

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM  
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

**University of the Pacific**

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Jeff Armstrong, President, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Chair);  
Brian Harlan, Associate Provost, California Institute of the Arts (Assistant Chair);  
Susan Collins, Vice President for Finance and Admin., Saint Mary's College of California (Team Member);  
Monique Snowden, Provost and Senior Vice President, Fielding Graduate University (Team Member);  
Maureen Maloney, Vice President, WSCUC (Staff Liaison)

The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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## SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

### A. Description of Institution and Accreditation History

University of the Pacific (Pacific) currently offers 93 degree programs through 11 schools and colleges across three campuses. The main campus, located in Stockton, CA, hosts most of the university's undergraduate students, 46% of whom are residential students living in 23 residence halls. The San Francisco, CA campus is home to the well-established Dugoni School of Dentistry along with new graduate programs recently added. The third campus in Sacramento, CA has also recently expanded graduate programs beyond its primary offerings through the McGeorge School of Law. In addition, the university runs 25 clinics, centers, and institutes across Northern California, simultaneously serving the needs of the community and offering experiential learning opportunities for its students.

An historic California institution, the university was originally established in Santa Clara by Methodist ministers in 1851, moved to Stockton in the 1920s, and became an independent institution in the 1960s. Throughout its history University of the Pacific has been among the most pioneering California institutions in higher education. The university established the state's first coeducational campus, first conservatory of music, and first chartered medical school (later moved to Stanford University). On the national level University of the Pacific was equally innovative; being the first to offer an overseas study-travel program, the first to offer an undergraduate teacher corps program, and the first to establish a Spanish-speaking inter-American college to name just a few.

Student enrollment as of the institutional report's submission was 6,255, approximately half of which were undergraduates, with a 12:1 student to faculty ratio. The university's pride in its undergraduate diversity is bolstered by its status as a non-majority Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). In addition, 36% of the university's students are Pell recipients, and 16% are first-generation students. It is noteworthy that a wide array of university rankings recognizes University of the Pacific for its diversity, economic mobility for students, and post-graduate employment outcomes.

These recognitions are aligned with University of the Pacific's stated mission: *to provide a superior, student-centered learning experience integrating liberal arts and professional education and preparing individuals for lasting achievement and responsible leadership in their careers and communities*; as well as with a core set of six values that were recently reaffirmed. These values include academic excellence, student-centeredness, respect and civility, integrity and accountability, diversity and inclusion, and community engagement.

The university was first accredited by WSCUC in 1959, and has been in good standing since that time. The last reaffirmation review requested an Interim Report, and set the subsequent reaffirmation review beginning with an Offsite Review in fall 2018. The Commission asked that the university focus on diversity within the overall context of student success, faculty workload guidelines, and systematizing its efforts around assessment and program review. Since 2012 the university has proposed one substantive change in order to establish a doctoral audiology program, which was approved for its San Francisco campus.

In 2016 the university notified WSCUC about a policy violation regarding the use of off-campus courses within one of its schools. University of the Pacific submitted a corrective action plan, and the institutional report included a summative update to that plan. During the visit the team not only recognized the university's open and honest communication with WSCUC with respect to this issue, but also the speed and seriousness with which the issue was resolved.

## **B. Description of Team's Review Process**

The team reviewed the institutional report during its Offsite Review in August 2018. Satisfied with the quality of the report and the responses to questions during the video conference, the team moved to proceed to the Accreditation Visit with nine lines of inquiry in the areas of planning and decision making, policy oversight, assessment, and financial sustainability. Additional information was requested to support these lines of inquiry beyond the institutional report and the numerous appendices associated; these additional materials included financial statements, athletics policy updates, recent survey data of all campus constituents, and example documentation on a full cycle of program review. All materials, as well as last-minute requests onsite, were provided expeditiously.

Between the Offsite Review and the Accreditation Visit one of the team members visited the San Francisco campus, and one visited the Sacramento campus. The Offsite Review led the team to highlight issues with respect to the initiative to build a unified university between the three campuses. This focus dominated the conversations of these two off-campus location visits, focusing on the impact of adding new programs on campuses that were previously dominated by only one school, the streamlining of services through changes to reporting lines and consistency of software systems, and new budget expectations. The team projected that the theme of unification would emerge on the Stockton campus as well, but interviews and group discussions quickly took a new turn toward not the changes themselves, but the way in which the changes were made.

Once on the main campus the team interviewed students, staff, and faculty through open meetings; the board of regents; leadership in the areas of academics, administration, assessment, student affairs, and athletics; the accreditation steering committee; and external auditors. The university also hosted a reception for the team with alumni, and prepared a poster exhibition of student, staff, and faculty research. Engagement from the campus was intensive and candid, and left the entire team impressed by the deep commitment and care evident from everyone who participated.

