

Submitted to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Humboldt State University

Section 1: Institutional Context

This is an ideal time for Humboldt State University (HSU) to develop a re-accreditation proposal for WASC, for several reasons:

HSU has just completed three pivotal documents which will help lead the University many years into the future: a five-year strategic plan, a multi-decade master plan and a comprehensive diversity plan. Under the leadership of a new President and with his promising vision for the University, the campus community must now engage in refining these plans by setting priorities, creating strategies for implementation, and establishing criteria for evaluation. The new WASC process provides an opportune tool for these ongoing efforts to shape University priorities.

This process of creating and acting on priorities is especially crucial now, due to the generally adverse financial climate in California public higher education. HSU has been plagued with budget cuts for the last three years, so it is important to focus limited resources on creating outcomes that are most beneficial to our students.

During the past decade, enrollment at HSU has been flat while other California State University (CSU) system campuses have experienced significant growth. Therefore, it is vital that this institution continue to strengthen its academic programs, attract a diverse student body, and support all students, thereby increasing retention and graduation rates. The WASC process provides an additional opportunity for us to develop strategies that serve these priorities.

Institutional Background

Humboldt State University is a comprehensive, regional university in the 23-campus California State University system, with an enrollment of approximately 7,500 students. Located in Arcata in the unique redwood coast region, HSU is the northernmost CSU campus. The surrounding Humboldt County locale is largely rural, and has a population of approximately 130,000.

HSU was founded in 1913 during the Progressive era, which placed high value on education and social responsibility. Originally a Normal School dedicated to training teachers, HSU continues to provide outstanding preparation for professionals in education. As a comprehensive university within the CSU system, HSU also has strong programs in the arts and sciences, humanities, and professional areas. Humboldt State has a deep relationship to place, reflected especially in a number of distinctive programs in natural resources and Native American Studies.

Humboldt State University continues to be a progressive institution that attracts students who are driven to improve society. Because of its history and the expectations of its students, HSU places a special emphasis on learning that develops knowledge, skills and values necessary for moving society in positive directions.

This guiding principle, expressed as “Learning to Make a Difference,” means providing an educational experience that promotes civic and environmental engagement. It is reflected in programs focused on sustainable economic development and environmental responsibility, and on a community ethic of personal involvement in civic activities, public affairs and international issues. HSU is dedicated to excellence and ethical behavior in all endeavors. A variety of programs, as well as an emphasis on outreach, community involvement and hands-on learning experiences, express the core belief that learning to make a difference can continue for a lifetime.

WASC Background

Following a WASC campus visitation in March 1998, the Commission highlighted several areas warranting special attention:

Assessment

In 1998, the Commission encouraged HSU to develop a comprehensive assessment plan, to help refine its efforts to assess student learning, toward the overall goal of improving teaching effectiveness and student learning. WASC further noted that integrating assessment data into the decision-making process would assist the faculty in improving academic programs.

In response to concerns raised by the Commission, HSU held student assessment conferences in 1999 and 2001. Each conference, attended by more than 100 faculty, staff, and students, focused attention on ways to use outcomes assessment to improve academic programs. In 2001, WASC encouraged HSU to consider how to use the information provided by these conferences to develop measures of educational effectiveness. These efforts resulted in an assessment plan, endorsed by the HSU Academic Senate in 2001, directing that assessment should be “central to the academic culture” of the institution.

Planning

In 1998, the Commission encouraged HSU to proceed with a campus planning process utilizing input from a broad campus constituency, and to set priorities, assign resources and evaluate programs in order to improve the educational experience. The Commission noted in 2001 that HSU had made progress in this regard, and encouraged additional efforts.

Diversity

The Commission stated in 1998 that HSU had made little progress in addressing issues of diversity since the WASC 1990 visit, and encouraged the University to renew its diversity efforts. In 2001, the Commission noted that the University had made some progress toward its diversity goals, and encouraged HSU to continue to improve its strategies in the recruitment and retention of under-represented students. Diversity remains an area of particular concern for the University, and it is one of the central themes of this proposal.

