



PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

WASC-SCUC

Interim Report

October 2015

Interim Report Form

Name of Institution: Pepperdine University

Person Submitting the Report: Lisa Bortman, ALO

Report Submission Date: November 1, 2015

Statement on Report Preparation

Briefly describe in narrative form the process of report preparation, providing the names and titles of those involved. Because of the focused nature of an Interim Report, the widespread and comprehensive involvement of all institutional constituencies is not normally required. Faculty, administrative staff, and others should be involved as appropriate to the topics being addressed in the preparation of the report. Campus constituencies, such as faculty leadership and, where appropriate, the governing board, should review the report before it is submitted to WSCUC, and such reviews should be indicated in this statement (page 5).

List of Topics Addressed in this Report

Please list the topics identified in the action letter(s) and that are addressed in this report.

1. Request an Interim Report on November 1, 2015, showing progress on the following issues:
 - a. Strengthening student learning and assessment (using more and varied forms of direct evidence of student learning; defining and refining student learning outcomes; and working to better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes)
 - b. Implementing the strategic plan (including aligning school level plans with the university plan, and incorporating strategies for responding to the changing higher education landscape);
 - c. Enhancing diversity and inclusion (clarifying the meaning of the diversity strategic goal and putting in place action items and timelines for further improvements);
 - d. Strengthening faculty engagement and shared governance (developing a vision and plan for shared governance; creating open and collaborative working environments; improving levels of trust between faculty and administrators).

Institutional Context

Very briefly describe the institution's background; mission; history, including the founding date and year first accredited; geographic locations; and other pertinent information so that the Interim Report Committee panel has the context to understand the issues discussed in the report.

FOREWORD

Pepperdine University is an institution of higher learning committed to rigorous and effective educational programs. Because of this commitment, the many units of the University—including faculty, staff, and administration—have engaged in serious, extended, and intensive reflection on the ways we can become a more effective institution. This interim report is in response to the Commission letter of March 2013. Pepperdine has taken the recommendations very seriously and believes it has made steady progress in all areas. This thoughtful process has made us a better institution. Pepperdine was commended in 2013 for the progress the University had made toward strengthening student learning

outcomes, better utilizing assessment and program review, and developing a strategic plan, and we think it has made even more strides in these areas since that time.

We would also like to thank the Commission for its recognition of the commitment of the faculty, staff, administrators, and students in supporting institutional change. Improvement in the four areas noted by the Interim Report committee is a never-ending process. However, this report demonstrates our attempts to address each area in significant ways and the substantive progress that has been made in each of the areas, progress that we envision will result in a successful full review in 2020.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Pepperdine aspires to be a nationally recognized institution whose mission conjoins seamlessly the best of the academy with the best of its Christian faith heritage. Pepperdine University pursues the very highest academic standards within a context that both celebrates and extends the spiritual and ethical ideals of the Christian faith and maintains ties with the Churches of Christ. The University was founded in 1937 by George Pepperdine, a businessman who established the Western Auto Supply Company and was a lifelong member of the Churches of Christ. For its first 30 years, Pepperdine was a small, mostly undergraduate Christian college located in downtown Los Angeles. Graduate and professional schools were added in 1970, allowing university status to be achieved. In 1972, the University opened its newly constructed Malibu campus.

Pepperdine University is now an independent, medium-sized university enrolling approximately 7,600 students in five colleges and schools. Seaver College, the School of Law, and the School of Public Policy are located on the University's main campus in Malibu. The Graduate School of Education and Psychology and the Graziadio School of Business and Management are headquartered off-campus at Pepperdine's West Los Angeles regional center. The graduate programs of these two schools are also offered at branch campuses in Irvine, four off-campus sites located within 25 miles of the main campus or regional center, and four off-campus sites located beyond the 25-mile radius. In addition to leasing these facilities in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, Pepperdine owns five facilities and rents one overseas, and also owns a building in Washington, D.C., where both graduate and undergraduate students take courses.

In addition to regional accreditation through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges-Senior College and University Commission (WASC-SCUC), Pepperdine has received specialized accreditation through the following organizations: American Bar Association (which recently awarded

our law school membership in the Order of the Coif), American Dietetic Association, American Psychological Association, Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the National Association of Schools of Music. Pepperdine has recently received renewal of its National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I certification.

UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Christian higher education is frequently understood in terms of the institution's relationship to a sponsoring religious denomination, institutional governance, and perceived tendencies toward secularization. Pepperdine is affiliated with Churches of Christ, a group of autonomous churches that are committed to restoring Christianity which they see as "nondenominational." Churches of Christ belong to a rationalist tradition that values education and biblical scholarship. Members of Churches of Christ have been active in establishing colleges that have become "centers of higher learning, prompting thought, reflection, and self-criticism on the part of their students" (Hughes, 2001, p. 139).

Pepperdine's respect for its religious heritage is fundamental to its mission. First, the University draws from a Christian tradition that celebrates the life of the mind. The values of intellectual inquiry present in the Churches of Christ are lived out in the academic culture. Second, by maintaining and continually strengthening formal ties with the Churches of Christ, Pepperdine is able to maintain an institutional identity uncharacteristic of many higher education institutions that have loosened their church affiliations. Finally, by celebrating its Christian commitment, Pepperdine is able to pursue the intellectual integration of faith and learning and the development of its students' spirituality.

The importance of higher education's role in helping students pursue their life purpose and their spiritual center is increasingly evident in the work of the Spirituality in Higher Education initiative at UCLA and our own Lilly Endowment research and data collection on faith, identity, and life-purpose formation that dates back to 2002. Given the evidence of these and similar initiatives and research efforts, we are more certain than ever that our mission is worthy. Our certainty is reflected in at least two substantive endeavors. At the undergraduate level, Professors Cindy Miller-Perrin and Don Thompson have been collecting extensive data on the spiritual development of undergraduates. These data have been presented publicly and considered so substantively relevant that the professors are now gathering similar data from students at the graduate and professional levels. Their assessment methodology mirrors that of the work at the Astin Institute at UCLA.

Offering a somewhat different perspective, the provost, at the direction of the president and Religious Standards subcommittee of the Board of Regents, produced a white paper articulating the

relationship of the University to its faith heritage—Churches of Christ within the Restoration tradition. That paper has been endorsed by the Board and is currently being discussed across the University in key focus groups among faculty, staff, and administrators. It will also be a central topic of discussion among faculty focus groups at the upcoming faculty conference October 2, 2015.

Response to Issues Identified by the Commission

This main section of the report should address the issues identified by the Commission in its action letter(s) as topics for the Interim Report. Each topic identified in the Commission’s action letter should be addressed. The team report (on which the action letter is based) may provide additional context and background for the institution’s understanding of issues. Provide a full description of each issue, the actions taken by the institution that address this issue, and an analysis of the effectiveness of these actions to date. Have the actions taken been successful in resolving the problem? What is the evidence supporting progress? What further problems or issues remain? How will these concerns be addressed, by whom, and under what timetable? How will the institution know when the issue has been fully addressed? Please include a timeline that outlines planned additional steps with milestones and expected outcomes. Responses should be no longer than five pages per issue.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY’S ACCREDITATION HISTORY

The University was first accredited in 1949, and its accreditation was reaffirmed in 1983, 1988, 1993, and 2001. For our 2010-2012 WASC-SCUC cycle, the University submitted reports that were theme-based, with three themed essays making up the report for the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). The first, “Student Learning and Assessment,” offered illustrations to demonstrate Pepperdine’s maturation into a culture that values evidence and uses it to plan curricular and other changes to enhance the student learning experience. “Faculty Engagement” was the topic of the second essay, which discussed steps taken to improve faculty participation in institutional planning and governance and to move toward the collaborative, consensus-oriented institution we aspire to be. In the third essay, “Evidence-Based Decision-Making,” we reported our progress in using data effectively to increase diversity, improve communication about decision-making, and revise budgeting processes to ensure that resource allocations are linked to the strategic plans of the individual schools and the University overall.

*In February of 2013 the **Commission Action Letter** stated,
“Given the above, the Commission acted to:*

- 1. Receive the Educational Effectiveness Review report.*
- 2. Reaffirm the accreditation of Pepperdine University.*
- 3. Schedule the next comprehensive review with the Off-site Review in Fall 2020 and the accreditation visit tentatively scheduled for Fall 2021.*
- 4. Request an Interim Report on November 1, 2015 showing progress on the following issues:*
 - e. Strengthening student learning and assessment (using more and varied forms of direct evidence of student learning; defining and refining student learning outcomes; and working to better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes)*
 - f. Implementing the strategic plan (including aligning school level plans with the university plan, and incorporating strategies for responding to the changing higher education landscape);*

- g. *Enhancing diversity and inclusion (clarifying the meaning of the diversity strategic goal and putting in place action items and timelines for further improvements);*
- h. *Strengthening faculty engagement and shared governance (developing a vision and plan for shared governance; creating open and collaborative working environments; improving levels of trust between faculty and administrators).*

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that Pepperdine University has satisfactorily addressed the two Core Commitments to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness, and has successfully completed the three-stage review conducted under the Standards of Accreditation.

The Commission especially praises Pepperdine for establishing a plan for the next six to ten years that describes what the University needs to do to meet the revised Standards of Accreditation and the expectations of the 2013 Handbook. The expectations in the 2013 Handbook build on past practice and include, for example, student success, quality improvement processes such as assessment and program review, planning, and financial sustainability. The 2013 Handbook also incorporates new foci: the meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees; student performance in core competencies at the time of graduation; and institutional planning for the “new ecology” of learning. The Commission is pleased to learn that Pepperdine has taken steps to prepare itself now for its next comprehensive review.” The Commission letter can be found in **APPENDIX A**.

