REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

MARCH 11-13, 2009

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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The evaluation team in conducting its review was able to evaluate the institution under the WASC Commission Standards and Core Commitments and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for action and to the institution for consideration.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND TEXT

   A. Description of Institution and Visit

    <u>Background information</u>

    Founded in 1907 as the School of the California Guild of Arts and Crafts and renamed California College of Arts and Crafts in 1936, this institution has been dedicated to educating students to shape culture through both the practice and an appreciation of the arts. Fred Meyer, the institution's founder and driving force for its first decades of existence, was an advocate of the early 20th century Arts and Crafts movement. He and the other movement champions believed that connection of the arts to social and political life deepened the impact of the person's creative work but also contributed to the life of the communities. Meyer's vision still infused the institution as it celebrated its hundredth-year of operation in 2007.

    In 2003 because of an expanding institutional mission and the blurring of the line between craft and art, the Board of Trustees with the concurrence of the college's administration and faculty changed the institution's name to California College of the Arts (CCA). The new title better reflected the wide array of degrees being offered. However, CCA remains committed to fusing the practical and the ideal goals of the artist in the education offered to its students. This fused mission set by the founding president is reflected in its current mission statement, *Leadership in Arts Education 2004-2009.*

    The transformation of CCA began in the middle of the 1990s. At the outset of that decade, CCA served 900 students primarily on a small campus in Oakland, CA. Under the leadership of a newly appointed president, CCA adopted a strategic plan in 1994 to expand its degree programs, increase its enrollment, and expand the second campus in San Francisco that had opened in 1986. By 2003 the goals of that strategic plan were accomplished. A second

campus located in the South of Market area of San Francisco was in operation and housed

degrees in architecture and design. The Oakland campus had also experienced growth with new

buildings and programs. Finally, a major capital campaign had been successfully completed.

Having accomplished the goals of the 1994 strategic plan, CCA initiated a new planning

process in 2003. Throughout that year trustees, faculty, staff, students and alumni met to

consider how CCA should evolve. In 2004, the Board of Trustees approved a new mission and

strategic plan, *Leadership in Arts Education 2004-2009.* The goals were for growth through the

addition of new undergraduate and graduate programs, expansion of the student body, and the

elevation of CCA's standing among its peer institutions. The Institutional Proposal (IP), based

on that strategic plan and accepted in 2005 by WASC, constitutes the basis for its

reaccreditation.

Since the mid-1990s, CCA experienced significant changes. Its student body grew to

almost 1600 students enrolled in 26 major programs on two campuses. One new degree was

launched since the 2007 CPR visit, an MBA in Design Strategy. Its fundraising efforts, energized

by a new Vice President for Advancement and a very energetic and committed Board of

Trustees, established CCA's first endowment. The college conducted a major centenary

campaign with a target of twenty-five million dollars and exceeded the target by ten percent.

New buildings opened, including residence halls to expand the number of first-time freshmen.

CCA also opened the Center for Art and Public Life and the Wattis Institute for Contemporary

Art. These centers complement the institutional proposal's third theme, "Strengthen internal and

external community relations."

Since the CPR review, CCA appointed a new president, Stephen Beal. The CPR report

assured WASC and the visitation team that the college was not losing focus on its strategic plan

or its reaccreditation effort because of the departure of its president in June 2007. President

Beal, who had been the college's provost, continues the institution's commitment to its strategic

goals and facilitated the successful EER visit. In his first statement to the college community,

the president reaffirmed the college's commitment to the arts and crafts movement. He also

promised to lead the college through its next strategic planning process. This process has begun,

but it will utilize the results of the WASC reaccreditation in laying out the CCA's goals and

objectives for the next five years,

Recent accreditation history

CCA received its initial accreditation in 1954. WASC subsequently reaffirmed

accreditation through the early 1980s. In 1984 CCA did receive a warning that reflected

questions about its financial viability, elements of its curriculum, its campus organization, and its

lack of planning efforts. WASC subsequently conducted three interim or special visits (1985,

1988, and 1991) focusing on those four issues. After the last comprehensive visit, WASC

reaffirmed CCA's accreditation and scheduled a Fifth Year Visit in 2002. The Commission

received the Fifth-year Report and scheduled CCA to prepare an IP to initiate the two-stage

review process. The Commission in its letter to CCA identified several issues that it should

address in the IP and during the CPR review.

Three specialized accrediting bodies also accredit CCA: the National Association of

Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB), and

the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) (formerly FIDER) with each it is in good

standing.

The current WASC Educational Effectiveness Review team (with the exception of Dara

Larson of Alverno who was added for the EER) conducted the CPR visit in October 2007. The

CPR visit proceeded smoothly: there was appropriate preliminary contact among the team members and with the college; CCA provided all necessary and requested documentation; the CCA community proved to be engaged and interested in the WASC reaccreditation process; and the campus community—the senior management, staff, faculty and students—was totally responsive to queries and requests for information.

At the close of its three-day visit, the CPR recommended to the WASC Commission that CCA be allowed to proceed to the EER. The CPR team did make several recommendations that would require CCA action in preparation for the EER. The Commission accepted the team's recommendation about the EER and in its letter to CCA identified several issues to be addressed prior to the EER team return (discussed below).

B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report: Alignment with the Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

Educational Effectiveness Review outcomes

The Institutional Proposal established three goals. They were

1. Enhance national visibility through academic excellence;

2. Maintain a sustainable business model; and

3. Strengthen internal and external community relations.

Finding that the CCA EER Report was not organized to address these three goals, the team asked CCA to prepare a supplementary document, which would state CCA's assessment of the college's status regarding the three goals. Immediately prior to the team's arrival at CCA the team received the supplement to the EER Report. The team also received separately the latest audited annual financial statement. These two documents allowed the team to assess how successfully CCA accomplished the three goals, and, for the most part, the three goals have been

accomplished. Later sections of this report address areas requiring continuing attention on the part of CCA.

In addition to the three goals, CCA set out ten questions in the IP "that will govern the Educational Effectiveness report and review" (p. 12).

