

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW
To COLEMAN UNIVERSITY

MARCH 26-29, 2013

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Candidacy of Accreditation

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT	3
A. Description of the institution and visit	3
B. The institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report:	
• Alignment with the Proposal	
• Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report	
C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review	
SECTION II. EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS	10
Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives	10
Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions	13
Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures To Ensure Sustainability	22
Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement	32
SECTION III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW AND THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW	35
APPENDICES	37
Reports on off-campus and distance education programs	38
Report on credit hour review	45
Compliance audit	46
Report on substantive change related issues	51

SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the institution and visit

The institution, then named Coleman College, was founded in 1963 in San Diego, spurred by career growth opportunities in the burgeoning electronic data processing industry. During the 1970s, the institution offered Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees to support the educational needs of individuals in the information technology industry. In 1982, a Master of Science degree in Information Systems was launched to “provide graduates with the technical knowledge, conceptual understanding, and research skills necessary to function effectively as leaders in their technical professions.” In 1986, the San Marcos campus was opened to serve the growing population in Northern San Diego County. In 2003, the institution introduced a Master of Science degree program in Business and Technology Management. In 2008, it received approval from the American Council of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) to make the transition from Coleman College to Coleman University. In 2009, the university introduced an MBA degree program, addressing the “needs of international students with a technology background who wish to transition into general business and management.”

Coleman University is a private, independent, non-profit university with five colleges (Graphic Design; Information Sciences; Computer Networks; Advanced Studies and Education; and Graduate Studies). In recognition that the market for technology professionals “demands ever-increasing knowledge and skills for entry-level employment,” the university discontinued its various certificate programs in July 2011, and began enrolling all new students in associate degree programs. The College of Graduate Studies added a Health Care Management concentration, and also began to offer the MBA concentration in General Management online.

Due in part to increased competition from nearby institutions, enrollments steadily declined at the San Marcos campus, and subsequently, the board of trustees voted to close and teach-out this campus by December 2013. The academic calendar operates year-round, and is organized into 10-week terms, and 5-week terms (for the master's degree programs). The institution offers a number of General Education courses via distance education, and currently, the Master of Business and Technology Management degree is its only program offered fully online.

As of June 2012, the ethnic composition of the undergraduate student population was 47% White, Non-Hispanic; 23% Hispanic; 14% Asian; 10% Black, Non-Hispanic; and 6% Other. For the graduate student population, the composition was as follows: 76% Non-Resident Alien including 6% Asian; 6% Black, Non-Hispanic; 4% Hispanic; 4% White, Non-Hispanic; 1% American Indian; 80% Ethnicity Unknown; and 24% domestic students. Reflective of numbers in the information technology industry, the gender mix of the student population is as follows: 88% male, and 12% female. About 84% of the university's students are primarily enrolled in undergraduate programs, compared to 16% in the graduate programs. (*WASC/ACSCU Summary Data Form*)

The hospitality extended to the team by Coleman University was outstanding. The team met with a broad cross-section of the campus community, including administrators, faculty, staff, board of trustees members, and students. The team appreciated the candor, as well as the open and forthright manner in which comments were made in all of its interactions. The university provided convenient and comfortable meeting rooms, as well as technical support to assist with the team's technology needs. The team's requests for additional information during the visit were satisfied with a high level of responsiveness.

Finally, a compliance audit was conducted for this Educational Effectiveness Review. This audit, as well as summary reports on distance education and off-campus programs, and a credit hour review, are included in the Appendices of this report.

B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report

The institution chose to prepare a self-study report that consisted of reflective essays related to the Criteria for Review (CFR) for each of the four WASC Standards. The team noted and also found useful the *Data Analytical Portfolio*, *Summary Data*, *Coleman University Publications*, all the data provided in the team room, as well as further data available on an accompanying disc.

The *Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) Report* was written with clarity, and provided the institution with the opportunity to gain further understanding and improvement of its capacity to support student success, and was aligned with the university's proposal. It appeared to the team that the EER Review process was inclusive and involved many faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The *Report of the WASC Visiting Team Capacity and Preparatory Review to Coleman University, March 7-10, 2011*, in Section III Findings and Recommendations, enumerated nine specific recommendations. In addition, the transmittal letter from WASC, dated June 19, 2011, consolidated the findings of the visiting team to assist the institution to focus its planning efforts in preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review for Candidacy. The recommendations are listed, along with brief descriptions and analyses of the institution's specific responses:

1. *Improve management and operations of the governing board to ensure its effectiveness. Specifically, the board's size, composition, and bylaws, as well as any current or potential conflicts of interest of its members should be reviewed. Board members and key personnel should complete an annual conflict of interest statement. It is also recommended that the board engage in self-review and training to enhance its effectiveness. (CFRs 1.3, 1.8, and 3.5)*

The board took action and voted to increase its size, voting in three new members with diverse expertise. In addition, its longtime chair is retiring, with one of the new members assuming the role of chair of the board. Four standing committees (Finance, Academic Affairs, Audit, and Nominating) have been established. Conflict of interest forms are now required by the bylaws to be completed annually by each member. The board has also made progress in the areas of self-review and education/training, and plans to continue development of these areas.

