units contribute to support student learning, to streamline the selection of review teams, and to support electronic reporting.
  - d. The Academic Program Review process was reviewed through internal processes and by an external consultant. Findings indicate that changes enacted in the 2005 revision produced a superior result, including a streamlined process with greater focus on student learning and future program planning, greater college accountability, improved institutional research data support, and exit meetings with the provost and college dean/faculty.
  - e. The effectiveness of the University's assessment efforts was validated by an external consultant, Dr. Mary Allen. Results indicated the organizational structures for assessment and quality assurance are effective and have contributed to campus progress related to institutionalizing assessment, assessing learning outcomes, supporting program assessment coordinators, on-going quality improvement through use of assessment results, and working toward a common understanding of roles and responsibilities. The review recommended actions for continued development, including the integration of assessment into reward systems for programs and personnel, greater use of external reviewers for quality assurance, and greater alignment between the processes for Academic Program Review and Student Learning Assessment. The report also urged immediate attention to the assessment of the General Education program.
  - f. Actions to improve quality as derived from the above reviews are summarized above and throughout the report as appropriate.
4. Refinement of support and systems for enhancing faculty development.
  - a. The Support Unit Review of the Faculty Development Center resulted in an affirmation of the effectiveness, vitality, and breadth of programming and the spectacular physical environment for formal and informal faculty interactions. It also identified four critical issues for future enhancement: sustained faculty participation in faculty development sessions, training needs of faculty at various stages of their professional careers, support for personnel processes, and infusion of student learning and engagement into faculty development sessions. The review also recommended increasing the leadership role of

- Center personnel for faculty development related to the direct assessment of student learning.
- b. Actions to refine and enhance faculty development are outlined in Thematic Essays Three and Four.
5. Refinement of critical infrastructural support of teaching and learning by the Library and information technology.
- a. A Support Unit Review of the Library was conducted; the capacity of the University Library is described in Thematic Essay Two.
  - b. A Support Unit Review of the Office of Information Technology was conducted; the capacity of OIT is described in Thematic Essay Two.
  - c. The Office of Information Technology conducted a review of accomplishments as outlined in the University's Academic Technology Plan. Overall, capacity and effectiveness of processes, infrastructure, and fiscal support varied, ranging from significant progress to limited attention, dependent upon fiscal availability. Actions and conclusions are included in Essay Two.
  - d. Other actions taken to enhance the Library and the Office of Information Technology as learning resources are discussed in Thematic Essays Two, Three, and Four, as appropriate.
6. Development of increased capacity in areas identified by the Inquiry Circles, governance committees, and administration.
- a. Actions resulting from these inquiries are discussed as appropriate throughout the report, and below as they are preparatory for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Our self study demonstrates that CSU Stanislaus functions with clear and consistent educational and administrative purposes. The University has a high level of institutional integrity, operating transparently with published policies and procedures developed in wide and open consultation with key constituencies. As a public institution dependent upon the State of California for a large portion of its budget, the California State University system as a whole has weathered a few years of state budget constraints in 2008 and once again faces fiscal reductions; CSU Stanislaus, however, has maintained its own operational stability by hewing to its priorities and its mission. The organizational structures and processes of CSU Stanislaus promote our mission, implement our strategies, and enact our vision.

#### **PREPARATION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

Progress already is being made on each of the intended outcomes for the Educational Effectiveness Review. University commitment to educational effectiveness is demonstrated through the implementation and enhancement of internal assessment processes in each of our undergraduate and graduate degree programs, in our General Education program, and in our co-curricular programs. Members of the Inquiry Circles and the Self-Study Team have made recommendations for areas of consideration areas for further work to appropriate governance and administrative bodies; these recommendations and their responses may be reviewed in the corresponding web site for each Inquiry Circle.

The University has taken action to understand more fully the diversity of the entire campus community and to celebrate and promote those practices that enhance it. The self study enhances the appreciation of elements of diversity, especially those elements related to students and the ways in which the faculty are



effective in teaching a diverse student population. In the Educational Effectiveness Review, we will continue to explore how well students learn about diversity from curricular and co-curricular activities.

