CPR Introductory Essay

Preface

In its *Institutional Proposal* <link>, California State University, Stanislaus committed itself to a self-study based of the theme of engagement and learning. The *Proposal* affirmed the University's decade-long self-identification as a "learning-centered" institution. Most institutions using a theme-based approach for educational effectiveness have organized their Capacity and Preparatory Review around the WASC Standards. In contrast, CSU Stanislaus has elected to maintain a theme-based focus for both the Capacity and Preparatory Review and the Effectiveness Review, and to adopt the model identified in the *Proposal* as the organizational framework for the entire self-study process.

This Introductory essay reviews the background and descriptions presented in our *Institutional Proposal*, updating changes that have occurred since spring 2006. The essay describes our community, our commitment to teaching and learning, the organization of the study, our responses to areas mentioned in previous WASC reviews, and concludes with a detailed review of the outcomes accomplished by the University for the Capacity and Preparatory Review.

The University and the Community

CSU Stanislaus is located in Turlock, the heart of the agriculturally rich Central Valley of California, 90 miles east of San Francisco and 80 miles south of Sacramento <link Map Quest>. Established in 1957 and relocated to its current 228-acre site in 1965, Stanislaus was awarded university status in 1985.
In 2007-08, CSU Stanislaus served a student body of _____ students (_____ FTES) in _____ undergraduate majors, _____ post-graduate credentials, and _____ master's programs <link>. CSU Stanislaus is one of the few campuses in the CSU system that has maintained a steady growth rate of 3 to 4% per year for more than two decades.

Increasing Diversity and Accessibility

CSU Stanislaus serves one of the fastest growing and most demographically diverse areas in the country: the San Joaquin Valley. Three valley counties —San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced — have grown at rates of more than 30% over the decade 1997-2007 (**source**). These three counties have been identified as "permanent residence" for 78% of our current student body (Factbook). The University also serves the three Sierra foothills counties of Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Calaveras; the combined service area equals a square mileage roughly the size of the state of Vermont.

Since the last self-study (1998), campus facilities have doubled in size, with a current building space of approximately _____ square feet <link map>. New facilities include the Residence Life Village, which was opened in 1994 for 200 students and has grown to a community of more than _____ students in 2007 <link>. New space includes classrooms, computer laboratories, a recital hall, 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. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, a 10,000-square-foot facility, was dedicated in 2002 and houses a variety of offices that support the faculty <link>. The new **[name]** Science Building opened in fall 2007 <link>. Complementing the expansion of facilities, landscaping projects — lakes, fountains, bridges, and a greatly expanded outdoor amphitheater — have enhanced a comfortable, park-like learning environment that blends utility and aesthetic appeal.

To extend access to students in the Stockton area, 45 miles to the north, the University has been steadily expanding its Stockton campus since its establishment in 1974. The Stockton Center offers upper-division courses and selected programs to transfer and graduate students who reside primarily in San Joaquin County. In Fall 2007, approximately ____ classes were offered and total headcount enrollment reached ____, approximately ___% of our total enrollment. **[add language from Strat Plan about new focus?]** On average, about 50% of Stockton students enroll in courses only in Stockton; the other 50% divide their classes between the Stockton and Turlock campuses (**source**). Together with the Stockton Center, our distance-learning program helps extend access to students in the six county service area though sites at Sonora, Tracy **[?]** and the Merced Tri-County Center, and a limited number of internet-based courses. The University currently does not offer full degree programs on-line.

Student Profile

Over the last three decades the population of the region has gone through dramatic demographic changes, evolving from a rural, predominantly white, agricultural area to one of the most highly multicultural regions in California. As the surrounding communities have grown larger and more multicultural, the makeup of the student body at CSU Stanislaus has changed accordingly. Consistently over the last decade, more than 50% **[60%?]** of CSU Stanislaus graduates have been the first in their families to graduate from college (**source**). Many CSU Stanislaus graduates are students returning to higher education after another career or raising a family. Females have made up the majority of first-time freshman during the last eight years and have entered at a faster rate than their male counterparts (**source**).

Since 2001, more than half of our students have self-identified as from a minority or international background (**source**). The Hispanic population of the University is currently at 28% of baccalaureate students (Table 2.2). In 2003, CSU Stanislaus was recognized as a "Hispanic-Serving Institution" by the U.S. Department of Education <link>. For the past decade, CSU Stanislaus has been ranked by numerous publications among the top western universities in the country in service to Hispanic students <link>.

The University strives constantly to improve accessibility and retention, and these goals have been achieved through highly proactive outreach, recruitment, and retention programs. Half of our student body comes to us from local community colleges and are accepted as juniors through articulation agreements; some of these students need extra work and additional academic support to succeed in upper-division courses. Our retention and remediation strategies are discussed in several areas of this report.

Faculty Profile

The majority of faculty members are not California natives. As discussed in detail in later essays, our tenure-track faculty is recruited from a national pool. The highest priority in hiring new tenure-track faculty is a proven record of excellence in teaching. The retention, promotion, and tenure system gives primacy to excellence in teaching. Complementing their teaching-learning activities, faculty members are encouraged to be active teacher-scholars by engaging in research, scholarship, and creative activity. Faculty members are also recognized and rewarded for excellence in service to the campus and the community. The interplay among teaching, scholarship, and service in the professional development of the faculty is discussed in detail in essays three and four.

According to 2005 data, 74% of CSU Stanislaus faculty members are white and 55% male (**update** Table 5.3). One of the priorities of the University is to see these numbers change over the next decade, and steps are being taken to enhance the diversity of the faculty. In 2004, responsibility for diversity oversight was distributed among various divisions on campus, including Faculty Affairs, Student Affairs, and Human Resources. In 2005, the President named three faculty members to a special Advisory Panel on campus and faculty diversity. This panel is now developing into an Ad-Hoc Committee on Diversity, whose principal charge is to recommend on

the institutionalization of such a body, including the composition and charge of a standing committee. The results of this effort will be featured in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

 The *Institutional Proposal* <link> affirms campus support of the *WASC Statement on Diversity* <link>. As discussed throughout this report, "diversity" at CSU Stanislaus refers to group representation but also to the characteristics of the academic community, and the extent to which group differences are recognized and affirmed by the University. The concept of "diversity" at CSU Stanislaus incorporates far more than gender, ethnography, and income levels, and includes such characteristics as age, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual beliefs, cultural and linguistic features, literacy and learning styles.

Staff Profile
The University employs [**update**, **these are 2005 numbers**] 23 executive and management personnel and 410 technical, clerical, service and other professionals, and skilled craftspersons. Hispanic-identified persons comprised 13% of all University full-time employees [**update**]. 61% of staff and administrators are female. Since 2005, new senior administrators — from the President and Provost through each of the collegiate deans, University Advancement, and Dean of Students — have prompted a wholesale reorganization of University personnel. This reorganization has streamlined procedures and processes, and has resulted in ___ new positions for staff personnel **[need a number here from HR].** Many positions are filled internally, as the University has an aggressive program of opportunity for staff development and advancement through academic credit as well as specialized training. In this way, the University demonstrates its commitment to learning throughout the institution <link to HR>.

Teaching and Learning
As it has grown and matured, the campus community has maintained a consistent focus on its central mission as a learning-centered institution in service to the communities of the region. 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 Mission Statement* (1996) <link>, the Academic Senate *Vision Statement* and *University Values Statement* (2005) <link>, and the Campus *Strategic Plan* (2007) <link> reflect the idea of a "learning-centered university" and each articulates a commitment to "engagement" and "learning."

One of the principal characteristics of engagement is the quantity and quality of interaction between faculty and students and the creation of 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, averaging 18 to 1 **[this may have dropped in 07],** and a large percentage of full-time faculty (approximately 74% as measured by full-time equivalent faculty **[same?]**). Another factor is a recruiting process that seeks new faculty with demonstrated dedication to teaching and learning in a highly diverse community of learners. Surveys conducted over the past decade indicate that CSU Stanislaus students are highly satisfied with the sense of community they feel on campus (**source**). They specifically praise the campus atmosphere, small class size, camaraderie of fellow students, and interaction with their professors. **[This was true in the Noell-Levitz survey of 1997; we need to update support for this statement.]**

In its *Graduation Rates Outcomes Study* (2005), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) placed CSU Stanislaus among twelve state-supported campuses nationwide that demonstrated exceptional performance in retaining and graduating students. 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 study. 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.

Organization of the Self-Study

The Inquiry Circles
As outlined in the *Institutional Proposal*, the heart of the self-study consists of reflective essays organized around two themes of two "Inquiry Questions" each, as shown in our "Overview of Self-Study Structure." <link>

> *Communities for Learning*
>
> *Inquiry Question 1: How effectively does the University engage a highly diverse student population in learning?*
> *Inquiry Question 2: How effectively does the University infrastructure support learning?*
>
>
> *Communities for Teaching and Scholarship*
>
> *Inquiry Question 3: How effectively does the University create and sustain a community of faculty dedicated to teaching and learning?*
> *Inquiry Question 4: How effectively does the University support research, scholarship, and creative activities (RSCA) appropriate to its mission?*

In order to address these questions, four "Inquiry Circles" composed of approximately a dozen members recruited from faculty, staff, administration, and students met every few weeks starting in the 2006-2007 academic year <link to Inquiry Circle page>. For the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the Inquiry 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 refined the key concepts, language, and parameters of their Inquiry Questions, referred them against Criteria for Review, and then divided the Inquiry Questions into smaller "researchable questions" to provide a more systematic process <link to RQ/CFR chart>. The results of these inquiries are contained in the four theme-based essays comprising the core of this report. The depth and breadth of the labor of the Inquiry Circles may be gleaned through a review of their web sites <link>.

The Inquiry Circles evaluate the capacity and effectiveness of the University not in lieu of, but parallel to, established University processes. In this way, the University is able to bring a variety of perspectives to bear on questions that are vital to the institution. Thus, membership in the Circles was proscribed to senior administrators and academic deans. The discussions, led by senior faculty members, focus frankly and openly on key issues, with the results communicated to faculty governance, deans, and upper administrators by the Circles and the self-study team through established University procedures. This organization resulted in an unusual degree of candor, rich discussion, and discovery for circle members, and allowed an unprecedented level of feedback to individuals charged with implementing University initiatives.

In the best sense, the Inquiry Circles themselves have become "learning communities." While the formal Inquiry Circle structure will be dissolved following the completion of the review cycle, the University fully expects that the liaisons, networks, and friendships developed during the self study will continue to inform campus practices.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized by the themes and four inquiry questions identified in the above model. Each of the Circles selected specific WASC Criteria for Review in which to ground their study. A comprehensive list of Criteria for Review, supporting data elements, and campus actions is available at <link>. The theme-based approach afforded the opportunity to go deeper than mere compliance. In the four essays that follow this introduction, the focus is consistently on student engagement and student learning. Inquiry Circle One drafted the essay on the relationship between engagement and learning. Inquiry Circle Two addresses the *Infrastructure to Support Student Learning*. Inquiry Circle Three describes the *Community of Teachers in Support of Learning*, and Inquiry Circle Four presents a comprehensive discussion of the *Role of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities* within a teaching-oriented institution. The report concludes with an Integrative Essay bringing together the four themes in a comprehensive statement, summarizing the findings, and detailing campus preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Collecting and Presenting Data

The University collects a wide variety of data regularly to complete reports to various agencies, as well as for its own internal processes <link to Institutional Research>. In many cases, these data elements overlap, but are configured slightly differently. The WASC review process also demands specific data elements in its own configuration. For the self-study, all common data sets were reorganized under the banner of the Electronic Data Portfolio <link> to allow easier tracking and management. In addition, each of the Inquiry Circles managed its own data requests, resulting in rather large evidentiary lists and supporting bibliographies. For the readers' convenience, all of this material has been collated into a Master Evidentiary List <link>, with each data element cross-listed by its use (as a citation or as a reference).

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 (such as perceptions and values) not immediately derivable from other sources, all data were obtainable either directly from regular University data-gathering activities and reports or from periodically administered University-sponsored instruments (such as National Survey of Student Engagement/Faculty Survey of Student Engagement). To assist readers and reviewers, each essay incorporates specific Criteria for Review by reference, and embedded hyperlinks lead the reader to source documents that provide verification of specific assertions and/or additional information. Along with the Master Evidentiary List, a comprehensive collation of Researchable Questions, WASC Criteria for Review, data sources, and University actions to enhance capacity may be found at <link to RQ/CFR chart>.

Progress Since Last Self Study

CSU Stanislaus has made significant progress in addressing issues raised in the last self-study (1998) <link>, and has identified future directions and actions for continued development. The WASC Commission letter (1999) <link> commending and endorsing the University's commitment to "learning-centered" as a core value, drew attention to three areas for continued improvement: information resources (particularly the Library), the role of faculty scholarship, and effectiveness strategies. Academic technology was mentioned in the 1998 site visit report <link>, but not in the Commission letter (1999); nevertheless, the University adopted it as an additional area for improvement. The University has addressed each of these areas over the last decade, and each has been incorporated into the self-study for study and reflection. A detailed enumeration of all activities in areas mentioned in the WASC Commission letter may be found in the chart at <here>. A brief summary of each area follows.