1. Have we enhanced educational excellence, student learning, and national visibility;

2. Have we met enrollment goals, controlled costs, and launched an effective centenary endowment and capital campaign;

3. Have we strengthened internal and external community relations;

4. Has the strategic planning process improved institutional planning and the alignment of institutional resources to further the mission and purposes of the college;

5. Have we improved our information and data gathering systems;

6. Have we developed a distinctive CCA curriculum with clear, cross-college standard and strong individual programs; How have the results of the diversity initiatives strengthened our community and the education we provide the students;

7. Have we strengthened the faculty with respect to new faculty hiring, faculty governance, responsibility for the evaluation of student learning, and the dialogue within faculty and across the college;

8. Do the retention, attrition, and graduation rates from 2002 through the accreditation review process reflect on the quality of the education experiences offered at CCA or are there other factors involved;

9. What improvements have we made to integrate technology and library resources into institutional planning to support learning goals;

10. Have we created a better environment for student learning?

The EER Report was organized to permit the EER team to answer these questions. Later sections of the report offer the team's assessment of how well the college has answered these ten questions. In summary, the team finds that CCA has effectively and responsibly addressed these questions.

Quality of the Educational Effectiveness Review Report

With the reservation noted above, CCA's EER Report was well organized and well written. It allowed the EER team to understand the condition of the college. The Report and its appendices were extremely effective in demonstrating CCA's commitment to enhancing student learning, assessing that learning, and in carrying out program reviews. The visit confirmed the assertions of the EER Report on these crucial issues.

The Report explained how the college community was involved in the report's preparation and WASC review, and meetings with administrators, staff, and students confirmed the high level of college participation. Faculty participation was particularly appropriate; as evidenced by accounts in the EER report, consultations occurred through the Faculty Senate, and in school and department meetings faculty were able to directly affect the document and overall review. The team met with Faculty Senate leaders, department chairs, and individual faculty and, as a result, is convinced that the faculty were more than satisfied with its role in the report preparation and WASC review.

From its original IP through the CPR Report to the EER Report, CCA has asserted its intention to use the WASC process as means to conduct a rigorous inquiry into student learning and its pursuit of on-going institutional quality improvement. The EER Report certainly provided ample evidence that CCA was accomplishing that goal. The report provided elaborate evidence of how CCA assessed student learning. The appendices contained considerable,

appropriate evidence from CCA's assessment of student learning and of its myriad support

activities. The team finished its visit confident that CCA has developed systems for continual

assessment of its operations and student learning.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The Commission letter and the CPR team made a number of recommendations for CCA

action prior to the EER visit. These are set out below along with a brief statement of CCA's

progress with each. As noted, subsequent sections of the team's report elaborates on these

comments.

Implement program review (CFRs 2.7, 4.4)

Since the CPR visit, CCA established a system of reviews and conducted two clustered

program reviews. EER team members met with faculty and administrators who either conducted

the reviews or were responsible for the program process and is satisfied that CCA has learned

from the reviews and will continue them, albeit likely in a different form. The EER Report and

comments made in the faculty meetings identified areas for change and/or improvement,

especially in the areas of instruction, curriculum and resources. However, as the Director of

Humanities and Sciences explained, the college might give up on clustering similar or related

programs in reviews. Instead, it is considering conducting single program reviews, since the

benefits of clusters were outweighed by identified problems.

The cluster review process calls for the college's Curriculum Committee and Academic

Cabinet to review the recommendations for follow-up action. Although the cluster reviews

concluded with written recommendations, the team did not learn of final meetings between the

chairs and faculty responsible for the program and the CCA administrators at which action was

taken on these recommendations. This "closing the circle" needs to occur to demonstrate for the faculty the value of program reviews.

Assess program and college-wide learning outcomes (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8).

At the time of the CPR visit, CCA had developed an impressive set of college-wide learning outcomes (CWLOs), but had not yet assessed student accomplishment. Since the visit, the college has conducted such assessments.   As discussed later in this document, the EER Report furnished ample documentation of the CCA's assessment of CWLOs, and meetings with faculty, area chairs, and students during the team's visit testified to on-going assessment.

CCA has not conducted a comprehensive assessment of its student services. As documented in the EER Report, individual student service programs have undergone assessment and the Vice President for Student Services affirmed during the team's visit her intention to conduct a comprehensive review in the future. In light of the many assessment activities carried out by the Vice President, the team does not see the absence of a comprehensive review at this time as an issue. The team does encourage such a review in the future, as continued planning occurs.

In regard to this recommendation, the CPR team identified the absence of centralized data collection and management as a problem. In the EER Report CCA responded to this concern by explaining that at this point it is unable to respond to this matter. It did promise to consider this issue in the next strategic planning cycle. In meetings with senior management, the EER Report comment was reiterated. The college's budget simply does not allow for this major initiative; in the interim, useful data are collected, analyzed, and disseminated. And staff and faculty are able to get answers to questions addressed by directing them to one of several key offices.

Improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of students of color (CFRs 1.5, 2.10).

The EER Report did correct the CPR Team's misreading of one appendix in the CPR Report. The retention and graduation rates of students of color were not as far below those of non-minority students as the CPR team feared. CCA has undertaken a number of exemplary programs to recruit, retain and graduate students of color. Particularly noteworthy are the programs that operate in the immediate external community, which recruit students from that community and support the K-12 schools in the area. On-campus retention programs have also been developed.

Although the problem of retention and graduation of students of color is not as serious as the CPR team concluded, the appendices provided with the EER Report still demonstrate that this issue is one requiring the attention of the college. The team discussed this issue with senior management, and the Vice President for Student Affairs recognizes the importance of addressing this matter.