The University has made significant progress in achieving and documenting its outcomes for the entire self study. Faculty members are systematically engaged in reflective discussions of effectiveness, focusing on issues central to teaching and learning. The University is increasing its understanding of the relationship between learning and engagement and is aligning our faculty support systems to develop and reward effective pedagogy more systematically and transparently. The University is improving its programs and institutional practices through the increased sophistication and precision of assessment of student learning practices, including the appropriate use of direct evidence. The University has refined its strategic planning process to identify priorities more effectively and to use data indicators in improving institutional quality. The *Strategic Plan* (2007) articulates the University's core values and envisions a future of growth in student enrollments, programs, faculty and staff, community partnerships, and educational quality. The University *Strategic Plan* is aligned with the CSU system-wide strategic plan, *Access to Excellence*, affirming student access and success throughout the educational experience, heightening learning through active student engagement, demonstrating achievement in student learning outcomes, sustaining the excellence of faculty and staff, and advocating evidence-based resource acquisition.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The *Institutional Proposal* identifies a method for our theme-based study in the creation and use of Inquiry Circles. These Circles – and the committed, concerted effort of the individual members – conduct the study through their intramural practice, their wide-ranging and lively discussion, their consultation with and advisement to governance committees, and their serious, collegial engagement with the terms, issues, and data of the study. The Self-Study Team created a review model that is widely participatory, comprehensive in its inquiry themes, highly evidence-based, intellectually stimulating, and meaningful to the campus.

Through the prism of learning and engagement, the work of the Inquiry Circles underscores several values held in common throughout the University. First, support for enhancing faculty-student engagement implies two major commitments by the University: making available the opportunities for professional growth as teachers and rewarding faculty members who demonstrate the dedication and skills necessary to engage students in learning. These primary commitments must not be lost as the University moves forward in its development, and appropriate levels of faculty development as both teachers and scholars must be maintained. Second, the time and resources necessary to advance the University to the next level of its development, as outlined in the *Strategic Plan*, may be scarce and precarious given the fiscal downturn projected in the State of California. This uncertainty affects faculty, staff, administration, and students alike. Third, the importance of community in envisioning and realizing the future of the University cannot be overstated. Serious, collegial deliberation should be given to establish priorities.

Through the inquiry process, the Inquiry Circles themselves have become learning communities. While the formal Inquiry Circle structure will be dissolved following the completion of the re-affirmation of accreditation review cycle, the University fully expects that the liaisons, networks, and friendships developed during the self study will continue to inform campus practices. The Inquiry Circle process has become a key element in the University's capacity to maintain an organization committed to learning and improvement and should serve as a model for future intramural organizing that works in parallel to, not

in lieu of, established campus governance procedures. Finally, the self-study process, with its theme of “engaging students in learning,” has stimulated a lively dialog across campus concerning the nature of “engagement” and the meaning of “diversity.”

We conclude the capacity and preparatory stage of our assessment satisfied with our model and eager to frame the next stage of our self study through the four Inquiry Questions, having ascertained that they remain cogently expressed, researchable, and focused on student learning. We will examine educational objectives at the institutional and programmatic levels, assuring that they remain clear, appropriate, and vital, and we will explore more extensively our collective accomplishments related to student learning and the degree to which the University is itself a learning organization that uses student performance to improve overall educational quality.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF FIGURES AND APPENDIX ONE**

Figure One: Communities and Inquiry Questions (Introductory Essay)

Figure Two: Sources Used to Measure Student Diversity (Essay One)

Figure Three: Sources Used to Measure Student Engagement (Essay One)

Figure Four: Sources Used to Measure Student Learning (Essay One)

Figure Five: Enhancements to Technology Services since 1998 (Essay Two)

Figure Six: Sample Direct and Indirect Assessment Measures (Essay Two)

Figure Seven: Sample Faculty Development Center Topics (Essay Three)

Figure Eight: Definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (Essay Four)

Appendix One: *Response to Previous Commission Concerns*

## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

### APPENDIX ONE: RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS COMMISSION CONCERNS

**\*\*DRAFT\*\***

#### INTRODUCTION

In its letter reaffirming the accreditation of the University in 1999, the WASC Commission highlighted three areas for targeted development and improvement: Effectiveness Strategies, Faculty Roles, and the Library. Each of these areas is one of perennial concern for the University, as it is for nearly every institution of this size and at this level of development. In addition, the campus self study of 1998 identified each of these areas as an area of concern. Each of these areas was adopted within the current self study and is addressed within the body of the Capacity and Preparatory Review Report. The following tables outline the significant progress made by the University in each area.

## EFFECTIVENESS STRATEGIES

The 1998 Site Visit Team recommended the implementation of the assessment-based quality assurance plan elaborated in the self study. The Commission acknowledged that campus effectiveness strategies were in the “early stages,” and specifically recommended developing “modes of assessing progress and of integrating those data into the program review process.” The Commission also endorsed the visiting team’s concern that existing “data and systems [do not] meet current needs, let alone those that will develop.”

As the current self study demonstrates throughout the report, effectiveness strategies have been woven into the very fabric of everyday life at CSU Stanislaus. The table below outlines major developments as the University continues to address this issue.