Information Resources

 Since the 1998 self-study, significant steps have been taken to enhance the library collection <link to Library>. Between 1998 and 2001, one-time funds were allocated to fill identified gaps in

the collection through targeted book purchasing projects. During the same period, annual base budget and lottery funds for library acquisitions were augmented as well. New library faculty and staff hires since 1998 have abetted this collection development. The Library has contended with system-wide budget fluctuations. Reductions in gains for library acquisitions have been offset to some degree by increased spending and system-wide support for electronic information resources, as well as by a library faculty and staff that have proved remarkably adept at working within these constraints. The Library has made significant progress over the last decade in the use of comprehensive surveys of quality (LibQual) in order to identify and prioritize needs. Recognizing the importance of the Library in the self-study process, the University named Library faculty to the Self-Study Leadership Team and each of the four Inquiry Circles. The Library is a central focus of Essay Two: *Infrastructure to Support Student Learning*.

Faculty Roles
One of the key concerns voiced by faculty in the last two self-studies has been the definition and role of research in the promotion and tenure process. In 2000, faculty and administration arrived at a broad definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) <link>, and an Academic Senate resolution required each department to elaborate the definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity more specifically within its own unique disciplinary parameters for retention, promotion, and tenure decisions <link>. The discussion helped promote a new Faculty Workload Agreement (2007) <link>, currently being implemented. Because of this agreement, achieved through the work of a task force comprised of administrators and local California Faculty Association representatives, the University is now able to support scholarship more systematically, as the Commission recommended. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, established in 1999 in part as a response to the last self study, has created a series of workshops and other activities <link> to guide and support junior faculty through research proposals, grant preparation, and the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process. Grant-writing support is available through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the Office of International Education **[Any others supporting grants?].** The University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, aided by the Office of Faculty Affairs <link>, has become highly proactive in encouraging departments to revise and improve the "departmental elaborations" that form the heart of the promotion and tenure process on our campus <link to the published list of elaborations>. These and other activities are described and discussed in detail in Essay Four: *Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities.*

Effective Assessment Strategies
Over the last decade, the University has developed a conceptually strong and highly proactive assessment program <link to Overview of Assessment>. Several new offices and functions have been institutionalized. A faculty member was appointed as Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning <link>; an Associate Vice President for Assessment and Quality Assurance was appointed to oversee institutional accountability and coordinate assessment of institutional effectiveness <link>, and an Assessment Council comprised of Program Assessment Coordinators from each of the academic units on campus was organized in 2005 <link>, followed in 2006 by the creation of an Assessment Leadership Team <link>, a cross-divisional gathering of professionals to discuss quality and improvement.

Assessment of all academic programs and support units takes place on scheduled rotation. Each department conducts an academic review every seven years. A revised Academic Program Review process was implemented in 2004 that is empirically based and more focused on program effectiveness by demonstrating assessment of student learning goals <link>. A Support Unit Review process was implemented in 2003 <link>. Unique to CSU Stanislaus in the CSU system, the Support Unit Review assesses the quality of administrative offices in light of the University's commitment to learning. An evaluation of the effectiveness of both of these review processes is scheduled during 2007-08, coincident with the self-study.

Since the last self-study, the University has significantly enhanced data management systems. In 1999, the University expanded its institutional research capacity by hiring a permanent, full-time

director and several professional support staff for the Office of Institutional Research <link>, designed to be a central, one-stop service office. A new Institutional Research director was contracted in spring 2007 and completed a Support Unit Review within three months. The results of this report form an important resource for the self-study. Overall, assessment and quality assurance processes have become embedded in the everyday life of the University, and these activities permeate this document. A detailed examination of several assessment strategies may be found in Essay Two: *Infrastructure to Support Student Learning*.

Technology
Not mentioned in the Commission letter, but identified in our 1998 self study <link> and echoed in the Site Visit Report <link>, was the need to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for providing and maintaining adequate computer resources for faculty and students. The Academic Technology Plan (2003) <link>, developed with broad campus involvement, was designed to improve technological support. Due to the budget reductions of the past three years, campus resources were not available for full implementation of the plan. Funds from the CSU System office earmarked for technology, grants, and lottery funds have contributed to progress in areas of highest priority described in the technology plan, and the campus has consistently prioritized those aspects of the Plan most centrally concerned with teaching and learning, specifically, with classroom, laboratory, and faculty equipment needs. Inquiry Circle Two made this topic a central concern in Essay Two: *Infrastructure to Support Student Learning*.

Outcomes for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

In our *Institutional Proposal*, CSU Stanislaus identified six outcomes for the Capacity and Preparatory Review:
[Need to remove all acronyms below.]

1. Demonstration of institutional core commitment to capacity and preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review.
    a. Describe improvements made in response to concerns raised by the WASC Commission in 1999. These improvements are summarized above, discussed as appropriate in Inquiry Circle 2 and Inquiry Circle 4 essays, and itemized here <link to RQ/CFR chart>.
    b. Conduct a formal review of the four WASC Standards and Criteria for Review. This review was conducted over 2005-06 <link>, with the results informing the Institutional Proposal and subsequent work of the Inquiry Circles.
    c. Identify any special capacity issues resulting from the review and take actions to address these issues. These issues and actions are detailed in the Inquiry Circle essays, and summarized here <link to RQ/CFR chart>.

2. Refinement of a sustainable institutional research infrastructure and service delivery.
    a. Conduct Support Unit Review of Institutional Research. Completed (summer 2007?) <link>.
    b. Implement actions to refine Institutional Research, especially in support of student learning. Actions and results are discussed in the Integrative Essay <link>.

3. Refinement of institutional capacity and organizational structures and systems for quality assurance.
    a. Conduct Support Unit Review of the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance. Completed (?) <link>.
    b. Conduct Support Unit Review of the Office of Academic Programs. Completed (?) <link>.

     c. Conduct review of Support Unit Review process. Completed (?) <link>.
     d. Conduct review of Academic Review process. Completed (?) <link>.
     e. Conduct external evaluation of the University's assessment procedures. Completed (fall 2007?) <link>.
     f. Implement actions to improve quality as derived from the above reviews. These actions are summarized above and throughout the report as appropriate, and detailed here (these fall under "Effectiveness Strategies" for "Since 98" overview) <link>.

4. Refinement of support and systems for enhancing faculty development.
     a. Conduct Support Unit Review of the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and associated Office for the Assessment of Student Learning. Completed (?) <link>.
     b. Implement actions to refine and enhance faculty development. These actions are outlined in Inquiry Circle 3, summarized in the Integrative Essay, and itemized here <link to RQ/CFR chart>.

5. Refinement of critical infrastructural support of teaching and learning by the Library and information technology.
     a. Conduct Support Unit Review of the Library. Completed 2007 (?) <link>.
     b. Conduct Support Unit Review of the Office of Information Technology. Completed (?) <link>.
     c. Implement instructional technology elements of the Academic Technology Plan (2003). This implementation is outlined in Inquiry Circle 2, summarized in the Integrative Essay, and itemized here <link to Since98 chart>.
     d. Implement actions to enhance the Library and the Office of Information Technology as learning resources. These actions are outlined in Inquiry Circle 2, summarized in the Integrative Essay, and itemized here <link to Since98 chart>.

6. Development of increased capacity in areas identified by the Inquiry Circles.
     a. Implement actions resulting from these inquiries. These actions are discussed as appropriate throughout the report, particularly as they are preparatory for the Educational Effectiveness Review, and itemized here <link to Since98 chart>.

In addition to the above, the Institutional Proposal identifies three outcomes for the Educational Effectiveness Review, and four overall outcomes for the entire review process. Each of these outcomes is discussed in the Integrative Essay <link> as they pertain to the Capacity and Preparatory Review and as the University prepares for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Conclusion
As discussed throughout this report, the University has clearly gone beyond minimum compliance with WASC standards. The report demonstrates that the University has the resources, organizational structures, and values aligned with educational objectives, and that the University has aligned student and organizational learning processes with institutional purposes. The University has made "continual improvement" a touchstone of everyday campus life. In sum, CSU Stanislaus completed its work plan and clearly achieved its outcomes as identified in the

Institutional Proposal.
The following four essays reflect the prodigious amount of work done by the members of the four Inquiry Circles and the Self-Study Team.

ESSAY ONE

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

I. Introduction

Inquiry Circle One explored the capacity of CSU Stanislaus to support and assess a wide variety of activities and programs designed to encourage engagement in learning and to foster diversity in campus life. Given the broad parameters of this topic, the Circle developed three "researchable questions" to guide the inquiry:

1. **How does the University define and build 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?**

These questions were in turn divided into sub-questions and topics, which were then correlated with WASC Criteria for Review <link RQ/CFR>. The findings of the inquiry indicate that the University has substantial capacity to address these questions.

II. Summary of Findings

1. Defining and building Communities

The phenomenon of "learning communities" at CSU Stanislaus may be described in two ways: as "academic learning communities" and as "affinity groups." Taken in the aggregate, these programs and activities demonstrate the broad capacity for building communities in support of student learning at CSU Stanislaus.

Academic Learning Communities
"Academic Learning Community" describes a group that has been formally designed and organized by the University with the objective of creating learning cohorts or addressing specific learning outcomes. The basic unit is, of course, the department. CSU Stanislaus consists of _____ departments, some of which have many activities aimed at engaging students in their majors and creating a sense of a learning community. The departments in turn belong to colleges, and there has been a sense over the last decade that the three colleges (Arts, Letters, and Sciences; Education; and Business) were growing too large and that smaller units would contribute to a better sense of academic community for students and faculty. Consequently, in 2005 the three colleges were reorganized into six colleges in the hope of creating smaller collegiate communities and streamlining administrative processes.

Although CSU Stanislaus academic curricula typically are not organized as formal learning communities, some of the most effective sites of community building that promote engagement in learning occur in inter-disciplinary and co-curricular settings such as First-Year Experience, Summit Program, Supplemental Instruction, Honors Program, Service Learning, International Education, and the Faculty Mentor Program. Due to their interdisciplinary nature, these programs are situated outside the confines of the college system, and represent unique and valuable sites of learning and engagement for students. [**Needs another sentence about how they fit within the structure of Academic Affairs.**]

> *First Year Experience:* The First-Year Experience (FYE) Program <link> was piloted in fall 2004. The program integrates two lower-division GE courses and a special one-unit seminar within a specific theme, thus supporting student learning by forming a defined

community for first-time first-year students in their first semester on campus. 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**.** Assessment data indicate that the First-Year Experience Program is especially effective at retaining first-generation students. In its first year (2004-2005), 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. **[Update with 2006-7 data; source FYE year-end reports]**

Summit Program: Students have the option of participating in the Summit Program <link>to fulfill their upper-division General Education requirements (Area F in the University Catalog <link>). Ordinarily, students select one course from each of three areas: Math/Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The Summit Program links two or three courses under a common theme spread across two or three terms. Similarly to the First-Year Experience Program, the Summit Program supports student learning through this defined multiple-term learning community. Students report higher than average satisfaction with the program as a whole, and transfer students, in particular, remark on the benefits of the Summit Program in acclimating them to the University (Pilot Assessment). These data also underscore the long-range effects of the program in terms of retention and persistence rates. The Summit Program is scheduled for an Academic Program Review in 07-08; results from this instrument will allow the University to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the program.

Supplemental Instruction: Supplemental Instruction (SI) <link>, initiated on this campus in 2004, is a non-remedial approach to learning support that provides students in historically difficult courses the opportunity for facilitated group study. **[Funded by?].** Nationwide Supplemental Instruction data from the Center for Supplemental Instruction at the University of Missouri-Kansas, which summarized the Supplemental Instruction program results of 53 institutions from 1998 to 2003, found that the dropout rates decreased and grades of Supplemental Instruction participants increased relative to non-participants. Results on our own campus have mirrored the national findings (op cit). Since spring 2004 **[update]**, CSU Stanislaus has provided Supplemental Instruction sessions in chemistry, economics, and mathematics. Approximately 21% of enrolled students participated in designated Supplemental Instruction sessions. Retention rates were higher than the mean, and the Supplemental Instruction students had a higher mean grade than non- Supplemental Instruction participants. The statistical evidence supports the value and success of the Supplemental Instruction program. Both national and local data indicate that failure and dropout rates of Supplemental Instruction students are significantly lower than those who do not participate. Supplemental Instruction participants also show a higher mean grade than non- Supplemental Instruction participants.

