Update from Provost Pallavicini

Dear Pacific Community,

WASC Site Visit
After years of preparation for our re-accreditation, the site visit team from WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) will be on the Stockton campus for a three day period, April 2-4, 2012. The team will meet with a number of faculty and students groups, programs, and committees to learn about our processes, plans and approaches to ensure that we are continuously improving our programs and student success across our University. The provost's website contains a link to all materials prepared for the accreditation team. I encourage you to visit the site and also read the following materials to remind yourself of how and why we continually strive to improve student success and the quality of our programs and services.

A few personnel notes...

- Caroline Cox, Professor of History, was appointed Interim Dean of the College of the Pacific effective June 1, 2012.
- Dean Giulio Ongaro is chairing the search committee for the dean of the College of the Pacific.
- David Hemenway will join Pacific in July as the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness. David will be responsible for facilitating University-wide program review and assessment.
- Lou Matz begins his appointment as Assistant Provost for University-Wide Academic Programs on April 1, 2012.
- The search for a Vice Provost is on track, with the last candidate having visited our campus yesterday.

Strategic Planning
Strategic Planning Town Hall meetings will solicit input on strategic planning progress. The meetings will be held at McGeorge (1pm, Wednesday, March 28th), the Stockton campus (12:15pm, Thursday, March 29th) and Dugoni (1pm, Friday, March 30th). Materials can be found via the Pacific website here.

Commencement
Just a reminder, University of the Pacific's Commencement 2012 ceremony, will be held on Saturday, May 5th at 9am in the Alex G. Spanos Center. We look forward to seeing you at this important ceremony in honor of the Class of 2012.
Assessment and WASC

Why does WASC care about learning assessment?

WASC has a core commitment to educational effectiveness. This includes an expectation that accredited institutions will set appropriate learning objectives and outcomes for academic and co-curricular programs, systematically gather evidence about student learning relative to those expectations, analyze that information, and use it for improvements in curriculum, teaching, and learning. Given current concerns about the effectiveness and high cost of higher education it is important that colleges and universities are accountable for the quality of student learning in their institutions and programs.

WASC is also sensitive to pressure from government and other external actors regarding the accountability of colleges and universities. WASC is committed to promoting and protecting approaches to assessment that are developed and implemented at the local institutional level. WASC aims to protect institutional control over educational effectiveness by providing review by peers in higher education, rather than governmental review of assessment practices.

Overall, what is Pacific's approach to the assessment of student learning?

Pacific’s approach to assessment of student learning is to work with programs to align expected student learning outcomes with university-wide objectives wherever possible, map courses, course-level learning outcomes, and co-curricular activities to program outcomes to ensure that students have ample opportunity to learn, practice, and achieve the program outcomes, and to assess student learning at the program level starting with the outcomes that are of most interest or concern to faculty and other campus educators, as well as questions and concerns of the faculty.

Our approach emphasizes a professional development, providing consultation and coaching to assist faculty and staff in developing assessment skills. We emphasize assessment that is meaningful, useful, and manageable, and includes direct evidence of student learning.

What are the strengths of Pacific's approach to assessment of student learning?

The faculty and student life educators care deeply about student learning, and when they get unclear assessment results or are not happy with student achievement, they use that information to clarify outcomes, refine assessment methods and improve programs. A culture of assessment has taken root and is growing across the University.

What critical issues does Pacific face regarding the assessment of student learning?

- Given our decentralized approach, we need to make assessment more cohesive and systematic so that we can learn from it more effectively at the institutional level. This will be necessary for progress related to the institutional learning objectives and outcomes.
- Institutional and program leaders must continue to nurture Pacific’s culture of assessment.
- All programs must consistently report assessment activity and results in annual reports and periodic self-studies.
- Programs must tap relatively unused information about student learning available from Institutional Research, e.g. CIRP results.
• Work on learning assessment must be consistently recognized in personnel evaluation and decisions such as promotion and tenure.

Where can one learn more?