Pepperdine’s approach to the Interim Report has been a continuation of how we approached the previous EER report. To produce this Interim Report, we utilized four working groups that came from our existing committee structure at the University level:

1. Advancement of Student Learning Council (ASLC) addresses student learning and assessment at all levels within the institution;
2. University Faculty Council (UFC) addresses issues related to faculty engagement and governance (standing committee);
3. University Planning Committee (UPC) is responsible for developing a systematic approach to planning and decision-making and the strategic plan (standing committee); and
4. University Diversity Council (UDC) addresses campus climate and diversity issues (standing committee).

These four working groups provided much of the evidence and content found in the four essays that comprise our interim report. These four essays are described below.

1. **Assessment.** We address how our assessment process and ability to make evidence-based decisions has progressed from the program level to the University level. This includes the assessment of our Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs).
2. **The strategic plan.** We address the implementation of the strategic plan, the development of related metrics, and how plans at the individual schools align with the overall University plan. The University process for “incorporating strategies for responding to the changing higher education landscape” are also discussed in this piece.

3. **Diversity and inclusion.** We present the plan for enhancing diversity and inclusion established by the University Diversity Committee and examine new policies and programming developed to improve our climate for increasing diversity.
4. **Faculty engagement and shared governance.** The last essay discusses our efforts to strengthen faculty engagement and shared governance.

These essays and the accompanying appendices seek to demonstrate Pepperdine’s dedication to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges’ (WASC-SCUC) “Core Commitment to Educational Effectiveness.”

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
WASC-SCUC Commission Actions Items for 2015
Assessment

Commission Action Letter

Assessment and program review. Pepperdine has established key committees and processes in the areas of assessment and program review that provide, according to the team, “a good model of faculty leadership working collaboratively with administration to support institutional learning.” Pepperdine has also created an administrative office considered by the team to be “an extraordinary resource,” that collects and analyzes data to help inform decision-making. The team acknowledged Pepperdine’s “remarkable progress” in program review, measurements of quality, inter-institutional comparisons, rubrics, and increased faculty involvement in these areas. Based on the evidence, the team confirmed Pepperdine’s self-evaluation that the university has “made significant strides toward fully integrating an outcomes-based approach to assess student learning.”

Continuing to strengthen student learning and assessment. The Commission is pleased to learn that Pepperdine has added students to its assessment and program review committees. The Commission expects the university to continue its assessment efforts by such means as: using more and varied forms of direct evidence of student learning; defining and refining student learning outcomes; and working to better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes. To this end, Pepperdine will want to demonstrate that the institution is producing individuals who meet the university’s expectations of a Pepperdine graduate. (CFRs 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 4.4, 4.6)

(1) 2015 Interim report will show progress on: Strengthening student learning and assessment (using more and varied forms of direct evidence of student learning defining and refining student learning outcomes; and working to better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes.)

STRENGTHENING STUDENT LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Onsite Team Recommendations: Develop a deeper understanding of the character and quality of students’ learning at Pepperdine. (CFRs 2.5, 2.10, 2.11, 4.6, 4.7). Give greater emphasis to the co-curricular experience as a contributor to student learning. (CFR 2.11)

The Commission and the onsite team commended Pepperdine in 2013 for integrating students into the assessment process and program review committees. It also commended Pepperdine for its progress in “program review, measurements of quality, inter-institutional comparisons, rubrics, and increased faculty involvement in these areas.” However, it recommended that Pepperdine use

HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2012
✓ Assessment infrastructure has matured
✓ Program review impacts decision-making
✓ Data is regularly disaggregated to represent subpopulations/diversity
✓ Assessment of the institutional learning outcomes is in progress and involves collaboration with peer institutions
✓ Assessment methodologies are more sophisticated and multimodal
✓ The student voice is now represented in the assessment process
✓ Program review influences decision-making in University committees such as University Academic Council

“more varied forms of direct evidence of student learning;” define and refine student learning outcomes; and “better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes.” Since the last accreditation visit, Pepperdine has continued to work diligently and conscientiously on establishing a *culture of evidence*. We believe we have addressed all areas needing growth, as identified by the Commission and the onsite team, and have integrated the new WASC-SCUC 2013 handbook into our assessment infrastructure. This section of the interim report will highlight some of those processes and provide examples of how Pepperdine University is gaining a deeper understanding of student learning.

ASSESSMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

The assessment infrastructure at Pepperdine University is led by the Advancement of Student Learning Council (ASLC), a University-level committee, and supported by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) and the assistant provost who oversees OIE and also serves as the University’s accreditation liaison officer (ALO). The ASLC oversees and integrates the University’s assessment process, including program review.

Program reviews occur every five years, which helps to ensure that programs are continually assessing and evaluating curriculum and pedagogy in preparation for this comprehensive review. The program review process has been revised (2013) and now has University-wide influence on planning and is the central component that ensures the meaning, quality, and integrity of our degrees. The program review process provides the foundation for curricular changes, and findings that advance to school- and University-level committees can serve as the rationale for budget decisions at both levels. The *Program Review Guidebook* and examples of changes that went to University committees are included in

APPENDICES B and C.

The *Program Review Guidebook* helps define the process for developing the self-study and also helps programs develop the data and information that will be needed for a successful five-year review. The *Program Review Guidebook* recommends that all programs have program learning outcomes (PLOs) that align with the institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and that each course includes student learning outcomes (SLOs) that align to the program learning outcomes. Alignments are demonstrated in matrices that are evaluated during the program review.

Since 2011 all five schools have been following this process, with each of the schools conducting annual assessments that provide data and analysis to inform the program reviews. As part of the program review process, each program writes a self-study and brings in an external reviewer and then

develops a quality improvement plan (QIP). The program review provides a chance to reassess the student learning outcomes and evaluate assessment methodologies. Through this process, we have improved the consistency and quality of our student learning outcomes and assessment methodologies, moving to multimodal assessments and the use of valid and reliable tools such as rubrics.

The final process for closing the loop during a program review involves developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the dean of the respective school. Many recommendations made by outside reviewers become part of the MOUs and the QIP. Examples of MOUs and QIPs can be found in **APPENDIX D**.

As Pepperdine has now completed its first full cycle of program reviews, all student learning outcomes have been evaluated by school-level assessment committees as well as by the ASLC. The assessment infrastructure now supports regular review of alignment matrixes, quality of the program, and student learning outcomes. Two years ago, the *Program Review Guidebook* was revised to incorporate the new 2013 WASC-SCUC accreditation guidelines and criteria. At that point, we also discovered the need for a more specific guidebook for the co-curricular programs and so developed one through the ASLC. The co-curricular guidebook can be found in **APPENDIX E**.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

All of Pepperdine University's five schools and its Student Affairs programs have been working conscientiously through the ASLC and across programs to ensure greater standardization in writing, measuring, and aligning SLOs. Each one of our schools developed an educational effectiveness update (EEU) for the Interim Report elaborating on changes since 2012. The EEUs in the appendix highlight some of the strong work done in this area. The EEUs can be found in **APPENDICES F, G, H, I, J, K, L**.

At **Seaver College** the entire assessment process is faculty-driven. The Seaver Advancement of Learning Team (SALT) continues to lead the program reviews of the academic majors. The team consists of eight faculty members (one from each academic division); three students; the associate dean for teaching and assessment; and the coordinator of assessment for Seaver. SALT also reviews and comments on the annual assessments, ensuring quality and the use of a consistent process in program reviews, student learning outcomes, and assessment methodologies.

Seaver College also has a committee for assessing general education. This committee was established in the 2012-2013 academic year. The team of General Education Learning Innovators (GELI) is made up of seven faculty members, a librarian, the academic director of International Programs, the associate dean of student affairs, three students, and the associate dean of teaching and assessment.

This team oversees the assessment process for the general education curriculum and is developing a sustainable plan to assess this curriculum. See **APPENDIX F**.

Student Affairs directors and deans meet annually for an assessment retreat. At that time, department reports (including SLOs) are reviewed and revised as a part of the peer-review process and through consultation with the supervisor and/or assessment coordinator. In addition to providing program reports five times a year, every department completes end of semester reports dedicated to indicating progress in assessing student learning and strategic initiatives. Annual reports give directors an opportunity to reflect on the student learning measured that year and how previously collected assessment information has been used to close the loop by prompting changes in program or instructional practices. See Student Affairs annual reports in **APPENDIX G**.

The Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP) follows a similar embedded process and also conducted an additional review of its SLOs in 2014-2015. GSEP program directors and faculty revised all program learning outcomes so that they utilized more active language and ensured outcomes that reflected competence at the point of graduation. See **APPENDIX H**.

All **Graziadio School of Business and Management** programs complete annual program assessment reports as well as five-year reviews. Over the past three years specific learning outcomes have been developed and are measured annually against carefully tailored rubrics in a process similar to that used in other schools and articulated above. These outcomes are included in each of the annual and five-year reports. Program committees evaluate these assessment reports, which are used in strategic decision-making and have led to specific curricular changes. All faculty have been engaged in this process at some point, and they directly measure learning outcomes with direct, indirect, and authentic forms of evidence. See **APPENDIX I** for an update report from Graziadio.

The School of Law began developing learning outcomes and a plan for assessment several years ago. Program learning outcomes were developed to align with the University's institutional learning outcomes, core commitments, and values. In August 2014, the American Bar Association (ABA) approved revised standards that include program learning outcomes and assessment of student learning for all ABA-approved law schools. Although the ABA is still developing additional interpretations of the new standards, the School of Law is moving forward with developing a schoolwide approach to assessing student learning outcomes. See **APPENDIX J**.