Library and Graduate Programs

The Commission noted in 1998 that the quality and support for graduate programs and library holdings, previously identified in 1990, continued to be issues. But the Commission also noted that HSU planned to evaluate its graduate programs, as well as the relationship of its library

holdings to the University's ability to accomplish graduate instruction and the ability of graduate students to conduct research, in the near future.

In 2001, the Commission noted that HSU had taken steps to address the adequacy of the library resources. Extensive on-line resources and access to CSU system-wide library resources have improved library capabilities. However, the availability of print journals remains limited, due to university-wide budget cuts. This is emphasized in responses by faculty and graduate students in the LibQual+ survey, conducted by the HSU Library in the spring of 2002. When financial resources become available, the library plans to improve the breadth of journal holdings unavailable through on-line sources.

In 2001, Humboldt State created the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education*, which articulates principles for graduate education at the University, including proposed quality indicators. The plan focuses on graduate program resources and recruitment and retention of graduate students.

Building on the 2001 document, the University's recently completed Strategic Plan defines goals for graduate education at HSU, as well as articulating strategies, benchmarks, time frames and parties responsible for implementation of its recommendations.

Section 2: Description of Outcomes

Humboldt State University expects to accomplish the following outcomes as a result of the accreditation process:

Direct the campus' efforts in improving the quality of the educational experience by focusing on two key themes.

Our first theme centers on determining the core academic expectations for our students, and assuring that those expectations are sufficiently challenging and aligned with our mission and vision. Our second theme focuses on ensuring inclusive academic excellence for traditionally underrepresented students with the goal of improving access and graduation rates for these students.

Create a data-driven implementation process to evaluate the effectiveness of processes and outcomes related to each theme.

We will continue to improve our capability to gather relevant data and use that data to improve the effectiveness of our institutional decision-making processes. We envision this as a constant and evolving feedback loop between data collection, evaluation, planning and policy implementation that will be incorporated into our decision-making process in addressing the two themes.

Create a detailed plan, which will result in matching educational outcomes and objectives.

As part of the planning process, the campus community will determine the learning outcomes for the core academic expectations that define a Humboldt State University education. The result of this effort will be to provide greater institutional clarity about the university's educational objectives and to improve the ability to evaluate educational outcomes.

Institutionalize the assessment process.

Guided by our themes, we will improve, add to, and institutionalize methods that measure student learning and success. Importantly, these assessments, for the first time, will include monitoring our efforts to improve the success of our underrepresented student population.

Promote increased opportunities for faculty and staff development.

As part of our continuous improvement model associated with our themes, the University will provide and support an infrastructure for on-going professional development for our faculty and staff. This will include support for examinations of creative and, where necessary, transformational pedagogies associated with our themes.

Section 3: Constituency Involvement

The Humboldt State University administration determined that it was important to involve a broad constituency in the WASC re-accreditation process. Following participation by an HSU team in a WASC workshop at Cal Poly Pomona, and in consultation with the faculty leadership and the administration, a WASC Proposal Steering Committee was formed to guide the institutional proposal process. This committee is co-chaired by the provost and a faculty member, and is composed of two faculty members, a representative from each of the administrative units (the President's Office, Administrative Affairs, University Advancement and Student Affairs) and a staff representative.

To begin generating and gathering ideas and support from the campus community, the Steering Committee gave presentations explaining the re-accreditation process. The following constituencies (see *Appendix A* for descriptions) were consulted on this WASC project: Academic Senate, Associated Students, Deans' Advisory Councils, President's Executive Committee, President's Cabinet, President's Council, Provost's Council, University Advancement and Staff Council.