Honors Program: The University Honors Program <link> is designed for students who desire a challenging program of study suited to the cultivation of strong intellectual curiosity. As a condition of admission to the program, students must demonstrate a solid commitment to intellectual growth and success in academic learning. Coursework is theme-based and linked across semesters. Considerable assessment of student learning is embedded throughout this program: year-end portfolio reviews, pre- and post-testing in the first year of the program**,** and assessments of course assignments requiring the application of skills and aptitudes developed in prior coursework, and a senior capstone thesis or research project. The projects are presented in year-end colloquia and publications supported by **(what supports this program? Where do they get the funds for activities?).**

Service Learning: The CSU System is a national leader in integrating service into teaching and learning curricula. CSU Stanislaus promotes service learning as a valued part of a student's educational process that deepens the academic experience and expands civic engagement. Launched in 2000, the Office of Service Learning supports 60 discrete courses, engaging an estimated 1,965 students (EL020). The CSU Student Needs and Priorities Survey (SNAPS) (1999) indicated that of the CSU students who had taken a service-learning course that year, 65% indicated that the courses helped them master the subject matter more than traditional courses, 70% said service-learning courses developed civic awareness and responsibility better than traditional courses, and 69% said service-learning courses provided more opportunity to explore career options than traditional courses. Each of these programs reports significantly higher results in student retention and persistence, as well as in the level of satisfaction with the University.

International Education: The Office of Global Affairs, recently renamed 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 year-long programs offered by the CSU International Program and variable-term programs offered through the University Studies Abroad Consortium, which together offer programs in 25 different host countries. In addition, CSU Stanislaus offers Bilateral Exchange opportunities in Denmark, the Netherlands, and England, a special summer internship program in France, and a popular winter term in Cuernavaca, Mexico. International study broadens students' perspectives and improves language and communication skills. **[How many per year go? What kind of follow-up do we do?]** Since 2000 the Office of International Education has been working on a project called the "global learning initiative," which has won recognition from the American Council on Education (ACE) <link>. One of the major goals of the Office of International Education is to dramatically increase the number of international students on campus over the next ten years

Faculty Mentor Program: The Faculty Mentor Program (FMP) <link> provides faculty mentors and educational and recreational programs to first generation and educationally, environmentally, or economically disadvantaged students. Mentors must receive training before they are matched with student protégés. Program staff and mentors teach the one-unit seminar of First-Year Experience specifically for Faculty Mentor Program students. Originally funded by lottery in 1987, the Program now relies on a combination of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs support. The Faculty Mentor Program supports student learning through a combination of direct protégé and mentor interaction, guided support programs (including workshops and retreats), and a strong sense of community. For the past five years, continuation rates for Faculty Mentor Program students run between 95 and 100% (Faculty Mentor Program internal study). The Program was recently (2007) commended by a California State Legislature joint resolution. **[How many involved?]**

Affinity groups
Affinity groups are those that form around cultural, professional, religious, special interest, political, recreational, social, honorary, and service dimensions. In 2006-07, the University sponsored 71 chartered affinity groups; student participation has remained at about 1000 students over the past three years (EL029). Most of these groups can be considered co-curricular.

**[List specific examples and describe the goals of these programs, as above for Academic Learning Communities, especially those that demonstrate and represent diverse groups.
1.
2.
3.**

4.]

In addition to affinity groups and academic learning communities described above, Student Affairs offers a wide range of co-curricular programs dedicated to improving student learning. These services are discussed in detail in Essay Two and include remedial programs, English as Second Language (ESL) courses, the campus Writing Center, and other tutorial programs. Like the Faculty Mentor Program, several of these programs combine resources from the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

2. Promoting Opportunities for Development of Engagement in Learning

A Commitment to Engagement, Community, and Student Learning
Statements published by CSU Stanislaus — from the University's Mission Statement <link> to unit and department documents — repeatedly invoke "student engagement" as a necessary and valuable component of the business of the University. The University Values Statement [sidebar: Values] adopted by Academic Senate, and approved by the President in 2005, is a coherent, sustainable campus definition of "engagement" at all levels of the University. Similar language permeates the University Strategic Plan <link> (adopted by Academic Senate and approved by the President in 2007): the Plan opens with "Student Engagement, Development, and Achievement," and closes with "The University and the Community."

Activities That Engage Our Students On An Institutional Level
In addition to faculty and administrative perceptions of engagement, our Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) avers in its Vision Statement <link>, "student leadership… is actively involved in the creation of a learning community." Associated Students, Inc. is the sole representative body for student governance at CSU Stanislaus. Incorporated in _____ as a _____ **[they have an NPO status?],** Associated Students, Inc. is composed of ___ members representing all the colleges, as well as defined constituencies such as graduate students, Residence Village students, and Stockton Center students. Associated Students, Inc. is led by a five-member (?) Executive Cabinet. All members of Associated Students, Inc. are elected annually to one-year terms. Associated Students, Inc. reserves the right to name student representatives to campus governance committees, where they are well represented on all major policy committees, including two seats on Academic Senate. The Associated Students, Inc. President represents students at numerous venues, including the University President's Advisory Board. Students, all named by Associated Students, Inc., serve on all four of the Inquiry Circles, as well as the Self-Study Leadership Team.
[Merger of ASI & UPB?]

Student Leadership at CSU Stanislaus is supported through a series of workshops sponsored by Student Affairs, including a mandatory course for all Senators and Executive Cabinet members.
[Describe Student Success, Summer Reading, Convocation and Commencement…]

Since Fall 2005, the University has increased its share of first year students annually. This change in the composition of the student body, combined with steadily increased enrollment overall, has produced changes in the way the institution serves students and supports student learning. In an effort to increase University outreach to the growing population of residence students, the Faculty-In-Residence program was inaugurated in 2004 <link>. This program is an innovative living-learning collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The program sponsors a faculty member to live in the campus housing facility. The program fosters increased academic focus in residential living, promotes out of classroom connections to faculty, and provides increased academic related programs – all with the aim of improving student academic success.

The Department As Community

For the instructional staff, the department is the primary academic community. For students, this is not always the case. However, many departments encourage the development of community in formal and informal ways. The formal side is most acutely and distinctively felt on the graduate level. The Master of Social Work program, for example, is designed as a cohort-based program emphasizing "community" as the primary site of research and knowledge-creation, as well as within the cohort itself.<link to brochure> The College of Education's Certificate program in Bilingual Education functions similarly. **[Need more examples here of how the departments create a community and how the university supports such activities.]**

Departments also support the development of academic community through the sponsorship of disciplinary honor societies and clubs, through organized study opportunities and social activities, and through classes designed on the engagement model, such as senior seminars and capstone courses.

3. Measuring And Evaluating Diversity, Engagement, And Student Learning

Defining Our Terms

Student diversity is a facet of everyday life at CSU Stanislaus, recognizable in all our published documents and statistics, as well as in the faces, learning styles, and backgrounds of our students. "Diversity" since at least the early 1990s, has become a topic of pride, anticipation, preparation, and celebration on our campus. **[Need to come up with a definition of diversity maybe with repetition of the numbers and a formal statement of commitment.]**

The *Institutional Proposal* <link> describes "engagement" as the values, behaviors, and strategies that attract and hold students' attention and motivate them through educational experiences to become involved actively with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and understanding. From another perspective, "engagement" may be seen as a series of attractions: attracting students to the campus, attracting students to programs of study, attracting students to courses, 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 this concept, a commitment that is especially important considering the highly diverse student body and the relatively high number of underrepresented students we serve. To help us develop the capacity to assess our success in that commitment, the University administers the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement.

The most recent National Survey of Student Engagement findings indicate that underrepresented students benefit most from "engagement" (NSSE 2006). The term "underrepresented" aptly describes a significant portion of CSU Stanislaus students, and local administrations of NSSE (2002, 2003, 2005) echo the national findings. In order to broaden University understanding of the relationship between student engagement in learning and student academic success, the University in 2006-07 participated once again in the National Survey of Student Engagement, this time supplemented by the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement. Because these surveys illuminate only portions of the picture the University is committed to investigate, several additional questions for faculty were presented as an addendum (Campus Faculty Survey) to the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement instrument administered in spring (undergraduate instruction) and fall (graduate instruction) of 2007. The findings of these simultaneous surveys will deepen 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 2007-2008 academic year, including workshops and seminars sponsored by Associated Students, Inc., the Village (student housing), and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Assessing Student Learning

The University has significantly increased its capacity to promote and support assessment throughout the institution, but especially in the assessment of student learning. The Office of Institutional Research, established in response to the 1998 self-study, represents a significant campus capacity for evaluating student performance while understanding student differences. Institutional Research is the central data collection and management entity on campus, and informs all institutional and systemic evaluations. Another entity, created in 1999, that addresses student learning is the Coordinator of Assessment of Student Learning. In 2005 the Assessment Coordinator provided a guideline for assessment activities called *Principles of Assessment of Student Learning* <link>. **[Say something about what this is and its effect.]**

The University combines its capacity to understand the nature of the diversity of its students with its commitment to engagement in the operation of its assessment of student learning. The University assesses student learning in a variety of ways, in addition to the individual award of grades for coursework. Four key areas — two University-wide and two departmental — demonstrate the enhancement of our capacity in the assessment of student learning.

General Education: Assessment of the General Education program, begun in 1996, is in the final phase of development. Student Learning Goals were proposed by a General Education Task Force and adopted by the campus in 1999.   This same General Education Task Force recommended the Summit and First-Year Experience programs, two highly successful programs discussed earlier. The General Education subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee provides coordination and oversight of the General Education program. The General Education Subcommittee approves new and revised courses as they participate in the meeting of Student Learning Goals and reviews Academic Program Review discussions of department General Education efforts, making recommendations for improvement as necessary. The campus has begun a more formal assessment of General Education performance through the establishment of a new task force to spearhead the General Education Academic Program Review during 2007-08. The University participated in the Collegiate Learning Assessment examination in 2006-07, and piloted the iSkills Assessment (formerly known as the Information and Communication Technology Literacy Assessment) the prior year. Data from these two endeavors will assist the General Education subcommittee in determining overall student performance assessment strategies and priorities and will contribute to the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The Writing Proficiency Screening Test (WPST): The Academic Senate in 2005 reaffirmed campus commitment to the CSU system's Graduate Writing Achievement Requirement (GWAR), in the form of a two-step process composed of a Writing Proficiency Screening Test (WPST) and a discipline-specified Writing Proficiency course. The Writing Proficiency Screening Test is required of all students before they enter the major. Upon passing the Writing Proficiency Screening Test, students are required to take a Writing Proficiency class to demonstrate that they can write at a level commensurate with upper-division work in the major. The Writing Proficiency Screening Test, a key indicator of student academic writing skills, is overseen by the University Writing Committee, which recommended several changes to improve and strengthen the process, adopted by Academic Senate in 2007. In an effort to measure students' perception of diversity, a prompt concerning the nature of diversity on campus has been added to the 2006-08 Writing Proficiency Screening Test essays; results of these essays will be incorporated into the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The Academic Program Review: The University recognizes the Academic Program Review (APR) process as the principal vehicle for assessing and improving the quality of academic 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." Each academic program undergoes a substantial self-study every seven years (or as prescribed by disciplinary accreditation

procedures). The results of the Academic Program Review guide planning and resource allocation within the department. Some departments, English for example, have used the Academic Program Review to develop a "department strategic plan," which is updated at annual departmental retreats and is used as the "roadmap" for changes and adjustments to the English curriculum. In addition, several programs on campus have comprehensive accreditation processes on a regular basis in order to be accredited nationally. These include the College of Business, the College of Education, Nursing, Social Work, and Criminal Justice.

Program Assessment Coordinators: In 2005, the University created a group of Program Assessment Coordinators (PACs). Program Assessment Coordinators receive assigned time provided by the Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance. Members meet regularly to share strategies and assist one another in the development, coordination, and successful application of departmental assessments of student learning. The Program Assessment Coordinators work with program faculty to facilitate program-level assessment, and 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. **[Need to say something about what the PACs have accomplished so far.]**

III. Conclusions

[reference: WASC Core Commitment to Capacity: The institution functions with clear purposes, high levels of institutional integrity, fiscal stability, and organizational structures and processes to fulfill its purposes.]

Over the last decade, CSU Stanislaus has greatly expanded its capacities to create and sustain communities of learners, to engage and support student learning, and to assess student learning outcomes. We have communities that can be described as *affinity* and *academic* and numerous co-curricular learning support systems in Student Affairs, including effective support systems for diverse underrepresented students. Co-curricular activities and student support systems are discussed in detail in the following essay.

Support for enhancing faculty-student engagement implies two major commitments by the University:
- Making available the opportunities for professional growth as a teacher, and
- Rewarding faculty who demonstrate the dedication and skills necessary to engage students in learning.

Successful engagement is often serendipitous in that individuals create activities and programs to meet special needs as they arise. One of ways to enhance an "engaged campus community" is to identify those activities or programs that lead to successful learning, and to recognize and promote these efforts.

The University has developed and funded infrastructures to assess student learning that include a Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning, Program Assessment Coordinators from the departments, and the Assessment Council. Through the revised Academic Program Review process, we have enhanced capacities to assess student learning at both the baccalaureate and graduate levels. **[Need more about grad programs.]** The Office of Institutional Research has expanded its capacity to evaluate student performance across a number of variables. 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" — a dialog that will continue for some time among both faculty and students.

Summary of Initiatives and Activities through the EER and beyond

The University is highly proactive in addressing the issues addressed in this essay. Some of the strategies underway are the following:

1. Faculty governance (especially through the University Educational Policies Committee and University Retention Promotion and Tenure Committee) will take leadership in affirming that "engagement in learning" is recognized in the Retention Promotion and Tenure process as a desirable component of excellence in teaching.