Review and clarify faculty governance (CFR 3.11)

Since the CPR review, CCA has taken a number of steps to clarify the role of faculty in governance and in assessment of student learning. It appointed four faculty as directors and charged them with responsibility for overseeing assessment in different areas of the curriculum. The Faculty Senate has changed its system of representation to enhance the faculty's control of and responsibility for the Senate's actions. Senate committees' authority has been clarified in order to empower those committees to play a more responsible role in decision-making at CCA. The authority of the Faculty Senate chair has been clarified and enhanced; she now meets with the senior management on an on-going basis and sits on the President's Cabinet. The team pursued these matters in meetings with the Faculty Senate leadership, its chair, its committee

chairs, and select faculty. These meetings confirmed the assertions of the EER Report. The

faculty see themselves much more engaged in decision-making at the college and understand

their overall responsibility for student learning.

CCA has additional tasks in this area. For example, the Faculty Handbook has to be

revised to bring it into line with campus practices. More important, the new arrangements have

to be given time to prove themselves and then to be assessed.

Plan for continued growth and quality at the two campuses (CFRs 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

As noted in the EER Report, CCA has identified actions taken since the CPR visit to

ensure comparable quality of services on both campuses. Most significantly has been the

creation of a dedicated student affairs office on the San Francisco campus and the regular

presence there of staff. This symbolic and real change, in addition to attention to smaller

issues, such as transportation, course scheduling, availability of library materials, has been well-

received, according to students and faculty met by the team. After conversations with senior

management, faculty and staff, the team is convinced that CCA understands the challenges it

confronts in managing two sites and will continue to approach them effectively. In meetings

with faculty and students from both campuses, the team concludes that the "two campus issue" is

not a broad concern for the constituencies involved and that CCA management is addressing

problems that emerge.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE

STANDARDS

A. **Evaluation of the Institution's Educational Effectiveness Inquiry**

Theme One - Enhance national visibility and academic excellence

As explained in the CPR, CCA's national reputation was to be enhanced through attention to academic excellence. Further, the college saw academic excellence "as having two symbiotic parts: the drive to improve student learning itself and the efforts to attract accomplished, visible, and dynamic faculty whose presence at the college will attract excellent student-artists." The EER team was impressed with the college's strides towards this goal at the time of the CPR, strides that have only been strengthened at this time. The team is convinced that this theme has been successfully pursued. The dedicated faculty, staff and administration have retained much of what was best in the original character of the school while pursuing a curriculum that advances contemporary theory and media practice within a culture committed to serving the greater community. The team has reviewed the initial proposal and the CPR and EER reports and explored the theme through visits with students, staff, faculty and administration from both campuses. Additional materials that supplement this review include research of the website and numerous curricular and administrative documents supplied in the team room during the visit.

Given the attention already shown to this goal at the time of the CPR and the team's earlier report, we highlight only a few of the accomplishments here:

- New cutting-edge curricular offerings implemented recently -- such as the unique MBA in Design Strategy, the revamped MFA program in Design, and the new undergraduate program in Animation – enhance the college's prominence in these areas and will attract students from across the country and globally.

- National searches by the college have enhanced what was already a very strong faculty. A review of the resumes of the 15 ranked faculty hired last year reveals

excellent credentials in both the academic and professional areas, and in the nature

and level of their exhibitions and scholarly work.

- The quality of the faculty and their achievements has led to increased press coverage

  and national and international recognition. This includes the presence of CCA faculty

  and alumni in the 2008 Whitney Biennial, one of the most important surveys of the

  state of contemporary art in the US; as well as the participation of CCA faculty in

  five of the eight teams in the "City of the Future" competition by the History

  Channel.

- CCA students have achieved recognition and awards from national and international

  organizations in architecture, fashion design, graphic design, industrial design, media

  arts and fine arts. CCA was also one of four design schools selected to exhibit

  student work in the 2008 International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York in

  May 2008.

- The recruitment of diverse students, including significant numbers of out-of-state and

  international students, has also enhanced CCA's national and international

  prominence. Over the last five years, applications have increased substantially, and

  enrollment of international students grew from 7% to 10% of CCA's entering class.

- CCA has significantly enhanced its multi-tiered assessment program by adding two

  new dimensions: college-wide student learning outcomes and a program review

  process. These assessments have yielded results to further strengthen the curriculum,

  teaching and learning. By including external consultants from prominent programs

  and colleges across the country in its reviews, CCA has been able to take advantage

  of their expertise, thus gaining important feedback for improving its programs. This

culture of assessment and evidence has led to an enhancement of the college's

national visibility through academic excellence.

In summary, CCA has successfully pursued Theme One: Enhance national visibility and

academic excellence.

Theme Two - Maintain a sustainable business model.

The second theme of CCA's Institutional Proposal was the achievement and maintenance

of a "sustainable business model," which correctly reflects the concerns of an institution with

relatively limited reserves, a small endowment, and a budget highly reliant on net tuition

revenue. (Only 2% of CCA's annual budget comes from endowment and another 2% comes

from annual giving.) Its strategy to achieve this goal had three clear objectives (CFR 1.2, CFR

4.1): 1) increase enrollment to 1,850 by 2009, through strengthened admissions efforts and

improved retention while maintaining student quality; 2) control costs with more efficient use of

physical, financial, and human resources; and 3) strengthen fund raising capacity to conduct a

Centennial Campaign and increase annual giving.

In its CPR review, the CPR team noted good progress in each of these areas, but

expressed concern that the challenges of achieving a truly sustainable business model remained

significant. The team indicated, however, that with the continuation of the progress seen during

its visit in 2007, this important goal could be achieved. Upon the conclusion of its EER review

and as elaborated in the sections below, the WASC team is pleased to see the progress CCA has

achieved in the past eighteen months toward this critically important goal. The team urges

continued attention and improvement in each component of this strategy to achieve sustainability

of its business model.

Enrollment. The institution reports that while it has fallen short of the enrollment goal of 1850 established for 2009 in its strategic plan, it is experiencing the "highest enrollment in history." A review of the enrollment data bears this out. By the fall, 2008, enrollment had grown to 1671 student FTEs, 115 more than the prior fall. In the spring, 2009, enrollment of 1543 student FTEs exceeded the 2008 spring enrollment by 100 FTEs. With more focus on its recruitment efforts, applications and admissions across most key categories have improved markedly (CFR 3.5). Freshmen applications have grown by 35% in the past two years. [NOTE: 879 applicants in fall 2006 and 1182 in fall 2008] Transfers from both community colleges and other institutions are also up. New aggressive efforts in international recruitment, including university sponsored recruitment events overseas, have helped contribute to the increase in this category of enrollees. Although the total enrollment is short of its IP goal, the institution's investments in national, international, and diversity recruitment have clearly paid off (CFR 3.5).

