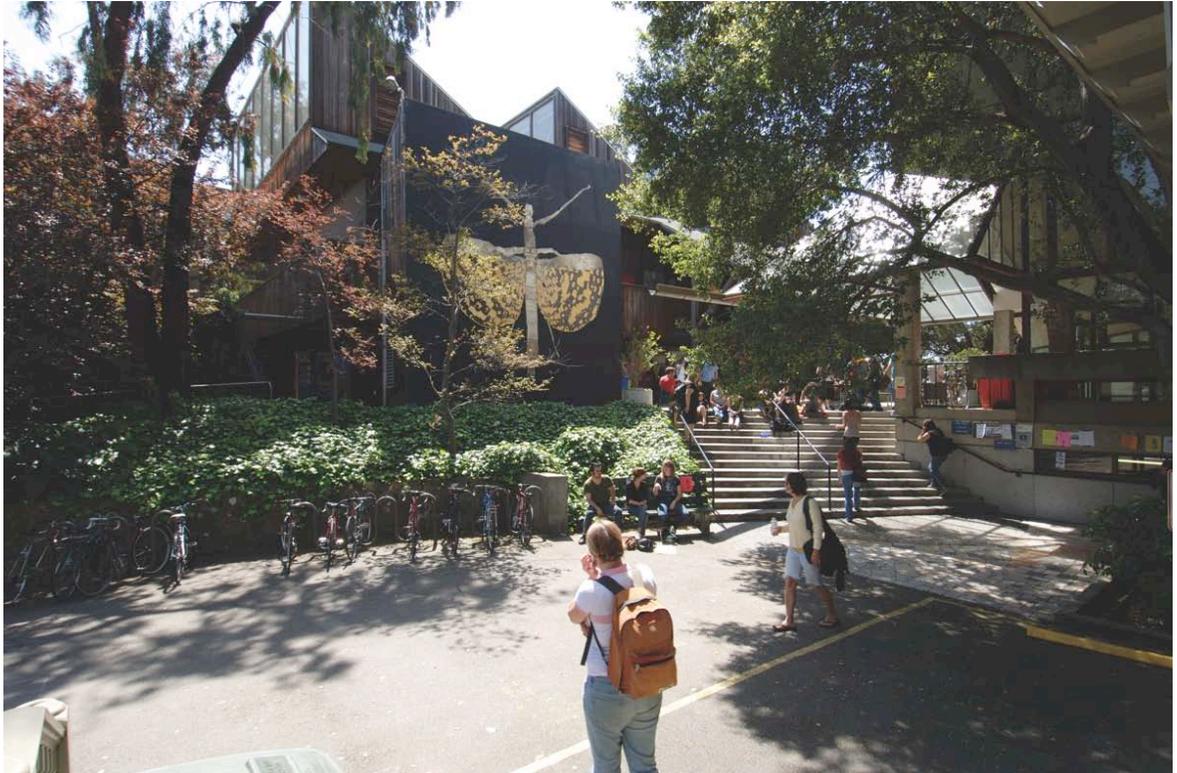




California College of the Arts

Educational Effectiveness Review Report



Submitted to Western Association of Schools and Colleges
December 15, 2008

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December 15, 2008

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Chapter One: Institutional Context and Report Overview

California College of the Arts values the experience of creating new work as the key ingredient in the education of its students. As the college's programs have expanded over the years, this belief has remained consistent. In addition to its fundamental commitment to creative practice, CCA has always held that conceptual thinking and contextual understanding are vital components of arts education. An education through the arts at CCA unites theory and practice. It preserves the promise of a liberal education: to instill in its students the lifelong love of learning. In addition, and most crucially, CCA mandates that its students acquire the skills and habits of mind that will allow them to continue to be creative contributors to the culture around them.

(CCA Strategic Plan, 2004-2009)

INTRODUCTION

In 2008, California College of the Arts (CCA) embarks on its second century and seeks to define the ways in which we will fulfill our centennial motto, "the Future of Culture." This critical moment comes in the year that has seen the appointment of a new president, the search for a new provost, the beginning of a new strategic plan, and the culmination of our WASC and NASAD re-accreditation efforts. While the convergence of so many major undertakings creates a bit of stress for those involved, it also represents the perfect opportunity to solidify CCA's vision and values, and plan for the next five, ten, and one hundred years.

At the beginning of President Stephen Beal's introductory video address on the CCA website (<http://www.cca.edu/about/president>), he remarks:

CCA's legacy and history is tied to the Arts and Crafts Movement. This was a time when young artists and designers were interested in producing work that would have a positive impact on social justice, on economics, and really engage with the social problems that existed in that time. This is something that's still very much part of CCA's history and its future.

Since his appointment in May 2008, President Beal has often pointed to the vital role of an arts education. In these difficult times of environmental crisis, economic uncertainty, and global political strife, seeking a degree in the arts may seem like an unaffordable luxury. But the importance of creative economies and the role of artists, designers, architects, and writers in shaping a culture capable of meeting such challenges remain as clear to CCA's current leaders as it was to the college's founders.

The **college's mission** states, "CCA educates students to shape culture through the practice and critical study of the arts. The college prepares its students for lifelong creative work and service to their communities through a curriculum in fine art, architecture, design, and writing." This fusion of theory and practice is one of the founding principals of CCA, and serves to guide considerations for the college's future. With over 1,750 students and 500 faculty members in our vibrant community, we are in a strong position to fulfill the founding aspirations of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH

The approach CCA is taking to the Educational Effectiveness Review Report (EERR) is the strategic plan model; this continues the approach for our entire accreditation review process as outlined in our 2005 Institutional Proposal. In February 2004, the Board of Trustees adopted the **Strategic Plan: Leadership in Arts Education, 2004-2009** (Appendix 1.1). The plan resulted from deliberations throughout the calendar year of 2003 and involved the key constituencies of the CCA community: the board, administration, faculty senate, program chairs, alumni, and staff.

The **Accreditation Coordinating Committee** (ACC) was formed in the late fall of 2003 to direct the accreditation review process. Comprised of a cross section of the CCA community, from senior administration to staff, and including faculty leadership, the committee undertook a preliminary review of the Standards, examined and digested the recommendations from the Action Letter we received in 2003 following the fifth year interim report, and reviewed the strategic plan. The ensuing deliberations within the ACC, along with senior leadership and the president's cabinet, identified the three goals of the strategic plan as the central issues around which we focused the accreditation review process. These goals are to:

1. Enhance national visibility through academic excellence.
2. Maintain a sustainable business model.
3. Strengthen internal and external community relations.

Our EERR aligns with the three goals of the Strategic Plan, the WASC Standards—primarily Standards Two and Four—and the February 2008 WASC Commission Action Letter. The main body of the report is divided into four analytical essays (Chapters Two through Five). Taken together, the four essays address 1) the five prioritized recommendations from the WASC Commission's February 2008 action letter; 2) the WASC Standards of Accreditation as articulated in the 2001 handbook; and 3) the three themes from CCA's Institutional Proposal that were drawn from our current Strategic Plan. These three lenses focus the analysis and reflection throughout the report.

Because the first and second of the Commission's prioritized recommendations reflect so broadly and substantively on educational effectiveness, we have addressed them directly in the bulk of the body chapters (Chapters Three, Four, and Five) and built the report towards those discussions. An **outline of the report** demonstrates the ways in which the three lenses overlap and culminate in considerations of educational effectiveness at CCA:

- I. Chapter One: Institutional Context and Report Overview
- II. Chapter Two: Recommendations and Responses
 - a. Focuses on the college's efforts to continue building and benefiting from a diverse, two-campus culture, reinvigorated by significant advancements in faculty governance.
 - b. Primarily addresses Goals 2 and 3 of CCA's Strategic Plan.

- c. Engages with all four WASC Standards, and particularly CFRs 1.5, 2.10, 3.7, 3.10, 3.11, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3.
 - d. Responds in detail to the third, fourth, and fifth recommendations in the CPR action letter.
- III. Chapter Three: Level Reviews
- a. Focuses on the first-year, junior, and capstone review processes that function to assess college-wide goals across the entire trajectory of students' artistic development.
 - b. Addresses Goal 1 of CCA's Strategic Plan.
 - c. Engages with Standards 1, 2, and 4, and particularly CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 2.12, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8.
 - d. Responds in detail to key elements of the second recommendation in the CPR action letter.
- IV. Chapter Four: College-Wide Learning Outcomes Reviews
- a. Focuses on the cyclical assessment of CCA's college-wide learning outcomes as well as the college's use of institutional research and learning management software.
 - b. Addresses Goal 1 of CCA's Strategic Plan.
 - c. Engages with Standards 1 and 2, and particularly CFRs 1.2, 2.2, 2.6.
 - d. Also responds in detail to key elements of the second recommendation in the CPR action letter.
- V. Chapter Five: Program Reviews, Assessments, and Specialized Accreditations
- a. Focuses its analysis on the implementation of program review through annual program assessments, clustered program reviews, and specialized accreditation processes.
 - b. Addresses Goal 1 of CCA's Strategic Plan.
 - c. Engages with Standards 2 and 4, and particularly CFRs 2.7 and 4.4.
 - d. Responds in detail to the first recommendation in the CPR action letter.
- VI. Chapter Six: Strategic Planning for Academic Excellence

The strategic planning approach to the accreditation process has offered a superb opportunity to ensure that our planning efforts are evidence-based and in support of educational effectiveness and to align our accreditation efforts with our college-wide goals. As the college nears the end of the current strategic plan and begins laying the foundations for our next five-year plan, we are eager to capitalize on the visiting team's insights and expertise. Discussed in more detail at the conclusion of this report, the current planning process and timeline enable us to embed current WASC Commission recommendations into the forthcoming strategic goals of the college.

OVERVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS EFFORTS AT CCA

As discussed during our Capacity and Preparatory Review, CCA's arts education is grounded in a robust and thorough **culture of critique**. As in most art and design schools, oral presentations of students' work followed by individual critiques by faculty, or group critiques by peers and faculty, are a form of constant assessment with which all CCA students and faculty are quite familiar. Many group critiques also include panelists who are outside experts; their participation allows for the students' work to be contextualized within a professional practice and also provides valuable connections between students and local businesses. This multi-faceted and continual feedback of critique serves as the foundation on which we are building a robust, complimentary system of program, level, and learning-outcome reviews.

Generally speaking, the process of critique serves as *evidence* for learning outcomes like verbal communication and methods of critical analysis; in addition, critiques also serve as a *tool* for

assessing many other learning outcomes such as visual communication, visual literacy, and knowledge of historical and contemporary context of visual practice. Our students and faculty are comfortable with a continual process of assessment and understand the direct consequences of closing the loop to connect reporting, assessment, and improvement. Perhaps in part because of this, formalizing outcomes assessment and program review did meet with some initial resistance from faculty. Thus, one of the challenges has been to translate this everyday practice into a systematic assessment structure. Fortunately, the collaborative efforts of administration and faculty increasingly demonstrate that our culture of critique has prepared us to enact a coherent institutional plan for evaluating student learning at the college.

As outlined in chapters two through four of the EERR, the college has developed the culture of critique into evidence-based, systematic, and sustainable review. Our academic programs are reviewed through annual program assessment, clustered program reviews with external evaluators, specialized accreditation reviews, level reviews, and learning outcome reviews. This multi-dimensional schema of review provides assessment opportunities that cut across the college by year (or level), assessments that drill down into specific programs, and learning outcome reviews that mark specific points along the trajectory of a student's educational path. But more important than the type or amount of review we do is the fact that institutional decisions about resource allocation, faculty hiring, new program development, and enrollment and retention efforts are based on evidence from these reviews.

Faculty and administrators of the college's general education programs, primarily housed in the Humanities and Sciences division, have undertaken significant training in assessment and continue to implement a range of reviews. The college's realigned academic structure has led to the formation of both graduate and undergraduate curriculum committees within Humanities and Sciences, with the undergraduate committee currently revising its mission statement and mapping the curriculum to better align methods and objectives throughout. This spring, the Diversity Studies faculty will undertake a review of the "understanding of cultural diversity" college-wide learning outcome, affording us important insight into the status of this core commitment. The Writing and Literature program has also been folded into the level review processes, benefiting from the insights afforded by the First Year Portfolio and Junior Reviews. Additionally, the division's undergraduate programs are also preparing for their clustered review next fall by gathering evidence, analyzing syllabi, and articulating area descriptions.

In addition to assessment of academic programs, CCA's tuition-driven status and resource limitations mean that co-curricular initiatives are carefully monitored for their effectiveness. As discussed more fully in Chapter Two, areas such as Enrollment Services and Student Affairs demonstrate their effectiveness in terms of recruitment and retention numbers, as well as through a myriad of surveys and other quality assurance assessment tools that inform decision-making.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW

As mentioned above, this year has been and continues to be exceptionally demanding. Since the CPR report and visit, we have seen a number of significant changes. In spring 2007, President Michael Roth left CCA to become the president of Wesleyan University, and last academic year, the college conducted a national search for a new president. In May 2008, the then-provost of CCA, Stephen Beal, was appointed by the college's Board of Trustees as the ninth president.

Given his new position and the coincidental departure of the dean of the college, President Beal had an opportunity to reconsider the structure of academic administration. He immediately engaged the help of an ad-hoc faculty committee, the Academic Leadership Transition Committee, which worked through the summer to determine the best means with which to

integrate faculty more fully in academic leadership. Detailed in the following chapter's discussion of faculty governance, the **new academic structure** reorganized the academic house of the college into four divisions led by faculty directors (see Appendix 1.2 for the Academic Organization Chart). This rearrangement provided better alignment of graduate and undergraduate programs, enhanced opportunities for cross-divisional collaboration, and mobilized faculty leadership.

In addition to the divisions, a new position of **associate provost** has been created. The associate provost will oversee cross-divisional undergraduate curriculum, accreditation, assessment, and diversity efforts, among other things. The full job description is still under development but will be available in the spring semester, and the current interim provost, Melanie Corn, will transition into this position once a new provost joins the college.

Meanwhile, CCA is concluding a national **search for our new provost**. The college engaged the search firm Spencer Stuart in July 2008 and began the search directly. The ambitious goal was to name the new provost by the end of the calendar year so that he or she could be engaged with the accreditation, strategic planning, and budgeting processes in the spring semester. We began our interview process in September and conducted two final-round interviews in mid-November. In keeping with the emphasis on vigorous faculty governance, the president committed to a faculty-led and open process, with a six-member search committee including four faculty leaders, the interim provost, and the senior vice president of advancement. The finalists in the search participated in public presentations and interviews with faculty and staff on both CCA campuses. Currently, the president is in negotiations with the top candidate, and we intend to have a new provost in place before the March EER visit.

The emphasis on greater communication and collaboration amongst faculty and administration has been greatly assisted by the development of the **Academic Affairs website** (<http://academicaffairs.cca.edu>). This site, still under construction at the time of our last report, is fully operational and includes a wide variety of resources including relevant information about other departments such as Human Resources and Student Affairs as well as a host of pages on faculty development, governance, course planning, assessment, etc.

Finally, two curricular changes since the CPR visit bear mentioning. CCA intended to begin an MFA in Film in fall 2008. After testing the waters for student interest and conducting a full cost-benefit analysis, the Senior Cabinet decided to put plans for the **MFA in Film** on hold. The resource-heavy new program would have been more of a burden than a benefit at this time.

On the other hand, CCA intended to begin an **MBA in Design Strategy** in fall 2008, and, after successfully completing WASC's Substantive Change process and receiving the Commission's approval, we did, in fact, enroll our first class this September. Applications far exceeded our expectations, and we enrolled 26 students, nine more than originally intended. The MBA in Design Strategy equips students to lead organizations from the unique perspective of design thinking. By uniting the studies of design, finance, strategy, and sustainability, the program provides the tools to manage in today's interconnected markets with a vision of business as sustainable, meaningful, ethical, profitable, and truly innovative. Founded with CCA's values at the core (e.g. sustainability, the interplay of theory and practice, and the belief in artists and designers as economic leaders) and meaningful quality assurance practices at the forefront, the MBA in Design Strategy will prove to be a flagship program for CCA as we enter our second hundred years.

A LONG-RANGE VISION OF PROGRESS THROUGH ACCREDITATION EFFORTS

Current senior staff members who also participated in the 1997 comprehensive accreditation review noted the vastly improved nature of current conversations around student and institutional learning. At a recent meeting in which senior staff presented drafts of material for this report, it

was evident that both the work and the conversations were evaluative in nature and that the recommendations for improvements in the respective areas were grounded in data and its analysis.