2. *Examine its financial resources and business processes. While the university appears to be financially stable, it is fully tuition-dependent and currently relies solely on the high demand for jobs within the information technology industry, which makes it more vulnerable to enrollment fluctuations. (CFR 3.5) The university is in a transitional stage, having a vocational focus for so many years, and now moving toward an educational, and more holistic focus. At the same time, some of the business processes and supporting infrastructure should be analyzed to identify any necessary improvements, such as financial aid, human resources, services to students with disabilities, and compliance functions. (CFRs 1.8, 2.13, and 3.1)*

The university is pursuing strategies to reduce tuition-dependence. These include updating of its alumni and employer databases, initiation of communication and outreach activities, and determination of the feasibility of pursuing grants. It has also established a one-person department devoted to development, and is interviewing candidates. Additional staff have been hired to expand student services. An alumni coordinator will also be appointed this year. Additional faculty have been hired to reduce teaching loads of senior faculty. Budget projections by the institution have taken into consideration increased costs due to WASC accreditation, closure of the San Marcos campus, and continuing support for the Charter Tech High School.

3. *Strengthen the academic culture. Faculty engagement in academic leadership in ensuring both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the university's educational purposes and character, as well as ongoing inquiry into the process of teaching and learning, appears to be limited to their home departments or programs. A change in organizational culture at the institutional level supporting such efforts, and broader involvement of faculty in these processes may be highly beneficial for further growth and development of the university. (CFRs 3.8, 3.11, 4.6, and 4.7)*

Faculty conducted research on faculty governance models, and articulated a statement on governance and organization that was approved by the administration. This statement indicates that faculty are responsible for the curriculum, subject matter, methods of instruction, research, and other areas that pertain directly to the education of students. Subsequently, it was determined that a Faculty Advisory Committee would be formed to represent the voice of the faculty in all important academic matters, elections were held, and faculty from each of the five colleges were elected as representatives. In order to spur further engagement with not only faculty, but with all employees, the university implemented “Coleman Boards, Teams, and Committees” – this now allows rank and file faculty, as well as staff to influence decisions and promote action at the institutional level.

4. *Broaden the faculty to include those with varied perspectives from diverse institutions of higher education. Significant reliance on nonacademic faculty who are also graduates of Coleman University, and some of whom have professional industry experience, may weaken overall educational effectiveness. While this approach appears to be aligned with the institutional mission and purpose of preparing students for professional careers in information technology, it may prove to be less effective in providing students with a full academic experience consistent with university-level educational objectives. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)*

The university formulated a hiring policy (published in its *Employee Handbook*) which promotes recruiting individuals who are deemed to be the best fit, as well as who bring varied perspectives from diverse institutions of higher education. An analysis of the faculty composition reflects some increase in faculty who hold degrees from institutions other than Coleman University.

5. *Expand and strengthen the role and functions of the Office of Instructional Support so as to proactively support assessment, distance education, faculty research, scholarship, and service activities in order to enhance teaching and learning effectiveness; as well as provide and promote increased professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. (CFRs 2.4, 2.5, 2.9, 3.4, 4.5, and 4.7)*

The Office of Institutional Support was reorganized into three departments – Institutional Improvement and Compliance, Curriculum Development, and Educational Support to provide more focused support for assessment of student learning outcomes, program review, curriculum development and alignment, pedagogy, scholarship, academic quality, and distance education.

6. *Establish an Office of Institutional Research that is dedicated to the collection and analysis of disaggregated student-level, course-level, and program-level data – enabling the campus to effectively monitor achievement, satisfaction, and enrollment trends over time. (CFRs 1.2, 2.10, 2.11, 3.7, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6)*

In 2012, the university hired an institutional research specialist. This position reports to the Office of Institutional Improvement and Compliance, and is responsible for maintaining statistical institutional data sets, providing a comprehensive data-driven view of the school, and for expanding and improving the role of institutional research campus-wide. Plans are underway to expand the analytical toolbox available to faculty and administrators for data-driven decisions, to integrate all databases into one comprehensive database where patterns may be easily identified and understood, and to develop forecasting models to better identify goals.

7. *Strengthen the role and functions of the library, by establishing a systematic and accountable mechanism, which annually allocates to the library the necessary and sufficient budgetary and human resources to support the curricular program, research, scholarship, and information literacy needs of the campus community. (CFRs 2.9, 2.13, 3.6, and 4.2)*

A new entity, the Spark of Ingenuity Committee, has defined academic competency expectations, including information literacy, that progress through six levels of the curriculum. Information literacy expectations rubrics will be used to develop course assignments at each level that require the use of library resources appropriate to each level. A new librarian has been hired, who has been elected to the newly formed Faculty Advisory Committee. With substantive increases in the budget, librarians are working closely with the five Colleges to acquire the necessary resources to support specific curricular needs.

8. *Use the existing Annual Planning Conference mechanism to fully incorporate the program review process and student learning outcomes into the processes of the institution, so as to better inform decisions. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, and 4.1)*

Analyses of learning outcomes, assessment, and program review have been incorporated into the annual planning process, and the Annual Plan. A three-year program review cycle has been established, and all programs are scheduled for comprehensive review.

9. *Review and implement, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Coleman University Climate Study, 2010.*

The position of director of diversity was established, and an individual was subsequently hired to fill this position. A Diversity Committee was established, and then implemented initiatives in areas: Female, International Student, Diversity Committee, and Veterans. Future planning is in progress regarding initiatives related to diversity training and adult learners. Diversity initiatives have been added to the institution's annual planning process.

This report begins with an analysis of each of the four standards, followed by commendations, recommendations, and suggestions. Findings, commendations, and recommendations for all sections conclude the body of the report and begin on page 34.