The institution's work with Noel-Levitz, student retention consultants, had begun shortly before the review team's first visit in October 2007. That engagement, along with some relatively modest increases in financial aid, has contributed to improved retention (CFR 3.5). This year, however, the institution experienced a 1% decrease in its rate of retention from the first to the second year. In response to the concern that economic considerations may continue to reduce retention, it is establishing a new retention initiative to provide additional financial aid to many current students now receiving institutional aid.

Looking ahead, the institution's undergraduate and graduate applications for fall 2009 are ahead of last year. A greater percentage of these applications come from other regions of the country. The percentage of applications from most ethnic groups is also higher compared to last year. It is clear that the market perceives greater value in the CCA learning experience. Given

the events in the economy during the past year, the institution's record of continuing to make

advances in overall freshmen enrollment, graduate enrollment, international enrollment, and

diversity enrollment shows the success of its investments and staff efforts in this area (CFR 3.5).

In fiscal year 2008, the tuition discount increased 1% to just over 28%, and for the

revised budget in FY 2009 tuition discount is expected to be just over 29%. The tuition discount

rate for the coming year will be near the 30% limit the institution has set for itself. Since each

percentage point of additional tuition discount reduces net revenue by approximately $500,000,

further increases in financial aid should be considered carefully (CFR 3.5).

Cost Controls. The institution continues to experience great pressures on its overall

budget as it aspires to improve the quality of its educational offerings, the operations of two

separate campuses, their facilities, and student life. Despite these demands, with a solid record

of good financial stewardship of its limited resources, the institution has continued its series of

balanced budgets in FY 2008 and expects to have a balanced budget at the end of the current

fiscal year (CFR 3.5, 3.10).

Despite balanced budgets, it is clear that the capacity of annual operating revenue to

cover the annual operating expenses is being strained. According to the FY 2008 audited

financial statements, the operating expenses (including depreciation) exceeded the operating

revenue by approximately $1 million that year. While net tuition increased 2.9% in FY 2008,

expenses for program services increased by 10.1%, expenses for general and administrative

services increased 8.2%, and expenses for fundraising and communications decreased by 12.6%.

Overall, expenses increased slightly less than 8%. For the current fiscal year 2009, the alignment

of revenue and expenditure growth is expected to improve. The net tuition revenue is projected

to increase 4.2% over FY 2008 while expenses are expected to increase between two and three

percent. While financial aid is an important component of the institution's strategy to achieve

enrollment projects, the projected 14 percent increase in financial aid in FY 2009 over FY 2008

limits net revenue available and causes the tuition discount rate to approach 30 percent (CFR

3.5).

There have been relatively small but positive increases in the net revenue per student

since the team's last visit. However, with the tuition discount increasing to maintain and grow

enrollments, the institution's plan to add additional financial aid for "retention incentives" must

be considered carefully so as not to adversely affect net revenue and the ability to make other

key strategic investments.

The College has a relatively small endowment, which, like virtually all other college

endowments, has been adversely affected by the recent economic downturn. Because of this

market downturn, endowment support may be reduced by as much as $750,000 for FY 2010.

Senior management will be working with some endowment donors to enable exceptional

treatment for their endowments during this challenging period. It will also consider selectively

providing additional unrestricted funds to make up for some of the losses in endowment payout.

It is important for the institution to consider carefully the additional strain on the budget of using

unrestricted net tuition revenue to make up for the loss of endowed income (CFR 3.5, CFR 3.6).

Since the team's visit in 2007, the institution appears to have effected a reduction in

faculty FTE while increasing the number of full-time faculty. This may or may not reduce

operating costs, but student learning should benefit with more full-time faculty. The decision to

hire ranked faculty may increase the faculty-student ratio (CFR 3.2).

Overall, the institution's budget is developed with prudently conservative estimates of

revenue. Given the great pressures that continue for additional resources especially with the

stresses of maintaining or growing enrollments in a difficult economic climate, the institution

must be sure resources are in place to sustain its business model and provide a quality

educational experience for its students (CFR 3.10).

Advancement and fundraising. The third critical component of the institution's strategic

plan to achieve a sustainable business model was the strengthening of its fund-raising and

advancement efforts. The institution realized impressive results from the Centennial Campaign

it completed since the team's last visit. It exceeded the goal of the fund-raising campaign by

more than $2 million and drew contributions from a wide variety of the college's constituents.

Approximately two-thirds of the gifts and pledges to the campaign came from members of the

college's board. While it is highly commendable for the board to indicate its great confidence in

and support for the college, the institution recognizes it needs to work to broaden its donor base

which can provide in a sustained way both annual giving support as well as new major gifts

(CFR 3.5).

The school's effort to develop and strengthen a branding package to sharpen and

modernize the perception of the college will help, but a successful advancement campaign needs

to have a comprehensive and sustained approach. Attention to major gifts and grants, annual

giving, alumni and other friends and supporters of the college, and deferred or planned gifts are

all important to a sustained and successful fund-raising and advancement effort. Obviously,

these programs require both human and financial resources be invested. While recognizing the

challenges of allocating the institution's limited financial resources and especially while not in a

campaign mode, the team is concerned that the college not lose the great momentum it has

gained from the campaign's success. If the college reduces support for advancement because the

campaign is over, it risks losing the momentum and support developed during the campaign.

Regaining that support later will be more difficult than maintaining it. The institution was

correct in its 2005 proposal that a strong and effective advancement operation was critical for a

highly enrollment dependent institution to achieve a sustainable business model (CFR 3.1, 3.5).