Senior staff also noted the significance of this meeting itself in that the conversations were intentionally cross-departmental and cross-referential, demonstrative of the broad consideration given to ideas, initiatives, and data in the current climate. This was seen as a necessary corrective to the "silo" structure of the past and is an important step forward in communicating information and deepening all stakeholders' comprehension of the college's objectives and priorities.

We look forward to the opportunity to showcase the work we have undertaken over the past few years and share some of the results of our burgeoning assessment and review processes with the visiting team. In addition to this report and its appendices, the team room on campus will contain detailed evidence from our multi-layered reviews and further documentation of our strategic planning and institutional research.

Chapter Two: Recommendations and Responses

Chapter Two provides an overview on progress we have made since the CPR visit to many of the visiting team's comments and the Commission's final recommendations.

DIVERSITY ENROLLMENT, RETENTION, AND GRADUATION

Improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of students of color (CFRs 1.5, 2.10). The team was impressed both by the efforts to provide more adequate services to students and by the College's extensive enrollment management efforts. Much has been accomplished. Nevertheless, as the team reports and as the College itself recognizes, these efforts have not succeeded in raising overall enrollment targeted levels, substantially improving retention rates, or producing similar student success rates across all student subpopulations. It would be wise for the College to continue to administer the NSSE; compare data from 2004, 2006, and 2008; look for changes and trends over time; and report on both changes and responses to this data in its Educational Effectiveness Review report. CCA's successes with students of color at the graduate level may offer lessons that can benefit undergraduate programs.

Given the energetic leadership in enrollment management, the team has expressed confidence that efforts in this area will continue, and it will be interested in seeing the results of all those efforts at the time of the EER. Enrollment management is a linchpin of the College's goal to achieve a sustainable business model; thus, as the team notes, "all [enrollment initiatives] require study and analysis so that the ample resources devoted to those efforts can be distributed appropriately."

(CPR Commission Action Letter, Recommendation #3)

The Commission's action letter and the CPR team recommended CCA continue its efforts to improve the **enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of students of color** (CFR 1.5, 2.10), an objective identified in the college's Campus Diversity Initiative and expressed in the Institutional Proposal (page 3). Enrollment Services (ESO) continues to address these issues and has made several changes in hopes of bringing the college closer to its targeted enrollment and graduation levels, and the Center for Art and Public Life (the Center) continues to work closely with its Cohort undergraduate group to support students of color. However, it is regrettable that some inaccurate data in the CPR may have shown the college to be less successful at enrolling and retaining minority students than is actually the case.

Unfortunately, the **graduation rates** by ethnicity and gender, reflected on page 58 Table 2 of the CPR report, were inaccurate. After reflecting on the visiting team's concerns regarding lower graduation rates for minorities, the vice president of Enrollment Services and the registrar reviewed their data. They quickly realized that the data provided in two different tables (tables 2 and 5 of IPEDS data) were misleading and/or confusing, and amended data was provided to the visiting team during their visit. As the registrar pointed out, the original tables showed the percentage of each subcategory based on the total cohort and not the requested graduation rate percentage per ethnicity and gender subcategories. The corrected version reflects the percentage of degrees awarded for each subcategory based on the total number of students in that category.

In other words, the original data provided was the percentage by ethnicity and gender of the overall freshman cohort. It did not accurately reflect a graduation rate.

The correct graduation rates are represented in the supplementary materials supplied and appended here (Appendix 2.1). While the corrected data reveals that there is still much work to be done, the 2001 cohort's graduation rates reflect an improvement in most sub-groups in comparison to prior years. For instance, the original Table 2 listed the average 3-year graduation rate of Black, non-Hispanic students as 4%, while the actual, amended figure is 60% (3-year average graduation rate). It must also be noted that given our size and the correspondingly small numbers of underrepresented students, graduation rates in these subcategories can vary greatly by the circumstances and decisions of a handful of individuals.

CCA remains vigilant in its commitments to diversity recruitment and enrollment. In the fall, the college created and staffed the new position of **assistant director for diversity recruitment and retention**, hiring a staff member who brings eight years of admissions experience working with diverse populations to lead our diversity efforts. ESO believes that while the entire enrollment team must share a commitment to diversity, it is critical to have a staff member in admissions leading the diversity efforts. This assistant director's responsibilities include: helping to formulate a new diversity recruitment plan, chairing the undergraduate diversity scholarship selection committee, ensuring that diversity applicants are carefully reviewed for admission, and following up on all communications with prospective and admitted diversity students. The assistant director will also maintain contact with enrolled students in an effort to improve retention. One of the objectives of the Campus Diversity Initiative, as the Institutional Proposal indicated, was to hire "a coordinator of diversity enrollment;" this position fulfills that objective.

Through the **graduate admissions** process, CCA has learned that we must take a highly individualized approach to diversity applicants. This includes contact from faculty as well as admissions staff, and must be combined with substantial scholarship support. As the CPR visiting team suggested, we are employing these strategies for undergraduate students throughout the admissions process. The college has developed targeted communications for undergraduate diversity students and has enhanced outreach efforts from staff, students, and faculty to inquiries, applicants, and admitted students. The college's new assistant director for diversity recruitment will continue to spearhead work with staff, faculty, and campus groups to support, assess, and improve these efforts.

CCA measures the effectiveness of diversity recruitment and **financial aid strategies** by analyzing enrollment data to track increases in applications, acceptance rates, and yield for underrepresented groups. With respect to financial aid, the college has learned that students from underrepresented populations who demonstrate exceptional promise and high need must receive financial aid packages that enable them to enroll and remain at the college. Two years ago, CCA revised its diversity scholarship plan to significantly increase scholarship awards to many diversity applicants. This approach has proved successful, with an 85% retention rate for recipients of the diversity scholarships entering in 2007 as opposed to a 78% overall retention rate.

Consequently, in 2009 CCA plans to increase diversity scholarship offers in several ways:

- In 2008, the college covered 90% of tuition with gift aid (scholarship and grant) to the 14 top diversity scholarship recipients. In 2009, this will increase to 100% of tuition with gift aid and 20 offers will be extended.
- In 2008, we offered \$5,000, on top of need-based awards, to transfer students. In 2009, we will do this again, but will increase the amount of the need-based awards for these transfer students to be commensurate with the freshmen packages. (Customarily, we offer less to transfer students.)

- In 2008, we offered six \$20,000 and six \$8,000 diversity scholarships to incoming graduate students. In 2009, we plan to offer seven \$20,000 and twelve \$8,000 diversity scholarships.

Additionally, many students of color take part in the Center’s Community Student Fellows (CSF) program. CSF positions offer on-the-job experience for students through the graduate level and are funded by federal work-study money as well as grants from Center sponsors. Students receive orientation and training through workshops at the Center for these quasi-internship positions as artists in residence or administrative assistants in schools and community art organizations.

Given our resource limitations, the college must look at **retention solutions** that impact all students but are especially beneficial for many of our students of color who are also first-generation college students and/or high financial need students. Current college-wide initiatives include, but are not limited to: enhanced and now-mandatory orientation programming, coordination of intervention and outreach efforts for struggling students by the Freshmen Retention Group (FROG), consistent first-year advising overseen by the chair of the First Year Program, and well-publicized tutoring services. This programming reflects CCA’s cross-college efforts toward meeting the goals outlined in CFR 2.10 such that the college “regularly identifies the characteristics of its students and assesses their needs, experiences, and levels of satisfaction. This information is used to help shape a learning-centered environment and to actively promote student success.”

The Student Cohort, which was funded by an Irvine Foundation grant that specifically fostered a learning community for students of color, provided both educational and social programming resources aimed at improving retention. While it was exceptionally helpful for the students who participated, it served a relatively small population. Now that the grant has expired, Student Affairs and the Center are working with the Cohort to establish a student-led organization that can partner with the college’s formal support networks to advance diversity at CCA as well as improve retention and graduation rates for students of color. Additional details on Cohort activities and CCA’s initiatives to both enhance the experience of students of color and strengthen ties to the area’s diverse communities—including the Community and Youth Development Project and (feeder) pre-college community arts program—are included in Appendix 2.3.

Lastly, in spring 2009 the college will review "understanding of cultural diversity" as part of its cyclical review of college-wide learning outcomes. It is intended that this assessment will contribute to broader discussions about the working definition of “diversity” at CCA and that this discussion will, in turn, yield insights that will aid in the recruitment and success of students from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Commission’s recommendation also suggested that CCA continue to administer the **National Survey of Student Engagement** (NSSE) and track changes over time, requesting a “report on both changes and responses to this data in its Educational Effectiveness Review report.” The visiting team report identified NSSE results as an important indicator for assessing Student Affairs: “The results of the 2004 administration were used to make substantial changes to the area of student services. The 2006 results are currently available, and the team expects the college will scrutinize these carefully to determine the effect of its service programs” (30).

The NSSE surveys indeed provide a valuable source of data that the college is learning to use more effectively. Therefore, we intend to continue participation in NSSE and acknowledge the usefulness of the data, both for long-term planning and for addressing immediate problems.

Data from the survey will be particularly useful in the future, now that the college is participating as part of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) consortium. We administer the survey every two years; the AICAD Consortium began participating in NSSE in 2006, providing two survey cycles in which we can specifically compare our results against other independent art colleges. Full results from our 2004, 2006, and 2008 NSSE surveys will be available for review in the team room.

Academic Affairs, for example, relies on NSSE statistics as evidence of academic rigor, collaborative learning, and student-faculty interaction, among other things. The reorganized Academic Cabinet (AC) has recently taken on the challenge of better utilizing the NSSE data as an auxiliary assessment tool for academic programming, and this winter, the four directors are coordinating Academic Affairs' efforts to analyze the 2008 results and recommend measures that will both fulfill department strategic goals and respond to specific NSSE findings.

One example of how NSSE data has been used by Academic Affairs is in the student-faculty interaction category. CCA has an average class size of approximately 15 students, the faculty teaches all classes (i.e. teaching assistants provide additional assistance in the classroom but do not replace instructors), and studio instruction classes require six contact hours for each three-units of instruction. However, the 2004 NSSE results showed that student-faculty interaction at CCA was low relative to our NSSE cohort (which was liberal arts colleges of a similar size for the 2004 survey). This information provided important evidence that influenced ongoing efforts to increase the full-time faculty population and provide more faculty offices.

As the visiting team suspected, when comparing the 2004 results with 2006 data, the college made considerable gains in four of the five **NSSE Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice**. Preliminary review of the 2008 data indicates results that are fairly consistent with the 2006 benchmark figures, with some declines. From 2006 to 2008 CCA dropped in mean scores in both freshmen and senior responses in four of the five NSSE Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice: Level of Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experience, and Supportive Campus Environment. While the decreases were not alarming given the expansion of academic programs and students during this period, it was important to be proactive so as not to lose significant ground in these areas as the college makes gains in other arenas.

Based in part on the assessment data provided by NSSE, the college has moved to reorganize and strengthen the academic advising program. Similarly, NSSE data supports the recent decision to create a Dean of Student Educational Support position to facilitate the operational partnerships between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. That position has now been staffed and will have particular responsibility for addressing key areas such as educational enrichment initiatives, academic advising, and student-faculty interaction.

Finally, as a result of the team report and action letter, the CCA group that participated in the WASC Assessment Retreat (Level II) in October sought advice on utilizing NSSE further for program review and other academic assessment purposes. As a result of the meeting, CCA is considering the following **recommendations**:

- Thoroughly briefing Academic Affairs and Academic Cabinet on the potential of NSSE as an assessment tool and on ways its data can streamline the identification of areas of concern in student learning.
- Changing the cycle of participation in NSSE to a three-year cycle, so the college would poll the same cohort (in their first and fourth years). This would entail approaching the AICAD consortium and recommending a revised schedule.

- Participating in BCSSE (Beginning College Student Survey of Engagement) to capture data on how well CCA is meeting expectations of our incoming students and to give us additional concrete evidence of the success of our First Year Program.

The college welcomes additional suggestions and input on NSSE from the EER visiting team.

CCA’s strategic plan calls for creating “a student experience and campus culture that values diversity, increases yield on recruitment, and strengthens retention” (8), and we are realizing that goal by increasing Enrollment Services resources to improve diversity recruitment, offering a more diverse curriculum, and providing a more successful experience for students of color. The college looks forward to advancing its core commitment to educational diversity and to engaging with the region’s increasingly diverse culture through our next strategic plan.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

Review and clarify faculty governance (CFR 3.11). CCA benefits from an engaged and generous Board of Trustees, as well as from skillful administrative leadership. However, the role of faculty in governance is less clear. The team reports that it was “unable to determine the ability of faculty to exercise effective academic leadership regarding academic quality.” The structure of the College faculty (with relatively few full-time and many part-time and unranked faculty) makes sense for the kind of institution that CCA is. However, only ranked faculty can vote on college-wide matters and faculty representatives on key committees are named by the administration in consultation with faculty leadership. Nor was it clear to the team what matters come before the faculty senate for disposition, what matters are dealt with at the program level, and what matters are handled exclusively by administrators.

The team gathered from its meetings with faculty and administration that the current approach to faculty governance is generally accepted. Still, the team and the Commission have questions about the ability of the CCA’s faculty to assert sufficient leadership over the academic quality of the College. The College is advised to revise its faculty handbook, engage the faculty in a discussion of governance, and provide greater clarity regarding the role, authority, and autonomy of faculty at the time of the EER visit.

(CPR Commission Action Letter, Recommendation #4)

Historically, the faculty at CCA has been engaged in governance and in exercising responsibility for academic quality. However, the team report and Commission recommendation have noted that a lack of clarity about the role and authority of faculty has adversely impacted faculty governance. The faculty and administration have taken significant steps since the CPR report to review and clarify faculty governance, including: restructuring the academic organization of the college, clarifying the role and function of the Faculty Senate and its representative bodies, having a more inclusive representation of faculty leadership in the administration of the college, and placing the revision of the Faculty Handbook at the top of the Executive Committee’s agenda for 2008 – 09.

While some of these processes had already been underway prior to the CPR visit, developments in these areas have proceeded dramatically since, intensified by the visiting team’s analysis and the Commission’s recommendation. The Institutional Proposal, for example, identified strengthening faculty committees and improving communications among its central issues, reiterating the strategic plan’s call for faculty to be more “deeply involved in the governance of the College.” The faculty is now directly engaging the terms of CFR 3.11.

The **structure of faculty governance** and academic organization is comprised of the Faculty Senate and its three standing representative committees – Executive; Curriculum; and Appointments, Promotion and Tenure – and are complemented by a realigned academic administration structure that organizes the individual major programs into four academic divisions. The college has done considerable work since the last visit in clarifying and

strengthening the roles and responsibilities of these critical faculty bodies, and the faculty is now better placed to exercise more effective academic leadership and quality assurance.

Faculty leadership and senior administration met in spring 2008 to review the academic structure in hopes of establishing more breadth and consistency in faculty governance. The task for the Executive Committee (EC) was to investigate and recommend a **revised academic structure** that would address the need for more faculty leadership and governance beyond the program levels, eliminate redundancies in administrative structures, and improve communications. Of particular concern was the distance between the chairs' program-level administration and the college's cabinet-level strategic decision making, a gap that previously had been bridged by non-faculty associate deans. The EC presented a revised structure to a joint meeting of program chairs, deans, and the provost, and at a subsequent meeting the program chairs voted unanimously in support of the proposed academic restructure.

The new president, formerly the provost who helped seed the initiative, identified the academic realignment proposal as a top priority. In conjunction with the EC, a task force was formed consisting of seven faculty representatives and several members of the administration to meet during the summer of 2008 to build consensus around the new structure of academic administration and to work out the details of its implementation. The new structure was in place by fall 2008.

The new structure realigns the college into four distinct and interlocking academic divisions: Architecture, Design, Fine Arts, and Humanities and Sciences. While CCA has long benefited from spirited and committed faculty leadership at the program level, the four divisions are now led by faculty directors (who are nominated by their divisional program chairs). The directors serve renewable three-year terms and meet bi-weekly as a group. The directors report to the provost and have replaced the staff associate deans on the AC. The increased representation in the AC has strengthened faculty communication and responsibility, a clear goal of the reorganization. The faculty now takes a leadership role in institution-wide conversations about academic quality and makes recommendations for changes and improvements to the college. While it is too soon to assess the results of the reorganization, several examples can serve to illustrate the more central role faculty plays in academic leadership. With the directors in place, faculty representation now consistently participates in strategic decision-making conversations with the executive administration. The directors now participate on the revitalized Academic Planning Board, are active in the preparatory stages of the next strategic plan, and are responsible for overseeing the first round of clustered program reviews.