PROGRESS IN EFFECTIVENESS STRATEGIES SINCE 1998	
1999	Created Faculty Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning position.
	Additional funding allocated for assessment training, departmental assessment plans, and the assessment coordinator.
	Refined Office of Institutional Research.
2000	Created Five-Year Assessment of Student Learning Strategic Plan.
2001	Established the Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee.
2002	Established the Summative Teaching Assessment Practices <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee charged with developing and implementing alternate student evaluation instruments.
	Developed the 2002-2005 Assessment Initiative Plan as part of the President’s Assessment Initiative.
	Published <i>Who’s Responsible for What?</i> and <i>Ten Methods Used at CSU Stanislaus to Examine Institutional Effectiveness</i> documents.
	Piloted Academic Program Review for review in 2005.
2003	Held President’s Assessment Summit featuring Dr. Barbara Cambridge.
	Developed Assessment Action Plan to be implemented beginning fall 2005.
	Evaluated effectiveness of student services in accordance with national CAS Standards.
2004	Published <i>Principles of Assessment at CSU Stanislaus</i> .
	Established the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance, led by the Associate Vice President for Quality Assurance.
	Revised Academic Program Review process to reflect focus on student learning outcomes and use of assessment data for strategic planning.
	Defined goals of the assessment program at CSU Stanislaus.
	Held Second President’s Assessment Summit featuring Dr. Barbara Cambridge.
	Engaged faculty in discussions of “culture of evidence” and increased understanding and support.
	Established Program Assessment Coordinator (PAC) positions for each department/program.
	Promoted understanding of new WASC process and standards as related to assessment and educational effectiveness.

PROGRESS IN EFFECTIVENESS STRATEGIES SINCE 1998 <i>continued</i>	
2005	Documented accomplishments for assessment of general education learning goals (Assessment of General Education chronology) and worked with General Education subcommittee to continue progress.
	Refined graduating senior, alumni, and graduate student (master's) surveys.
	Evaluated effectiveness of budget infrastructure and allocation processes.
	Created a glossary of assessment terms for CSU Stanislaus.
	Increased support of assessment efforts by enlisting governance groups in action phases of the assessment process.
	Began conducting annual Academic Program Review workshops.
	Developed assessment-related faculty development and learning opportunities for faculty.
	Identified and secured books and newsletters related to assessment for use by campus community.
	Developed and documented organizational infrastructure and roles and responsibility for university-wide assessment.
	Updated inventory and documented learning goals for academic programs across four stages: (1) learning goals stated, (2) methods and timeline identified, (3) data collected and analyzed, (4) data used by faculty to improve programs.
	Promoted leadership and participation of students in the assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness.
	Adopted Support Unit Review process for ensuring effectiveness in administrative support units.
2006	Identified critical core indicators of quality that transcend annual goals and priorities, monitor progress, and take appropriate actions for quality improvement.
	Increased participation by a broad range of faculty in assessment development opportunities.
	Increased participation by a broad range of staff and administrators in assessment and development opportunities.
	Revised <i>Ten Methods Used at CSU Stanislaus to Examine Institutional Effectiveness</i> document.
	Implemented the Support Unit Review process- evaluating the effectiveness of administrative units.
	Incorporated student learning assessment into the Support Unit Review process.
	Developed websites for the Office of Assessment of Student Learning, the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance, General Education, and Academic Programs.
2007	Completed an external assessment by Dr. Mary Allen, national expert on student learning assessment.
	Created Faculty Director of General Education position to oversee university-level educational initiatives and programs related to the traditional General Education program, the Summit program, and the general education component of First-Year Experience in consultation with relevant faculty committees and the Vice Provost.
	Documented accomplishment of assessment of learning goals in university-wide programs such as global/international education, service learning, and honors (support unit and academic program reviews 2006-07).

## FACULTY ROLES

The Commission in 1999 echoed the campus self study in urging “closure” on the issue of expectations for research, a concern raised originally in the 1990 review. The Commission also recommended aligning “review and reward systems with the needs of a learning-centered institution,” “improving support for research needs,” and generally clarifying the “definition and role of research” to alleviate “confusion and misunderstanding.” This issue is examined in exacting detail in Thematic Essay Four of the Capacity and Preparatory Review Report. The table below provides an overview of ongoing campus efforts to address this issue.