In order to determine which themes would be considered during the re-accreditation process, a modified version of the WASC self-review was distributed broadly to the campus community (see *Appendix B*). Responses from individuals as well as groups were gathered and analyzed, and the results were tabulated by the WASC Proposal Steering Committee. The top 18 areas were presented to the campus for further evaluation and prioritization. Each area was rated on a scale of one to five. The steering committee tabulated the data and analysis indicated that we should concentrate efforts on three broad themes: academic excellence, diversity, and retention.

The steering committee continued to meet during summer 2005 to write a preliminary draft of the WASC institutional accreditation review proposal. The draft was then made available to the campus community for review and comment. The WASC Proposal Steering Committee is committed to keeping administrators, faculty, staff and students involved as HSU moves into the subsequent phases of the re-accreditation process.

After receiving feedback from WASC on our initial proposal, the WASC Proposal Steering Committee in consultation with the Provost's Council, the Council of Deans, the Executive

Committee of the Academic Senate, and the University Executive Committee narrowed the focus of our proposal to two themes: core academic expectations of HSU graduates and ensuring inclusive academic excellence for traditionally underrepresented students.

Section 4: Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

In conjunction with the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the University will expand the scope of its web-based data portfolio to provide the WASC teams (as well as a variety of constituencies in the HSU community) with greater access to more information. The data portfolio will be organized using the four standards of the commission. Work is underway to assemble relevant data, policies and procedures as evidence in support of the standards and related criteria. The data will also be used to critically analyze HSU's ability to provide a quality education and experience for our students. In particular, data related to our two themes will be used to assure a common set of core academic expectations for our students and to assure the opportunity for success for all HSU students. Narrative essays will place the institutional portfolio in the context of both the preparatory and educational effectiveness reviews. Examples of data elements that will be provided for each standard follow:

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives.

Evidence regarding this standard will be provided, in part, in the HSU Mission Statement, the new Strategic Plan (including the Diversity Action Plan), Program Review documents, Policies on Grievances and Complaints, and Audited Financial Statements.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions.

Our Learning Outcomes for Degree Programs and General Education, General Education Areas of Study, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Results from 2002 and 2005, Student Needs and Priorities Survey (SNAPS), Per Capita Baccalaureate Origins of PhD's, Medical School Acceptance Rates, System-wide Evaluation of Professional Teacher Preparation, Results for Regional, National and International Student Competitions, Graduation and Retention Rates Disaggregated by Student Cohort, Historical Grade Data, Guidelines for Publications, and Academic Calendars will be provided.

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability.

Evidence for this standard will include the List of Full-Time Faculty by Discipline, Faculty and Staff Demographics, Retention, Tenure and Promotion Guidelines and Criteria, Faculty Development Activities, the Campus Master Plan, Historical Financial Information, Overview of Information Technology Resources, Organizational Chart, and Statements on Shared Governance.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement.

Data and policies (such as our Institutional Data Portfolio, Periodic Program Review Policies, New Curriculum and Program Approval Process, and the Program Suspension, Reinstatement and Discontinuance Policies) will provide evidence that HSU meets the WASC Standards of

Accreditation. It is clear from the NSSE and SNAPS surveys that HSU students have a high level of satisfaction with their overall educational experience at HSU. In addition we have data on baccalaureate origins of PhD's, student placements in Medical School, professional civil service placements, system-wide evaluations of professional teacher preparation and numerous student competitions to suggest that HSU students and graduates are quite successful on a regional, national or international level.

However, based on NSSE data, HSU student's perceptions of the level of academic challenge and academic growth are below national norms. Also, overall HSU graduation rates, while within the normal range for comprehensive institutions, are lower than we would like, and the graduation rates for some cohorts of underrepresented students are lower than those of the average HSU student. These data along with other factors (described in more detail in Section 5) have led us to consider the following two themes for our Educational Effectiveness Review:

1. Core Academic Expectations for HSU Students
2. Ensuring Academic Success for Traditionally Underrepresented Students

In the Capacity and Preparatory Review, we will begin our examination of specified elements of each of these themes. In our study of the first theme, the university community will engage in development of a set of core academic expectations for all HSU students and develop measures of outcomes associated with those expectations. By "core academic expectations" we refer to the learning that should result from a quality education at Humboldt State University. Core academic expectations should be nurtured in the general education program, strengthened through the curriculum of the major and supported by the co-curriculum. One core expectation already identified will focus on student written communication skills. Educational objectives for students' written communication skills will be developed and incorporated into the curriculum of the university. Evaluation of these performance improvement strategies will take place in the Educational Effectiveness Review.

We will also begin our examination of elements of our second theme during the Capacity and Preparatory Review by engaging the university community in an exploratory quest to determine a set of 'best practices' related to effecting access and success of underrepresented students. We will determine which program areas are successful at retaining and graduating underrepresented students and identify practices related to this success. Evaluation of these program improvement strategies will also be conducted during the Educational Effectiveness Review.

We will need to develop additional capacity to investigate these two themes in depth. The capacity issues and associated data elements for these two themes will be discussed more thoroughly in Section 5. Background, research questions, and action steps for each of these themes are represented in Section 5. In Section 6, our work plan and associated milestones are presented. Section 7 of this proposal provides details how HSU currently collects and uses data in university decision-making processes, and describes projected improvements in data collection and analysis.

Section 5: Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review

Theme #1: Core Academic Expectations for HSU Students.

Background

Humboldt State University identified learning outcomes and associated assessment measures for its degree programs during the 2001/2002 academic year and included the main areas of general education in 2002/2003. More recently, these assessment efforts have been incorporated into the long-standing periodic review of academic programs. However, program assessment and improvement have largely been isolated activities that have not been integrated into a campus-wide discussion to identify learning competencies of all students, regardless of major. Coupled with student perceptions about educational growth and academic expectations, these issues led to Academic Excellence as one of six themes identified in HSU's recently completed five-year strategic plan. Two goals under our strategic planning theme of academic excellence are strongly linked to our proposed theme of identifying, assessing and improving core academic expectations for HSU students:

- HSU will structure undergraduate curricula to be dynamically responsive to the needs of students and society, while reflecting the unique learning environment of our region, and emphasizing proficiency in written communication skills.
- HSU will develop a well-defined, signature All-University Curriculum that incorporates the development of strong skills, interdisciplinary experiences, and service/experiential learning. The program as a whole will reflect the university's institutional vision.

Because general education is integral to the structure of the undergraduate curriculum, HSU has also been reexamining its general education program and a subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) is working on possible revisions commensurate with the aforementioned strategic planning goals. Among the action steps being emphasized in our review of general education are the following recommendations from the Association of American Colleges and Universities' national panel report entitled "*Greater Expectation: A New Vision of Learning as a Nation Goes to College*":

- Each college and university sets explicit goals for student learning so academic department and general education outcomes can align with them.
- Colleges and universities implement curricula to develop student knowledge and intellectual capacities cumulatively and sequentially, drawing on all types of courses (general education, the major, electives) and non-course experiences.
- Faculty members across disciplines and departments assume collective responsibility for the entire curriculum to ensure every student an enriching liberal education.

The confluence of several factors including student perceptions about academic quality and educational growth discussed in Section 4, the campus strategic planning effort and our review of the general education, suggests that this is the right time for Humboldt State University to determine core academic expectations for our students, assure those expectations are sufficiently challenging and aligned with our mission and vision, deliver a curriculum and co-curriculum that

provides students with opportunities to achieve the core academic expectations, assess how well those expectations are being met and make adjustments as necessary to improve student success.

Research Questions:

In examining core academic expectations theme HSU will address the following research questions:

1. What are core academic expectations for HSU students?
2. Are these core academic expectations being met by HSU students?
3. Are HSU students achieving proficiency in written communication skills?