Theme Three - Strengthen internal and external community relations

During its CPR visit, the team found a broad-based commitment and on-going efforts to

improve the sense of community on campus and to engage the community around the campus.

The EER team sees a continuation of this commitment and effort. In fact, CCA has expanded its

strategies used to accomplish this theme. In addition to continuing the extensive outreach of the

Center for Art and Public Life and its programs designed to connect students to the community,

the added staff in student life, the creation of a career services position to grow internships, and

the expansion of housing and lounge spaces on campus have offered additional means to build

community.

Earning special mention are two efforts that have involved many members of the faculty,

administration, staff, and board and will have far-reaching implications. First, a strategic

planning process is underway that has drawn participants from all constituency groups and from

all over the two CCA campuses. Over 600 people have been involved in discussions and

exercises about the changes that have taken place at CCA since the last strategic plan was

adopted and, even more important to those involved, in discussions about values fostered by

CCA and what matters to all constituencies as they contemplate and plan for their future. The

planning process created much cross-disciplinary and cross-function interaction, leading to new

relationships and a feeling of appreciation for the work of others. In meetings with those

involved, the team sensed energy and excitement about continuing to the next phase of planning

and identifying directions for action.

Second, one of the most important objectives identified as part of this theme was to enhance diversity and promote respect for difference on campus. As mentioned in the CPR report and outlined further in this report (see section C), CCA is a college committed to increasing diversity among students, faculty, staff, and trustees and ensuring that all students are well prepared to be leading "shapers of culture in a global community," as one discussion participant summarized.

During the CPR visit, the team was impressed with the energy and accomplishments of the Center for Art and Public Life and its director in spearheading many of the campus's diversity efforts. At the same time, it was concerned, as were others in the administration and faculty, that there was too much vested in the success of one unit and perhaps one person. To truly transform the community, many stakeholders needed to take responsibility and be held accountable for achieving the college's diversity objectives. In the 18 months between visits, the progress with diversity has been remarkable. Instead of relying on a single person in a single center, staff members in various offices and faculty from across the campus have accepted responsibility for different aspects of diversity programming. Although many of the former projects are continuing (e.g., the Center Student Fellowships, the community outreach through the Center, faculty development around diversity), so much more movement is apparent. Among the developments:

- The increase in diversity among the student body.

- The expansion of faculty diversity training beyond "volunteers" to all department chairs and to all new faculty.

- The appointment of a faculty co-director of the Center who has a mission to "in-reach" to ensure broader curricular involvement and the College's burgeoning plans

      to use service learning to infuse the curriculum with opportunities for faculty and for students to be exposed to difference.

- The almost unanimous opinion by faculty and staff queried during meetings with the team that there is a new energy and engagement around topics of diversity. Some said that there is a "paradigm shift" underway.

CCA still has tasks to complete and faculty and staff to engage. Not all faculty are convinced that the efforts underway are sufficient or that the strategy for distributing responsibility and accountability is the correct one to take. In meetings with students, some mentioned a frustration with the lack of diversity among the student body and in curricular content (while others were pleased at least with the changes in the latter). CCA's retention of students of color is not as successful as it would like, despite considerable financial resources and other support systems being directed to this population. And recruitment and retention of faculty of color is not as successful as CCA would like either. However, this is a campus committed to achieving its aims, planning appropriately to do so, and directing considerable financial and person-power to transforming the institution to better accomplish this mission.

In summary, the team concludes that CCA has made great strides in achieving the goals set out around this theme. Diversity remains a college-wide objective, and from the documents given the team, this will be a primary goal in the new strategic plan. The college president, in his meeting with the team, was emphatic about the crucial importance of accomplishing the diversity goal. As explained below (see Section II. D.), the faculty now see the campus relations much more supportive and encouraging. Our meetings with faculty and administrators revealed that faculty morale has improved tremendously since the CPR visit. The college appears to be much

more of a community than it was 18 months ago. The college is primed for the next stage of planning and development.

B. Institution's Systems for Enhancing Educational Effectiveness and Student Learning

CCA has a comprehensive system for assuring quality of student learning and institutional performance and continuing institutional improvement (CFR 4.3, 4.4). The paragraphs below provide specific information on different elements of the system. In summary, the system involves level reviews (i.e., First Year Review, Junior Year Review, and Graduate Level Review), portfolio assessments, capstone reviews, College-Wide Learning Outcomes assessment, and Cluster Program Reviews (CFR 2.7). These are established but under ongoing evaluation (CFR 4.6). The results from the different assessments are used to apprise students of their progress, modify curriculum, and affect college level intermediate and long-term planning CFR (CFR 4.1). The EER team is impressed with the current state of CCA's system for enhancing educational effectiveness and student learning and with the enthusiasm to continue to perfect the system.

In its IP, CCA laid out several questions about the college's system for enhancing educational effectiveness and student learning. They are:

1.   Has CCA developed a distinctive curriculum with clear, cross college standards and strong individual programs;

2.   Has faculty been strengthened through new hiring, faculty governance and responsibility for the evaluation of student learning and dialogue within faculty across the college;

3.   Has CCA created a better learning environment for student learning.

The college has answered these questions in the affirmative.

CCA developed a strategic plan (CFR 4.1) that has aligned institutional resources to further the mission of building a distinctive curriculum. The college is in the first stages of its next strategic planning. In analyzing the strategic plan, the IP, and the CPR and EER reports, the team identified three systems for improving teaching and learning. With each of these, the college has improved the systems' operation during the reaccreditation period. The three include faculty governance and faculty acceptance of the responsibility for teaching and learning (CFR 2.4, 4.6), pedagogic practice (CFR 3.4), and assessment standards and practices that are integrated within strong individual programs (CFR 4.4).

From meetings with faculty, chairs and directors of programs, the team learned of the faculty's positive reception to changes in governance and academic management. The establishment of four divisions overseen by faculty directors rather than associate deans has led to a vastly improved system of communication among faculty and increased collaboration on important college-wide decision-making and strategic planning. Faculty expressed a sense of empowerment regarding the curriculum and student learning. The four division directors and graduate director have worked effectively since the summer of 2008 to explore important structural, financial, assessment and pedagogic issues. The four directors described important developments in building divisional partnerships, allocating budgets based upon greatest needs across divisions, and developing effective assessment of faculty through direct connection with the Appointment and Tenure Committee.