SECTION II. EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

Institutional Purposes

Coleman University has provided a clear and concise public statement of its purpose in its Mission Statement, which confirms its commitment to the training of professionals for the business and information technology (IT) industries. This focus is borne out in the various curricular and co-curricular offerings of the university that emphasize practical and professional programs. (CFR 1.1)

The university has written, published, and posted *Overall Objectives* for its students. These outcomes are assessed by the various academic programs. Additionally, an *Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP)* tracks indicators of student success, such as retention, placement, employer satisfaction, knowledge, and skills gained by students. (CFR 1.2)

With its founder retiring, and taking a less active role at the university, an effective leadership group continues its sound management of the organization. This group is composed of a board of trustees, a president, an executive committee and a leadership team. Policies for the board of trustees and president are delineated in a *Policy Governance Manual* and responsibilities for

leadership personnel are detailed in key performance indicators. The board has adopted the *Carver Policy Governance® Model* of board policy governance, and provides appropriate direction and oversight to the president. Issues raised in the *CPR Team Report* related to unclear roles and responsibilities, potential conflicts of interest, and board training have been resolved. The board is fully supportive of the initiative to seek WASC accreditation, and has been instrumental in assisting the president to establish a new organizational culture and climate. (CFRs 1.3 and 3.10)

Integrity

The university has taken major steps to address diversity concerns that were detailed in the *CPR Team Report*. A director of diversity has been appointed and a number of diversity initiatives have been implemented, the most successful of which has been “Diversity Month.” The university’s student body reflects the ethnic diversity of the region that it draws from, and it is to be commended for its efforts to recruit, retain, and provide transition services to military veterans. However, it remains primarily male (88%), and initiatives to increase gender diversity, including work with local Girl Scouts and the hosting of “Girl Geek Dinners,” have not had a significant impact on the recruiting of female students. A more concerted effort, particularly in the realms of seeking grant funding for the recruitment of females into STEM fields, and consideration of instituting or reinstating majors that are more attractive to females, is warranted. (CFR 1.5)

The university has continued to embrace transparency by sharing with all employees detailed information in the areas of finance and budgeting. Major improvements have been made by the

administration in its communication with faculty and staff, although some frustration was expressed regarding the degree to which the employee wiki has become overloaded and more difficult to navigate. Academic goals, program requirements, and services to students appear to be presented appropriately in public documents, including materials that students receive.

Students are particularly complimentary of the relevance of the curriculum, the reputation of the institution in the local professional IT community, and the dedication of the faculty and staff. Grievance procedures for students, faculty, and staff are clearly delineated in university publications, and a student complaint log is maintained by the vice president and dean of academics. (CFR 1.7)

The university promotes a culture of “students first,” and has been exemplary in its efforts to communicate openly and honestly with students, faculty, staff and WASC. Sound business practices are employed, and as mentioned previously, employees are fully informed regarding finances. Although the founder continues his involvement with the university as an emeritus member of the Board of Trustees, there does not appear to be undue interference in the management of the institution. A conflict of interest policy is in place, and there do not appear to be any remaining concerns in this area. (CFRs 1.8 and 1.9)

Commendation:

The university is to be commended for progress in delineating clear lines of authority and responsibility among leadership groups. The board of trustees is to be commended for its commitment to achieving WASC accreditation. (CFRs 1.3 and 4.1)

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

Prior to and during the visit, the team reviewed evidence including the *Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013*; the *College of Information Sciences (CIS) External Review Summary Report*; *CIS Program Review Self-Study Report* (Exhibit 2.7.2a); the *Computer Networks (CN) Program External Review Report* (Exhibit 2.7.4c); *CN Program Review Self-Study Narrative* (Exhibit 2.7.4a); *General Education Report* (Exhibit 2.2a.1); *Academic Competency Expectations Rubrics* (Exhibit 2.4.1); *Faculty Analysis* (Exhibit 3.2.1); *MBA (Masters of Business Administration) Program Review Self-Study Report* (Exhibit 2.7.3a); *MBA External Reviewer's Report* (Exhibit 2.3.2); sample syllabi of lower- and upper-division technology and General Education courses (Exhibit 2.7.1); *Coleman University Program Review Guide, Student Policies and Procedures Handbook, Manual on Campus Crime, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Substance Abuse*, and the *Career Services Workbook*; CIS AS and BS degree plan worksheets; table of learning methods and frequency of use per program (Exhibit 2.5.1); list of current assessment activities (Table 9.1); learning outcomes assessment reports (Exhibits 2.6.1, 2.6.2, and 2.6.3); the *Institutional Effectiveness Plan Review for the quarter ending September 30, 2012* (Exhibit 4.1.1); samples of CIS, Graphic Design & Development (GDD), and College of Graduate Studies (CGS) learning outcome assessment reports (Exhibits 2.6.1, 2.6.2 and 2.6.3); and summaries of accomplishments and planned improvements in the *WASC EER Evaluation Team Information Packet*.

Teaching and Learning

Coleman University offers associate, bachelor's and master's degrees that meet the standards set by their current accreditor, the Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). Detailed information for each program (including course and credit requirements, and

course descriptions) are presented in the *Catalog*. Regular evaluations by deans, faculty, the Office of Curriculum Development, program advisory committee members, and periodic formal program reviews ensure that content are appropriate and meet the stated program learning outcomes (PLOs). (CFR 2.1) Detailed information about the faculty is presented. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4) The university has hired additional faculty from other institutions but states that “further progress would be beneficial, particularly in hiring faculty with higher level degrees” (*EER*, p.18) and both the external reviewers of the CIS and MBA programs noted the potential benefits of appointing well qualified faculty. (CFR 2.1)

Entry-level requirements stated in the *Catalog* and the levels of achievement necessary for graduation are represented by a combination of skills acquired by achieving student learning outcomes (SLOs) at multiple levels in the university. The university is currently making revisions to the upper-division portion of the bachelor’s programs (these revisions are being made based on the CIS external review and the CIS program review). (CFR 2.2)

A detailed report on General Education is presented in Exhibit 2.2a1. The university offers 19 lower-division and 28 upper-division general education courses that include the development of oral and written communication, information literacy, and critical thinking. The “inverted curriculum” provides students the opportunity to concentrate first on their lower-division technical courses. (*EER*, pp. 7-8) Students can then pursue the General Education, intermediate, and advanced technology requirements for associate and bachelor’s degrees while working in their career fields. The General Education course descriptions are presented in the *Catalog*. (CFR 2.2a)

Since the CPR visit, the university has established initial and emerging assessment practices (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, and 2.7), expanded the culture of evidence, and enhanced the quality of data analysis. The university, for example, conducted a data symposium for all academic units and staff, and presented in-service training to all employees on data analysis. The institutional research specialist has begun to create detailed data reports, charts, and tables that are available to all personnel. The university is also currently exploring the purchase of a single database student information system designed for small and mid-sized institutions. There appears to be an issue/challenge in promoting the involvement of adjunct faculty in these data symposia – adjuncts may view this as additional voluntary workload, for which they are not compensated (in team interviews with faculty, it was revealed that some colleges at the university compensate faculty for attendance, while others do not). The external reviewer for the CN (Computer Networks) program discussed the need for greater involvement of the adjunct faculty in curricular planning. Input on curricular matters from faculty becomes problematic, especially in the case of CGS, where the majority of the faculty are adjuncts. (CFR 2.4)

Per recommendation of the WASC team during the CPR visit, the university developed institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) (presented in the *Catalog* and Exhibit 2.3.1), and indicated that faculty have developed learning outcomes and assessment reports, have begun to analyze data, use grading rubrics, and participate in assessment initiatives. Six instructors, for example, participated in the completion of a College of Advanced Studies and Education (CASE) Course Learning Outcomes matrix, as well as in a CASE Learning Outcomes Assessment, and developed plans for improvement based on the two assessments. CIS reported a

process it has put in place to assess if a learning outcome was appropriate in Exhibit 2.6.1. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3)

CGS is taking a proactive approach to developing evidence-driven assessment practices. Current practices include using recent MBA program review findings to update curricula, information literacy support with a Master's Corner and mentor support, and faculty involvement in the hiring of qualified faculty. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 3.1, 4.1, and 4.4) The requirement of submitting a weekly thesis assignment was instituted in July, 2011 to enhance academic rigor, promote information literacy, and to encourage students to work towards the completion of their thesis throughout a program. (*EER*, p.10) The MBA program is currently offered in both classroom and online format. The university has indicated in a future program review cycle that it intends to "extensively review its delivery of courses and programs via distance education." (*EER*, p.10)

At the time of the EER team visit, all programs were revising PLOs, and aspired to enhance initial and emerging PLOs and program review processes according to the *WASC Program Learning Outcomes Rubric* and *WASC Program Review Rubric*. The university's CLOs are presented on the course syllabi pages along with the methods that are used to assess the CLOs. (CFR 2.3)

The university has identified and developed key assignments that measure the achievement of SLOs in courses, and has completed a Learning Outcomes Assessment Report. (*EER*, p.10) Academic departments have developed a set of guiding academic competency "expectations

rubrics” for information literacy, writing expectations, oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative literacy. (Exhibit 2.4.)

Coleman University now has a statement and policy on the role of faculty in the assessment of SLOs. (Exhibits 3.11.5 and 3.11.6) However, to further develop the university’s initial and emerging institutional assessment practices, it should enhance current systems and processes to enable faculty ownership, oversight, and participation in a university-wide assessment strategy that includes the assessment of WASC core competencies and co-curricular programs and activities. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, and 2.11)

The university’s expectations for student attainment are communicated to students, faculty, and staff through various publications, such as the *Catalog*, course syllabi, rubrics and student manuals. (*EER*, p.12) (CFR 2.4) Faculty develop curricula with the assistance of the Office of Curriculum Development. Faculty review and assess all student work, and have begun to use information literacy, oral communication, critical thinking, computational and writing expectations rubrics that the Spark of Ingenuity Committee developed. (CFR 2.2a) Diversity issues have also begun to be incorporated in General Education courses. The team learned through interviews with faculty that writing across the curriculum remains a concern, and that students may benefit from remedial writing classes. The institution has begun to offer workshops focused on writing skills, research, and information literacy (these efforts have been driven, in large part, by the needs of the international student population). It was also revealed that an assessment of the effectiveness of these workshops is in the early planning stages, which will assist in determining the level of their impact upon quality improvements in student

coursework/theses. (team interviews) (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5) Data for student achievement is collected as part of the *Institutional Effectiveness Plan* that tracks indicators of student achievement. (CFR 2.4) (See detailed discussion of *IEP* in CFR 4.1)

The university utilizes a number of teaching and learning strategies, and presents a table of learning methods and frequency of use per program. (Exhibit 2.5.1) It assesses “the quality of student work through the process of evaluating the results of examinations, project deliverables and course assignments.” (*EER*, p.14) (CFR 2.5) Students receive feedback to “understand the results of their work and how to improve in future assignments.” (*EER*, p.14) Since the CPR review, the university has begun to use grading rubrics to assure grading uniformity, and faculty calibrate grading and maintain the quality of the rubrics. (CFR 2.5)

The Office of Curriculum Development is instituting a plan to incorporate CLO assessments into each course (after adjustments have been made to SLOs at other levels), and will provide training to faculty and staff to perform assessments. (*EER*, p.16)

Following the CPR team visit, the university gave priority to assessment and program review, and established a Programmatic Review Council (PRC), and also developed the *Coleman University Program Review Guide*. (CFR 2.7) Three programs reviews were conducted on an accelerated timeline and external reviews of programs are complete: CIS, MBA, and CN.

Multiple activities are taking place as a result of these program reviews such as: the revision of PLOs; the revision of CLOs; and the revision of curriculum maps, prerequisites, and course content. (CFR 2.7) Per external program reviewer feedback, program specific activities are also

taking place, such as thesis and “soft skills” workshops in the MBA program. Reviewers suggested more faculty participation in assessment and program review, and faculty indicated that more time was needed for future program reviews.

Scholarship and Creative Activity

The university is a teaching-centered institution and is considering faculty career development plans that will link them to career advancement. (*EER*, p.18) (CFR 2.8) Based upon numerous team interviews with different groups and individuals, it was evident that there was a lack of clarity as to a precise definition and interpretation of “appropriate scholarly activities,” in relation to possibly aligning these with faculty career development plans. Although the university provides educational benefits and professional development (CFRs 2.9 and 3.4), it appears as if the extent and specifics of the benefit opportunities may need to be more clearly communicated to faculty.

Support for Student Learning and Success

The institution tracks indicators of student achievement, including retention, placement, employer satisfaction, graduate satisfaction, default rates, and knowledge and skills gained by students in the *Institutional Effectiveness Plan*. (CFRs 4.5 and 4.10) It also analyzes data on time-to-graduation and completed a campus climate study for all current students, faculty, and staff in 2012. (*EER*, p.19 and Exhibit 1.5.4) The university reports how retention rates compare to peer institutions. (CFR 2.10) In the opening meeting with evening students, the university’s excellent reputation in the technology industry was extolled.

The Coleman Activities Council is responsible for student events (on and off-campus), and a number of activities are described in the *EER Report*. Non-academic departments have begun to analyze data at a university data symposium (*EER*, p.15), and the Financial Aid Department presented their deliverables. (Exhibit 2.6.11) Admissions, Financial Aid, Computer Services, and PAC Development and Analysis, each developed mission statements and measurable goals. The university could continue to enhance these initial co-curricular assessment practices to firmly establish a culture of evidence-driven practice. (CFRs 2.3, 2.11, 2.13, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7)

Student Services addresses orientation and informs students about the services available to them. Students meet with Student Services staff for degree planning (according to CIS AS and BS degree plan worksheets). Students are advised on the effects of leaves of absences, as well as, failed courses on their satisfactory academic progress. Satisfactory Academic Progress policies are detailed in the *Catalog*. (CFR 2.12)

Academics, Student Services, Financial Aid, Learning Support Center, and Career Services are primarily responsible for student services at the university. Academics provides tutoring services, and Student Services manages students' orientation and academic and personal issues. Students are provided with the *Student Policies and Procedures Handbook* and the *Manual on Campus Crime, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Substance Abuse*. Student Services also coordinates student retention activities. (*EER*, p.22) The university maintains a policy of "students first," and monitors attendance records and counseling in all instances. All instructors are required to contact absent students, and after a third absence, those students need to meet with the dean of academics. Financial Aid staff provides services such as tuition planning,

assistance with scholarship searches, exit counseling regarding student loans, and assistance in applications for the federal work-study program. The SALT program is also offered as an in-house service to help students become financially literate. Career Services meets with students, providing each with a *Career Services Student Workbook*. In October, 2012, placement rates stood at 85%. (CFR 2.13)

Policies for transfer credit for undergraduate and graduate courses are published in the *Catalog*. The registrar/director of student services makes decisions about the transfer credits, and where necessary, consults with other personnel. (CFR 2.14)

Commendation:

The university is to be commended for the proactive approach that graduate programs have taken in establishing evidence-driven assessment practices, using program review findings to update curricula and develop student support services. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.13, and 4.4)

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the university enhance initial and emerging institutional assessment practices to assure a faculty driven, university-wide assessment strategy that should include the consistent implementation of grading rubrics, well developed program review processes and co-curricular assessment. (CFRs 2.1, 2.4, 2.7, and 2.11)
- The university needs to assess all WASC core competencies, and assure an alignment of core competency assessment and data collection with institutional outcomes and data collection. (CFR 2.2)

Suggestion:

The university may want to consider strategies to more actively engage, involve, and incentivize adjunct faculty to participate in curriculum planning, learning outcomes assessment, and programmatic review activities. (CFR 2.4)

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

Faculty and Staff

The university supports its student body of 630 undergraduate and 144 graduate students with 138 faculty and 60 staff members. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2) Since the CPR visit, both total enrollment and the number of faculty and staff have increased. The current student to faculty ratio is 12:1. Several new faculty and staff have been hired during the last two years.

In July 2012, the university changed its two-category system of faculty status classification (full-time and part-time) to three categories: full-time, focused, and adjunct. Responsibilities of full-time faculty include teaching and active involvement and participation in all university meetings and activities. Focused faculty members are full- or part-time employees whose primary area of responsibilities are relevant to teaching methodology, curriculum development, assessment, and programmatic review rather than teaching, although they may be called upon to teach. Similar to full-time faculty, focused faculty are expected to be on campus on a regular basis and attend faculty seminars, workshops, meetings, and other activities. Adjunct faculty members are contracted to teach a designated number of courses per year and typically have their principal professional commitments outside of Coleman University. Currently there are 18 (13%) full-time faculty, 26 (19%) focused faculty, and 94 (68%) adjunct faculty. Out of the entire faculty body of 138 members, only 15 (11%) hold a terminal degree and 81 (59%) hold a master's degree. Nearly one-third of all faculty (30%) hold only a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, 40 faculty members (29%) have earned their degrees from Coleman University.

The institution continues to depend a great deal on part-time, nonacademic faculty with professional industry experience who are also Coleman University graduates. The university has made some improvements in the area of recruitment of faculty with advanced degrees earned at other institutions. For example, out of 54 new employees hired since March 2011, 87% earned their degrees at other universities. However, sufficient number of qualified faculty, with substantial and continued commitment to the institution who are actively engaged in the ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning and scholarship, is essential in demonstrating the quality of academic programs and educational effectiveness. As such, external program reviewers also have noted that “program quality is directly correlated to the qualifications and instruction excellence of faculty.” (*EER Report*, p. 18) In alignment with CPR recommendations, external reviewers have recommended hiring faculty with terminal degrees earned at other institutions. Although some progress in this area has been made, the issue of faculty qualifications and academic experience remains a significant concern. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, and 4.7)

The university maintains appropriate faculty and staff performance practices to ensure continuing alignment with institutional purposes and educational objectives. (CFR 3.3) Upon completion of each course, students complete a course survey form, the results of which are shared with the instructor and his/her supervisor. Periodic classroom visitations are also performed by academic department heads and peers. A similar annual performance evaluation requirement is in place for all staff.

The Human Resources department conducts orientations for all new employees. The in-service program includes periodic training in instructional methodology and curriculum development; annual departmental curriculum reviews by departmental faculty in conjunction with Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings; annual planning departmental reviews and conference; annual development evaluations; quarterly review of training plans; and quarterly review of the *Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP)*. Development plans for each faculty member are designed by academic department heads in conjunction with input from the individual faculty member. (CFR 3.3, 3.4) Funding is provided for each department to send employees to conferences, seminars, and training sessions that contribute to their professional development.

A variety of training and professional development opportunities are available to faculty and staff. Both *Faculty* and *Employee Handbooks* address educational assistance programs and its specific benefits and expectations. However, discussions with faculty and staff indicated a lack of clear understanding of the available programs, their extent, and their benefits. It is suggested, that the Human Resources department continues to inform and orient both new and current employees, faculty and staff, on all available programs and benefits. Furthermore, encouragement of existing faculty to pursue graduate education at other universities may allow Coleman University to further strengthen the academic background and experience of its faculty body. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, and 3.4)

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

According to the audited financial statements, total university assets were \$15.9 million as of June 30, 2012, with an increase in net assets of \$2.9 million. Total revenues reached \$15.6

million as compared to \$11.3 million in the prior year. The university continues to exercise a “conservative approach to its financial plans to ensure its continued financial stability.” (*EER Report*, p.26) A three-year financial plan, however, projects a decrease in net revenues of \$1.7 million or 11.9% from fiscal year 2012-13 to fiscal year 2014-15. As a result, a contribution margin decrease of \$800,000, or 22.8%, is projected during the same period of time. This reduction is primarily attributed to the closure of the San Marcos campus.

While the university is financially stable, it continues to be small in size, fully tuition-dependent and highly reliant on the demand for jobs within the information technology industry. As a result, this makes it more vulnerable to enrollment fluctuations and competition from other institutions. (CFR 3.5) In response to the CPR recommendations, the university has made some improvements in its business processes and allocation of resources, including financial aid and student services. It is also considering some possible revenue diversification options which are, however, limited. As a result, the university is now in the early stages of addressing its tuition-dependence and diversification of its funding and revenue sources, through four main initiatives: 1) completing its purchase of a closely located building for rent to Coleman Tech Charter High School; 2) increasing its international student body; 3) developing new academic programs; and 4) hiring a director of development.

Several main issues identified by the university and their impact should be considered within strategic and fiscal planning and implementation strategies: closure of the San Marcos campus, additional support of Coleman Tech Charter High School, and resources needed for WASC accreditation. (CFRs 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3) Also, other possible developments and issues should

be factored into any future planning efforts, such as future demand for Coleman University graduates, institutional competitiveness, currency of instructional equipment, and upgrades to physical space and infrastructure, to name a few.

Since the CPR team visit, there have been a number of notable developments related to the library at Coleman University. Organizationally, the librarian now is a direct report to the dean of academics. An associate librarian was hired, who also serves as the director of educational support, as well as the chair of the Professional Development Planning & Effectiveness Committee. This individual was also elected to, and serves a key role on the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC). Overall staffing levels for the library increased by 22% from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2011. The current year's budget allocation for library materials effectively amounts to a 300% increase over the allocated budget for fiscal year 2010-2011. Based upon their specific curricular needs, the five Colleges (represented by Associate Deans) submit requests for acquisitions by the library. This has resulted in the acquisition of information resources which are more directly relevant to the needs of Coleman University's faculty and students – full text journal subscription packages, electronic databases, instructional DVDs, technical certification guides, etc. To further leverage financial resources, the library could investigate memberships in regional and/or state-wide consortia, that would facilitate more favorable contractual terms for eBooks and other electronic resources. Workshop (information literacy, writing, etc.) attendance by students is minimal at this stage, as the library has yet to embark upon concerted marketing efforts to publicize and promote the workshops. The library also is a key participant in the activities of the Spark of Ingenuity Committee, which worked on initiatives related to academic rigor and core competencies. The institution appears to have taken the *CPR Report*

recommendations to heart, as the library is now a more active participant in the academic enterprise, and is integrated into the annual planning and decision-making process. (team interviews, *Coleman University Library Report*, Exhibit 3.6.1) (CFR 3.6)

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

Consistent with CFR 3.9, the university's organizational structure includes an independent, now expanded, nine-member governing board of trustees. The president, who acts as chief executive officer, reports directly to the board and has full responsibility for the operations of the university. In response to the CPR recommendations, three new members were added to the board. The current board includes members with extensive background and experience in higher education, academic accreditation, business and finance management, group process, thinking and learning, technology, trusteeship, and law. Bylaws were revised to ensure compliance with WASC policy. An annual conflict of interest policy was implemented, and dual roles of administrators and board members were eliminated. A new chair of the board was elected in 2012. Establishment of the four board committees: Finance, Academic Affairs, Audit, and Nominating further improved functionality and effectiveness of the board structure.

During interaction with the visiting team, board members demonstrated an extensive knowledge and understanding of the issues, challenges, and opportunities facing higher education in general, and Coleman University, in particular. (CFR 3.9) The board's commitment to the success of the university and its engagement in the WASC accreditation process were also evident in its specific actions during the last two years. Completion of the self-review process based on the *WASC Policy on Independent Governing Boards* guidelines on accountability and oversight has resulted in identification of specific future priorities and continuous improvement efforts for the

board. The current board, however, recognizes that although several improvements toward transparency with the administration and related entities have been implemented, it should continue its efforts for total transparency of information and operations, both from the board to the administration, and vice versa.

Two vice presidents, the chief financial officer, the director of computer services, the human resources coordinator, and the facilities manager report directly to the president, who in turn, reports to the board of trustees. The role of the recently hired chief financial officer is being expanded and redefined to further strengthen budgeting and financial planning and management functions. (CFR 3.10)

The university president and five officers serve as members of the executive committee. The executive committee “provides high-level oversight to ensure that all aspects of university planning and operations fully support the mission.” (*EER Report*, p.3) All executives, academic department heads, directors, managers, and other key personnel constitute the leadership team. This group meets every five weeks and reviews departmental planning and operations, including admissions, financial aid, accounting, marketing, student services, career services, computer services, facilities, library and instructional resources, academic departments, and instructional support. The university continues a “cyclical review and planning process comprising ongoing management monitoring and review of institutional results, quarterly reviews of *Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP)*, reviews of the *Annual Plan* every five weeks, and an annual planning conference to ensure institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement.” (*EER Report*, p.33)

According to the *Employee Handbook*, Coleman University stated that “faculty has clear responsibilities and authority in the academic affairs of the institution” (p. 8). Active faculty involvement and participation is expected in “developing and maintaining the educational programs of the institution, including proposal and development of academic programs and courses; selection of course materials, instructional equipment and other educational resources; systematic evaluation and revision of the curriculum; assessment of student learning outcomes; and planning for and evaluating institutional effectiveness” (p. 8). (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.8, and 3.11) Moreover, discussions with faculty indicated a significant improvement in institutional policies and practices since the CPR visit, including faculty engagement and participation, as well as more open and transparent communication, in a myriad of institutional issues. At the same time, many have expressed a concern that these efforts are in an early stage of development, and much work remains to be done in strengthening faculty’s role and ability in exercising effective academic leadership. (CFR 3.11)

For example, a recently created Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), an elected legislative board of faculty members, now provides a venue for faculty to express their concerns and bring certain issues of importance to the attention of the Executive Committee. (CFR 3.11) Since its formation in 2012, FAC, described by faculty as a “step forward,” established bylaws; met with faculty from various colleges; created a statement and policy on the role of faculty in the assessment of learning outcomes; and reviewed the final recommendations for improvement resulting from the CIS and MBA program reviews. As the university states, “the Faculty Advisory Committee is committed to creating an environment in which the voice of the faculty is heard and its contributions are valued and play a meaningful role in furthering the mission and educational

objectives of Coleman.” (*EER Report*, p.32) While the FAC is making attempts to communicate with faculty and develop a two-way process, such efforts are in the early stages, and require not only administrative support and encouragement, but also commitment and interest on the part of faculty, especially adjunct members.

Based on faculty input during the visit, however, some expressed a concern about the university’s ability to fully engage its faculty in matters of scholarship, creative activity, and academic leadership. This concern is based on the high number of adjunct (part-time) faculty who are only compensated for teaching, and as a result, are not required or willing to participate in other essential university functions. It is, therefore, suggested that Coleman University continue to develop strategies to engage its faculty in all aspects of the educational enterprise, and provide appropriate venues for academic leadership by faculty.

Commendations:

- The university is to be commended for creation of the Faculty Advisory Committee, an elected legislative board of faculty members, which provides an initial venue for faculty to exercise academic leadership. (CFRs 3.4, 3.11, and 4.7)
- The university is to be commended for a continuing stable financial position and the early stages of addressing its tuition-dependence and diversification of its funding and revenue sources, including a purchase of a closely located building for rent to Coleman Tech Charter High School, increasing its international student body, developing new academic programs, and hiring of a director of development. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.5)
- The university is to be commended for progress made in improving board management and operations, specifically expansion of the board membership, elimination of dual roles of administrators and board members; revision of the bylaws; implementation of the annual conflict of interest process; completion of the self-evaluation process; and engagement in rigorous self-reflection, training, and continuous improvement. (CFRs 2.4, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8)

Recommendations:

- Although some progress has been made, it is essential that Coleman University continue to strengthen its hiring and retention policies and practices related to faculty qualifications and academic experience. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)
- It is recommended that Coleman University continue to develop and enhance the role of faculty in exercising effective academic leadership to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution's purposes and character. (CFRs 3.4, 3.11, and 4.7)
- It is recommended that Coleman University continue its efforts in strengthening board transparency and continuous improvement efforts. (CFRs 1.8 and 3.9)