Since the CPR report and visit, numerous **other changes in faculty representation and governance** have taken place to help ensure academic quality and maintain educational purposes. Beginning in the fall of 2008, the president of the Faculty Senate has a seat at the critical Senior Cabinet meetings, which are held weekly and led by the president of the college. The Senate president has also been invited to attend the Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees meetings in an effort to improve faculty-board communication. Also beginning in fall 2008, there have been significant improvements in communications between the faculty and its governance structure. EC meeting minutes are now posted in a timely manner on the governance web pages on the Academic Affairs site. In fact, the website is being overhauled to facilitate dialogue between the faculty and its leadership, and the Senate president is committed to informing the faculty regularly on the EC's agenda and progress. A minimum of one Faculty Senate meeting will be held each semester.

An important part of the evolution of faculty governance at CCA is the clarification of the role of the Executive Committee as the representative body of the Faculty Senate. This conversation has taken place over the last three years, but the impetus of the accreditation review process, the recent visiting team report, and the Commission's recommendation on faculty governance have facilitated the completion of the transition from a "town hall meeting" approach to a representative model for faculty governance. The previous reliance on Faculty Senate meetings as a primary source for conducting faculty business proved untenable due to poor attendance, lack of clarity about faculty purposes and goals, and the unsuccessful use of mail-in ballots to poll faculty on recommendations. The EC and the academic realignment are a more representative and responsive model for faculty decision-making.

It is also worth noting that the Commission's recommendation on faculty governance included an inaccuracy concerning voting rights in the Faculty Senate when it stated that "only ranked faculty can vote on college-wide matters." In fact, the Faculty Senate is composed of all ranked and adjunct faculty members, all of whom may vote on college-wide matters.

The **Curriculum Committee** is another standing committee of the Faculty Senate that has revised its purposes and taken on considerably more responsibility in the last three years. Traditionally, the CC has had general responsibility for the college-wide curriculum and for academic quality. With the development of program and learning outcome reviews, the role of the CC has been expanded to serve as a hearing body for the results of these reviews, and in doing so its role overseeing academic quality at the college has expanded. In particular, the CC, along with the AC, developed the process for conducting the cluster reviews. Most importantly, and as part of the process, the CC receives the reports from each of the reviews and makes recommendations to the AC. The Academic Cabinet reviews the recommendations, may add to or edit them, and then CC and cabinet members meet with the chairs whose programs are reviewed to discuss the findings and ways to "close the loop" between assessment findings and strategies for improving educational effectiveness.

In addition to developing the structures for clustered program review, the CC has also been involved in the re-envisioning of the Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studio requirement and in the development of curricular streams, defined by themes that are common to groups of courses across the college. The first stream is in "Ecological Theory and Practice" and reflects the college's deepening interest in sustainability. The purpose of identifying and promoting the streams is to provide more guidance to students who identify with a thematic interest but who may have otherwise missed the common thread. Streams are not minors or concentrations and place a greater emphasis on course coordination, communication, and advising. The CC has also taken on the revision of the student course evaluation forms with the aim of creating a tool better suited for assessing faculty and better aligned with learning outcomes.

Finally, the CC oversees the college-wide curricular requirements. Significant changes to the requirements or new courses that are required of all students must be presented to the CC for approval. For example, the Foundations in Critical Studies (CRTSD 200) course, required of all students matriculated since 2007, was reviewed by the CC for approval. New courses within a major do not require CC approval unless they fundamentally change the nature of the program. Thus, the role and responsibility of the CC has been clarified significantly, and as a result it is now functioning more effectively to ensure academic quality and to maintain the educational character of the college.

The Commission also recommended that CCA "revise its current **faculty handbook**" as a necessary step to further clarify "the role, authority, and autonomy of the faculty." Accordingly, The Executive Committee made the revision of the handbook its top priority for the 2008-09

academic year. The goal is to produce a final draft of the new handbook to present to the Faculty Senate for a vote before the end of spring 2009. To achieve this goal, sub-committees of the EC have been formed to address the different sections of the handbook, and significant portions of each EC meeting are dedicated to the revision work. Again, the team report and Commission recommendation have played a critical role in accelerating a process that had been proceeding sporadically and tended to focus on specific faculty issues, such as Senate membership and voting rights, rather than considering the handbook as a whole and its critical role in clarifying faculty governance. The town hall model of governance also impeded a more timely review of the faculty handbook as the necessity for addressing institutional and faculty business simply outpaced the Senate's decision-making mechanisms. The process created for revising the handbook in fall 2008 exemplifies the college's progress on clarifying faculty governance.

Another indicator of expanded faculty responsibility is the appointment of the Faculty Senate president to chair the college's search committee for the next provost. In part, this demonstrates lessons learned from the recent presidential search, which faculty believed lacked transparency and failed to fully consider their interests. In the provost search, the EC, divisional directors, and program chairs all participated in the final vetting of the candidates. The entire college community was invited to the finalists' public presentations in November, which were well-attended. This faculty-led process exemplifies responsive leadership and the realigned academic structure at work in the appointment of the person charged with directing and administering the academic culture.

Additionally, the CPR visiting team's report stated:

As the faculty, the college administration, and the new president prepare CCA's next strategic plan and the faculty redrafts its handbook, we encourage CCA to consider various models for faculty governance that will assure the requisite faculty leadership to maintain academic quality and integrity, with full consideration of the college's special purposes and character. (p. 44)

With the college embarking on the creation of a new strategic plan, the faculty, through the realigned academic structure and invigorated faculty governance, are well-positioned to participate in the institution's long-term planning. This corrects what some faculty members believed was a lack of comprehensive faculty involvement in the production of the previous strategic plan. All of the actions taken, and the results to date achieved in response to this recommendation, demonstrate the evolution of faculty leadership over the last decade. It also demonstrates the importance CCA attaches to CFR 3.11 with the faculty assuming its necessary and rightful responsibility for ensuring academic quality and maintaining the educational purposes and character of the college.

TWO CAMPUS GROWTH AND QUALITY

Plan for continued growth and quality at the two campuses (CFRs 3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). In the words of the team report, "the institution has been creative and opportunistic in its acquisition and development of the properties now making up its San Francisco campus." When the team visited, the sense of artistic energy was palpable. It is understandable that students and faculty located on the Oakland campus may wish to take greater advantage of all that the San Francisco campus has to offer. It will be important for the College to negotiate any tensions arising from the relationship between the two campuses and to attend carefully to the needs of students, faculty, and programs so that learning experiences for all can be adequately supported. Similarly, administrative structures supporting the coordination of the two campuses should be examined. While the team, like the College, recognizes that significant planning efforts must await the arrival of a new president, it recommends, nevertheless, that efforts to clarify the relationship between the two campuses begin now, and that planning for this relationship be made a priority. (CPR *Commission Action Letter*, Recommendation #5)

Since the opening of the San Francisco campus in 1997, considerable leadership and effort has been applied to managing the two campuses. The award-winning interior design of the new campus successfully enables the dramatic presentations inherent in institutions dedicated to creative activity. The open plan's flow, interpenetrating spaces, visible exhibition areas, and liberal use of glass not only draw light into the studio classrooms but also signal values of openness and transparency.

Developing and expanding resources and capacities for **managing the two campuses** over the last ten years have included improving access to both campuses for students and faculty, developing a robust digital communications network for the two campuses, and, where possible, distributing the curriculum offerings to both campuses—particularly those that fulfill college-wide requirements. The challenges, achievements, and opportunities afforded the college as a result of the two-campus environment have been chronicled in previous accreditation reports and were apparent to the CPR visiting team.

Though it is important to continue exploring development opportunities that may eventually lead to a one-campus college, for the foreseeable future CCA will operate on both sides of the bay. The diversity of experiences and environments offered by the San Francisco and Oakland campuses is truly a great asset, and it is important to communicate the positive qualities of our two-campus culture. At the same time, there are obvious challenges that we work to address, from small practical issues (e.g. the library now purchases copies of high-circulation items for each campus library) to larger structural issues (e.g. a few years ago we consolidated all first year courses on the Oakland campus since the college does not currently have housing in San Francisco, and experience has demonstrated the importance of maintaining a non-commuter residence community for our first-year students). Student Affairs, for example, is working hard at improving its assessment practices to better respond to problems related to the two-campus setting as they materialize.

The 2004-9 strategic plan made scant mention of the two-campus culture of CCA except to “promote the development of a student community on each campus” as a component to strengthen internal relations within the college community. With the appointment of the new president, it is now possible to address the planning required to further clarify the relationship between the two campuses, and these efforts are being incorporated into the strategic planning process now underway. Prior to the arrival of the new president, the interim management team stressed the importance of strengthening Educational Technology and Student Affairs on the two campuses to support students, faculty, and programs (CFRs 3.10, 4.1). These initiatives represent the primary ways the college has successfully grown while maintaining quality on both campuses.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN THE TWO-CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

One element of the two-campus environment where significant resources are being committed is the support and development of educational technology on the two campuses. While this sometimes presents challenges that are not faced by one-campus institutions, it also presents some benefits that give CCA an advantage over more traditional models. Significantly, the CIO is a cabinet-level appointment, ensuring informed, high-level planning and decision-making for continued growth and quality at the two campuses (CFR 4.2).

Because of the two-campus model, the **technology infrastructure** necessary for supporting the goals of the strategic plan becomes increasingly complex. Whereas in a one-campus environment, a school would have a single network, CCA requires two complete and discrete networks, including duplicate services and hardware. In addition to having two twin networks, a satellite

connection is required to link the campuses and ensure equal quality and availability of services regardless of location or the user's home server.

While maintaining the two networks requires a greater degree of planning, management, and upkeep than would be necessary for one network, the two-campus model provides some advantages here, too. One example is in the duplication of infrastructure which presents the opportunity for failover, meaning that service connections are automatically switched to the other campus' connections, minimizing downtime. By the end of the year, both our campus Internet connections and our new mail system will have integrated failover. In this way, the two-campus environment allows us to engineer backups into our infrastructure.

Certainly, the two-campus environment has a significant impact on staffing, requiring duplicate personnel in some areas. However, having staff in different locations has led Educational Technology Services (ETS) to consider solutions to **communication challenges** that can be helpful to the college as a whole. For instance, ETS has stepped-up efforts to integrate technology tools with communication tools and implemented a chat server that allows ETS staff to communicate instantly via computer. The tool proved so popular that it has been provided to all staff departments as a way to improve communications. ETS also tested video chat services (like Skype) for this purpose, which allowed the college to support those services to various programs like the low-residency MBA in Design Strategy program. While there are drawbacks to duplicating staff on each campus, the diversity of experience within the department contributes a breadth of knowledge and experience to planning, projects, and support that has been invaluable as long-term strategic projects are implemented (e.g. a laptop initiative, wireless services planning, online registration, etc.) (CFR 3.7).

The experience students, faculty, and staff have with technology is also certainly impacted by the two-campus model, a model that necessitates data portability and leads to significant reliance on laptop computers. This in turn translates to increased purchasing, maintenance, and disposal challenges for the college. Yet, again, there are advantages here: the need for data portability has encouraged us to make our VPN services significantly more stable and reliable, meaning staff can access campus network resources (like servers and printers) while at home or on the road. This also allows us to provide the same level of tech support to users, regardless of location.

While the two-campus model certainly presents some unique challenges, CCA has worked to address these in novel ways and to learn from the results. We feel that this novelty is in keeping with the unique and exciting culture at CCA, while recognizing that more traditional models can be easier to plan for, manage, and maintain.

STUDENT AFFAIRS IN THE TWO-CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

The college has been extremely resourceful, responsive, and effective in balancing services and deploying human, physical, and fiscal resources appropriately to meet college-wide objectives on both campuses. Student Affairs illustrates this commitment by providing student support services for both campuses and is vigilant in maintaining the services and addressing problems when they arise (CFR 2.13). Student Affairs planning has taken great care to balance its infrastructure between the two campuses. Nevertheless, students experience tensions arising from the relationship between the two campuses, and Student Affairs continues to help articulate and address them.

The Department of Student Affairs (SA) has been expanded and enhanced considerably in the last four years. A new **vice president of Student Affairs** position was created and staffed prior to the 2007-8 academic year, signifying an upgrade over the previous dean of students position.

The vice president is also a member of the senior cabinet, further demonstrating the integrative approach to senior management leadership the college has undertaken over the last five years. SA has hired three directors to develop critical programming and services on the two campuses. In all, ten positions have been added and three major college-wide programs have been developed to support enrollment increases on the two campuses and the changing student population (notably, a larger cohort of first-time freshmen). Throughout the planning of Student Affairs' two-campus support programming, the following priorities have guided decision-making:

- **Accessibility of essential services and support.** SA is committed to ensuring that services and programming are reasonably accessible to students on both campuses and prioritizes accessibility for essential services and support. With the exception of Residential Life, located in Oakland with the residence halls, all other programs and services have a presence on both campuses.
- **Awareness of campus demographics.** Understanding demographics of each campus drives certain personnel and programming decisions. For example:
 - SA created and staffed the position of Academic Advising Coordinator for the Oakland campus, responding directly to the resource needs of our Oakland-based first-year population and the First Year Program.
 - SA recently hired a new director of international student affairs and programs, a position based on the Oakland campus for the past two years. Upon review of the needs and location of our international students, we re-located this position to San Francisco to better serve the majority of that population, while maintaining services in Oakland through an international advisory office that is now adjacent to the First Year Program office.
- **Maintaining executive leadership on both campuses.** It is important for SA to have executive leadership consistently present on both campuses. With Student Affairs' recent internal restructuring, the division now has an executive leadership team consisting of the vice president of Student Affairs, the dean of student development, and the dean of student educational support. This team meets weekly. The vice president of Student Affairs is based on the Oakland campus because most cabinet-level leadership is anchored in Oakland. In part, due to the student concerns captured by the visiting team, SA now has a dean based on each campus. While this may help address any perceived blind spots or inequity, the intent was a more balanced leadership presence across the college to improve functions and inform decision-making.
- **Direct, consistent, and collaborative communications.** The Student Affairs Leadership Team—comprised of the vice president, two deans, and program and service area heads—meets twice a month. While many SA staff members spend significant time on both campuses, their main offices are on one campus or the other. These monthly meetings help to facilitate communication and to assess changing dynamics that impact the student experience on both campuses. In this way the climate of the two campuses is monitored very closely, and SA is proactive in identifying and responding to issues as they arise (CFR 2.10).
- **Access to student input and feedback.** Student Affairs assessment benefits from a range of formal and informal student feedback sources (surveys, student forums, dinner chats, meetings with students and student groups, etc.). Such feedback is critical to the ongoing program review and strategic planning, as well as for responding to developing issues and trends in a two-campus culture.
- **Capitalizing on web resources.** Given the challenges of supporting two unique campuses, there is a heightened awareness of the need to provide information and services via the most appropriate means for students. Increasingly, the entire college has become more proactive in providing comprehensive student information through the CCA website.

The visiting team acknowledged the number of new support services created to meet the needs of students, and the new vice president (who has responsibility for these services) “will want to systematically collect data on these services and assess their effectiveness.” (Team Report, p. 31) The vice president is working with the program leaders to determine what types of data collection are in place and how the data might be used. **New Student Orientation** is the first area Student Affairs has identified for more formal assessment and improvement. The Associate Dean of Students responsible for Orientation created the Orientation Planning Committee, a cross-departmental group that meets regularly to assess and plan the events.

After developing and administering a survey of first-year students, reviewing best practices, and conducting further small group discussions with first-year students, the college implemented significant improvements to New Student Orientation for 2008-09. Analysis of the data collected by Student Affairs identified distinct needs of four core student groups: first-year students, transfer/second degree students, graduate students, and international students. For 2008-09, the orientation for each of these groups was separated to identify specific areas of information and transition support for each group (see Appendix 2.3 for Orientation schedule). The Chimera Student Leadership Team grew out of the involvement of continuing students in mentoring and leadership roles. Members of the team were assigned groups of incoming students over the summer and communicated with them before their arrival to help them engage with CCA earlier and more readily. The Chimera team hosted online chat sessions, met with and anchored their assigned groups over the course of orientation, addressed questions and issues that emerged, and escorted their group through the required programming, including introducing them to the unique opportunities each of the two campuses affords.