2. The Faculty Development Center will create workshops for faculty to share "best practices for student engagement," to arrive at common definitions and suggest ways the University can better promote student engagement.

3. Associated Students Inc. will hold workshops and focus groups for student leaders to share "best practices for student engagement" and suggest ways the University can better achieve student engagement.

4. The Office of Institutional Research will develop a *Baseline Interview of Student Expectations and Attitudes* for New Student Orientations as well as focused surveys and interviews for departments and individual faculty on the "best practices for engagement."

5. Three departments undergoing Academic Program Review in the 2007-08 cycle will assist in the development of "engagement" criteria and suggest improvements to the process.

6. The Assessment Leadership Team will develop a Student Engagement Project as described in the IC 1 year-end report. **[Explain this.]**

7. In 2004, the CSU system began the development of a Lower Division Transfer Pattern (LDTP) program. In effect, most programs around the CSU collaborate to develop a common set of coursework and prerequisites for students in California Community Colleges. Students who complete lower-division General Education and this Lower Division Transfer Pattern should be at a comparable point in their academic development as any native student. An analysis of this practice will be undertaken **(by whom?)** for the Educational Effectiveness Review. **[This needs to be described in the body with just an action item here.]**

ESSAY TWO

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

I. Introduction

CSU Stanislaus approaches infrastructural support for learning and engagement with the utmost seriousness. "Infrastructure" is used here in an inclusive sense to indicate the physical structures, campus environment, support staff, technological and material resources for learning, and policies and procedures that guide the efforts of the University in these areas.

The Circle elected to organize its inquiry 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?**

These researchable questions were further developed after consultation with University personnel and students, and correlated with specific WASC Criteria for Review (see chart). Given the interest expressed in the WASC Commission letter of 1999 — and continuous campus engagement with these questions — questions 1 and 2 were treated as expansively as possible. Questions 3 and 4, on the other hand, were narrowed to focus on specific areas that were most directly concerned with students, faculty, and staff, as described below.

II. Summary of Findings

1. The University Library In Support Of Learning And Engagement

The University Library supports learning and engagement through its collections, constant remote access to online resources, an active instructional program that fosters information literacy, and by providing a gathering space for study and collaboration.

Physical Collection
The Library *Collection Development Policy* establishes clear priorities and principles for the acquisition of books (monographs), print periodicals, videocassettes & DVDs, audio CDs, maps, music scores, government documents (federal, state & local), student theses, University archives, and special collections; and in electronic form, books, periodical articles, and music [ELxxx, section 3.1]. The Library's *Support Unit Review* includes an analysis of holdings by discipline; this analysis reveals that the collection reflects the courses of study offered at Stanislaus, as well as the age of programs and level of student enrollment [EL041, p. 9].

From its outset, the University Library has actively involved discipline-based faculty in library collection development in order to ensure the availability of library resources that support subjects actively being taught [ELxxx, section 1.4 and 2.1.1]. University Librarians and appointed members of the departmental teaching faculty share responsibility for library collections and the selection of materials. Librarian Liaisons coordinate with Departmental Library Representatives in this shared responsibility for collections and resources [ELxxx, section 2.1.1]. The Circle raised a concern that provisions are not automatically made to increase the library budget as new

academic programs are added to the curriculum. The University typically distributes this new funding through the colleges, and increasing efforts are made to include the Library in the planning and implementation of new program development. As an example, the coming Ed. D. program included an external analysis of information needs, and incorporated these data into the fee structure of this self-supporting program.

The Library has seen modest but steady growth of physical (print) collections over past 10 years [EL041, p.3]. The current holdings include _____ volumes **(use whatever metric we used on the first page of the 1998 report—the snapshot in brief)**. Benchmark data for CSU libraries shows Stanislaus to have the fifth smallest print collection overall (the second smallest compared with CSU campuses similar to Stanislaus in enrollment or FTES) [EL041, p. 5]. *Need benchmark data for make-up and currency of print collection.* A planned expansion of the University Library in the next five years will increase **[Collection space? Labs? Group study areas?].**

Print periodical subscriptions are an exception to this growth pattern, and have declined from a high of 2,130 subscriptions in 1996/97 to 1,383 in 2005/06. This decline, however, reflects a trend towards the cancellation of print periodicals when they are also available in electronic form as a way of strategically addressing budgetary shortfalls. As of 2005/06, the Library offered access to more than 113 on-line databases, of which approximately 75% are full-text. Electronic resources include academic journals; books; music; news, legal, business & trade sources; reference works and statistical sources [EL041, p.11]. **[Need benchmark data for make-up and currency of electronic resources.]**

User Services
Whether the user arrives in person, or is working outside the physical library, the University library seeks to serve all students, faculty and staff by expeditiously obtaining non-owned items from other libraries [ELxxx, p. 1]. The Library routinely enhances its print collection through a robust Interlibrary Loan program (ILL) connected to the Online Computer Library C, with access to over 40 million titles. The Interlibrary Loan program served over _____ patrons in 2006-07. Replacing the antiquated Integrated Library System with a state of the art Integrated Library System **[date]** will provide greatly improved access and functionality.

In 2006-07, the University Library was open 81 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters, 77 hours during winter, and 48 hours during summer. [ELxxx, p.1] **[Need: Benchmark compared with other CSUs].** The University Library provides open tables for study, carrels, 48 public computers and small rooms for group work. Students are requesting additional space, and expansion is anticipated within the next five years (subject to funding). There has been an increase in the number of public computers available to students, from 18 computers with access to internet only in 2005 to 48 computers with access to the internet and equipped with the same suite of software as those in the campus Office of Information Technology labs.

The Library also provides accommodations for users with special needs. The University Library has been able to devote and equip a room to provide computer access and enhanced functionality. This access complements the services of Disabled Student Resources by making these services available on nights and weekends.

The Library offers several programs to increase student awareness and knowledge of library collections and services, including two-credit courses 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 by appointment and at the Reference Desk [EL041, p.6]. The credit courses in particular provide a venue for direct instruction on library research methods.

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 encounters provide 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 [EL041, p. 7]. The Library's website is designed to help students help themselves. This capacity will be improved with the replacement of OLLIE, the public component of the Library's Integrated Library System.

The Library Access Center (LAC) at the Stockton Center is designed to serve the research needs of students, faculty, and staff at the Center. In 2006-07, the LAC was open 32 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters, 24 hours during winter, and 16 hours during summer [ELxxx, p.1 & ELxxx, p.1]. In addition to a select collection of reference and reserve materials, patrons of the Library Access Center and other distance learning sites are offered 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 all available to students at other distance learning sites [ELxxx, p.1].

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; faculty only 50% [ELxxx, p. x] [Stockton Support Unit Review Self Study – appendix E Table 10 & Table 6]. 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 [EL041, p.2], increasing from $1.8 million in 1997-98 to $2.6 million in 2003-04. Decreases in 2004-06 [EL041, p.1] were overcome by **[need number for 2006-07 to make this qualifying statement]**. [**Need: Data on % of university budget allocated to library. Need: actual numbers in order to comment on "Distribution of Library Allocation" chart – i.e., relative amounts/proportions going to info resources, operations and salaries. Also a comment about line-item v lottery funding]?**

Analysis of a 10-year trend shows an increase from 9 faculty (librarian) positions in 1996-97 to 10.5 in 2006-07, which includes staffing for the Stockton Library Access Center (opened in 1999) [EL041, p.10]. The same 10-year trend also shows an increase from 13 staff positions in 1996-97 to 16.0 in 2006-07 (including Library Access Center staff) [EL041, p.10]. The Library could not function as well as it does without the help of student assistants. Among staffing categories, the greatest fluctuation is in student assistant positions, which at 7.5 in 2006-07 are at their lowest level in 10 years, reflecting both wage increases and fluctuations in funding [EL041, p.10 and p. 1-2**]. [Need: comparison data for comparable institutions]**

In sum, the Library demonstrates the capacity to support student learning through comprehensive analysis and continuous improvement. Issues identified for additional attention are addressed through a regular process and will be reported in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

2. Technological Resources In Support Of Learning And Student Engagement

The University provides technological resources and support primarily through the *Office of Information Technology* (OIT). The responsibilities of Office of Information Technology include academic and administrative computing, campus telephone and information networks, and distance learning. The *Technology and Learning Subcommittee* provides important policy development and implementation oversight functions. This subcommittee was formed in 2007 by

merging the membership and functions of the *Academic Technology* and the *Off-campus, Distance, and Mediated Learning* subcommittees, both of which were formed in the late 1990s **[dates?]**.

Two CSU system-wide resources provide important guidance for University understanding of its technology status. The *CSU Integrated Technology Strategy and Technology Infrastructure Initiative* (ITS-TII) **[date]** provides common parameters and target baselines for campus technological services **[also funding?]**. The *CSU Annual Technology Survey* **[introduced date]** allows a comprehensive study of campus progress and performance toward these system-wide targets and benchmarks.

The Academic Technology Plan
The University developed over several years and with broad constituent engagement a comprehensive *Academic Technology Plan* (AT Plan) to guide development and establish priorities (2003). The Academic Technology Plan places paramount emphasis on making learning accessible to students, and details principles for the ways in which technology can enhance teaching and learning. The Academic Technology Plan focuses deliberate campus attention on several recurring areas of need, including specialty laboratories (GIS, CIS, languages, music, etc.), distance learning, assistive technology, information competency, proficiency expectations for students, accreditation, and technical support. Implementation of the Academic Technology Plan is the responsibility of Office of Information Technology, with monitoring and review by the Technology and Learning Subcommittee.

The Academic Technology Plan defines ideal levels and parameters of concern for each area. While progress has been made in specific areas, the campus has identified items of concern for further work. These include the development of additional capacity for the use of learning management systems. During 2006/07, faculty members were provided a stipend to develop on-line courses**. [Need: number of faculty incentives paid in 2006/07.]**

Increasing the numbers and providing support for professional development opportunities for the Office of Information Technology staff is a continuing priority. Office of Information Technology staff support for faculty use of technology-mediated learning materials is relatively sound **[cite data]**. 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. The Office of Information Technology doubled staff off-site training between 2004 and 2006 **[and continues?]**.

The Stockton Center and distance learning sites in Merced and Sonora currently receive classes transmitted by traditional broadcast TV. The University has developed a plan to migrate to an Internet Protocol (IP)-based transmission technology **[when?]**. The Stockton Center will upgrade equipment to communicate more effectively with the rest of the University.

The Academic Technology Plan identifies several items related to infrastructure, hardware, and software to help the University fulfill its learning-centered mission. The plan groups these items into two "tiers." Tier One specifies new funding priorities for three identified items (provision and upgrades for faculty and student needs, classroom support, and campus-wide software licensing), and Tier Two prioritizes several items that can help position CSU Stanislaus faculty to more effectively integrate technology across the disciplines.

Tier One: Adequate provision and regular upgrades for faculty and student laboratories
As provided in the Academic Technology Plan, the University prioritizes faculty computing needs, and provides computers for use by full-time faculty, replaced on a three-year cycle. The University also increased computer workstations for use by part-time faculty from 90 in 2004-05 to 124 in 2005-06. Baseline standard is 90%. **[Need: number of part-time faculty].** In 2004-05, 36% of these computers met the Integrated Technology Strategy (ITS)-Technology Infrastructure

Initiatives (TII) hardware standards, this level is expected to improve significantly with the regular cycling of computers (as stated in the Academic Technology Plan).

The number of available open computer workstations decreased from 384 in 2004-05 to 366 in 2005-06. **[Need: does this number include the Collabatory? Find out if reorganization was due to space use and effective use of fund: likely, more specialized labs and fewer open labs by design].** Internet access is available at 100% of the campus workstations that are accessible to students. These computers and networks all meet or exceed CSU system-wide standards (ITS-TII).

Tier One: Technological support for classrooms
Many classrooms are now permanently equipped to accommodate computer-based, multimedia presentations. The number of these "smart" classrooms increased from 37 in 2004-05 to ___ in 2006-07, representing ____ % of all campus classrooms. *Need total number of classrooms available in order to determine relationship of our "smart" rooms to the total.* In 2005-06, the University spent $80,273 to equip new rooms and/or refresh equipment, in line with the CSU median of $81,000.

Tier One: Software Licensing
[Need comprehensive list: Blackboard, Turnitin, etc.].
One growing area of licensed software usage is in learning management systems (Blackboard and eCollege), whether used in distance applications or as an adjunct to ordinary classroom activities. 625 courses (x% of total course offerings) in 2004-05 and 765 courses offered in 2005-06 (x% of total course offerings) used some form of learning management system. A 2005-06 CSU campus survey indicates that 30% of the course offerings system-wide use learning management web tools. *Need: total number of courses offered in 2004-05 and 2005-06.* 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 essay Inquiry Circle 3.