In addition to the 30 hours of meetings, the team reviewed 41 confidential emails. The emails were coded and summarized and considered alongside the first-hand feedback received in the meetings. The primary recurring themes included structural and cultural considerations of shared governance, the implementation and the pace of change over the last few years, the facility and accuracy of financial reporting, and above all issues of transparency and trust with the administration. Despite some challenges (addressed in Section IV of this report) that require immediate attention, the team left the visit with a sense of optimism bestowed by the numerous strengths of the university. The university's assessment and program review system, for example, are exemplary, and the efforts made to articulate the meaning of their degrees resulted in a new understanding of the student experience. The university at all levels appeared to the team to share a substantial willingness and enthusiasm to improve their beloved institution.

### **C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence**

The team expressed its appreciation to the university for the clarity and superbly organized institutional report. The report was straight forward and sincere, demonstrating a commitment to WSCUC Standards through well-articulated responses to all Criteria for Review. Evidence to support the university's claims as well as speculations about potentialities in the future. The report not only demonstrated how the university is in compliance with WSCUC and Federal standards, but in addition, it showed a meaningful engagement with the rigorous expectations of the report sections. The accreditation steering committee, for instance, explained that their work preparing for the review resulted in a near revelation regarding the alignment of the mission and values between all three campuses. Similar experiences were expressed by others involved in developing the report, and on the whole, students, faculty, and staff appears to have an enlightened understanding of the institution based on their participation.

#### **SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS**

##### Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

The Commission Action Letter for University of the Pacific's 2012 reaffirmation review identified the issues of student success for their diverse population, faculty workload, and assessment and program review. Each of these areas were thoroughly addressed in the institutional report and during the visit.

The report presented a detailed analysis of student success, identifying gaps and constraints, and proposing strategies to potentially resolve them. In 2015 the university initiated a Diversity Leadership Team and developed a Diversity Implementation Plan that included recruitment and retention of students, staff, faculty, and board members; strengthening effort to diversify the curriculum and co-curriculum; and improvement of the campus climate for all three campuses. Significant progress was made toward the commission's expectations, however, through discussions the team discovered more work still to be accomplished. The work of the Diversity Leadership Team appeared to the team as somewhat short lived, possibly due to staff changes. The students in particular spoke about disconnections between their perspectives and those of administrators that stressed a need for more inclusive dialog. Furthermore, the most recent climate study was not comprehensive of the entire campus, and was arguably out of date by the time of the visit. And finally, while the contract with a third party to smooth the transition into college for matriculated international students (in response to retention issues) was well received by the team, the university itself recognized that this is only a partial solution to supporting the ongoing needs of international students.

Regarding faculty workload, the commission required the university to clearly outline the range of faculty work expected, including course preparation, assessment, and advising, as well as teaching, scholarship, and both university and community service. The issue was addressed in the university's Interim Report to such a degree that it became a minor conversation at the time of the visit. Three approaches were taken that appeared to bring the issue under control; these included the adoption of a tool touted to holistically capture all faculty work activities, the development of a compensation

philosophy that will result in faculty salary adjustments in the next fiscal year, and further investment into an already well-functioning Center for Teaching and Learning.

A significant portion of the institutional report described the university's laudable progress in the areas of assessment and program review. The university provided much evidence of its capacity and expertise in the conducting of direct outcomes-based assessment, the compiling and analysis of data, and the interpretation and use of results. The expectations for faculty involvement in assessment are outlined in an Academic Program Assessment Policy, as well as in evaluation criteria for faculty. The majority of programs make use of curriculum-embedded assessment, for example, and half of the undergraduate programs assess a capstone requirement. The university also recently implemented Taskstream as their assessment management system, which immediately expanded its capacity to evaluate how programs are performing their assessment activities alongside offering enhanced reporting options. All core competencies have been assessed and their results have been integrated into the academic planning of the institution through annual faculty retreats. It must also be noted that University of the Pacific's Division of Student Life has been engaged in a comprehensive assessment plan for the past 12 years.

Component 2: Compliance: Review under WSCUC Standards and compliance with federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

***Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives***

The review team commends the university for the identification and articulation of four hallmarks of the Pacific experience for both undergraduate and graduate students. These include experiential learning both inside and outside the classroom, contributions to communities through numerous outreach efforts and clinical services, preparedness for a life of learning and purposeful work, and above all, an intensive and meaningful engagement with the dedicated faculty and staff of all three campuses. The team encourages the institution to better engage the campus in shared governance where implementation reflects structural and cultural needs; in particular, institutionalize the shared governance matrix so it will ensure faculty's ability to exercise effective academic leadership while reinforcing boundaries in decision-making (CFRs 1.2, 2.1).