Assessment Working Group, Director of Learning and Academic Assessment (Eileen McFall), Director of Assessment and Student Development (Sandy Mahoney), Guide to Academic Assessment.

Student Success (Persistence and Graduation) and WASC

Why does WASC care about student success?

WASC reflects increased interest from government and organizations like the Gates Foundation in student success, especially measured by persistence and graduation rates. For all accreditation reviews, WASC institutions must provide data and analysis about the following questions:

• What do data on retention/completion show overall, and for various student groups?
• How do results compare with the institution’s own goals and the performance of peer or aspirant institutions?
• How well does the institution understand the factors affecting student success?
• What are the institution’s plans for addressing student success gaps and how does the institution implement those plans?

Overall, what is Pacific's approach to student success?

Pacific's goals for student success (first-to-second-year persistence: 90%; six-year graduation: 75%) have been set to reflect Pacific's aspirations as a high quality comprehensive private university. Institutional Research collects and analyzes data related to student success. Analyses indicate that while many factors affect student persistence to graduation, college grades are the best predictor of success. Follow up analysis shows that many (28.3%) of incoming students need fundamental skills remediation and that students needing remediation have lower rates of success. Use of this data analysis informs policy making. For example, a mid-term grade check will be put in place at Pacific to identify students at risk for academic failure to provide earlier opportunities for intervention.

Pacific’s attention to student success is multi-faceted and addresses student needs throughout their time at Pacific.

The integration of new students to life at Pacific and the university’s academic expectations is promoted by the First-Year Experiences Committee and includes features that include new student orientation programs and MOVE, student advisors, and dean's or chair's seminars for new students in several academic units and programs.

Academic support, especially for at-risk students, is provided by programs such as the Educational Resource Center, the Referral Center, the Program for Access to Student Services, study-skills courses, workshops and supplemental instruction offered in various academic programs, academic services for student athletes, academic services for international students, and tutoring services.

Critical student services that help at-risk students include the Counseling Center, the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities, and Health and Wellness Services.

The Retention Analysis Network is a community of interest that brings together faculty members and academic administrators, student life professionals, and institutional researchers to develop a better understanding of student success at Pacific and consider proposals for improving student success at Pacific. The Strategic Enrollment Resources Planning Committee considers admissions and financial aid policy as they make affect student success. Academic units have identified lead administrators to address student success issues, e.g. the Senior Associate Dean of the College is responsible for student success issues in that unit. A new Vice Provost (a new position at Pacific) will have responsibility for coordinating academic approaches to student success.
What are Pacific's strengths in addressing student success?

- Pacific is committed to understanding the factors that affect student success and acting to promote the success of its students at all levels.
- University leadership has made student success an institutional priority for budget and planning.
- Institutional Research provides rich data and analysis to understand student success and challenges at Pacific.
- Pacific's multi-faceted approach to student success demonstrates the University's widely-shared commitment to student success.
- Groups like RAN and SERP promote wide collaboration on addressing student success issues.

What critical issues does Pacific have to address regarding student success?

- Pacific does not meet its goals for student success and must continue efforts to reach its goals.
- Although data analysis does not demonstrate a significant correlation between students' financial status and persistence to graduation, it is clear that many students experience stress and anxiety about the cost of attending Pacific. The University will be vigilant about financial factors that may affect student success.
- In doing so, the University faces an uncertain economic environment, including uncertainty about Cal Grants, a source of financial aid for a large number of Pacific students.

Where can one learn more?

EER: Student Success

Appendix A Required Data Exhibits, Appendix B Documentation of Program Outcomes and Assessment, Appendix C Inquiry Team Reports

IRIS: Graduation and Retention Rates

Program Review and WASC

Why does WASC care about program review?

WASC views program review as the key institutional process linking assessment of student learning with planning and budget decisions. All WASC-accredited institutions must provide information as part of their EER reports, and program review is one of the major elements that visiting teams examine as they develop their summative and formative assessments of institutions. WASC describes a highly developed approach to program review as systematic and institution-wide, with learning assessment findings a major component. Units under review should use findings from self-studies and program reviews to improve student learning, program effectiveness, and supporting processes. The institution should maintain a close linkage between program review and institution-level planning and budgeting.