The **University Library** hired an assessment librarian during the 2014-2015 academic year. The library now is represented by a committee member on the ASLC, and the University has provided funding for this committee position and to provide professional development in assessment for the

University's librarians. The library had already been actively participating in assessment efforts and program reviews, but this position allows its assessment work to be better integrated with the University infrastructure. The University library will contribute to efforts to examine and assess information literacy core competency. Library report is available in **APPENDIX K**.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

***Onsite Team Recommendations:** Continue to develop its assessment efforts by such means as: a. Using more/varied forms of direct evidence of learning; b. Defining and refining outcomes; c. Working to better align learning activities and rubrics with those outcomes. (CFRs 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 2.11, 4.4, 4.6)*

Along with student learning outcomes, assessment methodologies are reviewed on an annual basis at the program level and every five years during the program review process by the ASLC. The methodologies have vastly improved over the past three years, with direct learning being consistently measured through exams, assignments, and rubrics. The majority of the assessment methodologies also include indirect assessments.

At the time of the site visit in 2012, rubrics were used intermittently and were not well developed. The overall use of rubrics has now become common practice in all of Pepperdine's schools. Faculty norm the rubrics and test for validity and reliability. As the use of rubrics has increased, the sophistication of those rubrics has matured as well. Indirect assessment and authentic assessment are regularly integrated into the methodology to support findings from direct assessment, although there is still room for improvement in this area. Efforts are under way to ensure this integration occurs on a more consistent basis, and infrastructure is in place to provide counsel and assistance with this process. School EEUs can be found in **APPENDICES F, G, H, I, J, K and L**.

To help ensure the quality of the process, the OIE performs audits each summer of randomly selected annual assessment reports at each school and the co-curricular programs. The audit examines the student outcomes, the methodologies used in preparing the reports, and the integration of the new WASC-SCUC criteria, including those addressing a program's meaning, quality, integrity, and core competencies. These reports are given to the assessment directors of each school, and the assistant provost offers to meet with the program under review and discuss the development of assessment plans and methodologies.

The OIE continues to provide the University with data and reports to help with decision-making. Each program that comes up for program review receives data from OIE referred to as educational effectiveness indicators (EEIs) that contain information on the program's enrollment and retention

patterns as well as national survey data. During the 2014-2015 school year, OIE worked with the Natural Science and the Humanities divisions in Seaver College to create a discipline-specific alumni survey designed to collect data on student learning and whether the alumni had felt prepared for work and graduate school after completing their undergraduate degrees.

In addition, all constituents at the University have the ability to request data through the OIE website. OIE now conducts national surveys of students and alumni at all five Pepperdine schools, and each school annually receives data to use for planning and assessment, which the OIE shares on its website and on a Sakai site. National data from surveys are summarized and shared through EEI reports and research briefs. Samples of these reports can be found in **APPENDIX M**.

CLOSING THE LOOP

Since the last WASC-SCUC visit, the University has progressed in creating a culture of evidence, and checks and balances are now in place to ensure assessment evidence is used in improvement efforts. For example, one of the final steps in a program review is the development of a quality improvement plan based on the self-study and external reviewer's evaluation. These plans and the ASLC's internal review evaluation of the program review are all submitted to the dean of the college, where an MOU is developed. In the 2014-2015 school year, the ASLC worked with the University Academic Council (UAC) to improve communication and agreed to supply a summary report of the program review findings. These summary reports should help the UAC in its evaluation of program proposals. The summary report is a component of the Program Review Guidebook.

The UAC has also revised its proposal criteria to call for evidence to support requests for change and ask that results from annual and five-year assessment plans be included in new program proposals. Other University-level committees, such as the University Planning Committee, also ask for evidence to support proposals, and the Planning Committee regularly reviews the MOUs to inform strategic budget-planning decisions. Evidence-based decision-making can also be seen in processes and conclusions made by the University's governance systems, and the programs in each school have numerous examples of how information learned through assessment has been used to improve student learning.

STUDENT VOICE

Onsite Team Recommendation: Assure student involvement in the various forms of assessment that the University is pursuing. (CFRs 2.5, 4.8)

Many of our school-level committees have added student members. This has been more challenging to accomplish at the University level because the schools are located on different campuses and employ a variety of course schedules. This challenge has forced us to become more creative in trying to find a solution. Beginning in 2013, ASLC incorporated students into the process of evaluating program reviews. When a program is coming up for its five-year review, a student from that major is chosen to participate in the review process as part of the ASLC. They are part of the process of formally reading the review and making recommendations. This can be seen in the 2013 and in 2014 program reviews.

In addition to student participation on committees, we also gain student input through the data we collect. The OIE conducts student surveys at each school as well as alumni surveys for particular programs. OIE also conducts numerous focus groups to help interpret survey results, and reports based on those surveys and the focus group input are then shared with the community through research briefs and executive summaries provided to committees, groups, and administrators. Student involvement in assessment has been most easily adopted in our undergraduate Seaver College, where students are actively involved in both the Seaver Advancement of Learning Team (SALT) and the General Education Learning Innovators (GELI). They participate fully in discussions, working groups, assessment activities such as norming and using rubrics, reviewing reports, and planning for the future. Students also serve in growing numbers in assessing the majors and the various areas of general education.

THE WASC-SCUC 2013 HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION

In 2013, Pepperdine began the adoption and integration of the 2013 WASC-SCUC handbook of accreditation.

MEANING, QUALITY, AND INTEGRITY OF THE DEGREE: ILOs and Alignment

Pepperdine's assessment process began with the development of institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) based on our University mission, values, and core commitments. All of our programs now have ILO matrices that demonstrate how the program learning outcomes (PLOs) align to the ILOs. In addition, we have a curriculum matrix that demonstrates where each of the PLOs are addressed in the program's curriculum (courses). We have placed the ILOs and samples of program level outcomes and matrices in **APPENDIX N**.

With this strong "alignment foundation," integrating meaning, quality, and integrity into the system was a natural step. The ASLC has decided to use our ILOs as one of the primary ways

to meet the new WASC-SCUC criteria for meaning, quality, and integrity at the University level. The assessment process will be overseen by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree will also be assessed at the school and program level. At Seaver College, the curricular and co-curricular experiences together provide an integrated university experience with the breadth and depth to prepare our graduates for work, citizenship in a global society, lifelong learning, and service to others. Our academic programs ensure the development of the core competencies (graduate and undergraduate) through both the general education curriculum and the in-depth instruction a student receives in an academic major.

The schedule for assessment of the ILOs:

2014-2015 | **DIVERSITY**

Purpose with community and global understanding, ILO 3

(3) Develop and enact a compelling personal and professional vision that values diversity.

Leadership with community and global understanding, ILO 9

(9) Use global and local leadership opportunities in pursuit of justice.

2015-2016 | **PURPOSE**

Purpose with faith and heritage, ILO 2

(2) Appreciate the complex relationship between faith, learning, and practice.

2016-2017 | **SERVICE**

Faith and heritage with community and global understanding, ILOs 4, 5, and 6

(4) Apply knowledge to real-world challenges.

(5) Respond to the call to serve others.

(6) Demonstrate commitment to service and civic engagement.

2018-2019 | **LEADERSHIP**

Leadership with faith and heritage, ILO 8

(8) Practice responsible conduct and allow decisions and directions to be informed by a values-centered life.

Knowledge and scholarship with purpose and leadership (ILO 1 and 7) will be assessed during program review

(1) Demonstrate expertise in an academic or professional discipline, display proficiency in the discipline, and engage in the process of academic discovery.

(7) Think critically and creatively, communicate clearly, and act with integrity.

In 2015, graduate and undergraduate students are actively involved in learning—both in and out of the classroom. They participate in a wide variety of high-impact practices, such as orientations and first-year seminars, study-abroad experiences in our robust International Programs, research projects, internships, service-learning experiences, and many rich co-curricular activities. All of these programs and activities give students opportunities to practice, generalize, and apply what they have learned in the classroom. At the graduate and undergraduate levels, both our curricular and co-curricular programs actively foster creativity, innovation, an appreciation for diversity, ethical and civic responsibility, civic engagement, an

awareness of the needs of others, and the ability to work effectively with others in a variety of circumstances.

BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking is one of the newer aspects of assessment for Pepperdine. Programs with specialized accreditation have opportunities for national benchmarking, but disciplines such as those in the humanities depend more on longitudinal benchmarking. We have recently adopted the LiveText assessment management system, which we expect will make it simpler to establish internal benchmarks as our assessment practices mature and we accumulate more longitudinal data. We have just begun working with some of the national frameworks (value rubrics, Lumina) and with peer institutions to develop our benchmarking. Our assessment of our ILOs is being done in collaboration with three other faith-based institutions, and we have had requests for additional schools to join us, which would provide an excellent opportunity for benchmarking and cooperation for Pepperdine as well as the other institutions in the group. The year one ILO diversity project can be found in **APPENDIX O**.

In summary, Pepperdine University believes it has invested the time and resources necessary to continue developing a culture of evidence. We did not allow the reaffirmation received after our 2013 assessment cycle to lead to complacency, but instead have focused on building our infrastructure and developing a University-wide framework that would inform University planning. We believe our program review process has provided a strong foundation for creating our infrastructure and allowed us to improve the quality of our assessment practices. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness continues to lead and provide support for University-wide assessment while improving transparency in the assessment process and sharing of information.