The team was also encouraged to find examples of academic freedom and inclusiveness. The university provides a commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff and students, for example, through a clear policy statement located in the faculty handbook, which was reinforced during the visit by the Board of Regents. An initiative to intentionally diversify the membership of the Board of Regents is also underway, as is the aim to foster equity and inclusion across all three campuses through a Diversity Implementation Plan.

The team determined that the institution truthfully represents its academic goals, program, services, and costs to students and to the larger public as found on multiple websites and publications. These assessments were confirmed by consultation with students in multiple meetings. The team found the university to exhibit integrity in its operations through regular audits, yet based on consultation with many faculty, staff, students and administrators, the team encourages Pacific to establish a culture of clear and effective communication within the parameters of a well-defined shared governance system that are grounded in transparency, reliability, and inclusiveness (CFR 1.7). Related to this matter, the

team strongly recommends that the university establish timely and accurate financial reports to aid decision making through a rapid implementation of a new chart of accounts to streamline the attainment of financial information. These efforts should enhance budgetary control, increase transparency and expand the capacity for appropriate financial oversight (CRF 1.7).

In addition, the team heard from many faculty, staff, and students that the rate of change within the working environment at university needs closer management. The team encourages the institution to implement change at a pace that ensures well-considered and thorough plans informed by consultation with all constituents affected, and allows time for critical review according to sound shared-governance principles (CFRs 1.7).

The team was very impressed with the honest and open communication by the University of the Pacific. The institution promptly and clearly communicated changes to the team members up to and during the visit. The leadership, including the Board of Regents, were very open to change. Overall, the team found that University of Pacific has a clearly defined purpose with aligned educational objectives, and that the university functions with integrity and autonomy. Pending Commission's review, the team finds that University of the Pacific is in compliance with Standard 1. The mission statement and Pacific's Core Values clearly describe its purpose. These documents, and the revised strategic plan, are appropriate for an institution of higher education, allowing University of the Pacific to make a strong contribution to the public good.

### ***Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions***

At the heart of a University of Pacific education is student-centered learning and academic excellence. The university has clearly articulated its programs' content and standards, which are supported by highly qualified faculty, and appeal to an impressively diverse array of students. At both the undergraduate and graduate levels, Pacific has defined admission and graduation requirements in the catalog. Through a robust general education curriculum and intensive majors, undergraduates are expected to achieve measurable levels of competency in written and oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy, and quantitative reasoning as well as competencies related to civic and community engagement. Pacific is continuing to refine its assessment practices for the core competencies, most notably in the area of quantitative reasoning.

Graduate students are likewise accountable to published degree requirements and measurable standards of achievement as defined by the faculty in their respective programs. Syllabi reflect expected student learning outcomes at the program and course level, and students are challenged to work collaboratively with faculty to think about how their coursework influences their ability to contribute as positive, active members of society. Perhaps the best example of this is Pacific's integration of applied learning activities and service to the surrounding community, both considered hallmarks of a Pacific education. From the outset of their education, all students are encouraged to avail themselves of a variety of co-curricular opportunities including participation in research centers, institutes, and service clinics that engage and support regional communities. Much has been done to assess the impact of co-curricular opportunities, and the university continues to refine its learning outcomes to align with academic goals. Students and faculty believe these sorts of experiences amplify classroom learning.

Since 2012, the faculty has demonstrated an enhanced culture of assessment. Student learning outcomes have been articulated for every academic program and, in most programs, faculty assess

learning against established standards of achievement. Learning outcomes assessment at the general education level is done consistently and is reviewed through formal faculty committees. Similarly, the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators suggests that the vast majority of programs measure achievement using a broad range of direct and indirect assessment tools. While assessment appears to be ongoing, the university has continued work ahead to centralize reporting and to routinize the use of assessment results to improve student learning. This is especially notable in the graduate programs; graduate students make up more than 40% of the total student enrollment at Pacific, and yet just over 60% of those programs have recorded assessment results in Taskstream. While assessment-based program improvements may be occurring, the lack of centralized reporting impacts the university's ability to identify whether graduates have achieved stated levels of achievement (CFR 2.6).

This in turn, inhibits the identification of challenges and the design of effective, strategic interventions to support learning across the institution. The addition of an assessment coordinator at each school holds promise in addressing these concerns. Likewise, the Faculty Workload Policy, the Academic Program Assessment Policy, and Pacific's promotion and tenure guidelines clarify expectations that faculty are responsible for the assessment of student learning (CFR 2.9) at the course and program levels. Resources such as the Center for Teaching and Learning assist faculty in meeting these expectations by supporting them in teaching, assessment, and curricular innovation (CFRs 2.8, 4.3, 4.4). Program review templates have been developed to guide faculty to include student learning outcomes, assessment results, and persistence and completion data in their self-study documents for external review (CFR 2.7).

Subject to the Commission's review, the team's finding, is that University of Pacific has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 2.

***Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability***

Pacific completed the review of Standard 3 in a reflective and analytical manner. There were no gaps in policies and procedures related to the Criteria for Review. Pacific provided plans for making improvements in the following areas: faculty diversity, faculty and staff compensation, financial vitality, technology, internal controls and accountability, increasing trust between administrators and faculty and transparency in decision-making. While the team finds Pacific in compliance with this Standard, we have several concerns and points for enhancement.

The university employs faculty and staff with a commitment to the institution. The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualifications and diversity to achieve Pacific's educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs. The faculty staffing plan ensures that all faculty roles and responsibilities are fulfilled. Faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, workload and evaluations are aligned with institutional objectives. The Faculty Handbook provides the evaluation criteria for faculty. Faculty recruitment is addressed in the Diversity Implementation Plan, but is still awaiting full implementation across all three campuses.

The university identified fiscal, physical, and information resources as needing improvement, assigning it a high priority. Operating losses have been sustained in each of the last three years, and one is anticipated again in fiscal year 2019. The decreases in the Law School enrollment placed pressures on the operating budget and were a key factor in the deficit operations. Great strides have been made to



turn around the financial operations of the Law School in response to the new enrollment realities. During the visit it was also cited that a lack of timely, easily accessible financial reporting has led to a perceived lack of financial accountability (CFR 3.4). The university has nevertheless been able to maintain its rating with Moody's, confirmed in March 2019.

Pacific's self-review indicated that organizational structures and decision-making processes need attention, and stated that there is work to be done to achieve consistency in operational controls and accountability. A structure of shared governance exists and is documented in the Faculty Handbook, and the administration is working within that structure toward improvements. A shared governance matrix has been established, for example, that clearly charts decision-making authority for the board, president, provost, cabinet, deans, faculty, and governance committees. The matrix outlines who provides input, makes recommendations, makes decisions, or approves, both academic and business-oriented issues. Yet despite the clarity of this document, during the visit a number of faculty reported that it was never fully ratified by the faculty, and thus never officially implemented.

Indeed, there is general agreement that shared government is not functioning properly at Pacific. This fracture in shared governance has led to a lack of trust of the administration by the faculty. This was evident to the team from the institutional report and during multiple interactions and interviews during the visit. In April of 2018 the Academic Council delivered a letter of concern to the Board detailing grievances in budgeting, fiscal management and transparency, and faculty morale as a result. From the perspective of the faculty no improvements followed from this letter, and in October of the same year Academic Council drafted a "Resolution of No Confidence in the President" that was put to the faculty at large for a vote. The response rate was 80% for tenured faculty and 38% for non-tenure track faculty, and the final results were 93.4% in support of the resolution.

In the months following the resolution the president announced her retirement with the provost announced as interim president starting July 2019. While the team's finding, subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard 3, serious attention is needed for more engagement and full implementation of shared governance. The matrix provided should be discussed, evaluated and approved by all roles, and its effectiveness should be regularly evaluated (CF 3.7).

***Standard 4: Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement***

Pacific demonstrated that it systematically assesses learning outcomes at course, program and institutional levels, and subsequently uses collected data to improve pedagogy, curricula, and overall student learning. The establishment of the Vice Provost for Strategy and Educational Effectiveness position, supporting units and staff, and data resources has proven successful in terms of developing systems and processes to better ensure institutional alignment of academic strategy, planning and educational effectiveness. Furthermore, the university's continuity of institutional research leadership—for almost two decades—has resulted in an expansive repository of dashboards and reports, including comparative data artifacts.

The university evidenced strong institutional research capacities to inform planning, decision making, program review, and assessment of student learning. On one hand, data collection, analyses, and dissemination are being effectively leveraged to understand and improve educational effectiveness. On the other hand, the team was less certain that Pacific's institutional research capacity and resources are

being used for broader positive impact in terms of establishing institutional priorities and improving financial operations. The team sees opportunity for the university to continue expanding the impact of institutional research on institutional learning across and within all three campuses (CFRs 4.1, 4.2).

Pacific has made recent changes to its program offering portfolio and student services, with the goal of efficiently and effectively meeting the educational and support needs of students on its three campuses. While these changes appear to be justifiable and beneficial, during the visit the team encountered noteworthy faculty and staff concerns with respect to shared governance processes, decision-making transparency, and timely communications. On balance, the team also recognized the need for quick administrative action toward ensuring the institution's responsiveness to the changing higher educational environment, particularly in terms of enrollment-related competitiveness. Moving forward, in terms of demonstrated commitment to institutional learning, the team encourages more proactive and meaningful engagement of faculty and staff in matters that will yield significant institutional changes (CFRs 4.5, 4.6).

The team's finding, subject to Commission review, is that Pacific has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard 4.

### Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees

The university invested considerable effort into understanding the student experience as a means to articulate the meaning, quality, and integrity of Pacific degrees. This work was conducted largely by a university-wide committee composed of faculty from multiple disciplines and staff from a breadth of administrative functions (e.g., student life, institutional research, marketing, technology, planning). Through both qualitative and quantitative research investigating undergraduate and graduate programs over approximately two years, the team identified four characteristics of the Pacific experience that most—and in some programs all—students typically encounter. These characteristics, referred to as the Hallmarks of a University of the Pacific education, include close mentoring through a deep engagement with faculty and staff, applied learning opportunities or requirements, service to surrounding communities, and activities and services to prepare students for success in their life after graduation.

The hallmarks were repeated in several meetings during the visit by administration, faculty, staff, and students, and were evident in the review of academic programs and student services. The Strategic Framework for Institutional Change planning documents also captured the hallmarks, although ostensibly before they were identified as 'hallmarks'. The refresh of the strategic plan and the academic plan, for example, both emphasized the importance of commitment to engage with students by faculty and student support staff. The refresh of the strategic plan also incorporated applied learning, which at the university involves both curricular and co-curricular opportunities. For instance, approximately 86% of students currently participate in some form of applied learning (such as undergraduate research, internships, regional and national competitions, professional and disciplinary conference presentations, managing the Student Investment Fund), and the plan states a strategic objective to increase this to 90%.

Service to surrounding communities is widely integrated into the curriculum and co-curriculum, and is often modeled by staff and faculty. The most recent data reported reveals that the university provides

over 56,000 hours of service each year, serving more than 40,000 residents and clients within the communities surrounding its three campuses. Clinics and centers in Stockton, Sacramento, and San Francisco offer legal, dental, pharmaceutical, and educational services, to name a few. The level of impact on the community in terms of residents served appears to be matched by the educational impact on Pacific students, who in discussions during the visit expressed their appreciation for these opportunities as both learning opportunities and as career-preparation opportunities.

The academic plan also directly addresses preparing students for future success, rather than simply providing traditional career counseling resources. This begins in the first year for undergraduates through a first-year seminar, and is bookended in their last year in a self-reflective senior seminar. In addition, the university's Career Resource Center has recently received additional funding to increase internships and other applied learning opportunities, such as alumni mentoring, mock interviews and etiquette dinners. The latest data reports that 93% of Pacific alumni are either gainfully employed, completing a post-graduate internship or community service commitment, (or are serving in the military), within six months after graduation.

It was clear to the team that the university aims for an integrative and holistic experience for their students, and the university committee formed for this purpose did exemplary work in defining the components that make Pacific degrees distinct and meaningful. The quality of the programs is evident in the outcomes presented, and in assessment results achieved against faculty standards (see Component 4 for more evidence of the quality and integrity of degrees). The team has no concern about the potential sustainability of the hallmarks, but from conversations with committee members, the team was left with some questions about the plan for continued oversight and assessment of the student experience (CFR 2.1, 2.2, 2.11). The committee stated that it will disband after the review, for example, and the linkage between hallmarks and regular operations, and particularly how the hallmarks will be prioritized in terms of budgeting, was not made clear. Who, in this sense, owns these hallmarks that are so unequivocally essential to a Pacific education. This question did not rise to the level of a formal recommendation, yet the team would like the university to consider it carefully.

#### Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

The university has an impressively robust system of educational quality assurance. The institutional report, appendices, and supplemental exhibits provided extensive assessment data as evidence of student achievement in the curriculum and the co-curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. These achievements are rooted in standards developed by faculty, who have ample opportunities for development in their assessment skills, as well as time to reflect upon results and provide feedback at events such as the Core Competencies Forum and the Annual Assessment Conference.

The initial core competencies assessment plan was developed in 2014, and the first round of assessments of all five competencies occurred in the following year. Modifications were made to the rubrics and data-collection process based on feedback from the first round, and a second round of assessment was conducted for all five competencies over the next two years. Therefore, the university now has two full sets of directly-assessed, university-wide core competency outcome results, and these have been triangulated with supplemental data from assessments conducted near graduation within

general education and Student Life, as well as data from senior surveys such as *National Survey for Student Engagement* and the Higher Education Research Institute's *College Senior Survey*.

Assessment findings demonstrate student achievement at or above the faculty standards in written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, and information literacy. Scores for quantitative reasoning were below the standard in the first round, but were at the standard minimum in the second round with a different quantitative reasoning test. Because assessment results from the two different instruments varied, further discussion (and possibly further assessment) is required to verify student achievement. Indirect assessment revealed that students rate themselves lower on mathematical ability than students at peer institutions. The University Assessment Committee has proposed a list of recommendations based on the overall findings related to instructional improvements and faculty development focused specifically on core competencies, and the team encourages the committee to monitor and follow up on this action plan (CFRs 4.3, 4.4).