The immediate anecdotal feedback from new students indicated that the changes made to orientation were successful, and further analysis and feedback will doubtless result in additional improvements. As examples of the types of data used in making decisions about orientation, the results of two student surveys are included here. Appendix 2.4 includes the results of a brief survey given to all students attending orientation immediately before and after the events; it intends to get a quick read on how successful orientation was in delivering key information. Appendix 2.5 includes the results of a larger survey of first-year students created by Enrollment Services that includes some specific questions about orientation; a similar survey is given to transfer students, and the results of all surveys are discussed and analyzed by the staffs of Enrollment Services and Student Affairs.

The vice president and Student Affairs team learned much from this first **assessment of programming**. The assessment of effectiveness is new territory for the division, and, as a result, SA determined that its next step as a department should be identifying its specific data needs and systematic ways to collect it. Changes to the relatively new infrastructure in Student Affairs are already underway in the name of better facilitating ongoing program assessment and data gathering to better support educational effectiveness.

Because of its focus on the student experience and services at CCA, Student Affairs is uniquely engaged with its two-campus character. The lessons learned in the first assessment effort of the division will be helpful in the planning and assessment of the two-campus experience for students. While decision-making is always deliberate and rooted in qualitative and quantitative assessments (CFR 4.3), it is not without its challenges and compromises. One example was presented this fall when facilities and transportation limitations impacted choices for attending student orientation for our largest-ever entering class. Another issue emerging is the lack of dedicated space on the San Francisco campus for a Learning Resource Center to parallel the one in Oakland, though academic coaching is readily available in San Francisco. The new structure and organizational focus is critical to moving forward with college-wide strategic planning and to prepare Student Affairs to implement effective assessment processes throughout the division.

One additional recommendation from the team report that was not mentioned in the Commission's action letter is the need for the college to assess strategic efforts toward increasing its **national visibility**. Appendix 2.6 details these efforts, which include a series of national searches (53 ranked hires in the past five years; 15 ranked hires last year), increased out-of-state and international recruitment efforts, an enhanced website, and a significant national public relations campaign.

In **conclusion**, while there is clearly still more work to be done to improve enrollment and retention, faculty governance, and our two-campus environment, great steps have been made in these areas over the past two years. Encouraged by the advice of the WASC visiting team and Commission, the senior leadership at CCA has folded these issues into the core its current strategic planning efforts. And, while it may seem out of place to spend such a lengthy portion of our EERR addressing issues of capacities and resources, we see clear links between the Commission recommendations discussed above and our educational effectiveness. The college depends on faculty leadership, a well-functioning dual-campus model, and the retention of a diverse student body to deliver the education our mission promises.

Chapter Three: Level 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). The team was impressed by the College's practice of frequent and intense critiques of student work. Clearly, this practice provides high-quality feedback to students on an ongoing basis and contributes to their development as artists. However, as the team report noted, there is still "considerable work" to be done in moving from assessment of individual student- or course-level learning to program-level analysis of students' strengths and weaknesses. A plan for systematic assessment of College-wide goals needs to be developed, one that will look not only at upper-division work, capstones, or theses, but also at the entire trajectory of students' artistic development. Similarly, the effectiveness of student services should be assessed, given the resources that are being invested in them. In short, the College's multi-tiered assessment plan urgently needs to be developed and implemented.

(CPR Commission Action Letter, Recommendation #2)

In recent years, CCA faculty has worked to improve the system of **level reviews** to stimulate more focused critiques of student work, expose students to additional perspectives, and enrich program assessment. The level reviews are a central component of CCA's "culture of critique," directly assessing student learning, engagement, and achievement at each level and across the curriculum. The reviews represent a key way the college addresses the need to systematically assess college-wide goals not only in upper-division work, capstones, or theses, but also across "the entire trajectory of students' artistic development" (2) as called for in the Commission's letter.

Level reviews include first-year, junior, and capstone reviews. The first-year and junior reviews are often exhibitions and public critiques of work conducted by interdisciplinary faculty panels. All students at CCA participate in these level reviews and receive both oral critiques and written feedback; these level reviews are independent of course work and are not evaluated as part of students' grades. Results and data from these reviews are integral to program review and are beginning to be useful for a range of assessment purposes.

Junior reviews are currently implemented through an interdisciplinary fine arts review and program-specific reviews in architecture and design programs. In 2008, the Writing and Literature Program conducted its first junior review, following the model of the Fine Arts review, and the Visual Studies Program is currently studying how best to conduct a similar review in a format more suited to its humanities focus.

The **purpose of these reviews** is to build community and involve students in a constructive and critical conversation about the range and quality of work produced either in first-year studio courses or in the degree major course work of their second and third years. Written evaluations generated in the reviews are provided to students, and copies of the evaluations and digital documentation of the work are archived by the program chairs. The evaluation forms correlate with the relevant learning outcomes, and a review of these evaluations by each program's faculty contribute to annual assessment of the program and its curriculum as a whole. The divisional directors will also review and discuss this information with the relevant chairs as part of ongoing goal evaluation for each program. In addition, in order to measure not only our achievement but also our progress, the directors and program chairs will assess the results of junior reviews in comparison to the results from the first-year review.

The significance of these last points should be stressed because it reflects two important ways that the college is working to improve its assessment processes and comparative data. First, the realignment of Academic Affairs this year has placed the responsibility for assuring educational quality firmly in the faculty's hands. Previously, the associate deans were responsible for engaging with program chairs regarding the results of their junior reviews. With the new structure, faculty directors now hold this responsibility, ensuring that "the institution's faculty takes collective responsibility for establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating the attainment of...expectations" (CFR 2.4).

Second, as engagement with assessment has increased, it has become increasingly clear that more needs to be done to develop comparable sets of data from the various reviews, particularly between the first-year and junior reviews. Following the WASC Retreat on Assessment, Level II, the Academic Cabinet is currently discussing the viability of a cross-college rubric format, which would greatly streamline the process of developing rubrics and enhance the ability of the college to "track results over time, and use the results of these assessments to revise and improve structures and processes, curricula, and pedagogy" (CFR 4.4).

The undergraduate capstone, or senior exit, review is to be conducted by every program at the college during the final semester of the senior year. This review will follow the same requirements as junior review, though only senior-level work is reviewed. Rather than a public display and critique of the work, as in first-year and junior reviews, the senior exit reviews are done through electronic submission of materials. Senior reviews are in addition to capstone coursework and exhibitions, which provide ample direct feedback to students. The purpose of this review is to collect evidence on the final achievement of learning outcomes for outgoing students. The materials are reviewed annually by the program chairs and faculty at their spring retreat, and may reaffirm a program's curriculum or suggest adjustments to its learning outcomes, assignments, or course structure.

FIRST-YEAR REVIEW

Tracing the **development of CCA's first-year review process** illustrates the college's efforts to improve student learning and realize the intersecting goals of the strategic plan. The First Year Program (FYP) faculty, chairs, and administrative leadership exemplify a vital, institutional commitment to a "culture of critique" through a practice of constantly analyzing the achievement of the program's learning outcomes together with its impact on college-wide retention and continuing student success (CFR 2.7). This collective approach to establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating the attainment of college-wide learning expectations provides a model of faculty governance and regenerative assessment across the college (CFR 2.4 and 2.5).

The First Year Program emphasizes skill-building, experimentation, and critical thinking in a year of cross-disciplinary study. Through a combination of studio (Drawing 1, 2D Visual Dynamics, 3D Visual Dynamics, and 4D Visual Dynamics) and academic courses, the program orients students to the rigor of building a creative practice while using foundational skills that apply to all programs at the college.

The first-year review process is a primary tool for introducing and reinforcing the college's learning outcomes for all students through an explicit, personalized review (CFR 2.3, 2.12), which provides direct feedback to the student as well as the program. Some initial analysis suggests that recent improvements to the review process may have improved the college's first-year retention rate.

FIRST-YEAR REVIEW HISTORY

Before 2003, the Core exhibition was traditionally held in the spring semester to highlight the work produced in the Core Program's studio courses (FYP was formerly known as the Core Program.) Faculty collected work and exhibited one project assignment from their Core studio courses to demonstrate the variety of student interpretations of the project. As the Core Program grew, it became difficult to hang a comprehensive show of all student work due to space limitations. The exhibited work was photo-archived, and informal faculty discussions guided decisions about the event.

In 2002-2003, the Core Program's name changed to the First Year Program, reflecting a more holistic view of the first year experience, a more proactive engagement with the Humanities and Sciences requirements, and the range of introduction-to-the-major courses offered by all programs. Also at this time, the college's curriculum was divided into a full year of pre-major studio coursework, required courses (predominately in the majors and Humanities and Sciences), and elective courses to encourage students to explore mediums, materials, and disciplines in their first year without fear of falling behind in their major requirements. Core studio faculty meetings focused on critical questions about what students should be gaining from the annual Core exhibition, and there were discussions of creating a thematic or otherwise more cohesive program format.

In 2003, early discussions around developing the strategic plan prompted a move to align the first year exhibition with the school's Junior Review model in order to develop a capstone experience for the FYP. Thus, the First-Year Critique Symposium was initiated, wherein faculty and visitors responded to students' Core and elective introduction-to-major studio work in a one-day event. Important goals at this point were to enhance the students' sense of accomplishment at the conclusion of their first year and to strengthen the sense of community amongst the first-year cohort.

The **First-Year Critique Symposium** drew faculty from across the college, alumni, and members of the local artistic community, exposing first-year students to a broader range of voices than the previous Core exhibition model. In a large gallery, wrapped with work and a filled with participants, students experienced an exciting event focused directly on their first-year work. The critique format was not individually focused; ten students and three panelists engaged in a general discussion about the process of making, and panelists advised participating students on their future directions at the college. At the end of the day, the panelists selected the best work for a Core exhibition, which hung for a week after the Critique Symposium. From 2003-2007, the First-Year Critique Symposium became an annual fixture, and the process continued as a one-day, weekend event.

Originally, there were several purposes for the First-Year Critique Symposium, including assessment of students' presentation and verbal communication skills. The symposium also served as a community-building forum, a platform for discussing process, and a vital preparation for more rigorous critiques as students advance into the majors. The program solicited and discussed feedback from panelists, but the formal responses were limited despite the development of a form for this purpose. These early assessment methods were also problematic because they called for panelists to comment on groupings of work by multiple students; thus, data tended to reflect broad averages. Faculty and other panelists were also unclear as to what was being evaluated—the event, the students, the program, or the work itself. The discussions of the Symposium in faculty meetings were more productive, with instructors identifying artistic and pedagogical connections, while building consensus on the program's challenges, plans, and progress.

Faculty valued the collegial exchange promoted by the review, especially as it exposed them to new critique styles and the cross-section of projects in Core studio and the introduction-to-major electives. Students also reported that they benefited in new ways from a more public critique

format than in their classes and appreciated the broader range of responses from the mix of professionals, graduate students, and faculty on the panels. Feedback from all participants stressed the success of the review as a community-building event.

However, the Critique Symposium had its shortcomings, which were also expressed by participants. Feedback noted that the critiques were not rigorous enough and students felt it overemphasized previously critiqued Core studio work. Students also resented that the event was held on a weekend, and, therefore, attendance diminished among students and, subsequently, faculty. Symposium attendance (which was not mandatory) dwindled to the truly motivated and those willing to attend. The program faculty also had concerns about the reliability of the exhibit as a tool for level review, since it attracted a limited and self-selecting segment of the first-year student population. In 2007, student attendance at the Critique Symposium was approximately 25% of the first-year cohort, and the ratio of panelists to participating students was almost equal. Overall, the amount of work required by staff and faculty, and the resources allocated to the event, did not produce a corresponding benefit. Conversely, program faculty agreed that the initial goal of aligning a first-year level review process with that of the college's Junior Review format was a significant improvement.

In spring 2007, after speaking with colleagues at other AICAD colleges and analyzing a range of comparable review processes, the FYP chairs proposed a significantly revised format that focused the review on assessing student learning. After lengthy and thorough discussions among FYP faculty, the current structure for the program's capstone level experience took shape, and the Critique Symposium format was split into a first-year portfolio review and a subsequent, distinct exhibition of select work from the first-year students. The First-Year Exhibition now runs early in the spring semester and is seen as a motivational, community-building event and a means for introducing students to the professional, curatorial, and competitive aspects of the art world. It also presents a valuable pedagogical exercise for students in the Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice (MA), who now curate the show with fascinating results. The more focused curatorial direction and the inclusion of fewer works have greatly elevated the quality of the exhibition.

THE FIRST-YEAR PORTFOLIO REVIEW

In spring 2008, FYP initiated The **First-Year Portfolio Review** (FYPR), which is required for all first-time freshmen and transfer students taking Core studio classes. Faculty panels now review individual digital portfolios over the course of a dedicated week, during which the Core studio classes are cancelled. The digital format, while initially a matter of considerable debate, supports the FYP's digital literacy learning outcome.

Works included in students' digital portfolios represent projects from all Core studio courses and may include studio elective work. The review is an opportunity for students to present their studio work for critique and conversation with CCA faculty and graduate students, as well as professional artists, designers, writers, and architects from outside the program and college (CFR 2.7). It also serves as an exceptional opportunity for the program to assess and reflect on student achievement of learning outcomes.

With faculty consensus, FYPR was incorporated into Core studio class time, and attendance is now mandatory, all of which assures faculty commitment and student participation. In order to capture work that is representative of the entire year's effort, the reviews are held near the conclusion of the spring semester. In spring 2008, FYP also facilitated distinct reviews for two sub-groups—Writing & Literature and Design and Architecture majors—in response to the curriculums these programs pursue.

The purpose and goals of the FYPR are continuously discussed in FYP faculty meetings as well as within the Curriculum Committee, Academic Cabinet, and Senior Cabinet. The review's fundamental aims are to create a capstone experience, to facilitate students' self-reflection at the end of an intense first year of studio work, and to review student learning outcomes. The review also builds community within the college by involving faculty and graduate students from all disciplines. FYP also continues to invite guest artists, designers, and architects from outside the community in order to expose students to a range of professional voices and connect with potential faculty for future studio courses.

For the spring 2008 reviews, FYP focused on creating collegial panel discussions with the students about the work and on establishing community connections within CCA because these had proved to be the most valuable elements under the previous Critique Symposium format. Students were encouraged to edit and reflect on the past year's work, and then to present their selection and discuss this with their review panel. At the end of the semester, students were offered copies of the review forms completed by the panels.

One of the major shifts the program made in moving to the FYPR format was to begin collecting **assessment metrics and archiving visual materials**. The collected evidence of the review process includes the written response of review panels (using a rubric), the edited portfolios, and the written response from students (a collection of spring 2008 FYPR materials is attached as Appendix 3.1). Additionally, subsequent faculty meeting notes demonstrate the programmatic and individual faculty responses to review data and the subsequent changes to the curriculum (CFR 4.4). Finally, digital archives have become a standard exit requirement for all Core studio courses throughout the year, and faculty members now address the steps to assembling the digital portfolio in their courses.

Following the first review in spring 2008, faculty were unanimous in their opinion that the process built a stronger sense of programmatic collegiality that benefits the program by encouraging more, and more forthright faculty dialogue. Faculty also commented on how valuable they found the interactions with fellow instructors and how useful it was to be exposed to alternative teaching methods. All also agreed that participation was high because the reviews were held during the week and within contracted course times, which also allowed more involvement from other faculty, graduate students, guest artists, designers, and architects from the community.

The faculty discussed the need to increase student "buy in," particularly the need for students to feel they received valuable feedback for their efforts. The faculty also wanted to see stronger presentation skills from the students and agreed to address this in coursework. Additionally, faculty expressed the need for more technological support for the review and the digital portfolios in the future. FYP faculty has also worked on better defining the criteria levels in the reviews and recognized the need to work towards ensuring consistency in the ratings.

Further modifications followed the faculty's assessment of the spring 2008's FYPR, including the development of a more formal presentation format (evolving from a more conversational one) that will emphasize verbal communication and presentation skills. The program has also adjusted the rubrics to better align them with the stated learning outcomes for Core studios. FYP will continue to facilitate separate reviews for students in the Writing & Literature, Design, and Architecture programs.

FIRST-YEAR PORTFOLIO REVIEW OUTCOMES

The First-Year Digital Portfolio Review format is an improved method of level review that allows the FYP to **evaluate student achievement of key learning outcomes**. Since replacing the Critique Symposium format in spring 2008, it has functioned as an important tool for program review, allowing the FYP to assess student learning near the conclusion of a year of required Core studio through a formal presentation. Additionally, the review functions as a curricular review and informs decision making within the program.

However, it is important to note that there is a strong consensus in the FYP that the portfolio review is focused on only some of the program's student learning outcomes and is only a part of its comprehensive program review process. In order to more thoroughly review specific course and programmatic goals, FYP conducts curricular reviews of all courses. Thus, the First-Year Portfolio Review should be understood as a level review and capstone experience for the first year, rather than as a program review in and of itself.