The University is very excited about collaborating with peer institutions in our assessment of ILOs, and we plan to continue in this direction. The University Academic Council has embraced the need for evidence to support curriculum proposals, and its stance has served as a mechanism to encourage programs in all the schools to practice evidence-based decision-making. The ASLC continues to lead assessment activities at the schools, resulting in much-improved practices.

Although Pepperdine has made great progress in these areas, there is still much to do before 2020. Our assessment methodologies are improved, but we know they will become even

more sophisticated, valid, and reliable as we continue to grow and learn. A contract with LiveText Inc. beginning in the fall of 2015 will aid Pepperdine's ability to move our assessment processes forward at a much faster pace. This past summer we have been working on the infrastructure and implementation plan for LiveText. We envision that the assessment management system will significantly improve the quality of our assessment practices, including rubric development and benchmarking, and greatly help us with the assessment of our ILOs and core competencies. The OIE and the ASLC will be overseeing this process, and we anticipate that we will be able to construct rubrics more efficiently, use the value rubrics more frequently, and validate and pilot rubrics with greater ease. We also need to continue collecting data so that we can compile longitudinal data sets to be used to help create benchmarks. Before our 2020 WASC-SCUC visit, we hope to have many more collaborative assessment projects with other institutions, and we should have all five core competencies assessed. In addition, in 2016, the ASLC plans to review program review results across the University in an attempt to identify trends.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
WASC-SCUC Commission Actions Items for 2015
Strategic Plan

Commission Action Letter

Strategic planning. Pepperdine has made “excellent progress” in developing a strategic plan (*Pepperdine 2020: Boundless Horizons*) that was the result of widespread institutional involvement. The plan’s main goals have been embraced by stakeholders and speak to the values of the institution: student learning, scholarship, faith, community, and diversity. Though implementation details had not yet been finalized at the time of the visit, the plan was already in use to guide decision-making.

Implementing the strategic plan. The Commission understands that the implementation phase of the strategic plan is underway. The Commission expects Pepperdine to continue its progress in establishing metrics, timelines and assignments of responsibilities and to show how the strategic plans at the level of the schools and colleges will align with the university’s plan. As the team noted, currently the plan “provides little about the future of higher education, the new opportunities and challenges that may lie ahead, and the potential need for universities to adapt rapidly to a changing marketplace.” The Commission expects Pepperdine to incorporate into its strategic planning efforts and specific actions steps ways in which the university will respond to the new ecology of learning (e.g. technology) and the changing higher education landscape (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

The 2015 Interim Report will show progress on: Implementing the strategic plan (including aligning school level plans with the University plan, and incorporating strategies for responding to changing higher education landscape).

The Commission commended Pepperdine for making excellent progress in developing a strategic plan that had widespread institutional involvement. However, they did ask to see finalization of its implementation and they expect

HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2012

- ✓ Creation of metrics and benchmarks for the strategic plan 2020
- ✓ UPC set of strategic planning leaders
- ✓ School-level strategic plans that align with the University strategic plan

Pepperdine to “continue progress in establishing metrics, timelines and assignments of responsibilities and to show how the strategic plans at the level of the schools and colleges will align with the university’s plan.” The Commission also requested that the strategic plan incorporate how it will respond to the changing higher education landscape and ecology of learning.

IMPLEMENTATION

Onsite Team Recommendation: *Continue progress toward a fully integrated and implemented strategic plan.*

The Pepperdine University Planning Committee (UPC), a University-level body that discusses and makes recommendations concerning the budget, budget process, and strategic goals, has developed a monitoring mechanism for the University strategic plan. The committee is composed of the president, the provost, three vice presidents, the five school deans, other key administrators, and three faculty representatives. The faculty representatives, who serve a three-year term, are rotated between the five schools of the University and chosen by the school dean in consultation with the president and provost. The UPC charter can be found in **APPENDIX P**.

In fall 2013, the provost invited five members of the UPC to serve as the facilitators for the five strategic goals. Each facilitator was selected based on area of expertise and working proximity with the topic area of each strategic goal. Along with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the goal leaders considered dozens of possible metrics that might be used for measuring progress on each strategic goal. At the November and December 2013 UPC meetings, the facilitators led a discussion and reported on which metrics had been selected for each goal, giving brief summaries of the chosen metrics, the progress made on the goals since the previous year, the challenges and potential obstacles of reaching each goal, and plans for achieving additional progress. The report included more metrics than would later be used, but the narrowing of the metrics was to become a larger discussion for the entire UPC. The UPC facilitator list and strategic planning metrics can be found in **APPENDICES Q and R**.

At the 2014 December UPC meeting, the strategic plan facilitators broke the twenty-five person UPC into five smaller groups to discuss the strategic plan metrics for each goal. All members of the committee participated in these discussions, and each small group selected four to six metrics to represent each strategic goal. At the April 2015 UPC meeting, facilitators again led small-group discussions on setting internal benchmarks for the selected goal metrics. These benchmarked metrics will now become part of the annual strategic plan update report at the fall UPC meeting. Following a substantial discussion at UPC, goals involving academic adjustments will be provided to the schools impacted; goals with budgetary implications will be added and prioritized in the budgeting process, and goals particular to co-curricular life will be provided to the appropriate school committee or Vice President for Student Life in order to close the loop on decisions made and action items approved. The 2020 WASC report will fully document progress made toward goals articulated in the strategic plan. The strategic planning benchmarks can be found in **APPENDIX S**.

ALIGNMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S STRATEGIC PLANS

Each school at Pepperdine is following an independent cycle to develop school-specific strategic plans.

On three occasions in 2014 and 2015, the topic of school-specific strategic plans was discussed at meetings of the Provost's Deans Council, which includes all five school deans, the library dean, the vice provost, the associate provost, and the assistant provost for institutional effectiveness. Each school, the library, and major University departments and divisions have developed plans to support, reflect, and integrate the University-wide strategic plan. At Deans Council during the 2015-2016 academic year, the council will review and discuss the updated strategic plans from the schools and provide recommendations relevant to their alignment with the University strategic plan. The strategic plans from the schools and Information Technology Division (IT) can be found in **APPENDIX T**.

For example, IT developed a strategic framework that positions technology planning and priorities around the institutional strategic plan. Through its strategic initiatives, Pepperdine's IT Division utilizes technologies to: (1) generate cost savings and improvements in efficiency by streamlining and automating business processes across campus; (2) establish an institutional CRM platform that forges strong, lifelong relationships with prospects, faculty, staff, students, and alumni that can build loyalty; and (3) create unique application development internship opportunities to give Seaver students invaluable practical experience that can position them advantageously upon graduation.

Another example can be seen in the actions of the Pepperdine Office of Financial Planning, which oversees University budget planning in conjunction with the UPC. At each step of the process, the Office of Financial Planning reminds all schools and major areas that requests for funds should emphasize how that money would be spent in ways that enhance the goals of the University strategic plan. Final funding recommendations for each annual budget cycle are based on how University dollars can best support the strategic plan.

RESPONDING TO NEW ECOLOGY OF LEARNING AND CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

The President's Steering Committee (the provost, vice provost, vice presidents and school deans) meets each month. This group uses the University strategic plan to coordinate topics for discussion and anticipate changes in the landscape of higher education. In addition, the president requests that members report on how their individual areas are addressing both institutional and higher education challenges. This group has addressed topics as diverse as Title IX, fundraising, school dean searches, University affordability and accessibility, and changes in institutional technology and data management. Information on this committee can be found in **APPENDIX U**.

The President, in 2013, also created a new University-level initiative, Waves of Innovation, to promote institutional community, creativity, and problem-solving. This new initiative was open to all

members of the University community. Students, faculty, and staff were invited to submit proposals for actions that could enhance the University's reputation, revenue streams, or administrative efficiencies. In two years, the program has received more than 250 proposals from the University community, and the president has awarded more than \$800,000 in funding to nine proposals. The funded proposals addressed significant issues in higher education: technology and learning, sustainability, accessibility, and the management of big data. The president was invited to submit a white paper on the successes of this new initiative to the TIAA-CREF Institute, an educational web portal on innovation and financial sustainability. **APPENDIX V** provides more information about Waves Of Innovation. Beginning spring of the 2015-2016 academic year, the Provost's office will develop a program similar to Waves of Innovation with a focus on collaborative research. Faculty, staff, and students will be asked to submit proposals that reflect collaborative research projects across the five schools. Research grants will be awarded to those proposals that are not only interdisciplinary, but also engage colleagues from various divisions and schools.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
WASC-SCUC Commission Actions Items for 2015
Diversity and Inclusion

Commission Action Letter

Continuing to enhance diversity and inclusion. Diversity refers to differences that exist among people, for example, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion and spirituality, language, family responsibilities, socioeconomic status, worldview, political persuasions, academic preparation, regional and national identity, among others. Inclusion refers to actions an institution can take to make each member of the campus community feel welcome and part of the university. The desire to increase diversity (faculty, staff and students) and the importance of campus climate has appeared in Pepperdine’s CPR and EER self-studies. Pepperdine has signaled the priority of diversity by making it one of the five goals of the strategic plan: “increase institutional diversity consistent with our mission.” The team noted that “more remains to be done” in this area. Pepperdine can strengthen its effort by ensuring that attention to diversity and inclusion is threaded through academic programs, co-curricular experiences, faculty/staff hiring, communications and other facets of the life of the university. The University will need to clarify the meaning of its diversity strategic goal, widely communicate that understanding to campus stakeholders, and set action items and timelines for achieving further improvements in diversity and inclusion. (CFRs 1.5, 4.1, 4.3)

Enhancing diversity and inclusion (clarifying the meaning of the diversity strategic goals and putting in place action items and timelines for further improvements).