Faculty engagement in outcomes-based assessment at the program level has increased substantially since the 2012 reaffirmation review. The inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) present 86% of undergraduate programs and 61% of graduate programs now making regular use of assessment results to enhance student learning from changes to assignments and pedagogical approaches, to changes to the curriculum, the sequence of courses, or program requirements. While the university recognizes there is still more work to be done in bringing programs on board, the overall increase of program participation from 54% in 2013-14 to 78% in 2016-17 represents substantial progress. Increased engagement among faculty is no doubt related to administrative changes (such as the implementation of an Academic Program Assessment Policy), and technological changes (including the implementation of Taskstream as the university's assessment management system).

Based on the assessment results provided, the team is confident in the quality of the educational offerings at Pacific. It does not rise to the level of a formal recommendation, yet the team encourages the university to continue to make progress on ensuring educational quality in both undergraduate and graduate programs, and across the curriculum and university in general education, core competencies, and co-curricular experiences. In addition, the University Assessment Committee could contemplate the utility and relevancy of framing the student-experience "hallmarks" as potential institutional learning outcomes (CFR 2.6).

#### Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation

Student learning and success are clearly valued at many levels of the university. Information about program expectations are conveyed through admission materials, website resources, and academic advisors. The university is attentive to both aggregated and disaggregated data related to student achievement, persistence, and graduation rates.

Data on undergraduate and graduate level retention and graduation rates are available through the institutional research website and Fact Book, and are included in program review documentation. Complexities resulting from accelerated pre-professional degree programs have limited the utility of the WSCUC graduation rate dashboard in understanding relative success rates of students; however, the university has initiated a detailed longitudinal attrition study and used the Integrated Postsecondary

Education Data System Outcomes survey to provide more reliable means of assessing the success of new freshmen and transfer students at both full and part-time status. Student success data suggests a need for additional academic support for some undergraduate populations. While the recent average of 6-year graduation rates for first time, full time undergraduates is over 67%, with Latinx students at over 70%, African American students graduate on average at only 56%, and international students at 52% (CFRs 2.7, 2.10, 2.14).

Pacific has been extremely responsive to concerns around persistence. Collaborations between the academic and student affairs divisions, supported by institutional research, have proven critical in supporting student success. Special efforts have been made to shore up advising with the hire of a Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education who oversees coordination of the advising program, and the hire of a Dean of Students who attends more holistically to students' individual needs. Student support strategies are many, and include multi-day retreats for populations at risk for attrition, partnerships with international student support consultants (Shorelight Education), Strategic Educational Excellence Development (SEED) grants to fund specialized project innovations, and the integration of the Student Referral Center and the Constituent Relationship Management tool to prioritize academic-concern referrals in order to provide early interventions.

The university also hired an Assistant Provost for Diversity and, more recently, an Assistant Director of Black Student Success. These positions collaborate with other invested personnel to offer programmatic interventions that build community and bolster support resources for student populations with reportedly lower persistence rates (CFR 2.13, 3.1).

At the graduate level, Pacific reports strong completion rates in the dental and pharmacy schools. Although McGeorge School of Law previously struggled to enroll sufficiently-sized classes, recent efforts have improved the attractiveness and efficacy of the educational program; for example, the addition of experiential learning, mentorship modules, and revisions to academic success and career service resources. The impact of these strategies are currently being assessed.

The six-year completion rate for master's programs is about 79%. The P2020 Graduate Student Support proposal outlines strategies to support the development of writing skills, financial aid, career services, health services, advising, and work in building inclusive communities. A Dean of Graduate Education has been hired and is tasked with overseeing the implementation of these key initiatives across the graduate school and professional programs.

Across all campuses Pacific has made much progress in supporting student success, but has continued work to do to improve retention and graduation rates. The team suggests that programs such as the Community Involvement Program, which boasts a 6-year graduation rate of 82% for first-generation students, should be analyzed carefully for replicable opportunities for other student populations (CFR 2.10).

## Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

Pacific demonstrated best practices in learning-outcomes assessment at the course, program, and institutional level. The Director of Assessment designs undergraduate and graduate program assessment processes and provides feedback to faculty, department leaders, and program leaders on the quality of their assessment practices. The institution's assessment processes and practices for general education, undergraduate programs, and graduate programs incorporate the review of direct and indirect evidence of student achievement of learning outcomes (CFR 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).

The Director of Assessment uses a consultative approach in working closely with undergraduate and graduate faculty—in groups and one-on-one sessions—to routinize the assessment of student learning. These faculty engagements inform program reviews, which systematically roll-up to institutional learning outcomes. The University Assessment Committee, by its oversight of the assessment across the curriculum and co-curriculum (for example with core competencies), and the General Education Committee, by its oversight of the assessment of general education, are influential purveyors of best practices that are promulgated throughout the institution, thereby helping to continuously develop a strong culture of assessment. Moreover, the multi-disciplinary memberships of the committees yield diverse perspectives and approaches to collecting, analyzing, and using data to advance quality assurance, institutional learning, and improvement (CFR 2.7, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).