A second and vitally important system that improves teaching and learning is the quality assurance process provided through the review of actual student work (CFR 2.5). CCA has created a strong and open culture (CCA defines it as a "culture of critique") that provides

students with active critical practice of presenting and reviewing work within a public setting.

The facilities at both campuses are designed to maximize the presenting spaces for completed

work, work in progress and collaborative work. The team judges this a tremendous asset of the

CCA pedagogic practice. Tours of both campuses on both visits showed the course level

assessment and student-centered selection process of temporary displays or exhibits. Students

become highly engaged in peer assessment practices that are ongoing and allow for community

level discussion of educational objectives across programs.

The open air or flexible spaces act as teaching spaces and thus serve as a vital model of

informal assessment culture. The daily practice of public presentation of learning allowed the

team to assess the results of student learning. CCA is to be commended for its

exhibition/informal assessment strategy. The division of space allowed the team to assess the

work products across developmental levels and programs. In viewing works generated for the

First Year Program, the team was able to determine that core studio and 100 level electives were

meeting defined outcomes in cognitive and creative approaches to multimedia production. Other

program displays demonstrated process learning through the inclusion of preparatory drawings,

iterations and final projects related to design problems. Junior review portfolios detailed

comprehensive understanding of student work across time. Individuality, scholarly approach to

material and processes and attention to formal structure were noted throughout the diverse

exhibits. Most importantly, the spaces were active with students highly involved in methods of

interpretation and critical analysis of peer work. The overall environment of both campuses

projects a sense of student ownership of space and a vibrant support of experimental and

imaginative thinking that involves interdisciplinary activity essential to creative process (CFR

2.8).

While program faculty are charged with responsibility for program learning outcomes (PLOs), the Faculty Senate's Curriculum Committee oversees the assessment of college-wide learning outcomes (CWLO; e.g., communication skills). The CC also is developing both student and peer evaluation forms that will provide effective data collection for CWLOs and PLOs.

With the requirement of First Year Review, Junior Review and Senior Review, CCA is creating a distinctive curriculum that assures student performance is reflective of educational objectives (CFR 2.4, 4.4). The process of portfolio preparation for the reviews is embedded within course and program level assessments that guide students to define their individualized approach to meeting outcomes. Students are introduced to portfolio as a process during core studios in FYP, where processes include selection, editing and digital documentation. Rubrics to measure outcome achievement at the course, program and college-wide level have been developed. Students are introduced to the use of rubrics and outcome assessment during the FYP as preparation for ongoing measured assessment practices that will be used in their chosen programs. The faculty are incorporating the language of outcomes and assessment into their teaching practice across developmental levels of expected student performance.

The team thoroughly reviewed assessment rubrics and applauds the high levels of development accomplished by CCA since the CPR. Continued focus on evaluation and refinement is suggested. This approach will lead to even greater capacity to collect quality data and effectively assure student understandings of outcome assessment.

In the meeting with FYP faculty and one student, the team learned that FYP assessment showed students needing improvement in communication skills. The faculty are planning modifications to the curriculum to assist students meet this LO. The team would encourage CCA to investigate cross-curricular outcomes and pedagogy for speaking and writing. The discussion

with FYP faculty also covered the area of quantitative literacy. The team observed that while quantitative skills may be used throughout the arts disciplines, no program or college-wide outcomes have been developed to measure student learning or faculty teaching methodology. While architecture mandates the development of quantitative skills, the arts curriculum should also be more attentive to this area. Measuring, ratio, formula, estimation and many other mathematical or quantitative skills are central to the creative process (CFR 2.4, 2.7), and CCA should ensure that its graduates gain the necessary quantitative skills.

Professional portfolio construction is emphasized at each level of review. Students at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels indicated that outcomes were addressed in syllabi, course and program assessments (CFR 2.3). From its meetings with students, the team learned that they in general recognized the developmental and summative nature of the review process, and students thoughtfully shared how assessment assisted them in selection of courses, programs and self-directed goals for improvement. Shared language about learning outcomes and assessment processes is developing. A partnership in building a strong evidence-based assessment culture is tangible in student faculty interactions (CFR 2.4), and the team encourages CCA to continue this work.

Discussions with faculty and students about the process of assessment revealed a shared belief in the value of evidence to improve both teaching and learning. The students gave insights into the value of feedback from a variety of sources. They were particularly positive about having assessors from across the college and the outside community, which provided them with opportunities to practice professional presentations.

CCA has also begun to build a support structure to assist with student learning, including training and mentoring models consistent with diverse student learning preferences. These

include freshman orientation, advising embedded within core studios, and faculty mentoring in

the first-year and throughout programs offered by the Centers. At the intermediate levels, much

support is centered in programs and includes new focused courses, tutorials and most importantly

student attendance at peer presentations. Students noted that highly valuable learning came from

talking with peers before, during and after their JYR. CCA should encourage this natural peer

mentoring system (CFR 2.1, 2.2, 2.3).

The majority of students achieve average to high evaluations across a variety of cognitive

and creative outcome measures during portfolio reviews. Where particular areas of lower

achievement are found, several programs have used this evidence to promote curricular change,

including development of tutorials, review of program content, and development of additional

courses to address concerns (2.4, 2.7).

After the CPR visit, CCA developed and implemented a program review process, called

by CCA "cluster reviews." In discussions with faculty who piloted the first set of cluster

reviews, the team learned that the reviews produced program changes based both upon the

external reviewer's report as well as the self-study. As noted above, reviews will continue

according to a published schedule, but probably not in cluster form (CFR 2.7).