ENHANCING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Onsite Team Recommendations: *Strengthen its efforts to achieve “community and global understanding” by ensuring that attention to diversity is threaded through academic programs, co-curricular experiences, faculty/staff hiring, communications, and other facets of the life of the University, while also clarifying the understanding of “diversity consistent with mission.” (CFR 1.5)*

The Commission acknowledged that Pepperdine University was committed to increasing diversity of its faculty, staff, and students and improving campus climate. It is evident that supporting diversity at the institution is an important priority,

HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2012

- ✓ The UDC defined diversity and created a report for the provost
- ✓ Our student population continues to represent rich diversity
- ✓ Data reports consistently are disaggregated for subpopulations

but a challenging one. As the Commission stated, “the desire to increase diversity and the importance of campus climate has appeared in Pepperdine’s CPR and EER self-studies.” Even with these efforts, “The team noted that ‘more remains to be done.’ It is recommended that Pepperdine incorporate diversity and inclusion in the ‘various facets of the life of the university’ like academic programs and faculty/staff hiring. The Commission and team would also like to see the University ‘clarify the meaning

of its diversity strategic goal', widely communicate that understanding to stakeholders, and set action items and timelines for achieving further improvements in diversity and inclusion."

CLARIFYING THE MEANING OF DIVERSITY

The University Diversity Council (UDC) was asked to provide a substantive and qualitative plan that would define, frame, and develop actions toward meeting the University's diversity strategic goals and to initiate assessment processes to measure institutional change in this area. Below is a brief overview of the plan that the UDC submitted to the Office of the Provost for review and in order to create an actionable plan. A full copy of the UDC plan can be found in **APPENDIX W**.

The next steps in the UDC plan are to:

- Invite feedback from key stakeholders across the University
- Revise the proposed recommendations based on feedback
- Review the updated recommendations with governance bodies
- Recommend that the University adopt a framework and establish corresponding timetables to achieve them

Since January 2014, the UDC and the Seaver Diversity Council (SDC) have been wrestling with ways to clarify the phrase "diversity consistent with mission" in the existing strategic plan. The committees determined that—although the current phrase carries slightly different meanings depending upon school culture, discipline-specific underpinnings, and internal and external constituencies—efforts to increase institutional diversity would be strengthened by one statement that frames the approach and makes those commitments explicit. The panel opted for a statement that draws from the University's mission and vision and demonstrates an understanding of the multiple dimensions of diversity. A working draft of the statement was reviewed and revised through a collaborative, consensus-building process that culminated in a strong diversity statement that we believe provides a clear understanding of our mission and vision:

Pepperdine is a Christian University with an uncompromising commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our faith celebrates diversity as a true representation of God's creative expression and cherishes the sacred dignity of every human being. Only through the full inclusion of each community member can we make complete the transformative educational process. We strive to build a diverse community of fellowship. Therefore, we strive toward academic excellence and a shared sense of

belonging with the understanding that a broad range of diverse perspectives enriches the quality of our learning, scholarship, and service.

DEFINE DIVERSITY

Part of the UDC's work over the past two years has been to seek a viable option of framing and monitoring our diversity work across the University. As we surveyed the existing higher education literature and scholarship, we decided that the approach in Darryl Smith's book, *Diversity's Promise for Higher Education*, best matched our mission-centric approach. Smith frames institutional diversity as central to the educational endeavor—which encompasses teaching, scholarship, campus climate, access, and success—and engages the multiple dimensions of diversity in instituting long-term, effective changes. We will monitor our progress through these four spheres of influence and focus upon: climate and intergroup relations; access and success; institutional viability and vitality; and education and scholarship.

Once the diversity assessment plan of the UDC is adopted by the University, each school will be expected to align its strategic plan and employ the above-mentioned spheres of influence to assess current school strategies and initiatives. Each school will benefit from a University-wide analysis of diversity that is comprehensive and coherent. Annual assessment reviews will incorporate an assessment of diversity, and the University will analyze institutional diversity every five years through an external review.

Part of the work undertaken over the past two years has included clarifying UDC's relationship to the Office of the Provost and updating its council charter in the spring of 2015 to include specific offices and stakeholders that will be added either by appointment or election to the council's standing composition. In order to create a stronger feedback loop leading to more action, the UDC agrees that council representation is needed from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Intercultural Affairs, Student Affairs, the Disability Services Office, the Office of the Provost, faculty from each school, Seaver Admissions, the chief business officer, Human Resources, the Department of Facilities Services, the Department of Public Safety, undergraduate and graduate students, Information Technology, Integrated Marketing Communications, and the Office of Advancement.

The UDC now functions as an advisory council and recommending body with direct access to the Office of the Provost. Proposals for "closing the loop" include clear and direct communication with the University Planning Committee (UPC), the University Academic Council (UAC), the Deans Council, the

Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and student forums, including the student newspaper and magazine and the Student Government Association. The UDC will also meet with groups not represented on the council—such as academic divisions, Alumni Services, Center for the Arts, libraries, the Weisman Museum, and athletics—to disseminate information. In addition to providing greater exposure and awareness of the important work of the UDC, the Provost’s office is implementing a leadership development program in the fall 2015 for junior and mid-career faculty interested in academic administration. This year long program targets especially faculty of color, females, and Church of Christ faculty. This leadership program has as one of its key objectives the goal of preparing a more diverse faculty cohort for administrative leadership positions.

COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

“Community and global understanding” is language used in Pepperdine’s strategic plan and its institutional learning outcomes. The Diversity ILO project on awareness and global understanding, as previously mentioned, is currently ongoing. This project in particular will inform both the curricular and co-curricular programs as it examines structural diversity, psychological diversity, and students’ knowledge and understanding of diversity, social justice, and global awareness. The findings will be shared with the UDC and each school dean and will be considered in relation to curriculum, co-curricula, and the student experience. The Diversity ILO project update can be found in **APPENDIX O**.

DIVERSITY DATA

In 2012 when the onsite team was visiting Pepperdine, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness had just revised its mission and goals to include creating and sharing annual data sets and reports that would aid the University’s strategic decision-making. At that time, OIE provided student success data almost exclusively to Seaver College, but now all five schools have access to data reports on the OIE website. In addition, OIE has been expanding its reporting by working with the Business Intelligence Group to develop a comprehensive set of reports that provide the community data that can be used in decision making.

Our Fact Book page on the OIE website (<http://oie.pepperdine.edu/facts-and-figures/fact-book.aspx>) has been expanded to offer more—and more sophisticated—data reports, most of which are disaggregated for gender, race, and ethnicity. In the 2014–2015 school year, OIE completed a project to add variables to the University’s integrative reporting

system on first-generation status, student Pell Grant, Cal Grant, and debt load. This data can be aggregated with gender and diversity data variables to examine socioeconomic status (SES) and student success.

OIE will recommend a set of metrics for the UDC to help monitor the status of structural and psychological diversity. The majority of those data will come from reports that can be accessed from the OIE website. Two new pages are slated to be added to the OIE website in the fall of 2015: (1) a page devoted to the University's strategic plan that displays metrics related to each step; and (2) a page for graduation and retention reports, which will include data showing SES data aggregated with graduation rates. When these webpages are fully functional, the UDC will have easy access to a large amount of data that can help inform discussion and actions on diversity issues. A mock-up of the revamped OIE website can be found in **Appendix X**.

Using survey data related to diversity issues, OIE published a research brief on structural diversity in 2014 and another on psychological diversity in 2015. The briefs detailed some interesting findings gleaned from the surveys, including:

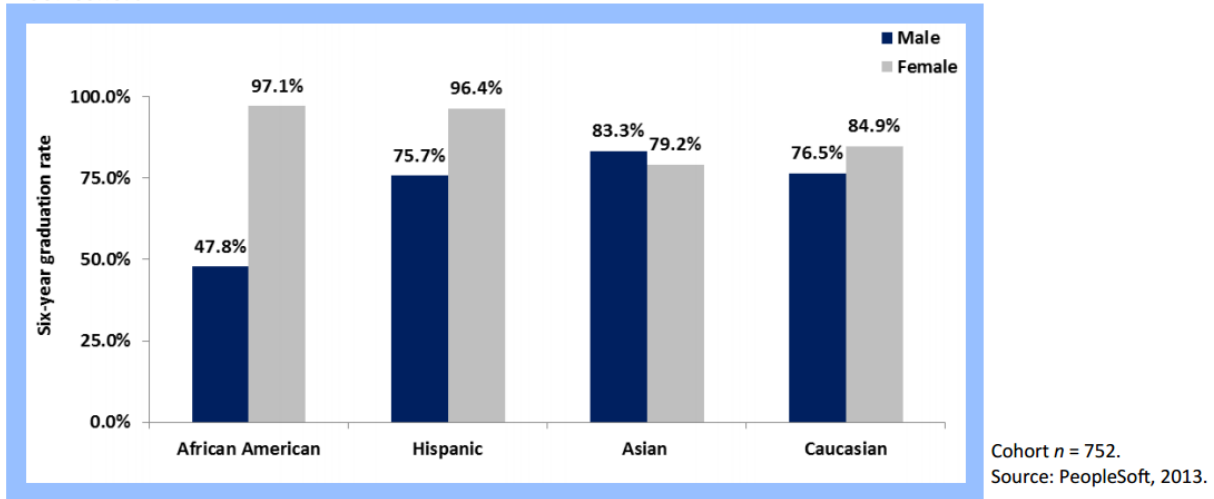
- Pepperdine University's minority student population has been steadily increasing.
- Female minority students perform as well as—or often better than—the majority population.
- The graduation rate was 97.1% for African American females and 96.1% for Latinas. This was for a first-time, full-time undergraduate student cohort (IPEDS cohort).
- Seaver College's student population experienced population growth in most ethnic groups, particularly among Latinos and Asians.

The research briefs on diversity can be found in **APPENDICES Y and Z**.

In addition to presenting information, the research briefs recommended that the University continue to work in specific areas, such as increasing graduation rates for male minority group members, who are graduating at lower rates than our total population. In addition, African American student participants in our UCLA senior survey reported higher levels of perceived discrimination than did participants from other ethnic groups in Pepperdine's undergraduate population. The Seaver Student Success Alliance (SSSA) is working with OIE on these matters, and in the spring of 2015, OIE conducted a focus group with undergraduate male minority students to gather information on their

undergraduate experience. The focus group information and survey data will be reviewed at the next SSSA meeting, in the fall of 2015. The figure below is from the research brief on structural diversity.

Figure 6. *Seaver College undergraduate six-year graduation rates by gender and ethnicity, 2007 cohort*



Faculty Diversity

The ethnic proportions among faculty at the University have remained stable while the student minority population has increased, leading to a disparity between the student and faculty ethnic distributions. This increased disparity, while not surprising, reflects the significantly different characteristics of the student cohort vis-à-vis the faculty cohort. Student presence at an institution changes on a four- or five-year cycle; faculty demographics often change on a thirty-year cycle. Although these trends at Pepperdine are similar to national trends, we continue to work to increase faculty diversity and improve the experience and success rate for our student minority population.

At Seaver College, our largest school, the percentage of diverse (i.e., not Caucasian or White) faculty hires since 2012 has been: 35% in 2013; 39% in 2014; and 57% in 2015, with hires still in progress. When you compare these percentages to the years of 2010–2012, the difference is staggering. In 2012, 8% of faculty hires were not Caucasian or White, as were 16% in 2011 and 14% in 2010. The data strongly suggest that an intentional effort to hire diverse

faculty and increase faculty diversity at Seaver is working. A table demonstrating faculty diversity can be found in **APPENDIX AA**.

Given the challenges of altering faculty demographics, Pepperdine has challenged faculty search committees to become far more proactive and aggressive in recruiting and hiring diverse candidates. Search committees now actively seek out qualified diverse candidates and must provide a rationale if that candidate is not selected for an open position. In a few recent cases, diverse candidates have been hired outside the normal hiring season when warranted.

The Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP) Diversity Committee, established by concerned faculty in the late 1990s with the support of the dean's office, reviewed and chronicled aspects of cultural diversity in the coursework of the Education and Psychology Divisions and identified a need to increase diversity among faculty and staff. Progress has been made, and now sixteen of the fifty-one full-time faculty at GSEP identify as African American, Hispanic, or Asian (six African American, six Hispanic, and four Asian). Females represent 10 of the 16. Of the fifty-seven full-time staff persons employed by GSEP, thirty-two identify as African American, Hispanic, or Asian. Nine of the fifty-seven full-time staff persons are male. Our twenty-member Board of Visitors includes six males and fourteen females; one board member is Jewish, three are Muslims, sixteen are Christians, two are African American, two are Hispanic, and three are of Asian descent.

Diversity at Each School

Each of Pepperdine University's five schools has provided examples of the work they have done in just the past three years.

Seaver College

In its strategic plan, Seaver College presented a detailed explanation of its desire to increase diversity and the strategies it will take to accomplish that task in a manner that honors its mission. Excerpts from that plan are included here.

Increasing institutional diversity consistent with the University mission requires studied attention to the challenges and a willingness to become more focused in thought and action. Simply wishing and hoping for increased diversity will not result in a more diverse community; desire for diversity without the institutional fortitude to act courageously upon stated goals will deliver little change. Seaver must become more intentional, deliberate, and relentless in its pursuit of diversity. Seaver must first ensure that the community has a compelling theological vision that clearly articulates the divine impetus for diversity. At a Christian university, diversity is never simply a capitulation to current whims of political correctness in the secular arena; rather, it is fully embedded in the will of a Creator who clearly celebrates diversity in his creation while calling

the vast diversity of his creation to come together as one. Theologically-rooted diversity empowers community members to celebrate unity and inclusiveness without sacrificing the beauty and wonder of diversity. While the college has made great strides in meeting its goals for diversity among the student body, it continues to struggle with increasing diversity in its staff and faculty.

To increase diversity consistent with the mission, Seaver College must do the following:

- 1. Maintain its initiatives to secure a diverse entering student class. At the same time, Seaver must redouble its efforts to recruit diverse students from the immediate Los Angeles area and provide enrollment pathways for first-generation students. Recent articulation agreements with local community colleges should be aggressively pursued to ensure the college is serving diverse populations in its own backyard. Recent changes in moving Posse recruiting to Los Angeles and efforts to attract foster students to Seaver College reflect this commitment to increased diversity among the student body.*
- 2. Develop and articulate a more aggressive approach to hiring within the context of diversity. All search committees will follow the hiring guidelines in the "best practices" hiring handbook provided by the provost's office. Search committees will also avail themselves of relevant databases listing diverse candidates in various disciplines. In future hiring, search committees must not only include diverse candidates in the short list of finalists, but must also provide a rationale for not selecting a diverse candidate, if that candidate is not selected as the finalist.*
- 3. Utilize resources such as the SALT and Academic Affairs committees to assess regularly curricular offerings to ensure topics and themes relevant to diversity occur across the curriculum.*
- 4. Provide increased service opportunities for Seaver students studying abroad, opportunities that place the students in diverse contexts and settings. Similarly, provide increased opportunities for international students to engage with the larger Seaver population to increase understanding of the varied cultures and worldviews from which all our students come.*

Strategies and action plans toward goals include:

Goal 1. *A diverse student body is a key component of the Seaver College strategic plan and mission. For this reason, intentional efforts to recruit and maintain a diverse student body are a part of the normal operating procedures within the admissions and enrollment management offices. Specifically, each year the dean of the college, the dean of admissions, and enrollment management staff set targets for gender and ethnic diversity in the incoming class. We are also intentional to recruit students that span the income spectrum present in our surrounding communities to ensure socioeconomic diversity within the student body. Other strategies necessary to recruit and maintain a diverse student body at Seaver College are stated within goal one.*

Goal 2. *A diverse faculty is necessary to educate and mentor a diverse student body. In recent years, Seaver College has been intentional to recruit and hire diverse faculty. These efforts occur through imperatives originating in the dean's office that are implemented by the college's division chairpersons in search committees.*

Goal 3. *At Seaver College a part of the template for the Annual Program Review for each major and each graduate program regularly includes the question "Does at least one of your PLOs reflect your diversity goals?" and an entire section which addresses Diversity: "VI. Address specific PLOs or other aspects of your curriculum which address diversity issues or further the students' understanding of and sensitivity to diverse populations, learning styles, cultures, or individuals." Each Annual Review is regularly assessed by a member of the Seaver Advancement*

of Learning Team using the attached “Checklist For Annual Reviews” which includes “Comments on where Diversity issues are addressed” and the “Annual Assessment Report Rubric” which includes the section on Diversity. These reports and the SALT reviews of the reports are available on the Seaver Sakai Assessment site. The Seaver Academic Affairs Committee routinely and rigorously requires assessment data that substantiates each proposed change in the curriculum.

Goal 4. *As with goals one and two, the strategies necessary to implement goal four are central to the ongoing operations and mission of international programs. From listening summits to service activities developed in each program, providing opportunities for Seaver students to engage with local citizens and cultures is a requirement for all program directors.*

APPENDIX BB highlights the work Seaver has done with faculty mentoring programs, integrating diversity into the curriculum, and its student Posse program.

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

The Graduate School of Education and Psychology has been interested in diversity since its inception and thus has been intentional about inclusion in its academic and co-curricular programs and in the composition of its faculty, staff, and student body. GSEP seeks to institutionalize its diversity efforts by:

1. Establishing a standing faculty committee with elected leadership to lead diversity efforts related to the curriculum and student activities.
2. Establishing a specific recurring account in the school's budget to support the programming efforts of the Diversity Council.
3. Asking the dean/associate deans to identify mentors for all newly hired full-time faculty.
4. Requiring each newly hired and junior faculty member to participate on the GSEP Diversity Council.

GSEP will review and finalize its strategic plan by June 2016.

Graziadio School of Business and Management

In 2013, the Graziadio School of Business and Management responded to staff concerns highlighted in an annual employee climate survey, including concerns about a lack of inclusion and celebration of diversity within the community. The Staff Advisory Council (SAC) was created to promote staff engagement and commitment, to facilitate communication between the staff and the leadership team, to consider staff input, to provide feedback on decisions, and to represent all staff across Graziadio. As it completes its second year, the SAC actively serves the Graziadio staff community by hosting biweekly meetings to discuss and address engagement opportunities; publishing a regular newsletter that captures progress, features staff accomplishments, and promotes the University; and

meeting regularly with the dean and the leadership team to share issues of mutual concern, including the efforts to enhance a diverse culture at the Graziadio School.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, Graziadio also facilitated the creation of a new student organization, Graziadio Reaching OUT, a networking and professional group for LGBT & Allied MBA students and alumni built on the foundation of inclusion, diversity, and social responsibility. This group aims to build a student and alumni network that connects with companies focused on the values of inclusion, diversity, and social responsibility in the workplace.