In anticipation of the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the Core Academic Expectations Action Team will broadly consult with faculty, staff, and students regarding a set of core academic expectations for HSU students. Once consensus has been reached on these, they will be broadly shared with faculty and students. Next, an analysis will be conducted to determine where these core academic expectations are reflected in the curriculum and co-curriculum. This mapping activity will identify the scope and depth of the core academic expectations in the curriculum and co-curriculum. Adjustments to the curriculum and co-curriculum may have to be made at this time if there is a determination that there is not sufficient emphasis being placed on them in order to meet the core academic expectations.

As part of general education reform effort, there have been some preliminary discussions about the core academic expectations expected for HSU students. A number of possibilities have been mentioned including an emphasis on the ‘basic subjects’ of communication, critical thinking and quantitative reasoning as well as the ability to work within diverse groups and a commitment to service/experiential learning. Based on the HSU Strategic Plan, a survey of HSU faculty teaching general education classes and other evidence described above, one of the core academic expectations addressed in this review will be proficiency in written communication. During the Capacity and Preparatory Review, HSU will develop an assessment plan for “written communication” that will serve as the model for other core academic expectations.

Action Steps

As described above, leading up to the Capacity and Preparatory Review, HSU will determine a set of core academic expectations for HSU students, adjust curricular and co-curricular offerings to help meet those expectations and develop assessment measures to determine whether the core academic expectation of achieving proficiency in written communication skills is being met.

Student perception of their growth in written communication skills is one of several areas being assessed in a general survey of students in all general education courses being conducted during the spring 2006 semester. In addition to providing an in-depth analysis of the current state of HSU’s general education program, this survey will provide benchmarks against which we will be able to measure progress during the Educational Effectiveness Review. An additional capacity-building result of this survey will be the development of an on-line tool whereby faculty will be able to securely and confidentially compare the survey results for their classes with those of faculty teaching similar areas of general education. The data will be provided in both tabular and graphic formats.

Direct measures of student achievement in the area of written communication will also be considered. For many years, HSU has required every student to pass a writing exam, the Graduate Writing Proficiency Exam (GWPE), prior to graduation. To date, the campus has not used the wealth of historical data collected from the GWPE to deeply assess writing competency. During the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the campus will use the substantial historical data collected from the GWPE to analyze HSU student's ability to meet this core academic expectation and correlate the results with several variables such as grades in freshmen writing courses, incoming verbal SAT scores, freshmen versus transfer students, and freshman English Placement Test results. Students who have taken freshmen English at Humboldt State University develop portfolios of their writing, and these direct examples of student work will be analyzed with regard to important written communication outcomes.

In preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review site visit, assessment results will be analyzed and reflected upon by the Capacity and Preparatory Review Action Team to determine the extent to which HSU students are achieving this core academic expectation. Adjustments in course offerings or other educational experiences may be necessary based on the assessment results. We anticipate these efforts to be the first in a continuous cycle of assessment, reflection and adjustment to improve student learning. Of equal importance, the assessment of proficiency in written communication skills will serve as a model for future assessment of the other core academic expectations explicated during the Capacity and Preparatory Review. In addition, the development of a set of core academic expectations for HSU students will help to inform the ongoing process of general education reform and may also lead to additional curriculum changes during the educational effectiveness review.

Theme #2: Ensuring Academic Success for Traditionally Underrepresented Students.

Background

The student population at HSU does not reflect the demographic diversity and cultural richness of the state of California. The CSU enrollment growth of traditionally underrepresented students within the California State University system has been slow to reach HSU. The percentage of non-white students at HSU is below state and CSU system percentages, and the same is true for percentages of faculty and staff. Each of these trends is well documented within the HSU Diversity Action Plan draft report (April 2004). Among these trends, the Diversity Action Plan Committee found that White students (49%) were more likely to graduate from HSU within 6 years than were African-American students (34%), American-Indian students (35%), Asian/Pacific Island students (40%), and Latino students (38%).

As a result of these findings, the Diversity Action Plan included a number of recommendations that were forwarded to the President and subsequently included in the University Strategic Plan. The recommendations forwarded by the Diversity Action Plan committee go well beyond recruitment, application, and enrollment goals, and include recommendations for creating an equitable institutional and welcoming social climate; the development of course curriculum that enhances learning and a respect for racial and ethnic diversity; improved accountability; diversity training for staff, faculty, and administrators; and other recommendations pertaining to access.

Since the creation of the 2004 Diversity Action Plan, an Advisory Council has been formed that advises the President on progress being made towards the implementation of strategies and the

achievement of goals outlined in the plan. This committee has initially identified five areas of focus and has created individual task-forces to oversee work in each of the following areas:

- Student Access, Recruitment, and Retention
- Diversifying Faculty and Staff
- Cultural Transformation
- Diversity Training and Accountability
- Inclusive Excellence in Curriculum

The last three of these areas of focus are also embedded in Theme #1 of this proposal. Given the breadth of work involved in implementing the Diversity Action Plan, inclusion of each of these focus areas far exceeds the scope of the WASC study. To accomplish the goals of the accreditation process, and in support of the campus Diversity Action Plan, the focus of the second theme for our WASC study will be more narrowly defined as ensuring inclusive academic excellence for traditionally underrepresented students in the areas of student access, persistence and graduation.

Research Questions:

As part of the inclusive academic excellence theme, HSU will address the following research questions:

1. Which program areas (as defined below) at HSU are most successful at retaining and graduating underrepresented students?
2. What are the “best practices” that characterize successful program areas in effecting access and success of underrepresented students?
3. How can these and other “best practices” be used to facilitate persistence, academic achievement and promote graduation rates of underrepresented students in other program areas at HSU?

The institution maintains detailed enrollment, retention, and graduation data for students and provides summary reports that are disaggregated by ethnicity. In anticipation of the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the Inclusive Academic Excellence Team will use these data to ask how the disaggregated enrollments and persistence rates of underrepresented students on campus vary from the majority population within defined academic units. The disaggregated graduation rates of underrepresented students within the identified program areas after four, six and, eight years will be explored. How do these graduation rates compare with those of the majority population of students, and what are the factors contributing to the variation within each program area? Expected outcomes include increases in enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates of underrepresented students where access is disproportionately lower than expected.

Action Steps

To address these questions, the campus will first identify appropriate units for analysis. Academic departments, majors or programs with low enrollments are likely to reflect especially low numbers of underrepresented students. In such cases, clustering academic departments into larger units of analysis (hereafter, program areas such as those defined by the CSU) should render the data more robust. Program areas will also include various support programs such as

the Indian Natural Resource, Science, and Engineering Program; the Indian Teacher and Educational Personnel Program; the Educational Opportunities Program; and others.

In this study, the approach for using disaggregated data for analysis at the program level is proposed with the intent of engaging a broader campus constituency in the analysis and discussion of access, retention, and graduation rates among traditionally underrepresented students at the program level, where student engagement is most frequent and personal. This approach parallels the model outlined in the AACU papers, “Making Excellence Inclusive,” and incorporates their two basic premises:

- The prevalence of inequitable educational outcomes for... historically underrepresented students needs to be viewed as a problem in institutional performance.
- To bring about change in an institution, individuals must see for themselves...the magnitude of the inequities affecting students from historically underrepresented groups.

The approach described in this proposal also provides program areas the opportunity to identify the most significant obstacles that impede inclusive academic excellence at the program level. While outcomes will be measured by enrollment, retention, and graduation rates, possible strategies for improving inclusiveness for traditionally underrepresented students within the program area may encompass one or all of the thematic areas included within the Diversity Action Plan.