Because the review is now required, students receive credit in their spring Core studio courses for participating. This ensures a much higher percentage and degree of student involvement, allowing the program to collect substantial evidence, as well as to archive well-organized digital portfolios of the student work produced in the program. Also, students learn to prepare a formal digital presentation to a panel of CCA faculty, graduate students, and art and design professionals, supporting program goals to develop digital literacy and professional skills. Design students have the option of signing up for a discipline-specific panel as a way for them to engage directly with Design faculty before the end of their first year at the college, while Writing & Literature students are able to undergo a review that better addresses their discipline, coursework, and progress.

In preparation for the review, first-year students receive introductory information about review in the fall and are required to digitally archive their core studio work in both semesters. In the spring, students prepare for the review by reflecting on their portfolio and responding to a few questions in a prepared piece of writing that is submitted to the review panel, supporting the program's goals to develop and assess students' **written communication skills**. Students also select and/or edit the works they will present following FYP guidelines.

In this way, students gain practice in presenting and engaging in critical conversations about their work (**verbal communication**) in a fast-paced and rigorous format. Additionally, the review motivates students in their Core Studio classes and facilitates their development of an appropriate vocabulary for communicating to the panel about ideas, principles, and skills they have explored in the work. Faculty members are charged with drawing students out and encouraging them to lead the conversation, reinforcing verbal communication skills. Essentially, the review process functions as a pedagogical tool by providing an opportunity for faculty from across the college to mentor first-year students and prepare them for advancement.

Finally, an important outcome of the revised FYPR format has been its success at **involving more FYP faculty** in the process, thereby addressing a significant finding from our previous NSSE data, which showed that students desire additional and varied opportunities to engage with faculty. Because faculty members teaching in the spring semester host the reviews and are charged with leading the review panels, they see a range of work from students not enrolled in their classes, allowing instructors to compare and contrast assignments, encounter new teaching ideas, and make connections with other FYP instructors, administrators, and faculty at the college.

Thus, this review process allows the FYP to benefit from an inclusive level review of student learning each year. As they review student work, FYP faculty members see curricular gaps and innovative pedagogical techniques, allowing them to recommend and implement adjustments as needed. Faculty members also have the opportunity to speak directly with students about the relevance of first-year student learning outcomes in relation to their interests, ambitions, and majors. Hearing directly from students about the most instructive projects provides the program with perspective on the student body and their engagement with the curriculum.

The First-Year Portfolio Review format has improved the way the FYP and the college measure the preparedness of first-year students as they complete the core curriculum. The results from this level review allow us to adjust curriculum, pedagogy, and standards based on direct engagement with evidence of student learning. A formal review at this level and with this format also functions to impart the standards and expectations for critique presentations that students will encounter in their subsequent coursework and reviews within their majors. Equally important, the first year-review provides students with a crucial introduction to the corresponding process they will undergo in their junior review.

JUNIOR REVIEW IN FINE ARTS

As detailed in CCA's 1997 WASC Report, an optional Fine Arts Junior Review was established to measure student achievement as a result of the 1989 planning proposals. Over the years, there has been strong faculty support for this format and review process. In 2003, the associate dean of instruction, together with Fine Arts chairs, developed a plan for expanding Junior Review and making it mandatory for all Fine Arts students. The plan quickly won support and funding from the provost, and since its implementation in spring 2004, Fine Arts Junior Review has evaluated over 100 students each year.

Along with its role as an intensive individual review of student work, the Fine Arts Junior Review (Junior Review) is intended to function as a component of program assessment and review. The review format itself is based on graduate school review panels and is intended to prepare students for these experiences. The importance of interdisciplinarity has remained a consistent thread throughout the evolution of the review. Review panels are intentionally multidisciplinary, reflecting jury and panel make-ups in professional art contexts and thereby contrast with the relative familiarity of critiques within students' major programs. Over the years, Junior Review has implemented a stronger emphasis on assessment of student learning and of Fine Arts programs and de-emphasized the focus on individual students transitioning to senior year work; this refocusing of the review has provided feedback to students more directly tied to the learning outcomes and has turned Junior Review into a vital part of program assessment.

Process: Each semester the Fine Arts division assembles a list of Fine Arts juniors by department and sends that list to each program chair for verification. At this time, the chairs determine which students should proceed with junior review as scheduled, and which should be deferred until the next semester. Participating students are then notified by the Fine Arts division, which also provides all necessary information on the process and preparation. Students also receive a copy of the evaluation form (Appendix 3.2) and are encouraged to meet with their chairs, faculty, and peers. The week before Junior Review, Fine Arts runs two student orientation sessions to review the evaluation form, explain the format, discuss preparations, and answer questions. Typically, approximately half of the eligible students attend these orientations.

The two weeks of Junior Review are a busy and exciting time on campus. Each day, 15 students participate in individualized 30-minute critiques. Five students and four or five faculty members

convene for three-hour review blocks. During the breaks between these blocks, faculty and students view the work installed in the gallery.

Following the completion of Junior Review, students can obtain copies of their evaluation forms, and approximately half of students pick up their forms and take this opportunity to review the written comments. Fine Arts staff tabulates statistical evaluations from the completed forms (Appendix 3.3), and these are sent to the Fine Arts program chairs for use in year-end faculty meetings. An email is also sent to all faculty panelists soliciting feedback on the structure and logistics of Junior Review in order to inform future considerations of the review process.

The Fine Arts division maintains a dedicated budget to support Junior Review. Allocated resources cover expenses related to materials and labor for a professional installer to assist students with hanging their work in the gallery. Fine Arts also budgets sufficient honorarium funds to support small payments for outside panelists (artists, curators, art historians, and other professionals in the field) to participate on review panels. In addition, the Tecoa Bruce Gallery in the Oliver Art Center is dedicated to reviews for the entire two-week process. This commitment of the most prestigious and prominent exhibition space on the Oakland campus sends a message that Junior Review is essential, supported, and celebrated.

Participation: Fine Arts Junior Review involves students, faculty, and staff from across the college contributing to the internal community relations and providing a common experience. First and foremost, the review is the main event in the junior year for Fine Arts majors. Lower-division students in Fine Arts are also employed to assist with installation, allowing them to preview the procedure. Additionally, graduate students from a variety of disciplines participate on the review panels along with faculty and visitors. Thus, students at all levels are intimately involved in the review process.

Faculty participation is equally broad, with the review panels representing expertise from across the college's disciplines and divisions. Unlike the more design-specific reviews, the Fine Arts Junior Review strives to be interdisciplinary in nature, and therefore seeks balanced and multidisciplinary panels to elicit a range of responses. This gives each panel and the review itself a unique flavor since students encounter responses from curators, artists, architects, designers, writers, and scholars on their panels.

Outcomes: Like all the level reviews at the college, Fine Arts Junior Review facilitates faculty and institutional discussions about student learning based on direct evidence of student work. While it may be difficult to categorically prove that in and of itself Junior Review has improved student learning, the process requires students to make sophisticated choices about the work they will present, to communicate about their intentions in both a rigorous critique setting and a formal written artist's statement, and to reflect upon their learning. Program-specific and college-wide learning outcomes are also reinforced by their prominence in the Junior Review process and materials.

From its inception, Junior Review has had strong support and participation from faculty leadership in Fine Arts. This support enabled the transition from voluntary to mandatory reviews in 2004, and overall faculty volunteerism remains relatively high, even during a very busy time in the spring semester. The importance program chairs and administrators place on the review is evidenced by the role Junior Review participation and results plays in resource allocation. Because of the process, new faculty members have been hired and new courses have been created. In addition, faculty has been able to argue for additional programming that meets the learning outcomes.

It is unclear from the data how Junior Review has affected pedagogy at CCA. However, many faculty members have expressed interest in, and support for, how colleagues frame and approach

critique during reviews. Encountering new approaches and methods in Junior Review has enriched the critique practices of many participating faculty over the decades. Additionally, the opportunity to meet peers in this context has been continuously praised by participating faculty and thus supports the community building intentions of the current strategic plan. For a busy, largely adjunct faculty, this benefit should not be underestimated.

Junior Review statistics are distributed to each program along with a ranking of programs based on the review results, and faculty members discuss curricular changes based in part on these results. For instance, since 2006, the Sculpture Program has instituted a junior seminar to address some of the weaknesses identified through the Junior Review analysis. The Printmaking Program developed a similar junior seminar in 2007, and the Junior Review results for students in both programs have improved overall since this curricular change. Additionally, as a result of Junior Review scores in the areas of History and Contemporary Context of Visual Practice, the Photography Program revised their program sequence, recommending that majors take their media history classes (History of Photography and Contemporary Issues & Images) in the sophomore year. Again, the scores in these areas have improved in recent years.

While not the review's primary function, the involvement of faculty, graduate students, and outside visitors, including artists, designers, art historians, curators, and other professionals in the field, has afforded Fine Arts the opportunity to evaluate some guests as potential instructors for the institution. Junior Review provides the venue for these professionals and teachers to interact directly with students, faculty, and administrators in a studio setting, and with this vetting process (in addition to other regular hiring procedures), the college has hired some of its part-time Fine Arts instructors.

Reviewing the Review: Feedback about Junior Review from panelists is solicited through email and analyzed each year to improve the process and format. Additionally, discussions about the review process take place at all levels and venues across the college throughout the year, which often lead directly to changes. Issues raised in such discussions are consolidated by the Fine Arts director and associate director and brought back to the Fine Arts chairs for discussion and action. A full suite of Fine Arts Junior Review documents will be available in the team room during the visit.

Several examples of changes instigated as a result of this process demonstrate the closing of this particular assessment loop. In spring 2006, after discussions with deans and program chairs, Junior Review evaluation categories were changed to reflect CCA's college-wide learning outcomes (see Appendices 3.4 and 3.5 for 2005 and 2007 evaluation forms, respectively). The following fall (2007), after difficulty communicating with students over the summer and a lack of participation in the "Best of Junior Review" exhibition (highlighting work from the previous spring's review), Fine Arts rescheduled the exhibition to take place in the week immediately following Junior Review. After discussions with Advancement, Financial Aid, Student Affairs, the Academic Planning Committee, and program chairs, the college decided in spring 2008 to use Junior Review as the means for awarding All College Honors scholarships to Fine Arts students. A multidisciplinary group of faculty members now reviews candidates nominated for "Best of Junior Review," and the initial experience has been overwhelmingly positive. Finally, following participation in the WASC Retreat on Assessment this fall, the director and associate director of Fine Arts worked with program chairs to update the Junior Review evaluation form (Appendix 3.2) and test it in fall reviews. Changes include identifying Fine Art's learning outcomes more explicitly, providing a grading scale on the form, and developing and distributing a grading rubric to all panelists to improve consistency (see Appendix 3.6 for a rubric of divisional learning outcomes). A more thorough analysis of this process will be conducted upon completion of the fall Junior Review, and future plans include distributing the new forms and rubrics to students at the pre-review orientation sessions.

JUNIOR REVIEW IN DESIGN

Because of the distinct nature of their curricula, the undergraduate Design programs have developed somewhat different approaches to Junior Review (Level 3 Review) over the past decade. The division's junior review processes perpetually assess educational effectiveness and provide current evidence to support program decision-making.

Initially, the **Design reviews** were intended to provide direct faculty feedback to students in a formalized critique setting addressing work produced in all required studio courses up to, and including, those at the junior level. This range encourages students to reflect on their progress in curating their own reviews. Students are also required to enlist a minimum of three faculty members in the program to participate in the review. While not a competitive process, because the exhibition space is shared, these reviews provide a venue for students and faculty to compare work across the program (and division).

Level 3 reviews were quickly identified as a useful format for **evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the Design curriculum, pedagogy, and program in general**. At meetings following the reviews, program faculty members share their responses to the reviews and collectively determine how to leverage successful practices and address areas of concern. Additionally, several programs require that faculty submit written feedback on the reviews to the program chairs (Appendix 3.7). This written feedback from faculty, together with the subsequent discussions, represent program-wide self-reflection and facilitate curriculum planning for improved student learning, thereby closing the assessment loop. The reviews have also proved useful for identifying, examining, and correcting redundancies in the curriculum and pedagogy. For example, because of faculty feedback from the Graphic Design reviews, that program is considering ways to expand non-studio investigations by making the content of projects more rigorous and research-driven, while working to eliminate form redundancy.

The reviews also necessitate that programs constantly monitor the relevance of their curriculum and pedagogy with respect to emerging professional practices. Several of the programs, including Fashion Design, Industrial Design, and Interior Design, use numerical rubrics to assess college-wide and program-specific student learning outcomes, including design skills and work habits (see Appendix 3.8 for Industrial Design Junior Review documents). For program chairs charged with overseeing a heavily adjunct faculty, the review also provides an opportunity to assure the quality of coursework and student learning in particular courses.

In conclusion, Junior Review in the Design programs functions to assure program quality while providing direct, substantive, and comparative feedback to students on their progress in the program and their current level of achievement. These reviews also provide rich, first-hand data with which program faculty can make informed decisions about programmatic improvements and resource allocations.

JUNIOR REVIEW IN ARCHITECTURE

The **comprehensive 3rd year review process for Bachelor of Architecture** students takes place in the middle of the 6th semester of their professional education. Approximately 45 students are reviewed and 40 to 50 Architecture faculty members participate as reviewers.

Each student prepares a five-minute PowerPoint presentation containing representative work from Studios 1 through 4 (Studio 4 is in progress in spring semester of the third year). In addition, each student is assigned an exhibition space, which can accommodate two- or three-dimensional work. Students then deliver their presentations to their assigned faculty review panels on the San Francisco campus, and the reviewers also examine the work that is on exhibit without the students

present. Finally, faculty reviewers return completed evaluation forms to the program, and the students submit a disk of their PowerPoint presentation to the program for archiving (see Appendix 3.9 for informational memo to students and 3.10 for evaluation form).

The **purpose of the review** is to evaluate each student's progress and overall development within the architectural design studio sequence at the midpoint of his or her academic career (the third year of a five-year program). In this review, all students must physically and verbally present a substantial cross-sectional portfolio of work that best represents their design studio output for each of their first four architecture studios. This work is then reviewed and fully evaluated by the entire Architecture faculty to assess the level of development and progress of each student within the program toward his or her degree. In the reviews, the design work of each student is evaluated in the following areas:

1. conceptual development and independent research;
2. process and methodology: analytical and synthetic skills in the application of initial research to formative and material processes in design, as well as the rigor, depth, and level of design strategy development;
3. spatial and compositional relationships, the use of precedents and the understanding of formal ordering systems;
4. representational strategies and the acquisition, use, and integration of visual, physical, and digital media in the design process;
5. technical development and the integration and understanding of building technologies;
6. initiative, innovation, and progress;
7. overall quality of work: general aesthetic and technical competence, as well as productivity, consistency, thoroughness, and completeness of work.

These evaluations perform a critical self-assessment function for the Architecture Program, with the director and faculty coordinators reviewing the materials to determine both gaps that may be present in the curriculum as well as students' preparedness to move into their advanced studios.

JUNIOR REVIEW IN WRITING AND LITERATURE

In spring 2008, Junior-level students in the **Writing & Literature** Program's Majors Workshop course participated in their own pilot review organized by two members of the program's faculty, where their creative writing submissions were assessed and critiqued by an interdisciplinary panel of faculty and graduate students from outside the program. The work presented was intended to represent the best of students' writing during their time at CCA and to relate to their intended senior thesis project. Students also were asked to produce an accompanying artist statement that reflected on their plans for the senior thesis project. The program initiated the pilot review to assess student progress on learning outcomes and to compare that progress with current curriculum goals. Thus, the first Writing & Literature Junior Review was intended both to provide substantive feedback to the participating students and to the program itself.

This pilot review was a success for the Writing & Literature students and program, motivating the students and incorporating the program into one of the essential events of the undergraduate experience. Student responses to the Junior Review were generally positive. Knowing there was an award at stake—All-College Honors in Writing—also energized them. It proved beneficial that students were informed at the beginning of the semester that they would be going through the review, that the review was directly linked with the Junior Majors Workshop course, and that both the review and the course were oriented toward students' preparation for senior thesis. All Writing & Literature majors can now expect Junior Review as part of the undergraduate curriculum.