School of Law

The Pepperdine University School of Law has added several programs in recent years in an effort to strengthen its ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion. Two student-led organizations are noteworthy additions to the Law School's roster of diverse student organizations, which are listed below. The LGBT Legal Society was added as an official organization in 2012 following a unanimous recommendation by the Dean's Advisory Task Force, and the School of Law Dean of Students created an Interfaith Student Council in 2012 that became an official student-led organization in 2013.

In the spring 2015 semester, the School of Law Dean of Students created a Council on Diversity and Inclusion among students. The newly-formed Council is expected to assist in planning an orientation presentation on diversity and inclusion and a "diversity week" near the beginning of each academic year. It will also serve as a liaison between students and administration on diversity and inclusion issues and concerns.

In addition to those efforts, the School of Law's commitment to academic support has been enhanced. New student orientation, including the addition of multiple academic support sessions, was expanded from two days to five days in 2014 under the leadership of the Parris Institute for Professional Formation. There are also increased numbers of faculty and student teaching fellows involved in the academic success program, and new, small, upper-division academic support courses with increased feedback for students have been added to the schedule for the 2015-2016 academic year.

The School of Law sent a representative to the ninth annual meeting of Law School Diversity Professionals in April 2015. If financially feasible, the school plans to participate annually in this conference. A number of diverse student organizations exist in the School of Law in addition to the two mentioned above. In 2014-2015, these included the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, Armenian Law Students Association, Black Law Students Association, Hispanic Law Students Association,

J. Reuben Clark Society, Jewish Law Students Association, Law Students—Catalyst for Youth, Veterans Legal Society, and the Women’s Legal Association.

Student Affairs

Student Affairs continues to help the Pepperdine community celebrate diversity and develop multicultural competence through a variety of channels. All departments in Student Affairs have at least one diversity-related student learning outcome and address issues of diversity in their programming and assessments.

Each department supports diversity in ways that align with their work and mission. For example, Student Activities staff members mentor the Student Government Association leaders, who have been a particularly ethnically diverse group in recent years. Student leaders in departments such as Housing and Residence Life participate regularly in diversity training. Multiple Student Affairs departments offer support and mentoring to Posse students and international students. The department of Intercultural Affairs (ICA) provides leadership in areas of diversity, including coordinating Culture Fests and the multicultural graduation celebration, Loqui: A Celebration of Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, which has become a highly valued campus tradition. The Pepperdine Volunteer Center engages students in community service and service-learning with area non-profits where students encounter and wrestle with issues of inequity. One example of such encounters is the Jumpstart Program that engages 100 students a year in long-term (300 hours) of teaching literacy skills to underserved preschool children.

ICA also leads the annual sophomore educational field trip to San Francisco that offers a chance for students to explore social movements in an intensive weekend program. During this trip, small groups of students, faculty, and staff visit historic sites and consider the relationship between social justice and social movements while meeting participants from activist groups involved in efforts such as the Green movement, Black Power movement, American Indian movement, women's movement, and free speech movement.

In addition, Student Affairs has become more intentional regarding hiring a diverse staff. Because of its efforts, the division is increasingly mirroring the more diverse student population.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
WASC-SCUC Commission Actions Items for 2015
Faculty Engagement and Shared Governance

Commission Action

Strengthening faculty engagement and shared governance (developing a vision and plan for shared governance creating open and collaborative working environments; improving levels of trust between faculty and administrators).

Commission Action Letter

- *Continuing to strengthen faculty engagement and shared governance.* The university has taken numerous steps to understand and improve faculty engagement and shared governance, but in the team’s words, “Structures for shared governance and faculty’s sense of influence in decision making still need considerable development.” The team urged Pepperdine “to move with haste,” and the Commission concurs, to develop a vision and concrete plan for shared governance, appropriate to the university’s culture. The Commission is pleased to learn about recent efforts to give faculty a voice in committee appointments and to craft a new governance statement. The university will need to continue its effort to create open and collaborative working environments, and to improve the sense of trust between faculty and administrators. (CFRs 3.8, 3.11, 4.1, 4.6, 4.7)
- The Commission's recommendation was "to create a risk-free climate that encourages open communication."

INTRODUCTION

Pepperdine University’s philosophy of institutional governance is grounded in the mission of the University, in the biblical mandate to treat others as we wish to be treated, in the very definition of the university as the

“collegium”—that is, a society of colleagues, a fellowship—and in the ethical expectations expressed in the University Code of Ethics, which states: *“We value integrity, honesty, and fairness and strive to integrate these values into our daily practices.... We seek to be people who are honorable, forthright, and upright at all times.... We value people; we speak the truth; we have the courage of our convictions.”*

Thus, transparency, collaboration, a shared sense of responsibility, and the free expression of ideas and concerns are intrinsic to our institutional culture. In brief, while our decision-making practices are complex and evolving, they are nonetheless carried out within a particular Pepperdine culture founded on enduring values. That culture is shaped by the Christian faith, which inspires an ethos of care, respect, and the welcoming of vigorous debate. It is supported by the University’s esteemed tradition of—and aspiration to—collegiality, open communication, mutual trust, and shared

<p style="text-align: center;">HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Dr. Rick Marrs named as new Provost in 2014✓ A vision of shared governance has been developed and shared with all constituencies✓ Survey on shared governance was conducted in 2014
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participation in a common life.

SHARED GOVERNANCE

***Onsite Team Recommendations:** Do more to clarify faculty roles, to provide structures for various faculty to work together more productively, and to improve the sense of trust – by faculty of administration, and by administration of faculty. (CFRs 3.8, 3.11, 4.1, 4.6, 4.7)*

In 2010, the University Faculty Council (UFC) drafted its charter. The largest challenge in this process was defining “faculty” because Pepperdine’s individual schools identify full-time faculty somewhat differently; as the professional schools need practitioners in addition to the more traditionally defined tenure-track faculty. Once this issue was resolved, the UFC drafted its charter, which was revised during the 2012-2013 academic year. The revised version is posted on the website for the provost’s office. The UFC charter can be found in **APPENDIX CC**.

In 2012, the UFC formed a subcommittee made up of UFC faculty members, the provost, and one representative from the provost’s office to draft a vision statement for shared governance. During the 2012-2013 academic year, this vision statement was brought to the entire UFC, which proposed further revisions. In fall 2013, the provost’s office posted the document for review and comment from the faculties of the various schools. These comments were incorporated into the document, and the school representatives on the UFC took the document to their faculties for ratification.

Because there are vast differences in governance in the various schools, the document led to substantive discussions among the schools and within the UFC. Faculty at some of the schools wanted the document to establish a *model* for governance rather than a vision. These discussions made it plain that the UFC must play a clear role in ensuring the vision statement will foster shared governance in each of the schools. The “Vision for Shared Governance” was ratified by all five Pepperdine schools in the spring of 2014, and the ratified document is posted on the provost office website. The shared governance statement is included in **APPENDIX DD**.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the provost will utilize town halls, open forums, and focus groups to discuss with faculty from all five schools the best ways to implement the adopted shared governance policy in specific cases and situations. In conjunction with the UFC, the provost is also convening a special task force to clarify further and specify the practice of shared governance at Pepperdine. This blue ribbon committee will flesh out the nature of shared governance for specific decision making practices at the University. See **APPENDIX DD**.

Governance Structures within Pepperdine's Five Schools

Two of the five schools at Pepperdine, Seaver and Graziadio, have faculty associations with either charters or constitutions and bylaws. GSEP has a faculty association, but it is less coherently defined. These three schools have a clear committee structure to enact governance over curriculum, hiring and tenure, and faculty concerns. The School of Law faculty act as a single body in all decisions on curriculum, hiring, and tenure. Only the School of Public Policy lacks a designated faculty governance body.

Documents for the faculty groups at Graziadio and GSEP are on Pepperdine's "Community" website. The Seaver Faculty Association constitution and the school's committee structure are posted on the Seaver Dean's website. Furthermore, with the exception of the School of Public Policy, the role of faculty in shared governance at the school is clearly defined in the school's respective faculty handbook. All of these (except for SPP) are posted either on the Pepperdine website or in the school's "Community" webpage.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES

The list and description of University-wide academic committees, their membership, and their charters are posted on <http://community.pepperdine.edu/committees>. As the descriptions indicate, these committees are principally made up of faculty members, though administrators may sit on the committees and engage in collaboration. The UFC serves to promote the development or refinement of shared governance practices in the five schools. The University Tenure Committee (UTC) and the University Academic Council (UAC) act on decisions made in the respective schools, although the mechanisms in each of the schools may differ. School of Law, for example, meets as a committee of the entire faculty to decide on curriculum, hiring, and promotion. Seaver has an Academic Council and a Rank, Tenure, and Promotion Committee. The provost's office assures best practices in hiring and tenure in each of the schools and in academic program decision-making by ensuring consistent documentation policies (available on the provost's website).

The UAC has instituted a policy that any proposal for academic change must be accompanied by evidence from program learning outcomes and student learning outcomes. This policy is enacted through the document process, with a single form being used for any proposal that goes from a school to the UAC. In short, no proposal that goes to the UAC will be considered without assessment evidence or program review results.

The minutes of the UTC are confidential based on the nature of the committee's work. The UAC

minutes are posted on the University Intranet.

OPEN AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Consensus building is being fostered by enacting a review and comment procedure on any University policy changes. Dedicated space for review and comment is included on the provost's webpage, which notes:

NEW POLICIES FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT. Prior to their final approval, policies are open for comment and review by segments of the University community. For each policy the dates for comment and review are provided, along with a downloadable copy of the proposed policy and an email link to send your comments to the Provost.