Assessment outcomes inform program review at Pacific. The Assistant Vice Provost for Educational Effectiveness—who serves in the administrative position part-time, along with holding a faculty appointment—oversees program reviews. Evidence from annual assessments and programs' self-study, including program goals, strengths and weaknesses, learning outcomes, and how these elements are related to core competencies are fundamental to program reviews. Pacific has demonstrated that it conducts program-level assessment for its degree programs on a regular schedule. The institution has established schedules for program reviews and program specific self-studies to support processes for specialized program accreditation. University faculty and academic leaders appear to be deeply invested in program success, student learning, and associated continuous program improvements. Similarly, students expressed deep appreciation for academic rigor in their programs and the quality of their relationships with faculty and staff.

The university demonstrated sufficient structure and institutional support to close assessment feedback loops; adequate resources to administer ongoing improvements; and reliable, centralized, longitudinal data to inform assessment activities. Institutional research provides standard "data packs" (e.g., program demand; admission trends; retention, graduation, and time-to-completion; course sequence, internal transfer) for program reviews. In addition, institutional research fulfills customized data requests deemed necessary by those leading specific program reviews. Pacific uses Watermark Taskstream™ to support its assessment and program review efforts, and the Director of Assessment is the system administrator. The institution's learning management system is Canvas, which is not yet being fully leveraged for learning analytics. The university, however, has strong analytic capacity and thus is well-poised to expand use of course delivery data. Institutional development in this regard will become essential as online program offerings, most immediately in the graduate education space, becomes more prominent (CFR 2.7, 4.3).

### Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

The university utilizes the Composite Financial Index to benchmark its financial health. Its strengths are in the areas of return on net assets, reserves and debt capacity. The fourth area, net operating revenues, has been a challenge. Pacific has run operating deficits for the past three years and is projecting an operating deficit in fiscal 2019. The university has identified the return to stronger operating margins in fiscal 2020 through the implementation of early retirements, involuntary separations and budget reductions, all of which are in the process of being implemented. These structural adjustments will translate into a financially healthier university. A five-year financial plan, integrated with the enrollment plan, projects stable financial performance starting in fiscal 2020 (CRF 3.4).

The university evaluates financial performance at the institutional level, but does not prepare easily accessible, timely, financial reports on budget versus actual expenditures disaggregated by department and program. The lack of these reports has allowed budget variances across programs to occur that were not noticed in a timely manner. Thus, the capacity for financial oversight and accountability is limited. Pacific is planning to implement a new chart of accounts which should enhance budgetary control, increase transparency and expand the capacity for financial oversight. This implementation should be a high priority for the university (CRFs 1.7, 3.6).

In anticipation of the challenges of a changing higher education environment, a Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) was established several years ago to provide resources for building infrastructure capacity, such as student success and information technology, as well as providing funding for new program development (CRF 3.5). SIF expenditures are tied to attaining the goals of the strategic plan. The restructuring noted above should aid in additional resources for adapting to the changing environment. The endowment fund has grown to over \$450 million during the past five years. Much of the increase was due to gifts received as part of the capital campaign. Pacific has consistently received unqualified opinions on its financial audits and its A2 Stable bond rating was confirmed by Moody's in March 2019 (CRF 3.4).

### Component 9: Reflection and plans for improvement

Throughout the review the team heard from students, faculty, staff, alumni and others that they support University of the Pacific and strive to be optimistic about the future. Whether they expressed positive comments or recommendations for improvement, it was clear to the team that there was a desire to help the university to improve. The team heard a clear understanding from a majority of constituents that the landscape of higher education is changing; yet, there was no question that there were differing views as to how the university should respond. The team was left with substantial assurances that by celebrating their achievements and addressing their areas of growth collectively and collaboratively, University of the Pacific will move the three campuses toward greater unification and thereby strengthen the institution for the future.

### **SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS (such as Substantive Change)**

None

### **SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Commendations**

The team commends the university for:

1. Identifying and articulating four hallmarks of the Pacific experience for both undergraduate and graduate students, which includes experiential learning both inside and outside the classroom, contributions to communities through numerous outreach efforts and clinical services, preparedness for a life of learning and purposeful work, and above all, an intensive and meaningful engagement with the dedicated faculty and staff of all three campuses.
2. Demonstrating a strong commitment to involving appropriate stakeholders in the systematic assessment of teaching and learning, and using results to inform regularized program reviews and enhanced educational effectiveness.
3. Anticipating, responding, and adapting to the changing environment of higher education with respect to student needs.
4. Developing and effectively executing essential student success initiatives that evidence focused and thoughtful cross-unit collaboration between student life, academic programs, and institutional research.
5. Conducting a successful capital campaign to-date that will contribute to the financial vitality of the university through significant increases in the endowment.
6. Intentionally diversifying members of the Board of Regents.

