# RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE LATEST WASC REPORT
**"Report of a Visit to California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, California," October 13-16, 1998**
*August 9, 2004*

The document, "Report of a Visit to California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, California" was received early in January 1999. It was produced by an eight-member evaluation team following its on-site visit of October 13-16, 1998. The report listed 26 specific recommendations, which were reported in two of the five major sections of the report. An additional 35 recommendation statements appeared in the text of Sections II and III of the report.

This document lists these 26 formal recommendations and the additional 35 recommendation statements that appeared throughout the report. The sections labeled "Formal Recommendations: The Quest to Be Learning Centered" and "Formal Recommendations: Summary of Major Recommendations" present the 26 formal recommendations. The third section reports the additional recommendation statements that appeared within the text of Sections II and III in the report.

Please review the recommendations in preparation for the discussion at the Deans Council Retreat on Wednesday, August 18, 2004.

## FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS:
## THE QUEST TO BE LEARNING CENTERED

### Defining "Learning Centered"
**LC-1** Clearly define "learning centered" in a way that will engage every part of the campus community.

**LC-2** Actively promote the importance of a culture of learning and a culture of evidence. The administrative team may wish to discuss ways that they as individual leaders can reinforce the values underlying the concept.

**LC-3** Align faculty and staff training activities around this concept so that everyone develops a working knowledge of how to ensure that their area is continuously learning.

**LC-4** Initiate celebrations, rewards, and development opportunities throughout the campus community to reinforce the goal of being learning centered.

**LC-5** In parallel with the above efforts, formulate a communications plan so that as the process unfolds the campus community will be kept informed.

**LC-6** Place "Reports on the Status of Learning Centeredness" at the top of every Cabinet and Deans Council agenda.

### Priority Setting
**PS-1** Annual priorities relating to "learning centeredness" need to be set and communicated down through the organization.

**PS-2** A step-by-step process for implementing "learning centeredness" in every department and service unit on campus needs to be developed complete with steps, mileposts, deadlines, rewards, celebrations, and the like. The process should be published and widely circulated and discussed.

**PS-3** Strategies need to be developed to directly integrate and connect co-curricular programming and activities to the curriculum and faculty activity.

### Budget Development
**BD-1** A formal approach to integrating planning and budgeting with the learning-centered concept needs to be developed and disseminated that is systematic, iterative, and integrated with other processes on campus.

### Assessment and Feedback
**AF-1** The campus personnel need to better understand the full nature of assessment and the different ways it can be achieved. Quantitative and qualitative approaches using a variety of tools need to be part of the full assessment effort. In addition, better coordination of campus resources that impact on assessment is necessary. Institutional Research, the Office of the Provost, the schools deans, department chairs and other stakeholders/resource control agents must build an integrated network where assessment activities are coordinated and supported in various ways (money, space, assistance, professional recognition, etc.).

**AF-2** This Academic Assessment Plan needs to be implemented according to specified timelines and mileposts.

**AF-3** Systematic protocols need to be developed for assessing entering student preparation, needs and attitudes, and linking these to general education requirements and other managed learning activities.

**AF-4** Current efforts to reinvigorate and strengthen the Office of Institutional Research need to continue.

**AF-5** Specific protocols and timelines for measuring the quality of each service provided on campus need to be developed.  These will make it possible to zero in on opportunities for improvement identified through the Noel-Levitz survey.

**AF-6** Information gained through various assessments should be framed as "actionable data" and discussed with appropriate groups on campus.

**AF-7** Members of the campus community should be encouraged through admonitions and rewards to recognize, internalize, and take ownership of assessment and outcome-based activities.

**AF-8** A few critical rolled-up measures should be defined and a review cycle established so that the president and her Cabinet can monitor progress and report it to the community.

**FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS:
SUMMARY OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following list of recommendations were drawn from Section II—The Quest to be "Learning Centered" and from Section III—Compliance related directly to the WASC standards.  The site visit report noted that the following recommendations were separated from the other Section III recommendations that related specifically to the learning-centered theme but not directly to the standards.

**MR-1** Given the continuing penetration of technology into every aspect of the academic environment, a comprehensive plan needs to be developed and implemented for providing and maintaining adequate computer resources for faculty and students.

**MR-2** The recommendation made in the last site-visit team's report and by an on-campus task force that scholarship be defined needs to be brought to closure.

**MR-3** The Academic Assessment Plan needs to be implemented according to specified timelines and mileposts.  The University must follow through with its commitment to use assessment to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to set priorities to reinforce its "centers of excellence."  This will necessitate linking the budget with assessment and the identification of "centers of excellence."
   a.  Quantitative and qualitative assessment approaches using a variety of tools need to be integrated into the plan.
   b.  Systematic protocols need to be developed for assessing entering student preparation, needs and attitudes, and linking these to general education requirements and other managed learning activities.
   c.  Specific protocols and timelines for measuring the quality of each service provided on campus should be included.
   d.  A "dashboard" displaying a few critical rolled-up measures should be defined and a review cycle established so that the president and her cabinet can monitor progress and report it to the community.
   e.  In keeping with the planning focus prevalent through the campus, the library needs to develop a library plan. In order to provide a factual basis for developing the plan, a system needs to be developed for monitoring what students (by major) are using the collection and what portions of the collection (by discipline) are being used.
   f.  Finally, coordination of campus resources that impact assessment should be stressed including Institutional Research, the Office of the Provost, the schools deans, and department chairs.

**ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN
THE TEXT OF SECTIONS II AND III**

Although the following list of 35 recommendations were not labeled as "recommendations" by the headings in the report, each was presented as they appear below within the text of Section II—The Quest to be "Learning Centered" and Section III—Compliance.   They are presented below numbered consecutively and grouped under the subheading under which the statement was presented.

**Defining "Learning Centered"**
1.   . . . the next critical step must be the refinement of a working definition that clearly sets forth the attributes of "learning centered" culture so that the various units on campus can be assured that they are moving in that direction.

**General Requirements**

2. . . . the university has traditionally relied on satisfaction or value questionnaires . . . .  So far there are few examples of academic programs that have profited in this way from their assessments; mostly these are programs whose graduates have pointed to deficiencies in their subject-matter preparation for the workplace.
3. . . . at present the student government is considering the assessment of teaching (now mainly done through the IDEA form); the students have interesting thoughts on the effectiveness of current methods, and their thinking should have a place in any planning for an assessment plan of this nature.
4. Other than the assessment plan incorporated into the OIT BATS plan, there is no evidence of assessment practices and feedback in either OIT or the library.
5. At a minimum, efforts should be made to assess how library resources are being used.  Everyone seems to agree that library resources need to be improved yet it is not clear what portions of the collection, by discipline, are, or are not, being used.  It is also unclear how lack of library resources is impacting the rigor of student research.

**Graduate Programs**

6. While the role of graduate education is defined, it needs to be communicated and embraced more extensively across the campus.  (*Definition:  To develop autonomous, analytical, life-long learners who know how to inquire and create; are able to tie their expertise and experience back in to the community; and are well prepared to move on to professional positions or doctoral studies.*)
7. For the most part, while course goals, objectives, and learning experiences are aligned with specified learning outcomes, some programs need to reflect more of the "learning centeredness" theme of the campus.
8. . . . there is a need to improve the linkage between planning for graduate offerings and the budgeting process.
9. Recruitment of more ethnically and linguistically diverse graduate students in to the smaller programs should be emphasized.
10. Furthermore, assessment strategies and approaches that are aligned with the goals and objectives of the program should be developed.

**Research and Scholarship**

11. There is not a clear definition of scholarship.

**Special Programs and Courses for Credit**

12. It is recommended that this degree authorization (*the international implementation of the B.S. in Applied Studies*) not be implemented until a thorough internal review of the issues associated with international deployment are examined.

**Academic Planning**

13. While there appears to be generally favorable support for this approach (academic planning based on the learning-centered theme), specific, consistent, and comprehensive program assessment is still lacking.

**Non-Credit Courses and Programs**

14. The university is encouraged to continue to clarify the roles of the various units involved in developing special programs and outreach so that efforts of these units can be coordinated rather than thwarted by competition or confusion.

**Academic Credit and Records**

15. An anomaly is that according to the self-study, 10 percent of course registration each semester is in individual studies, mostly undergraduate.  This seems a large proportion, and raises questions as to the purposes and costs of such instruction.
16. A related concern is raised by anecdotal evidence that activities such as student help with recruitment may be rewarded with academic credit.

**Faculty Role in Academic Programs**

17. The campus will benefit by involving a larger number of faculty in the core processes of building a learning centered strategic plan.
18. The institution should provide the faculty and department chairs with the full range of support necessary to create high quality assessment tools to examine student learning outcomes.  In particular, the resources and expertise of Institutional Research should be mobilized for this important task.

**Faculty Selection and Evaluation**
19. The campus will be well served by finalizing its current exercise of having departments provide local definitions of scholarship/creative activities.
20. The University is encouraged to clarify how faculty positions are created at the level of the provost and deans.

**Faculty Welfare and Development**
21. . . . the campus has relatively few resources invested in centralized faculty development at the level of the Faculty Development Committee and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.  In order for the campus to move to a learning centered state, the resources of schools deans and the provost will need to be mobilized towards this effort.
22. The current faculty reward apparatus (i.e. the academic personnel processes; RPT and PSSI actions) will need closer linkage to the full range of activities of the faculty in the learning-centered institution planned by CSU Stanislaus.
23. Providing support and validation for adjunct faculty is important for stabilizing the instructional program of the campus.  The administration should explore ways to bring recognition and validation to this important sector of the instructional team.
24. Workshops for orientation of new department chairs are necessary to get clarification of roles and responsibilities of these important academic managers.

**Staff Selection and Policies**
25. In the creation of a learning-centered university it will be useful to convince staff that its voice is important.
26. Refinement of the processes for awarding Performance-Based Salary Increases (PBSI) is necessary.
27. Professional development should occur more often than once a year at staff development day.
28. The campus should also create opportunities for staff networking.

**Library Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services**
29. The most serious problem the team found regarding the library relates to the status of its collection

**Library Collection Availability and Use**
30. It is recommended that in its effort to strengthen the holdings of the library some type of assessment regarding collection use be made such as what students (by major) are using the collection and what portions of the collection (by discipline) are being used.
31. In keeping with the planning focus prevalent throughout the campus the team encourages the library to develop a meaningful plan.

**Information Technology**
32. Given the level of concern expressed by faculty and staff, and the growing and increasingly critical role technology plays on the campus, the team recommends that serious consideration be given to resolving service and maintenance issues.

**Co-Curricular Educational Growth**
33. The identification of the characteristics and learning needs of the students is not as systematic as would be desirable.

**Student Services Coordination and Administration**
34. The co-curricular and student services needs of evening, graduate, Stockton, and other campus and off-campus sites need formal assessment, and the resource development to match any documented needs.

**Instructional and Support Facilities**
35. While significant progress has been made in completing these projects (ADA compliance), the campus is encouraged to continue to make this a priority.