In addition, the University president holds monthly briefings for the Pepperdine community. Beginning in 2012, the president and the University chief financial officer have met with the UFC and then presented the same information to the faculties of each of the schools. These meetings have opened a dialogue between the president and the faculties of the various schools in the challenging economic times of recent years when academic programs have faced potentially profound effects from necessary budget moves. That dialogue has helped to promote evidence-based decisions.

In the 2010-2011 school year, Seaver faculty had serious conflict with the then-provost regarding some tenure decisions and some structural problems that led to those decisions. The provost, the dean of Seaver College, and five Seaver faculty members formed an ad hoc committee on faculty/administration relationships that met regularly for a year and drafted consensus statements and proposals for change. Some of these proposals, including rules that committee members recuse themselves from decisions regarding their spouses or family members, had to be sent to the University Tenure Committee to facilitate change. Others, such as encouraging the Board of Regents to allow faculty members to attend meetings, were left to administrative initiative.

In the past few years, Pepperdine University has been undergoing changes in senior administration. In the 2013-2014 school year, the University engaged in a search for provost and for the dean of the Graduate School of Education and Psychology and in the 2014-2015 school year for the dean for the Graziadio School of Business and the dean of Seaver College. For all of these searches, the University hired a national search firm, and the search committees included very strong faculty representation. Faculty members made up the majority of the search committee for the University-wide position of provost. Three candidates were nominated by the committee, and each of them made presentations at both the West Los Angeles and Malibu campuses. The University president attended all

the presentations and invited written comments from faculty members. This search process demonstrates a significant commitment toward shared decision-making.

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SHARED GOVERNANCE/CLIMATE

Onsite Team Recommendation: Move with haste to develop a vision and a plan for shared governance, as appropriate to its culture.

The Pepperdine University “Vision for Shared Governance” recognizes that decision-making authority lies on a spectrum, with faculty having the most authority in areas of curriculum, faculty hiring, and faculty promotion. It is important to note that these processes take place first in the individual schools, and the means for faculty participation in these decision-making areas appear in the faculty handbooks of the respective schools. With the exception of the School of Public Policy, it is apparent from these handbooks that faculty provide leadership in nearly all academic matters.

Faculty Survey Findings

In the fall of 2014, the faculty governance survey from 2012 was repeated, and faculty participation rates nearly doubled. The research brief on faculty governance can be found in **APPENDIX EE**.

Seaver College faculty made up the majority of participants—more than 55%—which was the same rate as in 2012. Tenured faculty made up the majority of respondents.

Year	Number Solicited	Number Participated	Response rate
S 2012	695	187	26.9%
F 2014	758	412	54.4%

In both 2012 and 2014, the majority of the faculty rated “The importance of shared governance” as *very important*, essentially a 4 out of a 4-point scale rating. Similar findings were found in both 2012 and 2014 when faculty were asked about their perceived levels of influence over areas of governance at both the school and University levels. In both surveys, faculty reported that they believed they had the highest degree of influence in the areas of curriculum, standards for evaluating teaching and promotion, and tenure. On the other hand, faculty believed they had the lowest level of influence on setting budget priorities at both the University and school levels.

The significant difference between 2012 and 2014, however, is that overall faculty response rate to the survey doubled, suggesting that more faculty were willing to respond to the survey because they may feel their input is of significance. These results are consistent with the literature on faculty shared

governance.

Faculty were also asked to identify “critical challenges to faculty governance” at Pepperdine. This open-ended question yielded 202 comments that were then coded. The majority of the comments fell into five areas that participants viewed as challenges to faculty governance (in ranked order):

1. Systems and structures in place to allow for faculty governance
2. Faculty’s opinions and contributions being valued in decision-making
3. Faculty trusting administration
4. Communication and transparency in decision-making
5. Issues of time for faculty in the current RTP system

Table 3 on page 6 of a research brief written to summarize responses to this survey showcases faculty responses that are representative of the most frequently occurring themes and comments and that best capture the meaning of the categories. Faculty frequently reported that they felt their input and participation were not valued or utilized in decision-making, which contributed to a perception of a top-down administrative decision-making process.

Poor communication, lack of transparency, and limited structures were listed as barriers to faculty participation. However, faculty recognized that there were geographical challenges as a result of Pepperdine’s multiple campuses, and they noted that the campuses and different schools function independently of one another. Both of these views contributed to their perceptions that challenges exist to engaging faculty in governance. These coded themes were almost identical to the results in 2012, and there is no way of knowing whether a given response was made by the same faculty member in both surveys. Two years is a very short time to change a deeply ingrained perception.

The survey in 2012 was given at a low point of faculty/administration relationships, and changes in administration have occurred only recently. The UFC aims to better educate respective faculties about decision-making responsibilities set forth in the Vision for Shared Governance document with the hope that faculty will become more aware of the governance structure, forms of communication, and responsibilities of all parties. The governance survey will continue to be implemented every two years to help guide and monitor change in this area. The research brief on governance can be found in **APPENDIX EE**.

Since the selection of a new provost, specific opportunities and occasions have been created for faculty and staff to provide input and engage in collaborative decision-making. During the 2014–2015 school year, the provost conducted town halls and focus groups at each of the five schools. One topic addressed at these sessions related to the role of faculty in decision-making at the school and University levels. The provost and chief financial officer conducted budget hearings at several of the schools to

discuss allocation of resources and receive faculty input. The provost also determined to office one afternoon each week at the West Los Angeles campus (the primary location for GSEP and GSBM), and he devoted that afternoon to meeting with faculty, staff, or students about concerns of interest or relevance to them. This decision received favorable reactions, and numerous interactions occurred.

In addition, the white paper produced for the Religious Standards Committee by the president and provost was distributed and discussed at a University Faculty Council meeting. Following that discussion, the UFC determined that the best next step would be to engage the entire community in a discussion of the mission and vision of the University at a retreat for faculty and leading administrators. Although much work remains to be done, significant strides have been made to remove perceived communication barriers between faculty and administration. Early anecdotal evidence suggests that faculty are feeling increasingly free to speak openly and publicly about matters of importance and concern to them.

FEARS ABOUT SPEAKING OUT PUBLICLY

The question of whether faculty fear speaking out publicly has been raised in UFC meetings. Some of the anxiety about this issue stemmed from the tenure issues mentioned above that led Seaver to form an ad-hoc faculty administration committee. It became clear in UFC discussions that a “culture of politeness” is part of Pepperdine University, which may contribute to the fear of openly criticizing administration members or actions. Recent meetings between senior administration and faculty have demonstrated a significant increase in candor and willingness to speak openly about sensitive topics. Faculty have expressed appreciation for this improved climate for dialogue and meaningful interaction. Hopefully, efforts being taken by the senior administration to be more open will reduce earlier fears and this healthier climate will be reflected in faculty climate surveys submitted in the 2020 WASC report.

The recent faculty governance survey did not address the relationship between dissatisfaction and particular schools. However, because we have discovered how widely governance practices differ among the schools, attempts will be made to in the next survey to correlate satisfaction and dissatisfaction with school and governance practices. Hopefully, this survey will confirm the anecdotal evidence noted above that suggests Pepperdine is becoming an increasingly open environment for faculty discussion and dissent.

FACULTY CHARTER

The relationship between faculty and administration occurs at the level of the five schools, and four of the five schools have a faculty handbook that clearly spells out the role of the faculty at the school and their participation in decision-making. (The School of Public Policy's handbook does not address this issue.) The three schools that have faculty associations (GSEP, Graziadio, Seaver) all have constitutions or charters. The School of Law specifies its voting practices and its faculty's authority in its faculty handbook. The charters for the faculty associations of the five schools can be found in **APPENDIX FF**. A University-wide faculty charter, thus, would be inconsistent with the current faculty governance structures that are functioning and functional. Discussions on the University Faculty Council among representatives of all the schools demonstrate no faculty interest in establishing a University-wide faculty charter.

Identification of Other Changes and Issues Currently Facing the Institution

Instructions: This brief section should identify any other significant changes that have occurred or issues that have arisen at the institution (e.g., changes in key personnel, addition of major new programs, modifications in the governance structure, unanticipated challenges, or significant financial results) that are not otherwise described in the preceding section. This information will help the Interim Report Committee panel gain a clearer sense of the current status of the institution and understand the context in which the actions of the institution discussed in the previous section have taken place.

Concluding Statement

Instructions: Reflect on how the institutional responses to the issues raised by the Commission have had an impact upon the institution, including future steps to be taken.

While much work remains to be done between now and the full review in 2020, we hope this report demonstrates that Pepperdine not only has heard clearly the recommendations of the WASC committee, but has also responded positively through its initiatives, reflections, and allocation of financial resources to address the varied and various issues raised. The response to the recommendations in the report has been thoughtful, intentional, and University-wide. Throughout the University, vibrant and enlivening discussions related to assessment and student learning, strategic planning and action, diversity, and shared governance occur daily. Not unimportantly, during the 2015-2016 academic year, several key initiatives and programs will occur that demonstrate the University's response to WASC recommendations. At Seaver College, an ad hoc committee will host serious discussions about the definition, nature, and priority of academic excellence at the undergraduate level. The previously mentioned academic leadership program will inform and prepare faculty of color, female faculty, and Church of Christ faculty for future administrative positions at the University. The October

University faculty retreat will focus upon current challenges and opportunities in higher education, utilizing both a nationally recognized expert in this area with subsequent small group discussion. From our perspective, diligently responding to the challenges placed before us by the Commission has enriched our dialogue and enhanced the educational experience for the students at each of our five schools. We look forward to continuing this ongoing dialogue with WASC.