Tier Two Items
CSU Stanislaus has made significant steps toward four of the seven items on the Tier Two list. Wireless access is available in 50% of the library and 100% of the Student Union. There is no wireless access in dormitories or open space and wireless access is only available in selected classrooms. Discussions toward the feasibility of making the entire campus wireless continue. *Discuss results of student survey spring 2007 (*Need: results of survey – could be a strength or a weakness*). Technological enhancements throughout the Library are described in that section of this essay. Enhanced storage capacity has been added to critical networking systems. Internet upgrades to improve distance learning is proceeding as described above.

Budget
[Name the Budget *Need: benchmarks and budget broken down by area, also what percentage of the overall university budget is OIT.]

In sum, since 1999 the University has substantially increased its capacity to provide technological resources to support student learning and engagement. A comprehensive 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 are inherent to the use of technology, and are addressed regularly.

3. Services In Support Of Student Learning

Student Advising
The *Advising Resource Center* (ARC, formerly known as the Office of First Year Programs and Advising) provides academic advising and support services that remove obstacles to student

success and assists students with the adjustments to college life. Students and their parents are offered numerous opportunities for orientation. During the summer, the Advising Resource Center offers New Student Orientations (as a form of first-contact advising) to both first-year and transfer students. _____ of these one-day sessions were offered in summer 2007, with _____ 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. Grant funding allows Student Support Services to offer special intensive Academic Retention Services for 250 participants annually, recruited from low income, first generation, and/or disabled students with academic support needs.

In order to assure that advising meets the needs of our student population, a task force was convened in 2006 **(?)** to review the current policy and to 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 ([ELxxx] 1/26/04). The task force made the following recommendations related to advising principles:
   a. Value advising as an essential component of the teaching mission.
   b. Designate high standards for quality academic advising.
   c. Deliver academic advising services to meet or exceed these standards.
   d. Assess, recognize, and reward academic advising excellence.
   e. Sustain effective academic advising with appropriate funding and support.
A proposal in response to the findings of the task force reflecting substantial revisions to our academic advising policy is currently under review by faculty governance. Implementation of this revision, including faculty training and departmental-level systems, will be tracked through the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Academic Support For Under-Prepared Students
The University provides a wide variety of programs and services to support successful engagement of its diverse 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, 60%-70% of all entering freshmen require some form of remediation, either in English or mathematics (or both) in order to meet CSU standards. Despite remarkable growth in this period, this percentage has remained constant. The Successful Remediation Committee (SRC), 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. As a result, a more organized and purposeful process was implemented for continuing such students, with clear messages to them about disqualification should remediation not be completed as agreed upon. First Year Programs and the Advising Resource Center responded with increased workshops and personal advising to assist students in completing their remediation coursework. The Math Department also used data collected by the Successful Remediation Committee to begin planning for curriculum adjustments in remedial courses. As a result of these and other efforts, CSU Stanislaus increased the level of proficiency of sophomore at-risk students from 77% in 1999 to 96% in 2005.

English as a Second Language
The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program has a wide range of students: freshmen coming from another language backgrounds (Generation 1.5) who scored low on English Placement Test, upper division students who did not pass the Writing Proficiency exam, graduate students working to pass the graduate exams, and newly-arrived lower division international students. The strengths of these courses are low class size (approx. 15 students), individualized diagnostic profiles of language problems, and one-on-one tutoring by trained English as Second Language tutors who are closely supervised by the instructors. This program is unique in engaging the students one-to-one with both instructors and tutors. As a four-unit

course in a small classroom setting reinforced by caring mentors (tutors), students feel a sense of comfort and form lasting friendships with instructors, tutors, and other students.

Tutoring Services
One of the most successful of our learning support services is the Tutoring and Writing Center. CSU Stanislaus offers tutoring support to all students free of charge in an open atmosphere through either one-on-one or group tutoring [ELxxx, p. 38]. The relocation and expansion of the Center in the Library Building has increased its visibility. A four-year trend shows a steady increase in the number of students served (IC2; 3-031). Over those four years, x% of the student population took advantage of these services [ELxxx, p.38]. **[Need: total student population each AY since 2002-03.]**

A full-time director leads the Tutoring Center staff. Student Support Services (a federally funded program housed in Student Affairs) contributes $11,000 annually to operating expenses, with the balance provided by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Recent pay increases have resulted in a perceived increase in the quality of tutors and an increase in their retention rates. In AY2006-07, the Center employed _____ tutors, who logged _____ hours with students. Systematic training is provided to all tutors as the Center works towards the goal of having tutors certified by the College Reading and Learning Association [ELxxx]. The Center is developing formal policies and procedures. Already in place is a continuous review process to respond to needs as they are identified.

Special Needs
Disability Resource Services (DRS) provides effective accommodations and support services to assist students with special needs to actively participate 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. CSU Stanislaus-Stockton also receives periodic visits from Disability Resource Services personnel. Students self identify as needing the services of Disability Resource Services and register with the program. The program director attends all student orientations to advertise available services. Disability Resource Services provides letters to faculty, notifying them of students with special needs who will be enrolled in their courses and advising them of any accommodations approved for those students. Information for students as well as Faculty/Staff Guidelines are available on the campus website **[No policy statement?]**. Some concerns have been reported with Disability Resource Services practices. The physical location of Disability Resource Services 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 [ELxxx, p. x,*Signal* Article]. Disability Resource Services does not currently provide testing services for learning disabilities, but does refer students to outside providers.

Campus entities such as computer labs and the University Library provide supplemental access for special needs students through assistive technology. In response to the Chancellor's Executive Order ___, the President's *Accessible Technology Initiative* **(in development 2007?)**, sets parameters and procedures for guaranteeing access for all faculty, students, and staff through assistive technology. This issue is especially crucial for our many campus open computer labs. The initiative addresses this issue by ____ **(need text to say it)**. The Academic Technology subcommittee also has recommended sharing stafff and expertise among the areas of Disability Resource Services, library, and the open computer labs.

4. Policies, Procedures, And Practices For The Assessment Of Student Learning

In keeping with the University's mission to be a learning-centered institution, assessment for student learning occurs through comprehensive periodic reviews of every academic and support

unit on campus [ELxxx]. These reviews are used to examine the effectiveness of policies and procedures, and to allow the targeted improvement of appropriate areas.

Develop ¶: One of the most important University infrastructural systems is the Office of Institutional Research. The University capacity for this level of support has increased dramatically since 1999.

Academic Programs
The *Program Assessment Coordinators* (PAC) work with program faculty to facilitate program-level assessment, and 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.

Each academic program develops a *Program Assessment Plan* that reflects the methods program faculty have determined will most effectively assess student learning for each of the program's student learning objectives. Program Assessment Reports are completed annually and provide a summary and evaluation of the methods used to assess student learning and specify what actions, if any, will be taken as a result. Methods vary by discipline, as determined by faculty; a comprehensive listing may be found in *Program-Level Assessment Methods* (2007).

Academic Program Reviews (APR) occur every seven years and have as their primary goal the enhancement of academic program quality. To achieve this purpose, programs use information from their Program Assessment Reports and other self-review processes to evaluate and plan within programs [EL008].

Support Units
Since the 1998 review, many new processes have been developed to ensure the continuous improvement of University processes and entities. One such process – unique in the CSU – is the Support Unit Review (SUR), initiated in 2004. Each support unit completes a Support Unit Review every five years to ensure continuous improvement. One of the special areas addressed by this review is how the unit contributes to and/or supports student learning. The Support Unit Review process consists of a self-study report, an external review and an implementation plan. 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. Methods vary by unit and/or division. Some examples of the methods currently being used include the Balanced Scorecard by the division of Business and Finance, and standards developed by the Council of Assessment Standards being used by the division of Student Affairs. Based on the conclusions, a strategic implementation plan is developed which includes future goals, strategies and expected outcomes [ELxxx].

Overall University Coordination
The University coordinates campus-wide assessment efforts through a robust structure. The *Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee* of University Educational Policies Committee coordinates the faculty-driven process for making recommendations regarding assessment policies, plans, resources and programmatic needs, and constitutes but one example of a faculty governance structure that supports student learning. The *Faculty Coordinator for Assessment of Student Learning* (FCASL) works to enhance student success, classroom teaching innovation, and formal and informal assessment that demonstrates student academic achievement. Additionally, the Faculty Coordinator for Assessment of Student Learning encourages professional development and provides leadership for faculty assessment of student learning outcomes. 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 an on-going discussion and actions regarding student learning and continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness. Finally, the *Office of Assessment and Quality Assurance* provides vigorous and positive leadership in the coordination of university-wide efforts for improving student learning and enhancing institutional effectiveness.

Clearly defined policies and procedures guide these structures and organizations. Examples include *Principles of Assessment of Student Learning* (2004) and the *Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)*, approved by the Academic Senate in 2002, and reaffirmed by the Academic Senate in 2006. The *University Writing Committee* coordinates the assessment of and improvements to the implementation of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement. Assessment of Graduate Student Learning Goals was approved in 1997. These goals **[say something about them].**

The University uses a wide variety of direct and indirect methods administered at established intervals to assess learning and engagement. A full list of departmental methods is available in *Program-Level Assessment Methods* (2007). University-wide measures include:

Direct

    a. *Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA).* A direct assessment of critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills. First administration occurred in 2006-07. Second administration will occur in 2007-08 and every 3 years following or as directed by the Chancellor's Office.

    b. *iSkills Assessment (*formerly Information and Communication Technology Literacy Assessment*).* A direct assessment of students' abilities to use digital technology and communication tools. Assesses students' understanding of ethical/legal issues of access and use of information. First administration to occur in fall 2007 and every 3 years following or as directed by the Chancellor's Office.

    c. *Writing Proficiency Screening Test (WPST).* A direct assessment used to measure the writing ability and competence of juniors prior to enrolling in a Writing Proficiency course. Administration occurs 3-4 times annually.

Indirect

    d. *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).* 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 3 years.

    e. *Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE).* An indirect assessment used to measure faculty expectations of student engagement. First administration occurred in spring 2007. Data will be analyzed and a determination regarding future administrations made.

    f. *Exit Surveys* and *Alumni Surveys.* Indirect assessment used to measure student satisfaction with academic and co-curricular programs. Administered each year.

    g. *Quality Indicators Survey* (QI). Beginning in spring 2008, the Library will use the Quality Indicators Survey provided by the Chancellor's Office. This survey will be administered every year for the next three years.

    h. A staff-faculty survey (developed in-house by the Office of Institutional Research) will be administered in fall 2007.

III. Conclusions

In sum, the University demonstrates the capacity to support student learning through comprehensive analysis and continuous improvement. Issues identified for additional attention are addressed through a regular process, with clearly defined policies, procedures, and practices.

Summary of Initiatives and Activities through the Educational Effectiveness Review and beyond

The University is highly proactive in addressing the issues addressed in this essay. Some of the strategies underway that will inform the Educational Effectiveness Review are the following:

1. The Library will implement the new Integrated Library System, and will investigate reported discrepancies in Library Access Center satisfaction.

2. The Office of Information Technology will implement the *Accessible Technology Initiative* (2007), with monitoring of its effectiveness by the TL Sub.

3. The Office of Information Technology will resolve issues in staff training and information security.

4. The Advising Resource Center will institute its New Advising process with full campus input.

5. The Tutoring and Writing Center will institutionalize its policies and procedures.

6. Disability Resource Services will develop a new classroom peer assistance procedure, where persons identified as note-takers take their notes to Disability Resource Services, thus preserving the anonymity of students with special needs.

7. The University will enhance student involvement in decision-making processes.

8. The University will study feasibility of extending consistent services to evening and distance students **[and Extended Ed?].**

9. The Office of Institutional Research will consult with appropriate units to determine continuation and frequency of University-wide assessment instruments.

It should be noted that the items in the above list are refinement measures, not large infrastructural issues. The University can be pleased with the development of policies and procedures, particularly since the last review, its review processes for continual improvement, and its investments in buildings, equipment, and software. 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 will be a part of the Educational Effectiveness Review.

ESSAY THREE

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

I. Introduction

In order to address this topic, the Teaching and Learning Inquiry Circle created the following five "researchable questions":

1. **How well does the University create a sense of a "teacher-scholar" community among faculty members in six colleges and more than thirty departments?**
2. **How well do our teaching strategies, curriculum, and support structures respond to the evolving student population in the region we serve?**
3. **How effectively do we support teaching in terms of infrastructure, scheduling, funding, access to materials, the library, and technological support?**
4. **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?**
5. **How well does our teaching support student learning? (What is the role of the scholarship of teaching and learning?)**

In preparation for data collection and discussions, each of these questions was broken down again into sub-questions, all of which were correlated with specific WASC Criteria for Review. There is considerable overlap between these questions and questions addressed by each of the other Inquiry Circles. The specific nature of student learning and engagement is addressed in essay one, and many of the specific infrastructural support units for faculty are addressed in essay two. This essay examines these and other topics with a focus on the faculty, especially the faculty as a community of "teacher-scholars." Thus, research and scholarship are discussed in parts of this essay. However, since the topic of the definition and role of research in the professional development of the faculty has remained controversial, that topic will be addressed in depth in essay four.

II. Summary of Findings

1. Creating a "teacher-scholar" community

The term "teacher-scholar" at Stanislaus means… "Scholarship of teaching and learning" means… **[Circle needs to define these terms, yes?]**

CSU Stanislaus develops a community of teacher-scholars through a myriad of activities, beginning with a two-day welcome and orientation for all new faculty, distribution of an elaborate handbook for new faculty, social activities for faculty and their families, and a mentoring system which pairs senior faculty with new faculty members outside of their departments. A series of campus-wide workshops are offered to new and junior faculty regarding the expectations of retention, promotion, and tenure (RPT) in the three areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Faculty are presented with University definitions of research, scholarship, and creative activities (RSCA) and departmental "elaborations," which define and specify the kinds of research and scholarship activities expected of junior faculty. Workshops are presented to faculty on the resources and support systems available, such as grants offered by the leaves and Awards Committee, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Office of Global/International Education.

College and Department Activities
As described elsewhere, the division of the three colleges (Arts, Letters and Sciences, Education, and Business) into six was motivated in part by a desire to reduce the size of the colleges as the

University grows, thus focusing the "college-community." The colleges have traditionally maintained a sense of community through regular fall and spring college meetings and many college sponsored social activities such as holiday receptions. Chairs of departments in a college meet monthly throughout the year, and most departments hold department meetings monthly or bi-monthly. All departments have a variety of social activities that bring together the faculty and students in an informal atmosphere, and many departments schedule guest speakers and presenters on a regular basis. Data concerning these kinds of "community-building" activities will be incorporated into the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Campus-wide activities
As has been described throughout this report, the advent of the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (FCETL) has been the single most significant step towards building and maintaining a sense of campus community among the faculty. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is located in one of the most comfortable and attractive buildings on campus, the John Stuart Rogers Building, which has become the locus of many important entities including the Faculty Media Services, the Faculty Coordinator for Assessment of Student Learning, and the Office of Service Learning. The Center is also the locus of faculty governance, housing the offices of the Academic Senate and comfortable meeting rooms for the many campus committees. The Academic Senate is the primary representative deliberative governance body on campus, consisting of members representing every department on campus, the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs, and elected representatives of lecturers, staff, and students. Participation in campus governance and committees is one of the ways that all faculty members may participate in the campus community. There are 14 **(?)** committees and sub-committees of the Academic Senate and General Faculty, ranging from the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee to the Graduate Council. At any given time, there are more than _____ faculty members involved in campus-wide committees. The Academic Senate holds bi-weekly meetings, as well as General Faculty meetings in the fall and spring attended by an average of _____ faculty members.

Other activities that help to maintain a sense of a community of teacher-scholars include convocations and commencements, lecture series, a summer arts festival, a Stanislaus Leadership Forum, and annual gatherings of faculty and staff to honor retiring faculty and present awards for an "Outstanding Teacher," an "Outstanding Researcher," and "Outstanding Service."

Communication among the faculty across departments and colleges has changed dramatically over the last decade. The Internet and e-mail has changed everything we do, including providing a lively forum for topical discussions of broad campus interest. 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.

2. Teaching Strategies, Curricula, and Support Structures In Response To An Evolving Student Population

Evolving Teaching/Learning Strategies and Support Structures
Current data indicate that there are approximately _____ students at Stanislaus for whom English is a second language. Many of these students are from homes in which English was not the primary language. This significant block of students is also a major component of those students who are the first generation in their families to attend college. Retention programs and skill-building ("remedial") courses, English as Second Language classes, tutorials at the Campus Writing Center, and Supplemental (non-remedial) Instruction serve these students. There are _____ classes per semester of English courses aimed at improving student literacy skills and there are _____ classes in English as Second Language. Lecturers and graduate students teach most of these courses, and these individuals are chosen very carefully for their demonstrated track record in the use of effective pedagogical techniques. The University is learning how to use more

effective writing process and writer's workshop approaches based on feedback, multiple re-writing, and editing. Discussion of effective teaching and assessment techniques never ceases among the members of the departments, the Composition Committee, the staff of the Tutoring and Writing Center, and the University Writing Committee.

The growth of programs at Stockton & Merced Tri-college Center, Instructional Television (Instructional Television Fixed Service and Codec), Service Learning…

The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Faculty Development Committee, have been a catalyst for workshops, round-tables, and presentations on topics related to changing and improving the way we teach and assess student learning. In 2006-07 there were _____ meetings on improved teaching strategies. Some of the topics discussed have been [**examples 1, 2, 3, 4, …**]   One recent presentation by a faculty member was entitled "Why I Stopped Lecturing." At the winter Instructional Institute Day in 2007, attended by _____ faculty members, the Center hosted an all-day workshop on Active Learning and Student Engagement.

All departments have established and are assessing student-learning outcomes in systematic ways, and there are department meetings in which pedagogy is discussed and strategies are shared among faculty. The Assessment Council, a University-wide body of Program Assessment Coordinators, supports these departmental efforts, as has been described elsewhere in this report.

Notable changes in the curriculum over the last decade include service learning, … **[Need to list some major changes here.]**

In sum, the University is constantly evolving and changing to respond to the needs of the students and the community.

3. Supporting Teaching Through Infrastructure And Support

As noted in the Introductory Essay, the campus built environment has increased in the past decade by _____ square feet. In a growing campus, space allocation can be a perennial issue. In 1989 Demergasso-Bava Hall was opened and in 2005 Snyder Music Hall. The University opened a new _____ sq. ft. Science facility in fall 2007, increasing the total building capacity to _____ sq. ft. Approximately _____% of this building space is allocated specifically to classrooms, laboratories, and faculty offices. In 2005, the University adopted a new course-scheduling platform designed to regularize course offerings and make more predictable classroom assignment procedures. There are reports of occasional disappointment among some individual faculty. **[What's being done to address this?]**

The University has a strong infrastructure directly supporting faculty work, including the Office of Faculty Affairs, the Library, Mediated and Distance Learning, the Office of Information Technology, the Office of Research and Supported Programs, The Office of International Education, and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. These facilities and organizations serve all six colleges. Data from these offices are available to the preparers of the Capacity and Preparatory Review thanks to the Support Unit Review (SUR) process. Every campus support entity is required to perform a self-study every five years, and to include in this report specific information as to how the office supports student learning. Many of the offices named above have recently completed a Support Unit Review or will do so in time for effectiveness analyses to be included in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The Colleges and Departments
The front-line infrastructure at CSU Stanislaus is the department and college system. There are ____ departments and, as of fall 2006, six colleges. Prior to 2006, there were three colleges at CSU Stanislaus: Education, Business, and a sprawling Arts, Letters, and Sciences (ALS). ALS

was divided into four colleges: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Human Services, and Natural Sciences. This reorganization was realized after years of dialog and discussion between administration and faculty governance and, with the recent (2007) relocation of Liberal Studies into the College of Education, is now complete. The six-college structure intends to decentralize many functions, to support departments more effectively and efficiently, to allow the colleges to develop their own sites of distinction and scholarly direction, and to enhance the sense of community within each college. The colleges provide several major supports to faculty, among them travel, grants, professional development opportunities, and regular communication among department chairs. Assessment of the colleges is accomplished through the Support Unit Review process, and faculty perceptions of its effectiveness will be incorporated into the Educational Effectiveness Review.

The departments, led by a chair who is a tenured faculty member, are intended to be self-governing entities, making key decisions and recommendations concerning curriculum, scheduling, hiring, assigned time, definitions of teaching, Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity, and service expectations. **[Distinguish "decisions" from "recommendations"?]**

International Education
The Office of International Education (formerly Global Affairs) has an excellent track record over the last decade of working with faculty on projects of an international nature. _____ faculty members have studied or researched abroad through Global Affairs sponsored programs since 1997, including several individual Fulbright programs and a group Fulbright to Venezuela. One of the major projects of the last six years is the Global Learning Initiative in which a dozen faculty members participated. In that project a series of global learning goals were elaborated and a campus-wide assessment was undertaken. That project (still ongoing) won the campus recognition from American Council on Education [*Additional input here.]*

Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning was initiated in 1998 with a staff of one in a re-purposed 100-square-foot office. Since 2002, it has been housed in the John Stuart Rogers Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, a 10,000 square foot facility. The Center is "dedicated to building a learning-centered community, and to improving student learning by supporting faculty in ways that make teaching a more satisfying, and productive activity" (Center Goals Statement). The facility also houses the offices of the Academic Senate, the California Faculty Association, Service Learning, the Multimedia Laboratory, Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning, and a robust and growing library of resource and support materials.

The Center's primary mission is the "support for faculty in their roles as teacher, learners, scholars, and members of the university and wider community as a means of enhancing student learning" (Academic Senate 6/AS/97). In pursuit of this mission, the Center:

- Provides practical advice on the integration of innovative pedagogies designed to improve instruction;
- Finds ways to support and encourage research, scholarship, and creative activities, as well as other related professional development activities;
- Assists faculty interested in integrating instructional technology to improve their teaching, and
- Works to create a collegial environment of shared purpose and mutual support, and to cultivate a conversation about teaching and learning on campus.   (Center Goals)

The programs sponsored by the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning include an annual workshop series; colloquia and guest speakers, including the previous year's winners of each of the faculty awards in teaching, research, service, and most promising junior faculty; special events, including the biennial Empire and Imperial Cultures Conference (an international, interdisciplinary conference now preparing for its third occurrence); and various other activities,

including book clubs, the Syllabus Project, and the Self and Writing Circle. The Center also offers a program of mini-grants to support efforts to enhance instruction and to promote innovative teaching and learning strategies.

The core mission of the Center is described in the *Faculty Survival Guide*:

> *Faculty development programs have been created on the CSU Stanislaus campus to support a climate that recognizes and values excellent instruction for a diverse student body. These programs support and encourage faculty to become even better teachers — teachers able to meet new challenges posed by changing students, changing demographics, changing societal needs and expectations, and changing technology. Furthermore, faculty development programs enable faculty to expand their intellectual, teaching and scholarly horizons, helping them discover and apply for grants and other research-related assistance and initiate and complete scholarly, creative, and professional projects (New Faculty Survival Guide 2007-08, page 1)*

The role of the Center has grown enormously in the decade since its establishment. It is even more vital now that the University is divided into six colleges. The Center, especially with its elaborate welcoming and orientation programs, serves to maintain among the disparate faculties of the colleges a sense of belonging to a campus community. The greatest challenge facing the Faculty Center at the present time is to devise ways of attracting faculty to participate more actively in the programs now being offered. The Center is proactively reaching out to lecturers to include them in Center activities. The effectiveness of these measures will be a key Circle concern for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

In sum, we have a strong infrastructure with many entities in direct support of teaching.

3. Recruiting, Retaining, Developing, And Rewarding A Diverse, Qualified Faculty

Recruiting New Faculty
It is made clear to candidates who come to interview at CSU Stanislaus that teaching is the primary activity expected of them. Candidates with excellent records in teaching effectiveness are favored over those who have little experience or demonstrate a desire to do primarily research. Most departments require that candidates make a formal presentation to the faculty, staff, and students, and several departments require candidates to teach a regularly scheduled class. Many departments request a "statement of teaching philosophy" of candidates; frequently candidates will offer such a statement voluntarily. All department hiring committees are careful to try to match candidates' career goals (in terms of the balance between research and teaching) with the mission and expectations of this campus. A candidate whose primary goal is to become a researcher may not be the best fit for a CSU campus.

The Office of Faculty Affairs provides valuable support and assistance to the departments in their searches for new faculty .and new training protocols: **[need input from FA and FAC… did we not just change/update/add to our recruitment procedures?]**.

Retaining Faculty
Once new faculty are recruited, they are welcomed to the campus by members of the Faculty Development Committee, and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning hosts the New Faculty Orientation, a two-day, stipend-supported experience for new faculty. A *New Faculty Survival Guide 2007-08* is in the eighth year of publication and provides more than 80 pages of advice, policies, resources, and a myriad of valuable information for a new member of the community.

The specific terms of the employment contract between the California Faculty Association and the California State University system are not negotiated at the campus level. The campus can control, to a limited extent, local conditions of employment. Our Faculty Workload Agreement

(FWA), a campus strategy for implementing the terms of the system-wide contract, addresses these local work conditions. This agreement, including all policy language and procedures, was developed with broad campus participation led jointly by faculty and administrators. The standard workload for faculty is 30 Weighted Teaching Units (WTU) per year, 24 of which (typically eight courses) are assigned as direct instruction. The Faculty Workload Agreement allows individual faculty members to designate up to 6 Weighted Teaching Units toward research, scholarly, and creative activities, thus allowing department flexibility in the assignment of workload. The Faculty Workload Agreement 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. In addition, it is the policy of many departments to assign new faculty 3 working units in their first year of employment to allow new faculty the time to develop courses, as well as to develop a research agenda and establish a publication record. An assessment of the effectiveness of this campus strategy will be part of the Educational Effectiveness Review.

One of the characteristics of CSU Stanislaus, observed in the last self-study, is the relatively high retention rate of the tenure-track faculty. For example, of the _____ faculty arriving here between 2000-2004, only _____% have departed. The retention rate has been … **[Need more data here.]**

Lecturers
There are _____ full-time and _____ part-time lecturers on our campus, representing approximately _____ percentage of the total classes taught. Primarily, lecturers teach lower division classes, which tend to be more highly enrolled. Lecturers are not required to go through the formal Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process, nor are they required to engage in either service or scholarly activities. Typically, full-time lecturers teach 30 WTUs, or ten (3-unit) courses per year. Lecturer performance is reviewed regularly by the appropriate department chair or program coordinator, and typically includes classroom observation. Lecturers retain limited rehiring rights based on successive years of employment. **[Could we say something about how lecturers are encouraged to participate as members of the community of faculty?]**

Rewarding Excellence In Teaching
In the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process, primacy is given to teaching. Faculty members are required to submit information from Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) course evaluations and also may submit supplementary written evaluations by students. Furthermore, many departments either require or request statements of teaching philosophy as part of the portfolio that is submitted for tenure and promotion. Examples of those statements will be presented as exhibits in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Tenure-track faculty are aided and supported in the retention, promotion, and tenure process by a series of workshops held for first and second year faculty at the Faculty Center and by specific guidelines provided by the University regarding expectations in teaching, scholarship, and service and by department elaborations that define and specify each of these categories, as described in the following essay.

Most departments have elaborations for the teaching section of the retention, promotion, and tenure elaborations, and all have elaborations for the research, scholarship, and creative activities section*. [URPTC has made a recommendation that elaborations deal explicitly and in detail with teaching, perhaps placing special emphasis on engaging students in learning?]*

Recognition for the excellence of teaching includes three prestigious awards — Elizabeth B. Papageorge Development Award, Distinguished Teaching Award, and Professor of the Year — in addition to awards for Outstanding Research and Outstanding Service.

5. Teaching to Support Student Learning, and The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Supporting The Faculty In Assessing Student Learning
Regular review of departmental academic quality and effectiveness is accomplished in the Academic Program Review (APR) process, the most significant tool for programs and departments to analyze their own strengths and weaknesses, and to plan for the future. Redesigned in 2004, the Academic Program Review process demands the creation of specific language to describe how departments respond to a changing environment and make changes to better address the needs of the department and the student body.

The University has solidified its ability to support departments in this effort in part by creating new organizational structures to measure learning outcomes and to make curricular adjustments where necessary. The Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning (FCASL), working with the Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee, takes faculty leadership in the development of policies and procedures of assessment. This effort led to publication in 2002 of the University's *Principles of Assessment*. In 2004, the University established a program wherein a faculty member from each department was given assigned time to act as a Program Assessment Coordinator. There are currently 30 Program Assessment Coordinators, who meet monthly in the Faculty Center under the leadership of the Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning to share strategies and to promote the general culture of assessment on the department level. In this way, faculty members take the lead in the design and execution of assessment of student learning on campus. In addition to providing new institutional support for the assessment of student learning, the Program Assessment Coordinators also form a key cross-college deliberative community.

Assessment of student learning within the General Education program is developing along the same lines, with a faculty committee (General Education Subcommittee), and a newly created Faculty Director of General Education leading the way. CSU Stanislaus has never adopted formally defined baccalaureate learning goals. Instead, General Education Learning Goals and our commitment to the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement comprise the equivalent. General Education Subcommittee is completing an Academic Program Review (its first under the new Academic Program Review system) through which the success of student learning will be analyzed. In addition, the Academic Program Review will suggest ways to better understand, and prepare for, differences in the academic preparation of diverse incoming students, be they Freshmen or transfer students.

The Faculty Development Committee, working through the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, takes as one of its principal tasks the continued improvement of faculty members as teachers. In addition to the numerous workshops and colloquia, the yearly New Faculty Orientation and Instructional Institute Day, all hosted by the Faculty Development Committee, the committee also compiles a set of guidelines for syllabus preparation — the Syllabus Project — available online for all faculty and students to see. The goal of the Syllabus Project is to promote campus understanding of the importance of these crucial documents in the teaching-learning process.

Using Data To Make Informed Decisions
The University relies on several well-established data-gathering activities to assess the quality of student learning, as described throughout this document. In order to gauge the impact of teaching on student learning, the University depends primarily on the teaching evaluations that form part of the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process. In the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process, the primary instrument for student evaluation of faculty performance is the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) form. Individual faculty are required to administer this instrument in at least 2 courses annually (many do it more frequently), and to discuss the results of these evaluations within the narrative of their retention, promotion, and tenure report. The University has maintained a strict "hands-off" policy regarding the use of individual faculty Individual Development and Educational Assessment results outside of the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process. The full Individual Development and Educational

Assessment form includes valuable information on teaching methods, pedagogical strategies, and learning goals that, if studied in the aggregate, will yield valuable information for a broader understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning. A study of aggregate Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) information will be conducted for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Either as part of the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process or for interim evaluation of lectures, many departments use peer observations of in-class teaching to help evaluate teaching techniques and effectiveness. Observations are occasionally performed by the department chair or even the dean. 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 by faculty motivated to improve their classes. **[Could we exhibit some of the departmental evals as models? English and ML both have them.]** In addition to the above, 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 effective teaching.

[Do we want to discuss the long-standing controversy over the IDEA form?]

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
At a learning-centered institution such as CSU Stanislaus, the role of scholarship is often related, either directly or indirectly, to learning. Much research has been published by CSU Stanislaus faculty related to teaching and learning, especially in the College of Education **[Will this work? any data for this?].** Discussions of the relationship between the two are ongoing at all levels, from informal lunchtime conversations among faculty to formal workshops at the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and publications on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Since 200-, the Center hosts a yearly publication, *Faculty Voices*, which is an anthology of faculty discussions of teaching and learning. These discussions are published after a year-long process of shared development and refinement, and serves the dual purpose of enhancing the community of teacher-scholars on campus, and contributing to on-going discussion of teaching and learning by the campus community.

The evolving definition and assessment of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) at CSU Stanislaus depends increasingly on a stronger understanding of the scholarship of teaching and learning. This self-study affords an opportunity to define Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity and examine the impact of faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity in the classroom. 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 of research, scholarship, and student learning. Essay Four also explores the following topics:

1. faculty who conduct research on learning outcomes in classes;
2. faculty who incorporate their own research in their course curricula;
3. faculty who involve students in their research;
4. community-based and service-based Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity;
5. support for student Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity that demonstrates potential for further degree study, and
6. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity outcomes that include student work.

III. Conclusions

CSU Stanislaus clearly demonstrates the capacity to engage and sustain a community of teaching faculty. Our campus process identifies areas in which improvement can be made, and in several areas actions are under way to increase our capacity or assess our effectiveness.

Summary of Initiatives and Actions through the Educational Effectiveness Review and beyond

1. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will establish a file of statements of Teaching Philosophies.

2. In conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, the Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning and the Assessment Council, the Faculty Development Committee will develop ways of using Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) aggregate data in appropriate ways to shed new light on teaching effectiveness on campus.

3. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee will develop a statement on the role of the scholarship of teaching and learning.

4. The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research will develop a tracking system for faculty declines and departures, and will suggest ways to mitigate those reasons that can be addressed by local campus measures.

5. The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research will conduct a system-wide comparison: salary/cost of living/workload. This data will allow a candid, campus-wide picture of Stanislaus to better promote its values and assist in the recruitment of new faculty.

6. In conjunction with Faculty Development Committee, the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee will compile a set of best practices/uses of technology in teaching. In addition, the Office of Information Technology will identify and widely disseminate information about common platforms and software available through the CSU system for use by departments and individual faculty.

7. The General Education Subcommittee will complete an Academic Program Review of the General Education program, illuminating the nature of baccalaureate learning goals and need for incoming student preparation levels. Discussion of results in University Educational Policies Committee, etc.

8. **[Needs assignment]** Assess the impact of campus efforts to enhance diversity and community, particularly efforts by Academic Senate and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

ESSAY FOUR

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

I. Introduction

The topic of the role of faculty scholarship was identified as an issue of expressed concern to the faculty in the last two self-studies (1992, 1998), and faculty scholarship was highlighted in the Commission's 1999 letter to campus, which emphasized the need to "develop a clear definition of scholarship and reach some consensus about expectations for faculty research."

The Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) Inquiry Circle formed in August 2006 to address the topic of research, scholarship, and creative activity. The members of the Circle elaborated four researchable questions to guide University inquiry:

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?*

For each of these researchable questions, numerous sub-questions were elaborated and correlated with specific WASC Criteria for Review.

There is abundant evidence of the capacity of the University to support research, scholarship, and creative activity appropriate to its mission. Data examined by the Inquiry Circle indicates that the University has enhanced its capacities in the last decade regarding developing and implementing policies for research, scholarship, and creative activity, supporting and rewarding research, scholarship, and creative activity, integrating research, scholarship, and creative activity into the classroom, encouraging student research, and enhancing student engagement in research, scholarship, and creative activity in general.

II. Summary of Findings

1. Defining Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Within the Mission of the University

Toward a Definition of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities
The 1999 Commission letter emphasized the need to "develop a clear definition of scholarship." This topic has been an issue for many decades and there has been a continual effort to address it. Even before the 1998 self-study, Academic Senate established an ad hoc Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Task-Force charged with developing definitions for research, scholarship, and creative activity. The University approved these definitions in 1998:

"Research" is generally characterized as the discovery and dissemination of knowledge or the application of existing knowledge, through the use of established empirical methodologies.

"Scholarship" is generally characterized as the creation of knowledge through interpretation, conceptualization, and dissemination.

"Creative Activity" is generally characterized as leading to a qualitative transformation of awareness and typically leads to public performances and exhibits.

These definitions characterize the general meaning of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity. Academic Senate designated the responsibility for the "elaborations" of these definitions to individual academic departments:

Each department has the prime responsibility for elaborating, interpreting, and reinforcing requirements for research, scholarship, and creative activity. Each department is to formulate its elaborations in writing.

A Spectrum of Elaborations
As discussed in other essays, teaching performance is measured primarily by data provided by student evaluations (Individual Development and Educational Assessment forms) and student written comments. Peer classroom observation is suggested, but not mandated. The measurements in regard to research, scholarship, and creative activity have been harder to define, as there are no universally objective criteria. Differences in evaluating research, scholarship, and creative activity are due mainly to differences among disciplines. For example, measuring successful research, scholarship, and creative activity for Chemistry is far different from measuring it for Drama or Music. Differences also arise due to personal values and attitudes of members of a specific college, or even within the same department.

For a decade all departments have been required to establish elaborations for research, scholarship, and creative activity for the purposes of supporting retention, promotion and tenure (RPT) decisions. These elaborations are aimed at establishing clear departmental expectations of those seeking retention, promotion, and tenure action. The "minimum standards" considered at the University level are thus deliberately expansive, and the elaborations dealing with research, scholarship, and creative activity continue to vary across departments. Some elaborations are highly detailed — for example, requiring a specific number of refereed journal articles prior to attainment of tenure — while other elaborations are comparatively broad and subjective.

[NEED EXAMPLES OF THE TWO EXTREMES: DETAILED AND BROAD]

The University provision to require written elaborations of research, scholarship, and creative activity for retention, promotion and tenure decisions is clearly intended to enable the University community to make better, more informed decisions. Differences in the level of specificity may on occasion make this process difficult. The University clearly has the capacity — in both administration and faculty governance — to address this issue; implementing policies at the department level is a greater challenge, and the University consistently has leaned toward flexibility and departmental control over a single, universal standard.

Definitions and guidelines in the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Guide
The Office of Faculty Affairs provides definitions and guidelines to faculty for the organization and presentation of their Retention, Promotion, and Tenure binders. This *Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Guide* helps to provide a common organizational structure and a certain uniformity in the contents of the binders. This procedure is useful for both the candidates and the various levels of review. This *Guide* affirms, "The four main criteria (teaching, scholarship/creative activities, professional preparation, and participation in university affairs) will be the same for every faculty member. However, the topics under each criterion may differ from department to department because of the uniqueness of each discipline." The *Guide* also provides the following categories for evaluating scholarship and creative activities:

1. Scholarly presentations. Differentiate between (1) International/National, Regional/State, Local/Institutional, and (2) refereed/not refereed
2. Proposal/manuscript reviews for journals/conferences/grants
3. Reviews of professional books and/or instructional materials
4. Funded grants

In all, _____ departments have reviewed and modified their Retention, Promotion, and Tenure elaborations over the last decade. The need to do so in all departments has been communicated to the campus by the University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee and the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee (RSCAPC). Prompted by the current self-study, the University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee chair sent a memo (spring 2007) requesting that all departments review their elaborations and revise them as necessary. This memo suggested that departments make a statement regarding, among other topics:
1. Research and Creative Activities related to the scholarship of teaching and learning, and
2. Focused efforts and contributions related to assessment initiatives and student learning.
In a parallel development, the Provost has requested that the Chair of the University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee conduct a comparative review of practices throughout the CSU system. The results of these activities will be addressed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

2. Recognizing, Valuing, and Rewarding Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

The Research Compendium
The quantity and quality of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity at Stanislaus has increased dramatically over the last decade, with a noticeable trend in many departments toward the encouragement and support of pedagogically related research. Data concerning University trends in the research, scholarship, and creative activity production of the faculty is now available through the annual publication of the *Research Compendium,* a consolidation of the research, scholarship, and creative activity surveys conducted in each college. Until the publication of this research compendium, data had been kept only in the colleges and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and was not published. The percentage of faculty responding to annual calls for faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity is estimated to have been less than 50%. The existence of this new annual publication may motivate more faculty members to report, and initial examination of data from the 2006-2007 *Research Compendium* suggests that faculty with lighter teaching loads produce greater research output. This new data source will be analyzed and evaluated for input to the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Reward Systems
The Retention, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) process is the primary vehicle for the recognition of research, scholarship, and creative activity. Initial examination of the data from reports on promotion and tenure over the last decade indicates that denial of tenure is rarely related to research alone. One of the impressions gained from an examination of the data to date is that teaching remains the primary factor in promotion. Based on the promotion and tenure tables, while some tenure-track faculty members have been denied tenure due to poor teaching, no tenure-track faculty were denied tenure due solely to a lack of research. This data reflects the priority given to teaching in our Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process, a reflection of the centrality of teaching/learning in our mission and value statements. There is no manifested desire among the general CSU Stanislaus faculty to change this priority.
Research, scholarship, and creative activity is also rewarded on campus through a variety of leaves, awards, and grants – including awards for outstanding research and publication on the college and University levels.