Findings from the review were reported to the Writing & Literature faculty at its year-end faculty meeting. For this purpose, the chair and the program's Junior Review coordinator produced an analysis of the review process and a series of recommendations regarding the process and the program's curriculum (Appendix 3.11). In preparing the report, the participating students and the panelists were all polled and solicited for feedback on ways the process can be improved and on the final recommendations for the program. While the faculty felt it was too soon to act on the findings of a single review, information about student learning gathered through this process will inform the program's planning and hiring requests going forward. Together with the specialized First-Year Portfolio Review that Writing & Literature students now undergo (also piloted in spring 2008), the program is fully engaged in the college's level reviews.

CAPSTONE REVIEWS

CCA's original plan for the fully-implemented level review system included capstone reviews (senior exit reviews for undergraduate students and thesis reviews for graduate students). Over the past two years of developing and beginning to standardize the level reviews, it became clear that we would benefit most from concentrating on first-year and third-year (or junior) reviews. As described above, these two reviews operate in a parallel manner and allow us to collect similar data that can be used to assess student progress as well as comparative program assessment evidence. As the CPR visiting team noted, creating a review process that was not overly laborious was the key to success and sustainability.

Capstone reviews are still a vital conclusion to each student's education and an important part of program assessment, but because they provide program-specific summative evaluations, they serve a clearer role as part of the annual program assessment and clustered program review, rather than as separate level reviews that attempt to provide some cross-programmatic evaluation in addition to program-specific assessment. Every undergraduate at CCA participates in a major capstone course; for most majors, this is a two-semester "Senior Project" class in which the students develop a body of work that reflects their own point of view and style and demonstrates the achievement of the program learning outcomes. The **Senior Exit Review** assessment of this work usually includes an exhibition and/or digital documentation, and the faculty members in each program review the senior work during their spring retreats as evidence of curricular and pedagogical effectiveness with regards to the learning outcomes and program objectives.

The Textiles Program serves as a premier example of how senior exit reviews serve as an element of program assessment. Every student participates in a review with a group of key program faculty members (see Appendix 3.12 for notes on the review process). The students' work is assessed based on achievement of college-wide and program-specific learning outcomes (see Appendix 3.13 for score sheet and Appendix 3.14 for LO definitions). The feedback provides the student with one final summary recommendation, but, more importantly, the process plays a key role in the annual program assessment. Results from the review are analyzed by the program's faculty during the spring retreat and are used as evidence for curricular changes, faculty requests, and other resource-driven decisions.

The capstone experience for our graduate programs includes a **Thesis Review** – a written thesis and/or a thesis body of work. The review of that thesis includes continual feedback throughout the final year's thesis courses and concludes with a commencement exhibition/symposium/reading, oral and written critiques, and archiving of the thesis project in CCA's library (see Appendix 3.15 for library submission guidelines). The thesis review then feeds

into program review in a way that is similar to other level reviews. Each program's faculty meets at the end of each year and assesses how the success of the theses reflects on the curriculum and teaching within the program.

A premier example of graduate thesis review is “The Master's Project,” the capstone of the Visual and Critical Studies Program. Students apply their advanced knowledge of visual culture and their facility in visual criticism to an individual research/creative topic. Students hone their research, writing, and verbal communication skills through the development of a master's thesis. Individual research is augmented by support from a primary thesis advisor as well as several external advisors. The process also involves collaborative exchange through group writing critiques. The project comprises four required elements: a written thesis, a symposium presentation, preparation of a poster for display during the season of graduate thesis events, and publication in the *Sightlines* journal. The faculty uses a rubric to assess the learning outcomes expected in the thesis work (Appendix 3.16), and analysis of the thesis work and rubrics is, again, part of the end-of-year faculty meeting and leads to important resource, curriculum, and faculty decisions.

Collectively, CCA's level reviews in the first, junior, and senior (exit) years represent a strategic and systematic approach to analyzing the levels to which students are achieving stated educational objectives. Through increased training in assessment practices and the cross-pollination of best practices from various disciplines (often undergoing additional evaluations by specialized accreditation bodies), the college's effectiveness at assuring the quality of student learning is making significant progress (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8). Vigorous faculty governance will also play a role in this advancement, with the recent reorganization of Academic Affairs distributing the responsibility for educational effectiveness more equally between the college's faculty and administrative leadership. Together with the other components of the college's multi-tiered approach to assessment, including program reviews, cluster reviews, and the cyclical review of college-wide learning outcomes, the college is dedicated to implementing and improving its educational effectiveness. The following chapter continues CCA's response to recommendation two with a discussion of College-Wide Learning Outcome Reviews.

Chapter Four: College-Wide Learning Outcomes Reviews

Chapter Four continues the response to the Commission's second recommendation as quoted at the beginning of Chapter Three.

DEVELOPING LEARNING OUTCOMES

In 2004, the Strategic Plan focused the college on pursuing academic excellence, and by defining and beginning the process of assessing a set of **college-wide learning outcomes** CCA has moved towards its stated objective of creating cross-college standards and empowering the Curriculum Committee to ensure satisfactory achievement in each area (Goal 1, Objective B).

Learning outcomes reviews evaluate specific college-wide learning outcomes (CWLOs) identified as vital to all students' education. The CWLOs were developed through discussions with program chairs, faculty governance committees, and administration. Since the submission of the IP in 2005, CCA has revised and expanded the list, increasing the number from eight to eleven in light of these discussions. The learning outcomes are intentionally broad and address the core academic objectives of the college. Defining and publicizing these outcomes has increased awareness across the college, and the faculty is currently engaged in developing indicators and criteria, the means with which to assess the success of these objectives (CFR 1.2).

The current lists of CWLOs were finalized in 2006 (Appendices 4.1 and 4.2). In accordance with its mission, these outcomes reflect CCA's commitment to "educate students to shape culture through the practice and critical study of the arts," and are assessed using the learning outcome assessment matrix completed each year by program chairs and faculty. Divisions, programs, and faculty are beginning to plan their curricula with a better understanding of how and where specific learning outcomes are delivered (Appendix 4.3). The learning outcomes are communicated through syllabi, course evaluations, and the college website. As discussed elsewhere in this report, program-specific learning outcomes are also developed by each program and are addressed as part of an annual program assessment as well as a cyclical clustered program review (see Chapter 5).

The **review cycle** schedule for all CWLOs was established in 2007 by the Curriculum Committee and Academic Cabinet (Appendix 4.4). While the general outline and scope of CWLO reviews has been established (see Appendix 4.5), the specific format of each review and content to be assessed will be developed by the faculty teaching in the relevant programs in conjunction with the CC and AC. Learning outcomes reviews then assess student work from relevant required courses in order to achieve a comprehensive evaluation of a cross section of students.

SPRING 2008 CWLO REVIEW SUMMARY

What follows is a **summary account of the college-wide learning outcomes assessment** process as it developed in its initial year (2007-8), and some reflections on the future of this assessment initiative. Three CWLOs were scheduled for review:

1. **Written Communication:** evidence of the ability to read critically and express one's own ideas in the form of expository writing;
2. **Methods of Critical Analysis:** evidence of proficiency of manners of engaged and careful evaluation, interpretation, explication, and/or understanding of the scientific method;
3. **Research Skills:** evidence of capability in investigation, inquiry, information gathering, and documentation.

The associate deans, in consultation with faculty and staff, decided to assess achievement of these three outcomes together as part of a single review exercise and identified two required courses from the Humanities and Sciences curriculum that would generate the relevant student work. The program manager for Humanities and Sciences was appointed to oversee the project.

Initially, we planned to assess papers from English 1 courses, customarily taken in students' first semester, and Methods of Knowledge seminars, customarily taken in the junior or senior year. English 1 courses are conducted by the Writing and Literature Program; Methods seminars are conducted by the Critical Studies Program. Term papers were collected from five representative sections of each course near the end of the fall 2007 semester. Subsequently, instructors were asked to provide the original assignment prompt and explain what instructions were given to prepare the class for the assignment. This information and the prompts were shared with the review panel.

After attending the WASC Retreat on Student Learning and Assessment in October 2007, and reviewing our plans with Mary Allen there, we determined that it would be appropriate to simplify this process by initially conducting only **summative assessment** of the identified outcomes, and thus eliminated the first-year English papers from the review. This decision was further supported by the recommendation made by the CPR team report: "We recommend that the entire assessment process be streamlined so as not to be unduly cumbersome and unwieldy" (43). Upon reviewing the Methods seminar papers collected, we determined that assignments from three of the five courses were most comparable and elected to work with these.

The associate dean and program manager of Humanities and Sciences drafted a **rubric** from various source materials and shared it with the Humanities and Sciences program chairs and the faculty who would conduct the review. Their feedback was incorporated into the final assessment rubrics (Appendices 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8). The rubrics were meant to give a broad indication of the levels of achievement for each outcome, so materials were rated on a scale of one to four: 1) inadequate, 2) developmental, 3) satisfactory, and 4) strong.

At the end of the spring 2008 semester, four faculty members (two from Writing and Literature; two from Critical Studies) met to conduct the review with the Humanities and Sciences program manager. This committee was provided papers and the rubrics, and worked in pairs (one faculty from each area), reading from a common stack of papers so that each paper had two readers, and scored the papers with the provided score sheets (Appendix 4.9). The faculty pairs then reviewed their scoring of each paper together and worked to reach consensus on any scores that were more than one point apart (which was rare).

After four hours, the faculty committee discussed what they saw in the student work with respect to the learning outcomes. The faculty also made a series of suggestions and recommendations for improving the levels of achievement in the respective areas covered by the review. Finally, the committee discussed the assessment process itself, which will allow the college to improve its process in subsequent reviews. All four faculty members felt the process was constructive and worthwhile.

Finally, staff computed the numerical results and produced a spreadsheet (Appendix 4.10). We gained several **valuable insights into student achievement** from the numerical data:

- The majority of papers achieved either developmental or satisfactory scores in all the subcategories; in no area was the achievement determined to be *primarily* either inadequate or strong;
- Learning outcome elements were closest to being achieved in Written Communication, though the Support/Research/Development sub-category was heavily slanted towards “developmental” and “inadequate” achievement;
- Learning outcome elements were furthest from being achieved in Methods of Critical Analysis;
- Achievement levels were highest in the Organization/Coherence and Style/Mechanics sub-categories;
- Achievement levels were lowest in the Inquiry, Evaluation, and Support/Evaluation/Research sub-categories.

A summary of the assessment panel’s discussion and **recommendations** was drafted (Appendix 4.11), reviewed by its members, revised, and submitted to the Curriculum Committee. One suggestion was that future assessment panels should review sample work from more courses to get a better overview of the learning outcomes’ achievement. The panel felt that in the future it would be better to review fewer examples from any one course and favored reviewing more examples from a broader spectrum of courses.

The panel also felt that while initially somewhat challenging, assessing the three learning outcomes at once was manageable in the end. They felt that more work could have been reviewed if the panel was more familiar with the rubrics—and with working with rubrics in general—before the assessment. Once the panel was comfortable with applying the rubrics, the assessment became more rapid.

Also with respect to the assessment rubrics, in a number of instances disparate or distinct elements of a particular learning outcome were bundled together into the same category, so that panelists found it difficult, in assigning the number, to separate which was actually being evaluated. For example, under Support/Development/Research, a score of 3 resulted from “adequate research that pulls from various sources” and “sources well evaluated, deployed, integrated.” Some felt these represent two distinct skills, since in many cases students may have used a wide variety of sources (which merits a score of 4) but did not evaluate them well. This observation raises the question of how nuanced rubrics can and should be, a consideration that must be balanced against the need for a streamlined process.

A related concern centered on the rubric’s definition of a particular CWLO. For instance some panelists felt the working definition of Written Communication did not account for the development of “a personal voice and stance, energy, original writing style or language usage.” This point was voiced during the rubric drafting process, but it was determined that, while desirable, this was not critical to assessing benchmark competencies. This demonstrates the importance of faculty participation in an inclusive drafting process when developing the assessment tools. It also yielded a valuable observation about this particular CWLO, pointing to the kinds of discussions generated by assessment.

Additionally, the panel observed that even with the assignment prompts in hand, it was sometimes challenging to evaluate the papers, since some of the prompts seemed too vague and some students in the same courses appeared to be responding in very different ways to the assignments. This suggested to the panel that there may be a lack of clarity (on the part of students, instructors, or both) regarding the assignments’ tasks in terms of writing, research, and critical thinking. For example, from the essays reviewed it appeared that some students were unsure whether they should make an argument, discuss a personal connection to the course material, or provide a general summary of an issue. Based on this, we have learned that future assessments will need

to incorporate the assessment intentions from the outset by clearly soliciting a demonstration of the learning outcome(s) in the original assignment prompt. This will take additional advance planning and coordination.

SPRING 2008 CWLO REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the assessment experience, the panel made a series of **recommendations** addressing pedagogy, curriculum, resources, and the assessment process itself, which were included in the final report.

In the area of instruction, the panel made the following suggestions:

1. Term papers should be developed over time and presented in various forms at various stages to encourage appropriate research and adequate writing.
2. The college should consider developing a common template that instructors could use to craft and present research/writing assignments across the college. The intention would not be to restrict the range of research/writing assigned, and care should be taken to stress this point in communications. Rather, a carefully developed template could both help faculty to solicit the appropriate work from students and assist students to achieve desired learning outcomes because the language used to communicate the requirements of good writing/research would be shared across the curriculum (i.e. between courses at the 100, 200, and 300 levels; or between English 1, Media History, and Methods courses). Developing shared rubrics (throughout Humanities and Sciences; throughout the First Year Program) and/or reconciling the language used in rubrics/assignments might also be useful in this regard.
3. Students should have access to the rubrics the panel used (or some iteration thereof), so they are aware of the evaluation criteria for their projects before (and after) submission.
4. Instructors should consider using small groups to articulate research proposals early on.

The panel made the following recommendations regarding curriculum:

1. The college should undertake a discussion of the utility of research to the graduating CCA student, and the objectives of this college-wide learning outcome should be specified.
2. The college should develop and articulate a cross-college curricular strategy for getting students from the introductory level of college-wide learning outcomes to the mastery level. The resulting strategy should be made clear to program chairs, and some system of accountability for realizing this strategy should be enacted.
3. The college as a whole should do a better job of communicating with students about its expectations for academic course work.

The panel recognized the need for additional resources to improve the abilities of instructors to facilitate accomplishment of student learning objectives:

1. Continue to upgrade research capacity in the library and train students at all levels in the resources that are available through the library as well as better inform the faculty about existing resources.
2. Provide more training to instructors—in all parts of the college—on how to integrate writing instruction and research skills/information literacy into their curriculums.
3. Continue to encourage and/or require students to utilize the Learning Resources Center; consider ways that instructors could collaborate more directly with tutors to identify skills sets to focus on when working with specific students.

Finally, in addition to the points discussed above, the panel identified ways that the assessment process itself could be improved:

1. If comparative, representative assessment is to be possible in given curricular areas or courses, more preparation is needed to ensure that courses make common or very similar assignments that lend themselves to comparative analysis.
2. Programs/faculty members should develop rubrics for assessing student work in specific courses and assignments, use them consistently, and share those rubrics with both students and program faculty. Rubrics should break down the various skills and tasks that will be assessed, and should articulate what characterizes the various levels of achievement. (Some faculty may find it most effective to develop such rubrics with their students.)
3. Assessment rubrics should take care to un-bundle the skills and/or learning outcomes as much as possible, so that each component is addressed individually.

In fall 2008, the **Curriculum Committee** met with the director and assistant director of Humanities and Sciences to review the report and its recommendations. The committee determined that the director and assistant director should meet with the relevant programs (generally in Humanities and Sciences) to review the assessment report and discuss its implications/recommendations. Specifically, CC was interested in the idea of promoting a common language for writing assignments and for mapping the curriculum in Humanities and Sciences to promote a sequential and *scaffolded* learning experience for students building towards capstone experiences with the college-wide learning outcomes. The CC has reported their full recommendations to the Academic Cabinet, and both bodies will meet in January with the relevant programs to discuss specific plans for closing the loop on this assessment of the CWLOs.

One indicator of the utility in this process can be demonstrated by the recent work of the **Humanities and Sciences curriculum committee**, which was formed in fall 2008 as part of the realignment in Academic Affairs. Informed by the assessment work detailed above, this committee has begun a systematic evaluation of the mission of general education at the college. In part, this was spurred by the findings of the first CWLO, since the programs increasingly grasp the necessity of “mapping” the Humanities and Sciences curriculum to ensure that it provides the necessary scaffolding to support student achievement of the learning outcomes.

This committee, with representatives from the three undergraduate Humanities and Sciences programs, is currently engaged in revising the divisional mission statement; assessing the capstone courses in the three programs by reviewing syllabi, course descriptions, and assignments; and evaluating the alignment between the mission and the capstones. Its next step will be to consider the alignment of the curriculum to ensure that student achievement of the relevant learning outcomes is being adequately and sequentially fostered through the requirements. It is worth noting that the faculty members engaged in this work are enthusiastic, finding motivation in the obvious potential for improving student achievement. This work is further evidence of the beneficial effects the college is beginning to see from its initial efforts to assess student learning in a more systematic and integrated way. It is also worth noting that, following its evaluation of the CWLO report, the Curriculum Committee has recommended that all divisions consider convening such committees to conduct similar curricular reviews within the division.

NEXT STEPS

Our first CWLO review was intentionally traditional in its scope and process. Not only did faculty agree that writing and corollary learning outcomes were ripe for assessment and in need of improvement, but faculty and administrators involved in developing the systems of assessment realized that the spring 2008 learning outcomes would allow for a single, rubric-based assessment

of written work. Upon completing the first review and delving deeper into the process, two things become apparent.

First, CWLOs in the **graduate areas** must be assessed within each program. Originally, our intention was to develop parallel processes with which to conduct the CWLO reviews within undergraduate and graduate studies; however, the seven graduate programs deliver the learning outcomes in unique ways that are best assessed by intra-program reviews. Because our undergraduate students take a large number of college-wide studio and Humanities and Sciences requirements, these courses provide the means for a common review process of college-wide learning outcomes. Although our graduate students do take advantage of "grad-wide electives," the vast majority of their courses are within their major, and although there is a set of agreed-upon core grad-wide learning outcomes that mirror the undergrad CWLOs, the delivery and inflection of those learning outcomes is unique to each program. Therefore, a singular review process that relies on assessing a sample would not necessarily provide accurate results that could be extrapolated across each graduate program. Additionally, there is not a particular course or assignment required of all graduate students that would allow the college to understand how well all students in every program are achieving the learning outcome of, for example, "understanding of ethics." Instead, the provost is working with the directors and graduate program chairs to ensure that the graduate CWLOs are thoroughly assessed within each program through their thesis/level reviews and clustered program reviews.

Second, a singular **format for CWLO reviews** will not provide the best data or faculty "buy-in." Although following the rubric model of assessment used for our first CWLO review might have provided a desired consistency of process, it became clear through a number of faculty meetings that we need to leave the format open enough to include alternative forms of assessment. For example, our second round of CWLO reviews will take place in spring 2009, when we review two learning outcomes—"understanding of cultural diversity" and "knowledge of historical and contemporary context of visual practice"—and each outcome will be reviewed differently. For the latter outcome, a rubric based on the scale and format set up for the 2008 CWLO review will be developed and applied to the outcome's criteria. This rubric will be embedded in the already-established junior reviews (see Chapter 3), since this college-wide review provides visual (through the work being displayed), written (through the artist's statement provided), and oral (through the presentation and critique) assessment evidence. A sampling of these rubrics from various programs across the college will be separately reviewed by an interdisciplinary faculty group in the spring. Potential areas for curricular development and improvement include required art history courses such as "Introduction to the Arts" and "Introduction to Modern Arts," and required major courses such as "Media History." In addition, the reviewers may find that the articulation of this learning outcome should be improved through the development of better artists' statements and oral presentations.

Developing an assessment process for "understanding of cultural diversity" has proved to be more complex. Not only does the learning outcome need assessment, but the assessment work will inform the college's broader conversation focusing on the strategic goals related to diversity in the curriculum. The faculty group charged with developing the format for this spring's review has determined that a numeric rubric will not best serve the goal of assessing how the college is doing with this particular learning outcome across the undergraduate education. Although CCA does have two required courses in Diversity Studies, a studio and a seminar, assessing the learning outcomes within those courses would not provide any insight about how students carried an "understanding of cultural diversity" back into the rest of their education, nor would it provide the opportunity to assess a college-wide goal of increasing diversity in the curriculum across all programs. In order to best do this, a faculty review team is developing a narrative survey that will be distributed to a sampling of students early in spring semester. The reviewers will then use this

evidence to complete their review and make their recommendations. The criteria and survey questions are still in development and will be available for review on-site in March.

CCA's goal in assessing these CWLOs has been to ensure excellent undergraduate learning by developing meaningful and sustainable processes. From the college's experience with its first assessment of its college-wide learning outcomes, we now have a better understanding of the importance of remaining flexible in our assessment processes and of embedding assessment work in the college's arts-based curriculum as much as possible. The cyclical assessment of college-wide learning outcomes that CCA has undertaken is driven primarily by the college's focus on achieving academic excellence and will allow us to gather evidence demonstrating the achievement levels of graduates so that resources will be appropriately deployed (CFR 2.2 and 2.6) throughout the curriculum.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

A more robust data collection and analysis function can provide support for assessment and program review, as well as for enrollment management (discussed below) and for future planning of all kinds. The College may wish to consider such steps as centralizing data collection or hiring a director of institutional research. As the team report notes, provision of evidence to support assertions was uneven: while some areas were well-supported (e.g., library resources), in other cases (e.g., assessment efforts, retention, community relations), "evidence was not marshaled effectively to substantiate assertions." Making fuller use of the capabilities of the newly adopted Datatel system may help in this regard. Adopting a course management program may also provide a means of collecting and analyzing evidence of student learning. (CPR *Commission Action Letter*, Recommendation #2)

The question of **institutional research** has proven to be a challenge for CCA, for as the Commission's letter and team report suggest, there may be benefits (as well as drawbacks) to a more centralized or professionalized approach to institutional research. Therefore, the college has chosen to address institutional research incrementally; while we recognize the importance of systematic data collection and analysis, the college is not yet prepared to centralize this function.

Institutional research is a broad category of work done at CCA that informs campus decision-making and planning in areas such as admissions, financial aid, curriculum, enrollment management, student life, fundraising, finance, facilities, and alumni relations. It involves the collection, analysis, reporting, and warehousing of quantitative and qualitative data about the institution's students, faculty, staff, curriculum, course offerings, and learning outcomes. Currently, this occurs in a distributed model, where the department with the highest level of expertise and need for the information is responsible for maintaining and sharing the data and analysis. This information is also used for reporting purposes with government, financial, and accrediting agencies.

CCA has **Noel Levitz** assess its institutional research capabilities. Their summary report states that "the list of data that CCA is currently gathering is quite extensive, and [...] provides a good foundation for most types of institutional decision-making and planning." Their assessment also notes that the college could benefit from additional staff to analyze data and present it to decision-makers in a timely manner.

The current system is successful at putting the most important operational data closest to those who most critically need it. What it does somewhat less effectively is consolidate this data for reflection, both by those using it and others who do not have a way to access it easily. The college has addressed this by regularly discussing research data at the weekly **Senior Cabinet** meetings. The director of Enrollment Services, for example, continually presents enrollment, retention, and financial aid metrics to the cabinet for discussion and planning (long- and short-term). Similarly,

outside consultants, such as those from Noel Levitz, are regularly asked to attend Senior Cabinet meetings and present on various research topics.

Additionally, Senior Cabinet agendas generally include at least one item addressing a strategic theme, such as diversity or technology, which often brings new institutional data to the table for analysis and reflection. The cabinet has recently been expanded to include faculty and other staff who can benefit from the research discussed there and share additional data streams. The college is also planning to publish key indicators on its website in the coming year to better disseminate information.

In general, this approach to institutional research has been effective, but the college is considering whether additional consultants or a more centralized model with dedicated staff would be an improvement. CCA is currently assembling an assessment plan that will allow the college to track the goals of the next strategic plan; embedding assessment in this way will also help to focus some of the initial strategic planning. The institutional research function is also being reviewed following the reorganization of Academic Affairs, and assessing needs in this area will be among the first orders of business for the new provost. As the team report's recommendation noted, and the college's leadership is aware that "the centralized alternative has liabilities, in addition to the expense."

In terms of institutional research into **student learning and program review**, with the hiring of a new provost we are creating a new associate provost position to further develop and sustain the educational assessment function at the college. Such a role would include: identifying new resources to streamline the collection and analysis of data; providing training in effective, relevant assessment techniques; and developing the college's critique-based instructional methodology into what Carnegie Mellon's Lee Shulman calls a "signature pedagogy." The associate provost would also promote more strategic uses of existing resources to improve student learning, such as a deeper analysis of NSSE data. We also plan for broader use of learning management systems, such as Digication and Moodle (discussed below), currently being used for assembling student portfolios as a means of collecting studio *and* academic work for a range of assessment purposes. In short, the associate provost's office is slated to become a hub of assessment activity, providing a clearinghouse for materials and information on best practices.

It is also important to recognize the college's growing commitment to conducting institutional analysis and research for planning purposes. The provost now oversees an annual assessment budget of approximately \$25,000 above any accreditation costs; five years ago, we had no assessment budget. We also have increased personnel in Academic Affairs in addition to the pending associate provost position. Over the past five years, Academic Affairs staff has been doubled, and while the increase in staff has primarily been implemented to meet the growing needs of developing programs and additional students, it has also provided more support to conduct ongoing program assessment and curricular and program reviews. While we are still developing the data collection practices that will best support student learning, the Curriculum Committee has developed and disseminated clear guidelines indicating appropriate data to be collected for annual program assessment (see Chapter 5). Also, as discussed above, based on analysis of recent assessment experiences and trainings, we are currently developing criteria along with rubrics and other assessment tools for college-wide learning outcomes and level reviews.

Finally, as discussed more fully in Chapter Six, the college is currently engaged in a 17-week self-study as a form of qualitative institutional research towards developing the next **strategic plan**. This work is being facilitated by IDEO, a leading design research firm, which specializes in human-factored research. It is hoped that this assessment will generate useful insight into fundamental institutional questions of identity and aspirations that will focus the planning and strategy discussions.

In these ways CCA has addressed the terms of CFR 4.5, particularly the stipulation that “The institution has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and objectives.” We have developed a foundation and a set of practices for the collection and assessment of (qualitative *and* quantitative) data that has grown gradually and organically out of ongoing functions and the needs of the college.

COURSE MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

The action letter’s second recommendation also observes that “adopting a course management program may also provide a means of collecting and analyzing evidence of student learning.” Because of this and its relevance to educational effectiveness, we thought it useful to outline the college’s efforts in this area.

During the 2007-8 academic year, the college began a pilot test of two **learning management systems** (LMS), Moodle and Digication. The selection of Moodle was based on several factors:

- Its wide use in higher education with a proven track record for success;
- Its fully customizable user interface;
- Its use of open-source technology;
- Our in-house staff experience and knowledge of the system;
- Its compatibility with the college’s ERP system (Datatel).

Digication is a relatively new system developed by faculty at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and is intended to facilitate the use of electronic portfolios (i.e. e-portfolios). It is currently used at RISD and the Otis College of Art and Design to facilitate web-based learning management and e-portfolio creation. Our interest in beta-testing Digication stemmed from

- Its e-portfolio feature, which facilitates wide-spread exposure of student and faculty work;
- Its superior user interface, which necessitates minimal training of faculty and students;
- Its reported success at Otis and RISD (comparable AICAD schools).

At the conclusion of the one-year pilot, we were not surprised that both systems proved useful for a variety of reasons as indicated by an online survey of faculty beta-testers following the fall semester. Moodle’s more traditional research-based tools were more easily adopted by faculty who were comfortable integrating technology into their course(s). Digication’s e-portfolio feature and simple interface were more attractive to our first-year and inter-disciplinary faculty, including those instructors who had less experience and motivation in integrating technology into their courses.

Because of our faculty’s range of needs and experiences, the college continues to maintain both systems, though we have decided to continue the pilot until additional, dedicated support resources can be acquired. It is worth noting that Moodle has become the primary vehicle of learning management for our new MBA program which follows a distance learning approach to a portion of instruction. The extensive use of this software in that program may yield useful data for adopting a single, college-wide system in the future.

Planning related to the learning management systems includes identifying and developing a model of support to meet existing and forecasted demand. Moodle will continue to be the software exclusively used by the MBA program. Digication has recently offered a new “Admissions” component that facilitates the submission of e-portfolios for CCA applicants. The college is also monitoring the impact of LMS usage on networking infrastructure and will consider enhancing infrastructure as needed. The further development of our institutional research capabilities and implementation of LMS will aid evidence-based assessment of all kinds, but particularly systematic program review, as discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Program Reviews, Assessments, and Specialized Accreditations

Implement program review (CFRs 2.7, 4.4). The Commission has expected institutions to implement systematic program review since the late 1980s, and this expectation is more fully expressed in the 2001 Standards. The Commission views systematic, comprehensive program review as a cornerstone of quality assurance in educational institutions. Thus, it is imperative that CCA move ahead with its plans for "cluster program reviews." This will entail finishing at least a draft set of guidelines for the reviews, piloting them with at least one cluster, and having some results to show the visiting team when it returns in spring 2009 for the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). Results should not only include a recounting of the process that was followed, but also present findings and at least tentative plans, with budgeted resources, for responding to the findings. The program or cluster review should include analysis of student learning outcomes at the program level, but it should not be limited to student learning. It should also include more traditional input and process criteria for program quality, such as faculty numbers and qualifications, financial support, facilities, information resources, course and curriculum review, promotion and reappointment, and the like.

(CPR *Commission Action Letter*, Recommendation #1)

Similar to most institutions of higher education, the development of systematic, sustainable, and *meaningful* program review has been both a priority and a challenge for CCA. While level reviews and continual critique are inseparable from our institutional culture and have functioned to assess student learning and improve curriculum for quite some time, augmenting these practices with additional evidence and translating them into substantive program review has been a major undertaking. Through this process we developed three goals: 1) standardize annual program assessment to ensure the regular development of evidence and "quality assurance" practices; 2) better utilize our existing reviews from specialized accreditation bodies (CIDA, NAAB, and NASAD); and 3) institute a system of periodic program review that would align with WASC expectations, but, more importantly, would provide the college with valuable evidence for integrated planning.

ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The new academic administrative structure has allowed for a greater degree of accountability in the **annual program assessment** process at CCA. The four divisional directors now work directly with the program chairs on implementing assessment procedures that are evidence-based and lead to manageable and incremental change. Additionally, with faculty directors assuming this leadership role, the process and materials are being critiqued by those closest to the classroom. It is hoped that this will lead to a more vital and streamlined assessment process that directly involves faculty in assuring the quality of student learning as called for in CFR 4.4.

At the beginning of every academic year, each chair convenes a meeting with the program's faculty at which they revise old and develop new strategic goals using a standardized **goal worksheet** developed for this purpose (please see examples in Appendices 5.1 and 5.2). Chairs are responsible for aligning their goals with the college's strategic plan and the program's mission. Additionally, the worksheet requires that the programs identify specific strategies for achieving the goals and establishing short- and long-term metrics. At the same time, the programs review program learning outcomes, and the chair is tasked with revising them as needed.

The resulting document is then shared with the chair's director at a dedicated meeting in early fall semester that includes a discussion of goals and the academic agenda. This then serves as the roadmap for the year and the primary means with which the director assesses the chair's performance annually. In January, every chair and their director meet to 1) evaluate progress on achieving the annual goals and 2) discuss budget requests for the following year. The dual purpose of this mid-year meeting is to keep budget requests tied closely to strategic planning and goal setting. These meetings also serve to keep now-explicit program objectives in focus and identify ways the director can assist in achieving desired results. Finally, in May, chairs and directors meet again to review the chair's performance and the annual goals. These meetings and working documents constitute key components of annual program assessment, keeping program administrators and faculty on target by clearly relating resource requests (curricular, personnel, and budgetary) to a program's strategic goals.

Similarly, at the end of every academic year, each chair holds a faculty retreat for the purpose of reviewing the level review materials as well as program-relevant learning outcome assessments in order to "close the loop." In light of this evidence, the program chairs can then make strategic decisions or recommendations about hiring, curriculum, and/or other programmatic planning. Additionally, program chairs compile **annual program portfolios** at the end of each year that contain pertinent documentation about the program and its assessment efforts. Among other things, these portfolios include information about goals; budgets; student, faculty, and alumni statistics; and curricular information (e.g. requirements, learning outcomes, syllabi, schedules). In keeping with the college's goal of standardizing annual program assessment to ensure the regular development of evidence, the suggested content of these portfolios has been fully articulated by the Curriculum Committee (CC) (Appendix 5.3).

CCA is still in the process of educating the program chairs about assessment (processes and utility) and of learning how to effectively manage the annual program reviews. Last year, the college achieved one-hundred percent compliance with the completion of the goals worksheet document and the year-end faculty meetings assessing each program. We are working on increasing the chair and faculty investment in the other procedures and documents, including the review of goals and the program portfolios. At the same time, feedback from chairs and directors on the degree to which some documentation is or is not valuable for improving student learning will lead to more streamlined evidence-gathering. This year, with the (faculty) divisional directors in place, we expect to have much greater participation and a clearer indication of what represents useful review evidence at CCA. Examples of full program portfolios will be available for review in the team room. Ultimately, the annual program assessment practices are designed to become embedded, habitual, and sustainable, grounding institutional decision-making in reliable evidence.

SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION

Besides WASC, CCA is accredited by CIDA (Council for Interior Design Accreditation, reviewing our Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design program), NAAB (National Architectural Accrediting Board, reviewing our Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture programs), and NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design, reviewing our 17 BFA programs, as well as our Individualized Major (BFA), BA in Visual Studies, MFAs in Design and Fine Arts, and MAs in Curatorial Practice and Visual & Critical Studies). The only three majors not reviewed by a specialized accrediting body are Design Strategy (MBA), Writing (MFA), and Writing and Literature (BA). These three programs, along with all programs reviewed by NASAD as well as our non-degree programs, are reviewed in the clustered program review cycle, discussed below.

CFR 2.7 states that

In order to improve program currency and effectiveness, all programs offered by the institution are subject to review, including analyses of the achievement of the program's learning objectives and outcomes. Where appropriate, evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional societies is included in such reviews.

The periodic reviews by our specialized accrediting agencies precisely fulfill this CFR. All three organizations have comprehensive standards for each program they evaluate, and their evaluations include a careful assessment of program learning objectives and outcomes as well as professional standards. All current CIDA, NAAB, and NASAD materials will be available for review in the team room (see Appendix 0.3, WASC's required Table 8.1, for a summary).

CIDA (formerly FIDER), founded in 1970, is an international non-profit organization that accredits postsecondary interior design education programs in the United States and Canada. The voluntary accreditation process uses internationally recognized educational standards to review programs. As detailed in the CIDA Accreditation Manual, the accreditation process involves the following primary steps: 1) Request for Review; 2) Determining Program Readiness; 3) Preparing the Program Analysis Report; 4) Site Visit; 5) Visiting Team Report; 6) Accreditation Decision. CCA has been accredited by CIDA/FIDER since 1980. The college was re-accredited in 2003 and will complete our next accreditation visit in November 2009.

NAAB is the sole agency authorized to accredit professional degree programs in architecture in the United States. Since most US state registration boards require any applicant for licensure to have graduated from a NAAB-accredited program, obtaining such a degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture. While graduation from a NAAB-accredited program does not assure registration, the accrediting process is intended to verify that each accredited program substantially meets those standards that, as a whole, comprise an appropriate education for an architect. The mission of NAAB is leadership in, and the establishment of, educational quality assurance standards to enhance the value, relevance, and effectiveness of the architectural profession.

An architecture program seeking accreditation must go through a number of steps stipulated by NAAB. These steps involve a combination of several tasks: 1) Self-Study; 2) Peer Review; 3) Visiting Team Report; 4) Action by the NAAB Board; and 5) Ongoing External Review. A program may be granted a six-year, three-year, or two-year term of accreditation depending on the extent to which it conforms to established educational standards. Additionally, NAAB requires annual reports to be submitted each November which include statistics, responses to the last team report, and a summary of changes. CCA's Bachelor of Architecture program has been accredited since 1992 with its next re-accreditation visit in 2011. CCA's Master of Architecture Program received initial accreditation in January 2008 and is scheduled for re-accreditation in 2011.

NASAD, founded in 1944, is an association of approximately 280 schools of art and design, primarily at the collegiate level, but also including postsecondary non-degree-granting schools for the visual arts disciplines. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials. Institutional Membership is gained only through the peer review process of accreditation. The Association also provides information to the public. It produces statistical research, provides professional development for leaders of art and design schools, and engages in policy analysis.

Similarly to other accrediting bodies, NASAD requires a self-study, an on-site visit, a visiting team report, and a judgment by the commission for accreditation. In addition, the association requires annual reporting through Higher Education Arts Data Services. NASAD's typical review cycle is ten years with a mid-point review, and CCA has held NASAD accreditation since 1950. The

college's last re-accreditation was granted in 1998, and our next visit will be in March of 2009. In 1997, the college underwent a joint NASAD/WASC visit, but in spring 2009 we are conducting separate, consecutive visits.

Finally, although not an accrediting agency, **AICAD** (The Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design) collects annual statistics on faculty, students, budgets, facilities, and other resources. Participating in AICAD allows CCA access to useful comparative data with our peer institutions, and, more importantly, members of CCA administration participate in various AICAD listservs, conferences, and meetings that provide excellent opportunities for sharing best practices and solutions.

Thus, additional, specialized accreditation bodies regularly monitor virtually all programs at the college, assessing student learning, curriculum, faculty, professional training, resources, and infrastructure. While these accreditation reviews are important for the specific majors, their processes also benefit the college as a whole. The reports and visits further create a culture among CCA faculty, administrators, and students in which engaging in purposeful conversations about educational effectiveness, learning outcomes, capacities, and resources is expected. Additionally, the multiple formats for accreditation review, while taxing on resources at times, allows the college to profit from a range of approaches to quality assurance. One small example of this is the way in which the director of Architecture has shared NAAB practices with the other divisional directors. Although NAAB requires a level of specificity not useful for all of our programs, some of its templates for learning outcomes have served as excellent guides in other programs. All together, our various accreditation and external reviews go a long way toward successfully meeting CFRs 2.7 and 4.4.

CLUSTERED PROGRAM REVIEWS

Finally, CCA has also implemented a system to review clusters of programs each fall (Appendix 4.4). As CCA has shifted toward an interdisciplinary focus in student learning, we find it makes sense to adopt a structure of clustered program reviews. This format combines our programs into six groups that allow us to review each program and ask important trans-disciplinary questions specific to certain areas of the college (for example, Humanities and Sciences or "3D" majors).

The reviews are largely based on evidence collected through the annual individual program assessments and portfolios. Besides the annual assessment data, this **periodic review** requires each program to submit a program-specific self-study that provides a narrative assessment of the past six years. This report also identifies areas for improvement and goals for the next review cycle. Additionally, the programs in each cluster meet prior to the review to discuss connections within the cluster and then include those connections in their self-studies. The evidence (program portfolios, self-studies, and any additional pertinent information) is then reviewed by a visiting team, and the team's report is presented to the CC along with the self-studies prepared by each program. The CC will make recommendations to the Academic Cabinet, which then reports back to the programs on the final results of the review and identifies any necessary adjustments in curriculum, leadership, facilities, or resources.

The CC worked diligently in the 2007-8 academic year to finalize the structures for this periodic program review, and with their guidelines, the first cluster review was conducted this fall. The CC defined the program portfolio (as discussed above), advocated for leadership and resources for the review process (see Appendix 5.4 for a job description of the Program Review Manager), and outlined the full clustered program review process (full details are in Appendix 5.5). Faculty leadership in developing the review format, along with the commitment of substantial resources, has led to a high level of faculty support for the new procedures. The college has committed

approximately \$15,000 to the annual clustered program review (approximately \$7500 to pay program review managers, \$5000 to cover costs for external reviewers, and \$2500 for miscellaneous expenses) and \$10,000 to ongoing faculty development in the arena of assessment. These amounts will be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted as necessary.

The fall 2008 clustered program review was planned to cover four programs: Visual Studies (BA), Visual and Critical Studies (MA), Writing and Literature (BA), and Writing (MFA). The four program chairs, director, assistant director, and interim provost met in July to discuss the upcoming review, and—per the CC’s menu of review formats—the group elected to conduct two smaller clustered reviews, one for VS and VCS and a second for W&L and (graduate) Writing. The chairs felt the most important trans-disciplinary “cluster” conversations were between the two similar grad and undergrad programs. The new divisional academic structure was put in place partly to leverage just such interplay, so we felt that dividing this first cluster would align well with these organizational goals while providing a more manageable first step in this new assessment process. The VS/VCS review was conducted in November 2008, and the writing programs’ review is scheduled for February 2009.

The first clustered program review, of VS and VCS, was conducted in November by a team comprised of two reviewers external to the college (Jan Stinchcomb, Dean of Faculty & Undergraduate Studies, Maryland Institute College of Art; and Jennifer Shaw, Assistant Professor of Art History, Sonoma State University) and one internal reviewer from a program within the college (Susanne Cockrell, Assistant Chair, CCA First Year Program). This team assembled for two days of meetings with faculty, staff, and students from the two programs under review. The team also spent two hours on each of the review days meeting in the team room to assess the materials provided in the program portfolios and to evaluate student work (see Appendix 5.6 for full schedule of the team’s visit).

Following the visit, the team’s chair compiled a review report and submitted it to the college (Appendix 5.7). The report consists of a comprehensive set of recommendations for each program, addressing curriculum, faculty and staff, assessment processes, and facilities and infrastructure. The Humanities and Sciences division director, chairs of VS and VCS, and staff then met to review the team’s findings and consider recommendations for leveraging strengths and addressing areas of weakness. Additionally, the report will be shared with faculty of these programs subsequent faculty meetings, and subcommittees, such as the Visual Studies subcommittee focusing on revising the requirements for the major, will carefully consider the findings.

In sum, all who participated in the review found it to be a productive and engaging practice. The opportunity to present the two relatively new programs to a review team afforded the occasion to honestly assess areas for improvement and to share accomplishments. Several of the faculty expressed their feeling that they saw this as a time to take stock, discuss current program goals as well as pedagogy with peers, and to establish future direction and goals. Minor revisions to the cluster review process were suggested that will enable the college to improve future reviews, most immediately the spring clustered review of undergraduate Writing & Literature and the graduate Writing programs.

The **fall 2009 clustered program** review will focus on undergraduate general education. The First Year Program’s core studio courses, Critical Studies, and the general education requirements in Visual Studies and Writing and Literature will all be reviewed. Although this is a crucial area for review, we chose to wait until the second year of the review cycle so that we could conduct a smaller “trial run” during the first year. As discussed in previous chapters, the First

Year and Critical Studies Programs have been conducting in-depth curricular assessments for the past two years that will provide for a very robust cluster review. Details about these assessments will be available in the Team Room in March.

With the integration of sustainable and systematic annual program assessment practices, in addition to the clustered program reviews and specialized accreditation reviews serving as punctuation marks throughout this process, CCA has developed a comprehensive plan for meaningful program evaluation. Additionally, the realignment into divisions headed by faculty directors promises to significantly enhance the depth and breadth of faculty responsibility for these review processes. Although we are still developing the capability and the capacity necessary to fully benefit from assessment, CCA has completed a full cycle of clustered program and learning outcome reviews and has found the process both illuminating and profitable.

Chapter Six: Strategic Planning for Academic Excellence

Through the accreditation review process we hope to achieve a greater understanding of the purposes, goals, and objectives of the strategic plan and to measure effectively our progress in the implementation of the plan. Specifically, we want to demonstrate improvements in academic excellence and student learning, enrollment growth and management and improvement of attrition and retention rates, and improved community relations with respect to the faculty, cultural diversity and communications across the college. In order to achieve a better understanding of strengths and weaknesses, successes and problems of the plan as we implement it, we intend to improve the infrastructure of the college academically and administratively in order to strengthen institutional learning.

(CCA Institutional Proposal, 2005)

CCA is fortunate to have undergone its accreditation review at a time when the college is deeply engaged with developing a new strategic plan and entering a new era of faculty governance. Drawing on the insightful assessment undertaken by the visiting team, the qualitative and quantitative information-gathering from a broad range of stakeholders, and energized faculty leadership working cooperatively with a new—but seasoned—administration will enable the college to pursue an inspiring agenda under its next strategic plan.

In response to CCA's fall 2007 CPR and the ensuing WASC Commission Action Letter, the college has been preparing for our **Educational Effectiveness Review** by implementing a multi-faceted approach to review and assessment, developing better methods and greater capacities for conducting institutional research, bolstering faculty governance and communications, and continuing our efforts to increase enrollment and retention. The central components of our efforts have been the improved level reviews along with the clustered-program and college-wide learning outcome reviews. Having completed the initial cycles of the clustered and college-wide outcome reviews and with work on the next rounds well underway, we are confident that although the components still need refinement, our students will soon be reaping the benefits of the kind of evidence-based quality assurance central to WASC Standards for educational effectiveness.

At the same time, CCA must maintain the commitment to its culture of critique and is currently spearheading efforts within the region to develop sound assessment of critique-based pedagogies. Indeed, CCA has plans to host a meeting of art and design schools located in the northern region of California immediately prior to WASC's 2009 Academic Resource Conference. We look forward to learning more about assessment in arts education and to contributing in this vital area.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The college has learned a great deal from our 2004-2009 strategic plan and from the ongoing evaluation of our progress towards its goals. To that end, Senior Cabinet is compiling data that provides evidence of how we have met our strategic goals. Once completed, that information will be shared with the CCA community and the public through the website. (Relevant

documentation of this process will be available for review during the team visit.) Part of the impetus for that work has been the WASC re-accreditation, which has taught us that assessment and metrics must be built into the next plan if its goals are to be articulated and achieved. Additionally, the strategic planning focus of our re-accreditation efforts has driven home the importance of developing the new plan through the most inclusive and transparent process possible.

The progression of work on our **next strategic plan** illustrates our commitment to these principles. Immediately following his appointment as president, Stephen Beal began interviewing planning consulting firms only to be disappointed by their conventional approaches to the college's unique conditions. A subsequent meeting with Tim Brown, a CCA trustee and CEO of the design strategy firm IDEO, led to discussions of the importance of forging a creative and inclusive process by engaging directly with creative stakeholders and strategists throughout.

Following these discussions and in consultation with the Board, CCA engaged **IDEO** to assist with its current strategic planning process. President Beal acknowledged that "IDEO's human-centered, design-based approach will help us achieve our goal of engaging a broad sector of the CCA community—alumni, donors, faculty, staff, students, and trustees—in envisioning the future of the college." Creative people, and more specifically, the radically collaborative planning process that CCA and IDEO are involved in, foster divergent and human-centered ways of thinking. The IDEO style relies on emergent strategies, rather than top-down planning, eliciting the best ideas, insights, and strategies from the network of participants. We are confident that the resulting new plan will set the stage for increasing our capacities and resources for delivering an excellent education.

To these ends, IDEO has designed a highly collaborative 17-week **project structure** that commenced in fall 2008 and includes project and research planning, human factors research, synthesis, visioning, and development. Development teams from CCA (including faculty, staff, and board members) and IDEO are being joined by members of the CCA community (engaged through visioning sessions, meetings, and interviews) and a larger group of IDEO designers who will participate in the project. This collaborative structure, and communications efforts such as the project blog (www.cca.edu/form), will allow broad segments of the CCA community to engage in the development of our next strategic plan by better understanding college-wide priorities.

Upon conclusion of the IDEO project, CCA will spend the summer refining the goals and developing the strategies and metrics. The draft plan will be vetted by various college constituencies in September 2009, and the finalized plan will be adopted in the fall.

President Beal has often remarked that this process is as important as the product. The **approach to the strategic planning process** and the engagement of IDEO are threefold. First, we are gathering as a community and reaching a broad consensus about who we are today. This step has included the institutional research into how well we achieved the goals outlined in our previous plan. Second, and related to the first goal, we are initiating an open discussion about the vision and values we share as an institution. Most felt that the previous plan did not include enough of this, and our shared commitment to sustainability, diversity, and social justice need to be embedded in the next plan and shape the development of strategic goals. Third, and most obviously, we are articulating our goals for the next five years and creating implementation plans for the college as a whole as well as for each department.

CONCLUSION

Above all, the WASC accreditation process has proved tremendously successful, and we are indeed grateful to all the visiting team members for their conscientious and comprehensive efforts. The educational opportunities, expert advice, and external reviews have offered tools and support for better integrating planning practices and creating an evidence-enriched environment that allows faculty and students to achieve common educational objectives. Through the challenges of defining what we do, explaining how we do it, and reflecting on the evidence that supports institutional assessment, CCA has certainly matured.

We now feel confident that the college is poised to be a leader in arts-based education, particularly at the moment when creative approaches to problem solving and the synthesis of theory and practice are more widely in demand than ever. For an institution beginning its second century with an inclusive strategic plan, new executive management, reinvigorated faculty leadership, sustainable financial resources, systematic assessment practices, and the wisdom accrued from a rigorous re-accreditation process, certainly the future is now.