#### **Recommendations**

The team's recommendations are:

1. Engage the campus in shared governance where implementation reflects structural and cultural needs, and implement Pacific's shared governance matrix so that it ensures faculty's ability to exercise effective academic leadership while reinforcing appropriate boundaries in decision-making. (CFR 1.2, 2.1, 2.10)
2. Establish a culture of clear and effective communication within the parameters of a well-defined shared governance system (including students and alumni, staff, faculty, administration, Board of Regents) that is grounded in transparency, reliability, and inclusiveness, and that facilitates the institution's nimble responsiveness to current and future challenges within the higher education landscape (CFR 1.7, 3.6, 3.7)
3. Expand the capability to provide more sophisticated financial reporting to aid decision making through a rapid implementation of a new chart of accounts that will streamline the attainment of financial information. These efforts should enhance budgetary control, increase transparency and provide enhanced financial oversight. (CRFs 1.7, 3.4)
4. Implement change at a pace that ensures well-considered and thorough plans informed by consultation with all constituents affected, and allows time for critical review according to sound shared-governance principles (CFRs 1.7, 3.6, 3.7, 4.5, 4.6)



5. Foster equity and inclusion across all three campuses through implementation of the Diversity Plan developed by the Diversity Leadership Team (CFRs 1.4, 3.1)

**APPENDICES**

The report includes the following appendices:

- A. Federal Compliance Forms
  1. Credit Hour and Program Length Review
  2. Marketing and Recruitment Review
  3. Student Complaints Review
  4. Transfer Credit Review
- B. Off-Campus Locations Review, as appropriate

Federal Requirements. A careful review of the Pacific catalog, policy documents, course schedules, syllabi, and program review documents shows that the institution provided sufficient evidence to confirm that the Pacific complies with federal standards for assigning academic credit, fair marketing and recruitment practices, responding to student complaints, and transfer of credit.

**Credit Hour and Program Length**

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Where is the policy located? <a href="https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-provost/shared-governance/standing-committees/academic-affairs-committee-on-undergraduate-studies/forms-procedures-and-policies/credit-unit-policy.html">https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-provost/shared-governance/standing-committees/academic-affairs-committee-on-undergraduate-studies/forms-procedures-and-policies/credit-unit-policy.html</a>
	Comments: none
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: none
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: <a href="https://app.box.com/file/299928026376">https://app.box.com/file/299928026376</a>
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses	How many syllabi were reviewed? 9
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Traditional, hybrid
	What degree level(s)? bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Education, Organizational Behavior, Pharmacy, Data Analytics, Business, Law, Music Therapy, Economics, Sports Sciences.

<i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: none
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 6
	What kinds of courses? Traditional, hybrid
	What degree level(s)? bachelor's, master's, doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Education, History, Biology, Music Therapy, Audiology, and Physical Therapy
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: none
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 6
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Traditional, hybrid
	What degree level(s)? bachelor's, master's, doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Education, Organizational Behavior, English, Chemistry, History, Dentistry
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: none

### Marketing and Recruitment

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: none
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The university's website provides information on time-to-degree for both freshmen and transfer students. The university's website provides information about the estimated cost of attendance.
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

	Comments: The university's website provides information on jobs for graduates and the employment of graduates.
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**Student complaints review**

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? <a href="https://www.pacific.edu/campus-life/safety-and-conduct/student-conduct/student-resources/student-complaint-procedure-notice.html">https://www.pacific.edu/campus-life/safety-and-conduct/student-conduct/student-resources/student-complaint-procedure-notice.html</a>  <a href="https://www.mcgeorge.edu/forms/student-complaint-process">https://www.mcgeorge.edu/forms/student-complaint-process</a>
	Comments:
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly:  Formal and informal processes exist to route complaints by category to the appropriate university official/committee. If warranted by the complainant, informal procedures are followed by formal procedures to resolve complaints and grievances.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Records are kept in the appropriate university official's records and in the student's record, if appropriate.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly:  Complaints are recorded by date, the official recording of the complaint, the nature of the complaint, the status of the complaint as formal or informal, the resolution to the complaint, and the parties involved.
	Comments:

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### Transfer Policy Review

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Is the policy publically available? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? <a href="https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-registrar/undergraduate-transfer-credit-policy.html">https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-registrar/undergraduate-transfer-credit-policy.html</a>  <a href="https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-registrar/articulation-agreements-roar/transferring-coursework-to-pacific/graduate-transfer-credit-policy.html">https://www.pacific.edu/about-pacific/administrationoffices/office-of-the-registrar/articulation-agreements-roar/transferring-coursework-to-pacific/graduate-transfer-credit-policy.html</a>
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: