

Essay 4 -- Concluding Essay

UCSF submitted an Institutional Proposal to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in May 2007. The Institutional Proposal was adopted by the WASC Proposal Review Committee in July 2007. The UCSF Strategic Plan, completed just after the Institutional Proposal was submitted to WASC (June 2007), includes within its priorities many of the actions proposed in the Institutional Proposal.

This Capacity and Preparatory Review report, with its three essays and accompanying datasets and exhibits, documents our preparation for the February 2009 site visit and for the Educational Effectiveness Review in 2010. We have made substantial progress in addressing challenges set forth in each of the three themes we selected – (a) Learning Environment; (2) Learning Outcomes; and (3) Diversity.

Learning Environment

As indicated in Essay 1, our efforts to provide a stimulating and successful environment for teaching and learning are guided by five strategies. The first strategy involves representatives from campus constituencies working together to develop a space action plan. The second strategy aims to implement state-of-the-art technology throughout the campus, enabling us not only to better link our teaching sites, but also to reach out to communities that need and can benefit from the resources UCSF has to offer. A third strategy will provide the campus with a better system for collecting and disseminating data. Fourth, we have developed and are implementing innovative programmatic and educational structures, such as Pathways to Discovery, which consolidate and advance opportunities for interprofessional education. Finally, we are continually working to improve our outreach activities so that we can effectively recruit the best and most diverse students, faculty and staff.

Learning Outcomes

Essay 2 documents that the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy, as well as the Graduate Division, have been developing opportunities for interprofessional education for their students. The improvements noted in UCSF's learning environment, and particularly in our technology services, have helped make these opportunities more accessible and better known to the students. In addition, the schools have done exploratory work to identify barriers that hamper students who might be considering academic careers, and have responded by encouraging and supporting students in their career plans. Each of the schools provides learning opportunities where students can explore career possibilities and begin to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience in research and teaching to prepare them for academic careers in the health professions.

Diversity

As indicated in Essay 3, diversity and inclusiveness have always been core values of the University of California. The faculty who founded UC's professional schools more

than a century ago made that clear when they decided to accept applications from women and people of color, a bold decision for the times. UCSF's Black Caucus later provided an impetus for the campus to improve its efforts to diversify its faculty, students, and staff at all levels to keep pace with an ever more diverse population in California and the nation. External political and cultural events have at times hampered our efforts. It is challenging, for example, to engage in this work under the constraints of Proposition 209. Nevertheless, the recent report and recommendations from the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Academic Diversity provide the campus with an action plan. The strategies, goals, and actions outlined in the report have already helped and have led to improvements in faculty recruitment and retention. In our effort to achieve a campus as diverse as the state itself, we still have a long way to go. But we have made a good start, and we have both the knowledge and the will to succeed.

Global Financial Crisis

The recent global financial crisis has wreaked havoc on California's budget. The Governor of California has announced an additional reduction in the 2008-09 University of California budget beyond what had been enacted earlier this Fall. In addition, we anticipate the possibility of a mid-year budget reduction in January 2009 and additional, even larger, reductions in 2009-10. While we remain committed to enhancing our efforts in each of the three areas above, we may be forced to delay some actions that require new funding.

Conclusion

UCSF is currently at the forefront of health sciences education and is well positioned to meet the growing demand for health care professionals. The development of the next generation of leaders in health care delivery, research and education is vitally important to the economic and social well-being of California and the rest of the world. UCSF views the WASC re-affirmation of accreditation process as an opportunity to maintain and enhance its efforts in three vitally important areas.