PROGRESS IN FACULTY ROLES SINCE 1998	
1998	Increased pre-award and post-award staff positions in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.
	Created the Grants Incentive Program and Research Incentive Program to provide support to faculty for their Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity through the initial investment and to seek extramural funding for continuing support.
	Revised the campus policy for indirect cost recovery (Facilities & Administrative) that provides funding directly to the Principal Investigator's with funded grants and some matching funds for grants.
	Provided each new faculty member with a computer for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity.
	Mandated elaborations with prime responsibility to each department for "elaborating, interpreting, and reinforcing requirements for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity."
	Deferred retention, promotion, and tenure evaluations of all new faculty until fall semester of second year of employment.
	Created the CSU Stanislaus <i>Journal of Research</i> (interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary).
1999	Increased the amount of funds for each faculty member for participation in professional activities, supplemented by the college deans in increasing amounts.
	Developed pools of modest funds in graduate studies to assist students and faculty in conducting their research.
	Increased the number of funded sabbaticals for faculty.
	Increased the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs funding for faculty sponsors to accompany student researchers to the CSU Student Research Competition.
	Enhanced financial support from the Faculty Development Committee to provide workshops related to Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity.
	Enhanced financial support for students and their faculty sponsors for the CSU Student Research Competition through Instructional Related Activities funding.
	Created a governance structure, the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee, that provides leadership and advocacy for research policy, recognition, support, and resources.
2000	Defined “research” for Retention, Promotion, and Tenure purposes as “research, scholarship, and creative activity,” and empowered academic departments to elaborate this definition in discipline-specific ways.
	Established the Outstanding Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity monetary award.
	Created the Office of Service Learning in support of enhanced definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity and service projects.
2001	Updated Institutional Review Board policy to comply with federal regulations.



PROGRESS IN FACULTY ROLES SINCE 1998 continued	
2004	Submitted initial compliance document for Executive Order 890 (Administration of Grants and Contracts in Support of Sponsored Programs) to the CSU Chancellor's Office.
2005	Updated the Funding Success Handbook, designed to update and improve grant administration.
	Assembled a special faculty task force to identify concerns related to Intellectual Property policy updates.
	Developed a procedural guide to assist faculty in procedures for obtaining approval for and documenting the use of bio-hazardous materials on campus in compliance with <i>Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories</i> , Department of Health and Human Services.
2006	Established a complete written policy and compliance directives for administration of Sponsored Programs in accordance with CSU Executive Order 890, Sponsored Programs Administration.
	Updated Institutional Review Board policy to comply with new federal developments in Human Subjects Research and provide more detailed, navigable information to faculty and students in gaining approvals.
2007	Amended the Institutional Review Board -policy to reflect federal definitions of human subject research and to refine definition of "vulnerable populations."
	Updated the Research Misconduct policy to comply with the federal regulations.
	Updated and expanded the Intellectual Property Policy to reflect current developments in technologies, agreements, and address unbundling of rights procedures.

## THE LIBRARY

The Commission letter shared “a concern voiced in the self study that only 20% of the faculty report that the Library is adequate to meet their needs,” and urged “the University to develop a plan to address the dated nature of the collection.” The Site Visit Team made additional recommendations regarding the availability and usage of the collection. This issue is addressed in detail in Thematic Essay Two, and as appropriate in Thematic Essays Three and Four. The table below identifies continuing University efforts to enhance the library as a learning resource.

PROGRESS IN THE LIBRARY SINCE 1998	
1998	One-time budget allocation from the Chancellor’s office for books only.
	Allocated funding for retrospective books in humanities and social sciences; allocated funding to library faculty for general book purchases; allocated funding to academic departments for faculty book purchases.
1999	Developed Library Strategic Plan for implementation through 2004.
2001	Allocated funding for retrospective books in sciences and business.
2004	Updated Library Strategic Plan.
2005	Administered pilot of the LibQual survey to a sample of students, faculty and staff to assess campus perceptions of library service quality.
	Received “Local History Digital Resources Project” grant, sponsored by the California Digital Library and the California State Library, to digitize and make accessible a collection of 200 historical photographs.
	Implemented electronic document delivery through Interlibrary Loan.
	Increased computers with Internet access from 18 to 48.
	Allocated funding for retrospective books in humanities.
2006	Established email notification for user requests, renewals, overdue notices, and cancellation of unfilled requests.
	Developed and implemented assessment of the quality of the library in support of student learning through Support Unit Review
2007	Administered the LibQual survey to a sample of sophomore and junior students to assess campus perceptions of library service quality.
	Completed “Stanislaus Region History and Culture Image Collection.”
	Added the Association for Computing Machinery Digital Library, bringing to 112 the number of databases offered by the University Library (10,000 scholarly journal titles).
	Initiated project to upgrade integrated library system from OLLIE to next generation of hardware and software.
	Upgraded wireless network to provide for access to all library locations.
	Completed feasibility study for capital project to update library facility.