Once program areas have been defined and baseline data have been established, each program area will develop a plan for promoting access, retention, and graduation of traditionally underrepresented students. Each plan will include both process and outcome objectives that are measurable and ambitious, and which are based on analysis of institutional data at the program level. Each plan will also include implementation schedules and milestones for measuring and reporting student achievement towards graduation (e.g., completion rates in introductory courses, completion rates of lower division core courses, participation rates in experiential learning opportunities, and participation in mentoring programs).

Progress in achieving milestones will be reported annually by each program area. Long- term student outcomes will be compared with baseline data gathered during the capacity and preparatory phase, with regard to access, retention, and graduation rates of traditionally underrepresented students at the time of the educational effectiveness review and at five year intervals thereafter. Programs with higher than expected access, retention, and graduation rates will be identified and an exploration of best-practices will be conducted and shared across program areas. Leadership and organizational responsibility for monitoring progress and performance outcomes will be developed and will parallel the institution’s hierarchical structure (Deans, Provost, Vice President, and President).

Interrelatedness of the Themes

The two main themes are part of the overall HSU strategic plan. They flow from that plan and reflect the overall goal of providing an excellent educational experience for all HSU students. A clear listing of the core academic expectations for our students will help faculty and students focus on the learning outcomes that are central to a Humboldt State University education and

should provide, in particular, further guidance for students from traditionally underrepresented groups as to the important skills, concepts and abilities they must master in order to achieve academic success.

Resources

The campus will employ a variety of resources to answer the questions identified above. Dr. Judith Little has recently been named as the Faculty Associate for Assessment. Working in conjunction with the Joint Assessment Committee she will provide assistance in the design of appropriate assessment measures for both of the main themes. Other campus constituencies that will assist in the investigation of at least one of the themes will be the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Faculty Associate and the WAC Committee, the University Curriculum Committee (UCC), the Graduate Council (GC) and the Diversity Plan Action Committee (DPAC). The University has provided funding this year for the two faculty associate positions listed above as well as the ongoing work of the HSU Writing Center and Writing Lab, the Office of Diversity and Compliance and notable academic support programs for Native American students. As part of the Capacity and Preparatory Review process, the adequacy of the support for the main themes will be investigated and adjusted as necessary.

Connection of the Themes to the Standards and Criteria for Review.

Each of the Standards and Criteria for Review are reflected in both Theme #1 and Theme #2. Standard 1 is reflected in the institution's intention to define common goals and outcomes and is inclusive of the criteria for review reflected in the institutional statement of purpose; educational objectives; and effective leadership (CFR 1.1, 1.2, 1.3). Standard 2 is reflected through the proposed processes for improving scholarship, student learning, and equity in student outcomes through our core functions, and includes criteria for review regarding engaging and fostering diversity; joint development of expectations; collective responsibility; linking scholarship, teaching, learning, and service; and in meeting the needs of students (CFR 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.9, 2.10, 2.13). Standard 3 is reflected in our plan to align resources and decision making processes with clear and measurable outcomes supported by institutional data, and includes criteria for review regarding the alignment and sufficiency of resources; clarity in organizational and decision making processes; and faculty academic leadership (CFR 3.5-3.8, 3.11). Standard 4 is reflected in our plan to incorporate processes for review, sharing best practices, and improving outcomes based on strategic thinking and planning, and includes criteria for review regarding institutional engagement in reflection, planning, and alignment with needs; effective use of qualitative and quantitative data; employment of quality assurance through assessment; dissemination of research data for review and planning purposes; and commitment to ongoing inquiry into the process of teaching and learning (CFR 4.1 – 4.6).

Independently, Theme #1 also reflects the criteria for review regarding academic autonomy and truthful representation of academic goals and programs (CFR 1.6,1.7); the appropriateness of programs and faculty, student attainment and expectations, program review, support for scholarship, co-curricular programs, and advising (CFR 2.1, 2.6-2.8, 2.11,2.12); personnel, faculty, faculty development, and governance (CFR 3.1,3.2,3.4); evaluation, inquiry and improvement (CFR 4.6-4.7). Theme #2 also reflects responsiveness to increasing diversity (CFR 1.5)

Section 6: Work Plan and Milestones

Humboldt State University will use a committee structure to oversee and conduct the re-accreditation process. The following committees will be employed:

WASC Steering Committee (WSC) – charged with oversight of the re-accreditation process and coordination between the various committees.