Leaves and Awards
The faculty Leaves and Awards Committee supports research, scholarship, and creative activity through **[summarize charges here]**. The committee also administers research, scholarship, and creative activities and instructional grant programs that address the improvement of instruction.

Sabbatical and Difference in Pay leaves provide extensive support for faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity. Over the past decade, 152 faculty members applied for a one-semester sabbatical, and 117 of these requests (77%) were granted. The number of sabbaticals awarded in any single year over the past decade has ranged from 7 to 17. When the project is complete, the recipient must submit an after-action report to the Provost.

In addition to funded sabbaticals, the University offers a Difference in Pay leave (DIP). A faculty member who receives a Difference in Pay receives their entire salary less the cost of replacing them with part-time instructors. The typical Difference in Pay recipient receives in excess of one-half of his or her salary. According to data from Faculty Affairs, over the past ten years there have been from one to three such grants per year, and no request for Difference in Pay Leaves has been denied.

Data indicates that in some years there have been fewer sabbatical applications than potentially funded sabbaticals. This disparity may suggest that some faculty members are not aware of the available resources or perhaps they are not encouraged to apply by their departments. There is a 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 data indicates, however, that there is sufficient funding for those faculty members who wish to engage in a sabbatical project. These issues will be addressed in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Grants
The Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity grants program, administered by the campus Leaves and Awards Committee and funded by Academic Affairs, has, over the past six years, provided an average of $100,000 per year, averaging 48 grants per year in an average amount of $2,100. Faculty members are required to submit an application in which they propose a research project. The Leaves and Awards Committee reviews these proposals and awards the grants.

Research and Publication awards
[Enumerate and define.]

3. Organizational Support for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

As reported in more detail in other essays, the University supports the research, scholarship, and creative activity of the faculty in a number of ways. In addition to library and technological support (available to all faculty members, regardless of rank), several campus units provide specific support to research, scholarship, and creative activities. Some of these have been in place for decades, and others are currently being developed. In addition to these programs, the colleges and departments provide additional supports through travel funding, summer grants, and research assistantships.

Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities Policy Committee (RSCAPC)
In 1999, the ad hoc task force on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity was converted to the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee (RSCAPC). This standing committee
1. Advocates for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity funding recommendations
2. Provides advice to administration on issues related to Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
3. Consults with other university committees
4. Provides support for reaccreditation efforts, and
5. Develops policies related to Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity and recommends those policies to Academic Senate for approval.
The establishment of this committee has greatly expanded our capacity to address Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity related issues.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP)
The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs facilitates, monitors, and supports research, scholarship, and creative activity efforts through [**Need: how has the ORSP been improved, expanded in the last decade; how it has increased our *capacity* in this area. Need numbers – totals in dollars: 1997-2007, numbers of grants, etc. We need to talk about some specific**

projects that relate to RSCA and student learning. How about the grant for Supplemental Instruction and other grants that faculty have obtained that address improvement in learning and research on the results?]

The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, as discussed in other essays, is a primary support facility for faculty. The Center supports faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity through a number of workshops and speaking engagements, including faculty lectures by winners of University awards, coordinated by the Faculty Development Committee. In addition, the Center hosts the biennial Empire and Imperial Cultures conference, which gathers scholars from around the world and from various disciplines to share their work. In 2007, this conference featured _____.

College and Departmental Support
One of the most important supports provided by the University to faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity is funding for travel to professional conferences, allocated through the colleges to the departments. In most academic disciplines, participation in such conferences is an essential component of scholarship. It affords the faculty members the opportunity to present their research and to receive critical comments from peers, as well as to allow the faculty member opportunity to remain current by exposing them to new and pertinent research in their fields. Another important aspect of conference participation is the opportunity to network with other scholars in the field.

Support for faculty travel is administered through the colleges to the departments. ***[Need data here on long-term trends in travel support, and maybe describe a model department or college in support of travel?]***

Graduate Research Assistantships
Some departments also support graduate research assistants, although there is great variability in this practice across colleges and departments. Most graduate students receiving fee waiver or other assistance teach classes or assist in teaching. Some departments have graduate students enroll in Individual Studies courses to help professors in research while gaining earned credit hours. **[Do we not have a firm definition of "research assistant;" what is the contract definition?]**

Summer grants
Limited support for faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity is provided by summer stipends. Currently, a relatively small number of faculty participate in the newly-instituted Summer Stipend program, in part to support research efforts, but also to help achieve parity with national salary averages. In 2006-07 for example, the College of Business distributed about $30,000 to five newly hired faculty members. **[Check with individual deans and departments for support on these.]**

The Faculty Workload Agreement
The Faculty Workload Agreement (FWA) allows individual faculty members, in consultation with their chair, to define their workload for the coming year in a Plan, distinguishing between the categories of Direct Instruction, Indirect Instruction (advising, etc.), assigned time (whether funded internally or externally), and research, scholarship, and creative activity. Through the Faculty Workload Agreement, individuals thus have the opportunity to assign up to 6 weighted teaching units of their (30 weighted teaching units) workload to research, scholarship, and creative activity. This assignment is approved by the chair and dean, and forwarded to the provost for ultimate disposition.

The departments balance these weighted teaching unit allocations against the curricular demands of their degree programs. There have been reports of difficulties managing this

process, especially in smaller departments; the implementation of the Faculty Workload Agreement thus will be a topic for further study in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

4. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity and Teaching and Learning

Faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity has a definite impact on the quality of teaching and learning. First and foremost, the quality of the 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. In addition, faculty members involve students in research. Various departments have supported these activities through capstone courses and seminars, MA/MS curricula, student publications, and student research assistants. [**Gather examples of faculty members involving students in their own research.[** Faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity also positively impacts the quality of student learning in many other ways at CSU Stanislaus.

The initial data suggests that there is a campus-wide commitment to encouraging and supporting instructionally related research by faculty in most departments. Faculty members incorporate their own research in their courses. Departments typically encourage junior faculty members to develop at least one course that directly reflects their own specialization or interest. Faculty members also use their own research to illuminate more general courses. [**Gather volunteer examples from the campus to use as spotlights. Chairs Survey will help here.[**

Many faculty members and programs use service learning and community-based research in their courses and curricula. Indeed, some entire curricula are anchored deeply in community-based research, including our Masters programs in Social Work, Public Administration, and Teacher Education. [**This topic is another that may be a spotlight in the report.[**

Departments and faculty members support research, scholarship, and creative activity for students who demonstrate potential for further degree study. Support for students' continued graduate study is primarily at the MA level and varies by department. **[Find out which departments have been successful in placing students into post-MA programs. Other programs to describe grad support: Forgivable Loan Program, Annual Student Research Competition, the Pre-doctoral Sponsor Programs, and Doctoral Forums. This will be a topic for the Survey of Chairs and input from Graduate School is needed.]**

III. Conclusions

Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (RSCA) are an integral part of our institutional identity and a major component of the professional lives of our faculty community of teacher-scholars. Furthermore, these activities are integrally related to faculty professional development, the enhancement of their teaching and, ultimately, the quality of student learning. Since CSU Stanislaus is primarily a learning- and teaching-centered institution, scholarship plays an important supportive role to teaching, and the institutional expectations for research, scholarship, and creative activity differ from those of primarily research institutions. The research, scholarship, and creative activity of our faculty – in particular that scholarship directly related to student learning – are supported and rewarded.

Perceptions of the Faculty
Since the concern for research, scholarship, and creative activity was identified through informal surveys of the faculty in the last two self-studies, the perceptions of the faculty will provide an important source of data for this Capacity and Preparatory Review and the following Educational Effectiveness Review. As part of the current self-study, several surveys are being conducted through Institutional Research. One is the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) administered in spring 2007. A faculty addendum survey was administered in spring 2007, and a follow-up survey of department chairs in fall 2007. The results of these surveys will initiate a

more complete campus understanding of faculty work, and broaden access and opportunities for faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity.

In sum, the University has developed the capacities to achieve a clearer definition of research, scholarship, and creative activity and has also developed infrastructure and policies to implement those policies.

Summary of Initiatives and Actions through the Educational Effectiveness Review and beyond

1. The University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (working with the Academic Senate) will take responsibility for creating a mechanism to assure more timely review and modification of departmental elaborations.

2. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will take leadership in identifying and sharing best practices in development of department elaborations.

3. **[Needs assignment]** Reaffirmation of departmental responsibility for decision-making in the RPT process.

4. Academic departments will review (and revise as necessary) Retention, Promotion, and Tenure elaborations for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity.

5. University Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee will conduct a comparative review of the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure practices throughout the CSU and communicate the results broadly.

6. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Policy Committee will review the *Research Compendium* for indicative trends in faculty research and correlation to assigned time.

7. The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Faculty Affairs Committee will jointly review the implementation of the Faculty Workload Agreement, in particular discerning differential impact on departments by size and suggesting ways to alleviate these disparities (if any).

CPR: Integrative (Concluding) Essay

As our study demonstrates, 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; 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.

Our *Institutional Proposal* defined the work of the self-study through a focus on the prism of engagement and learning. The *Institutional Proposal* identified 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 of them — enacted the study through their intramural practice, wide-ranging and lively discussion, and serious, collegial engagement with the terms, issues, and data of the study. Our intended outcomes for the Capacity and Preparatory Review were met, as enumerated in the Introductory Essay and detailed throughout this report.

The work of the Inquiry Circles allows the University to focus its efforts for the remainder of the self-study on the key issues and actions identified at the end of each of the four thematic essays. The University has taken action to:

- identify and to share broadly best practices and definitions of engagement, and to promote engagement through the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure and Academic Program Review processes;
- improve the quality and reliability of its information and technological services, and to institutionalize best practices in student service units where appropriate;
- enhance the delivery of these services in part by bringing students into the assessment process more centrally;
- promote and valorize best teaching practices, including best practices in the use of technology for teaching, and strengthen recruitment and retention processes for the teaching faculty;
- understand better the preparation and educational needs of its diverse entering students, and to develop mechanisms to adapt curricula as necessary to better support student learning, and
- assure timely review and modification of departmental elaborations for retention, promotion and tenure, and identify and share broadly best practices in the development of these elaborations.

Finally, the University has taken action to better understand the real diversity of the entire campus community, and to celebrate and promote those practices which enhance it.

Major recommendations observed by the WASC Commission as a result of its observations of the 1998 self-study are typical of institutions of this size and in this stage in their development. Indeed, CSU Stanislaus had identified these concerns well before the 1998 study, and has improved consistently 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 refine and enhance faculty development and to enhance the Library and Information Technology as learning resources. **[Sentence to segue]**

In preparing for the Educational Effectiveness Review, progress is already being made on each of the intended outcomes for that review. University commitment to educational effectiveness is demonstrated through the enhancement of internal assessment processes and implementation 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 identified areas for further work and recommended this work to appropriate governance and administrative bodies for leadership. The Circles and Team are monitoring these actions for the University in preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review. Lastly, data collection for the Educational Effectiveness Review is well underway, and the core indicators of educational quality identified in the *Institutional Proposal* are in the process of review and refinement, an effort led by the Office of Institutional Research, as the University moves from data examination to understanding the use of data for improving student learning and educational effectiveness.

In addition, 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 direct evidence. Lastly, the University has refined its strategic planning process to identify priorities more effectively and to use data indicators in improving institutional quality.

[Also to discuss:
EDP and bibliography of resources illustrate how the University examines evidence in larger context
IC as learning community
CSU Stanislaus as a learning organization: self-examination and actions for improvement]

In sum, the University has amply demonstrated its commitment to capacity as demonstrated in this report submitted toward the reaffirmation of our accreditation **[closer needs additional development].**