One of the significant observations of the WASC team report after the CPR visit was that

the College had accomplished very little in two areas of assessment—in CWLOs and program

cluster reviews — and thus had not met the program review standard (CFR.7). By the EER visit,

however, this picture had changed dramatically, with CCA responding seriously to the team's

major recommendation to conduct assessments of program and CWLOs and implement a process

for program reviews. CCA has undergone a transformation in a relatively short period of time

and the WASC team commends the college for implementing a process that has engaged many faculty in a wide variety of assessment activities.

To date, CWLOs have been incorporated into the majors, and matrices matching them to specific courses have been developed. An assessment timetable has been prepared, and implementation begun. Three CWLOs were assessed in Spring '08—methods of critical analysis, research skills and written communication; two more will be evaluated in 2009. For each of these areas, rubrics were prepared, criteria and standards identified, and assessments carried out. Faculty reviewed the results in depth, making a number of observations regarding student work and recommending changes in the curriculum and pedagogy as well as in the assessment process itself.

We urge that upcoming discussions about curriculum and learning outcomes include assessing quantitative literacy across the disciplines (2.6), ensuring that students from all disciplines are provided with the tools needed to compete professionally.

The Cluster Program Review process was implemented, with a timetable calling for the review of all of the degree programs within a six-year cycle. Two programs have been reviewed to date—the BFA in Visual Studies, the MA in Visual and Critical Studies. This review process included an in-depth examination of the program, its mission and goals and their alignment with strategic planning goals; and an assessment of the program by two external reviewers who came to campus for 2 days. The reviewers' reports addressed a number of program elements, such as curriculum, faculty and staff, assessment, and facilities and infrastructure. The results of these reviews were discussed by the Director, the chairpersons and faculty; they were also reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, whose recommendations were forwarded to the Academic Cabinet

for review and follow-up. The process is a serious one with the results of assessment disseminated and used to strengthen teaching and learning at the College.

Now that a viable and sustainable assessment process is in place, the team recommends that the College work to ensure that the results of the assessments are used to improve teaching, learning and institutional effectiveness. From the many meetings held with faculty and students on assessment, and the positive comments by them, the team believes that CCA is in the process of creating a better environment for student learning. "Closing the circle" is an important next step for ensuring that the results of the reviews become incorporated into program improvements, leading to increased student learning.

The list of institutional learning outcomes is extensive and is informed by best practices reflective of national disciplinary standards in the areas of the arts and design. The comprehensive listing allows students to develop sophisticated and personalized approaches to each outcome. CCA may wish to begin creating curricular maps that might guide the current faculty discussions about both rigor and complexity of the list. The use of a mapping strategy within a dominantly visual learning institution may provide clarity for faculty as they consider new LOs and/or modification of the current list. In light of the student interest in assessment, CCA might want to involve students in creating maps or models of the curriculum and visual representations of learning. This exercise involves students in the assessment process and allows faculty to see the curriculum from the students' perspective.

In summary, CCA has elaborate systems for enhancing educational effectiveness and student learning.

C. Student Success

CCA recognizes the importance of student success and its responsibility in assisting students to achieve success (CFR 2.10). The college monitors student success by tracking semester-to-semester persistence, time to graduation and graduation rates (EER Apps. 0.1 and 2.1 and CPR App. 3). From meetings with the Vice Presidents for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services the team learned of the collection of other essential data, which was not included in the EER Report but available in the team room (Data Table folder). Although it collects considerable data, CCA has not established goals for graduation for undergraduate or graduate students. The only agreed goal is 80% retention rate for first-time freshmen. In the near future, the college will want to consider establishing goals for graduation and of course begin to monitor them. As it establishes these goals, the college will want to draw on comparable data for other AICAD institutions and compare its students' achievement with these institutions.

The most recent IPEDS data (EER Apps. 0.1 and 2.1) revealed the average overall graduation rate for the last four 6-year cohorts of fall freshman was 51%. There had been improvement during the first three years (1998-2000), but the last year saw a small decline. A sizeable majority of the undergraduate six-year cohort was White, Non-Hispanic (a 4-year cohort average of 58%). The year-to-year changes in the share of fall freshman graduation of White, Non-Hispanic were small. The four-year average of the six-year cohort graduation rate for underrepresented students was lower than the average overall graduation rate and for White, Non-Hispanics. The graduation rates for the underrepresented groups varied widely from year-to-year. In meetings with the senior management, the team learned that the continuation and graduation rates were watched closely; because CCA is an enrollment driven institution, student persistence is essential. The leadership of the institution does not believe that the retention and

graduation rates are "good enough." The college has already undertaken a number of programs

that range from enhanced orientation programs, improved advising (embedding advisors in first

year core studio courses), to support offices for targeted students (e.g., international students, and

students beginning to show evidence of disengagement). The high level of enthusiasm among

the faculty and staff membership is noteworthy. The college is assessing its diverse initiatives to

determine what is and what is not successful, and will ask faculty to pay more attention to issues

of retention and graduation. In separate meetings with representative faculty and junior level

review faculty, the team noted faculty awareness of this charge and responsibility.

D. Other Issues Arising from the Standards and CFRs

Review and clarify faculty governance (CFR 3.11).

The CPR team noted issues with faculty governance, with faculty acceptance of

responsibility for student assessment, and faculty morale. The Commission's letter discussed a

variety of issues—ability of faculty to exercise effective academic leadership regarding academic

quality, selection of faculty members of the Faculty Senate, and the matters that come to the

Senate. The college was "advised to revise its faculty handbook, engage faculty in a discussion

of governance, and provide greater clarity regarding the role, authority and autonomy of the

faculty."

From meetings with faculty, the Faculty Senate leadership, and numerous other meetings

focusing on various topics, the EER team has discovered a remarkable and positive resolution of

many of the issues raised in the Commission letter. The college has done more than simply

clarify the role of faculty and the Faculty Senate. It has empowered the Senate and the faculty to

play a role in strategic planning, in overseeing the quality of student learning, and in developing

CCA policies and practices. The faculty morale seems significantly improved. The Senate

committees are active, and their members see themselves playing vital roles in developing new policies. Faculty leaders have positions in all administrative committees. The faculty Senate chair sits on the president's cabinet. Credit for this turnaround is due to the new president and to faculty leaders who worked with him during the transition months of his presidency.