“Blue Ribbon” Advisory Group – charged with evaluation of and consultation regarding the self-study materials. Membership consists of campus leaders from the faculty, staff and administration.

Action Teams – charged with specific phases of the process:

- CPR Action Team (CPR)
- Core Academic Expectations Action Team (CEAT, EER Theme #1)
- Academic Success Action Team (ASAT, EER Theme #2)

Membership on the Steering Committee and the Action teams will consist of senior administrators, Academic Senate leaders, faculty, staff and students. The chairs of the three action teams will also serve on the steering committee. Key evidentiary indicators and exhibits that will be used during the review process are provided in some detail in sections 2, 4 and 5 of this proposal.

Milestones

- Spring '06
 - Revised proposal submitted
 - Formation of WASC Steering Committee
 - Formation of “Blue Ribbon” Advisory Group (WSC)
 - Formation of CPR Action Team (WSC)
 - Benchmarking survey of all HSU general education classes (UCC)
- Summer '06
 - Review of evidence for CPR (CPR Action Team)
- Fall '06
 - Formation of Core Academic Expectations Action Team (WSC)
 - Formation of Academic Success Action Team (WSC)
 - Town Hall Meetings/ Campus discussions regarding core academic expectations (CEAT)
 - Formulation of program area retention, persistence, and graduation plans (Program Areas)
 - Inclusion of retention, persistence, and graduation rates of disaggregated underrepresented students into the ongoing program review process (UCC)
- Spring '07
 - Develop assessment plan for written communication (CEAT)
 - Determine core academic expectations for HSU students (CEAT)
 - Develop and implement written communication skills and development strategies (CEAT)
 - Implementation of program area retention, persistence, and graduation plans (ASAT)

- Fall '07
 - Implement assessment plan for written communication (CEAT)
 - Complete self-study for CPR (CPR Action Team)
- Spring '08
 - CPR site visit
 - Begin analysis of written communication assessment information (CEAT)
 - Initial effectiveness assessment of program area retention, persistence, and graduation plans (ASAT)
- Fall '08
 - Determine additional core academic expectation(s) for assessment (CEAT)
- Spring '09
 - New administration of the NSSE
 - Complete self-study for EER (WSC, CEAT, ASAT)
- Fall '09
 - EER site visit

Section 7: Effectiveness of Data Gathering and Analysis Systems

The following tables summarize where HSU currently is, and where it expects to be, in regard to our major data systems. The improvements made in the Banner student information system currently offer superior capabilities for historical and complex data retrieval.

Data reporting at Humboldt is performed by an Analytic Studies Group which includes analysts from the Offices of Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management. Over the last 15 years, this group has developed a data extraction and reporting infrastructure to meet ever-changing needs for institutional data. This infrastructure includes a modest data warehouse, a collection of institution-specific data views and functions, and other tools for data analysis.

Additionally:

- Over 1,000 reports are published to the web throughout the year. These reports range from general enrollment summaries to detailed program-specific data sheets. Users may access these reports via index pages or through a Report Finder tool.
- Over 400 pre-packaged report jobs may be submitted by users through Banner, our student information system. The output of these jobs generally is delivered via email.
- Data that are not available via the reports and jobs may be requested via a web form and are provided as email attachments suitable for analysis or written communication. The vast majority of these requests are filled by non-technical staff using generalized reporting tools that were developed on campus. Over 150 specialized functions allow the selection of almost any desired group of students.

Detailed information about the present capabilities of and future prospects for data collection and analysis may be found in *Appendix E*.