Overall, what is Pacific's approach the assessment of program review?

Pacific revised its planning and self-study process in 2008. Since then, the University of the Pacific community has increasingly recognized the need for assessment of learning outcomes and for a reflective, evidence-based, and transparent institutional effectiveness system.

University of the Pacific's institutional assessment and effectiveness plan relies on honest self-assessment in the form of annual reporting, periodic self-study, and review by a team external to the program. In order for programs to realize potential benefits, self-assessment and peer review must be conducted for the purposes of learning and improvement, without fear that findings will be used punitively. This is a unified process of the review of academic, co-curricular, academic support, and administrative programs.

What is Program Review?

Program Review is a customizable collective inquiry by all members of the unit under review. It allows for
inquiry, reflection, analysis, and planning. The ultimate goal of Program Review is to evaluate the program and make evidence-based decisions for improvement. It is designed to answer a fundamental question: how can we ensure and improve the quality of our programs and support the mission of the University? This question is based on the premise that understanding and defining program quality and how it evolves is at the core of institutional effectiveness. Moreover, program review represents a shared and open understanding of where we are and where we need to be.

Steps in the program review process include: a self-study, peer review, development of an action plan by the appropriate administrative leader and the unit undergoing review, a review by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) for quality of the program review, and adequacy of administrative responses and action plan, annual summary communication from IEC to IPC, Cabinet and Regents, two year post program review follow up by IEC.

Program Review cycles through all University programs approximately every 7 years. For the Program under review, it is a year long process. The schedule will align with external accreditations when appropriate.

What is the Institutional Effectiveness Committee?

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) is a university wide committee with a central role in the university's process to improve institutional effectiveness. IEC will be established as a pilot committee for two years during which time it will carry outs its charge, evaluate it own effectiveness in the assessment process and make recommendations to improve the university wide assessment process. The charge of the pilot IEC is to:

- Evaluate the quality of program reviews
- Evaluate the adequacy of unit response to the program review and action plan
- Identify challenges and opportunities to break down silos within and across campuses in the University
- Identify issues to be considered by the president and cabinet
- Review outcomes of program action plan at two year intervals following program review
- Communicate deliberations through an accessible website for Institutional Effectiveness

What are the strengths of Pacific's (developing) approach to program review?

- Program review is a key component of an institutional effectiveness process that is systematic across the institution.
- Program review across the institution aims at ongoing, evidence-based improvement, especially in student learning.
- Program review will be directly linked to institutional planning and budget processes.
- IEC two-year review of the results of program review provides transparency and accountability for program review outcomes.
- Student Life program review practices have been judged an example of "best practices" by external reviewers.

What critical issues does Pacific face regarding program review?

- To ensure that program review is meaningful and the outcomes are transparent including budget and planning.
- Strengthening the annual reporting system and ensuring the alignment that will allow this process to feed into and support a robust self study.
- To allow for opportunities to review cross-unit programs and interdependent programs and identify synergies across the institution.

Where can one learn more?

- Institutional Effectiveness
- Student Life Program Review

Strategic Planning and WASC

http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs038/1107310278460/archive/1109467284516.html
Why does WASC care about Pacific's strategic planning process?

WASC recognizes that a new strategic plan is a significant institutional event that should be articulated and managed well. Changes like this often have major impacts on other systems and WASC wants to be sure that institutional capacities and educational effectiveness continue at the high levels of quality that Pacific currently enjoys. In a June 2011 letter responding to Pacific's interim report on governance structures, WASC indicated that it expected progress reports on the strategic planning process for the EER visit.

Overall, what is Pacific's approach to strategic planning?

A new strategic planning process is underway at University of the Pacific. The process engages a broad cross-section of the University community, including external stakeholders and friends of Pacific. We are developing a new strategic plan that gives Pacific more options and greater resilience in adapting to external changes. The new plan will be supported by a corresponding financial plan, school-level plans, and an implementation and assessment framework.

The strategic planning process is moving through several stages including:

- An environmental scan (Early 2011)
- "Futuring" exercises (Fall 2011)
- "Big Ideas" symposia and summits involving various stakeholder groups (Spring 2012)
- Planning previews on the three campuses (Spring 2012)
- Preparation of draft strategic plan (Spring-Summer 2012)
- Community review of draft strategic plan (Fall 2012)
- Board of Regents consideration and adoption of strategic plan (October 2012/January 2013)

A number of concurrent planning activities at Pacific are underway, academic program planning, budget model review, capital and campaign planning, institutional and specialized accreditations, and institutional effectiveness reviews.

What are the strengths of Pacific's strategic planning process?

- The process is inclusive, involving university leadership, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders.
- The process is collaborative with leadership from individuals with various roles in the University.
- The process involves considerable energetic community engagement. Hundreds of community members have participated in planning symposia and committees.
- The process is integrated with key university processes, including review of budget systems, accreditation, institutional effectiveness and academic planning.
- The process is on schedule to produce a new plan for Board review in Fall 2012.

What critical issues must Pacific address in the strategic planning process?

- The various divisions and units of the University must effectively align their planning and decision making with the eventual University strategic plan.
- Pacific must develop a financial approach that effectively supports the strategic plan.
- Pacific must effectively align a number of related processes, including institutional effectiveness and program review, assessment of student learning, etc., with the new strategic plan.

Where can one learn more?

The University's planning website provides detailed information about the planning process.
http://go.pacific.edu/planning

Budget Review Process and WASC

Why does WASC care about this?
Effective budget systems and financial strengths are critical to WASC’s commitments to organizational capacity and educational effectiveness. All WASC-accredited institutions are expected to sustain their operations and support the achievement of educational objectives through investment in human, physical, fiscal, and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision-making structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high quality environment for learning.

In addition, in its CPR action letter the WASC Commission recognized that the University planned to review its budget systems with a view to adopting a uniform allocation model across the institution. WASC recommended to Pacific that "it will be important for the University to include in its EER report a description of the planned budgetary system . . ."

Overall, what is Pacific's approach?

President Eibeck charged a Budget Task Force in January 2011. The task force is to review the University's current budget models, study and evaluate alternative budget models, and recommend a unified budget model that will incentivize budget units to be innovative and adaptable and hold them accountable.

The task force has completed its review of the University's budget models and has worked with a group of external consultants to study alternative budget approaches. The next stage will be for the task force to engage a consultant to help develop a proposal for a unified budget allocation model. The task force expects to recommend a new budget model during Fall 2012. Following a period of community review and comment, the Board of Regents will review the proposed model their 2013 meetings. The university will phase in implementation of the new budget model, running the model in a simulation parallel to the current budget systems for at least one fiscal year. The transition period will allow fine-tuning of the new model and provide time for the University to train personnel to use the new model.

What are the strengths of Pacific's budget model process?

- The process is inclusive, involving university leadership, faculty, and staff.
- The process is transparent. The task force has reported to IPC. Task force documents and presentations are available on InsidePacific.
- The process is well-informed by presentations from critical University personnel and expert external consultants.
- The process has been integrated with the strategic planning process so that the eventual proposal can be shaped to serve the new strategic plan.
- The process is on schedule.

What critical issues must Pacific address in the strategic planning process?

- The task force must develop a proposed model that has been designed to promote the effectiveness of the new strategic plan.
- The University must carry out effective simulations of the new budget process during a transitional period.
- University leadership must develop consensus across its budget units for the new model.
- The University must effectively train and prepare personnel for the implementation of the new model.

Where can one learn more?

Information about the Budget Model Task Force can be found on InsidePacific under the Administrative tab.

Office of the Provost
University of the Pacific | 3601 Pacific Avenue | Stockton, CA | 95211