Institutional Research

The CPR visitation team identified the absence of a central institutional research office as a problem for CCA's efforts to assess program and college-wide learning outcomes. This gap in the college support structure seemed likely to impair its retention efforts. The Commission (citing CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.7, and 4.7) included a comment on "a more robust data collection and analysis function" in its letter to CCA. CCA's EER Report responded to these urgings with an explanation that its economic fortunes did not allow it to make the resource commitment to dramatically enhance its institutional research capability. The college president reiterated this decision during the team's meeting with senior management.

In its IP (p. 12), CCA had established information and data gathering systems as one of the ten areas by which it would assess its own progress. The team members systematically asked what increased capability the college had gained since the CPR visit. At most, meetings with faculty and staff, team members asked about data availability, transparency, storage, and retrieval. The team heard very few complaints about the lack of access to data. An Institutional Research meeting that included the administrators and staff charged with the data collection, report preparation, and storage responsibility proved very useful. CCA has evidently gained considerable functionality out of its DATATEL system. The Registrar and the staff with immediate responsibility for DATATEL system produced a myriad of reports essential for the college's retention efforts and planning activities. Staff members in student affairs and

enrollment offices are being trained to write queries to secure information from the central data files. Student Affairs, Enrollment Services, and other non-academic areas appear to have their immediate needs for data met. The team was very impressed with the progress of the campus in meeting non-academic areas needs,

The DATATEL system does not appear to serve likely data needs for academic affairs. In Academic Affairs, the data collection is decentralized. Arrangements for its storage and retrieval are unclear. There are some efforts to centralize the data collected by the programs as they conduct their different assessments and reviews. This will be a responsibility of the newly designated Associate Provost. While she will undoubtedly make every effort to respond, in light of her very limited staff, her efforts will probably not meet the intermediate and long-term assessment and program review demands for data and institutional research assistance.

SECTION III - SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

We cite the following areas for special commendation:

1.   The CPR team identified issues connected to faculty governance, faculty involvement in campus strategic planning, and faculty morale. The college, its president, its senior management, and its faculty leadership are to be commended for the remarkable improvement in the short period between the CPR and EER visits. The Faculty Senate has been revitalized. Its president has been given a much more important role in college activity. The Senate committees have also been revitalized. Their responsibilities have been clarified and expanded. Faculty have accepted responsibility for leadership in assessment and student learning as well as in the strategic planning

process. In this commendation, special recognition needs to be given to President Beal and the faculty who have worked with him to make these changes.

2.	The EER team also noted marked progress in advancing the "sustainable business model" of the college. Not only was there good improvement in enrollment and creation of programs likely to attract students, but enrollment is more diversified with increasing proportions of first year students, international students, students of color, and students coming from outside California. In addition, the school achieved success with its Centennial Campaign, exceeding its target of $25M by $2M through extraordinary financial support from its governing board (which provided $18M). Finally, the team noticed continued solid budget management with conservative budget development and balanced budgets, despite the challenges of enrollment dependence and endowment losses due to market conditions. We also applaud the intent to align targeted budget reductions to the strategic plan.

3.	The team commends the campus community for its developing commitment to an institution-wide approach to educating students for positions of leadership in diverse communities. We noticed significant buy-in from faculty and staff on this visit and applaud both the steps underway to produce even further change and the recognition by college leadership that the job is not done.

4.	The team commends CCA for its significant work in furthering the development of a culture of evidence, with faculty ownership of an assessment process that is formal, sustainable and institutionalized. As faculty progress towards this goal, they will continue to refine elements of the process to make them more effective and integrated.

5.   CCA is to be praised highly for the intensive dedication to scholarship in arts and design. The level of cross-disciplinary inquiry and a mastery of media are evidenced in each program. Imagination, creativity and complex models of interdisciplinary inquiry are present throughout both campuses. Real world professional practice is a hallmark of the college, and students eagerly rise to the challenges and rigor of community arts activity and use of design to address social and global issues. Students openly and effectively communicate about their learning and values with campus visitors. This comfortable dialogue is surely connected to the CCA philosophy of providing ample curricular and co-curricular programs that enhance student scholarship through active voice and engagement with contemporary theory and practice. And the interdisciplinary practices and constancy of collaborative problem solving provide CCA graduates with skills to adapt to professional contexts.

6.   Finally, we commend CCA for its creative vision in the development and implementation of innovative and cutting edge degree programs at the College —the MBA in Design and the BFA in Animation.

Recommendations

1.   California College of the Arts needs to continue its work to clarify the role of faculty in decision-making (3.11). The Faculty Handbook is being revised, and this process should be completed as quickly as possible. The campus has a new system of faculty directors. Most campus constituencies expressed a high level of satisfaction with this faculty-centered arrangement. The college will need to assess its effectiveness after a longer period.

2.   The college has decided that it does not have the resources to establish a central

office of institution research (4.5). While the team can understand how the current

budget environment does not permit the opening of such an office, the college should

revisit this issue when its budget improves. For the integrity of the strategic planning

process and the assessment of its student learning, the centralization and standardization

of data collection may be essential.

3.   While CCA has established first year retention rates, to continue meeting WASC

standards, it will need to establish goals for graduation. It will want to determine goals

after looking at its historical data and after a review of similar AICID campuses. Ideally,

goals should be set for each annual cohort overall and also for significant ethnic groups.

4.   To continue building a sustainable business model, CCA will need to ensure that

the overall tuition discount rate, which has increased to attract and retain students, does

not unduly erode net revenue increases. And in reallocating resources in a difficult

financial climate, CCA should provide adequate resources to sustain a vibrant fund-

raising and advancement function during the non-campaign mode (3.5).

5.   As CCA builds its next strategic plan and learns from its ample assessment

activities, we recommend that the college include more opportunities for faculty

development and be even more attentive to helping adjunct faculty succeed in mastering

the college's expectations for teaching and learning (3.4).