Suggestions:

- It is suggested that the university continue to develop strategies to engage its faculty in all aspects of the educational enterprise, and provide appropriate venues for academic leadership by faculty. (CFRs 2.4 and 3.2)
- The university may want to consider strategies to more clearly communicate to faculty and staff the extent and specifics of educational benefit and professional development opportunities. (CFRs 3.3 and 3.4)
- It is suggested that, in order to promote and create greater awareness of its services among its faculty and students (workshops, interlibrary loan, etc.), that the library design and implement a marketing program. (CFR 3.6)
- To further leverage financial resources, the library could investigate memberships in regional and/or state-wide consortia, that would facilitate more favorable contractual terms for eBooks and other electronic resources. (CFR 3.6)

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

Prior to and during the visit, the team reviewed evidence including: *The Coleman University Annual Plan 2012-2013*, the *Institutional Effectiveness Plan Review* for the quarter ending September, 30, 2012 (Exhibit 4.1.1), and the *New Program Proposal Policy*. (Exhibit 4.4.1)

Strategic Thinking and Planning

The institution has an annual planning conference that is attended by all university employees and occurs in the third quarter of the fiscal year. The plans are presented in the Coleman University *Annual Plan* (*EER*, p. 33). The *IEP* and quarterly reviews are used to evaluate: retention, placement, employer satisfaction, graduate satisfaction, default rates, SLOs, and key financial indicators. The president presents the *IEP* results to all university employees. Although these strategic planning practices are in place, the university needs to document a longer range strategic plan that is clearly informed by multiple data points across the institution. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.8) Data driven decisions about teaching and learning should inform the university-wide academic strategic thinking and planning such as curricular initiatives, faculty and staff recruitment goals, enrollment management goals, and quality assurance processes. (CFRs 1.7, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7, 4.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.8)

The executive committee and leadership team use daily, weekly, and end-of-module key indicators of institutional results. All employees do a quarterly review of the *IEP*. (CFR 4.1) The Annual Planning Process is informed by data analyzed at the yearly symposium. (CFR 2.6) Since the CPR visit, the university hired its first institutional research specialist, enhanced the awareness of data, and promoted a culture of evidence throughout the institution. (CFRs 4.3 and 4.6) The university intends to expand data types, increase amounts of data in more granular

manner, track more data over time, and complete more comprehensive analyses. (*EER*, p. 34)
(CFR 4.3)

Commitment to Learning and Improvement

The institution has processes that focus on academic quality such as a New Program Proposal policy, standardized forms and templates, course change request forms, and curriculum understanding contracts. The position of associate director of curriculum development has as one of its major responsibilities, oversight and focused attention to academic quality. In future planning, these initial and emerging quality assurance processes could be developed to integrate with institutional assessment practices, academic strategic planning, and institutional data dissemination. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.8)

Following the CPR visit, the university hired an institutional research specialist in May 2012, who is working on the improvement of its institutional data infrastructure and institutional effectiveness evaluation. (*EER*, p. 35). The university plans to expand the analytical toolbox to provide faculty and administrators data to make evidence-based decisions. It goes on to state that there is room for “growth and improvement” (CFR 4.5), and that it is committed to gathering data to improve the institution. (*IEP*, annual planning process and Institutional Research) (*EER*, p.36; CFR 4.6)

Since the CPR visit, the university established a Faculty Advisory Committee, comprised of elected members to represent faculty in academic issues, such as the review of the recommendations for improvement resulting from the CIS and MBA program reviews. (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.6, and 4.7) Such faculty involvement in teaching, learning, and use of institutional

data could be enhanced and incorporated in academic and institutional planning. (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8)

Commendations:

- The university is to be commended for progress in delineating clear lines of authority and responsibility among leadership groups. (CFRs 1.3 and 4.6)
- The university is to be commended for a marked improvement in organizational culture and climate due to a realignment of leadership, hiring of several key personnel, and revised policies and procedures. (CFRs 1.3, 3.3, and 4.1)

Recommendation:

The university's strategic plan and academic strategic plan (which includes, but is not limited to curricular initiatives, faculty and staff recruitment goals, enrollment management goals, quality assurance processes, and co-curricular initiatives) needs to be documented and aligned with the vision of the university, and needs to be clearly informed by multiple data points across the institution. (CFRs 4.1, and 4.8)

Suggestion:

The university may want to work towards documenting a longer range strategic plan that is informed by multiple data points across the institution. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.8)

SECTION III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW AND THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

Commendations:

- The university is to be commended for its significant progress in accomplishing key recommendations made during the CPR visit including: hiring individuals in key positions including the chief financial officer and registrar; continuing to increase the number of non-Coleman graduates in leadership positions; expanding the role and functions of the Office of Instructional Support; establishing an Office of Institutional Research, and strengthening the role and functions of the library. (CFRs 2.4, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8)
- The university is to be commended for maintaining a stable financial position and its early progress in addressing tuition-dependence through the diversification of its revenue sources, including investment in real estate and hiring a director of development. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.5)
- The university is to be commended for progress made in improving board management and operations, specifically expansion of board membership, elimination of dual roles of administrators and board members, revision of the bylaws, implementation of an annual conflict of interest process, engagement in rigorous self-reflection, training, continuous improvement, and commitment to achieving WASC accreditation. (CFRs 1.3, 3.5, and 3.9)
- The university is to be commended for the proactive approach that graduate programs have taken in establishing evidence-driven assessment practices, using program review findings to update curricula and develop student support services. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.13, and 4.4)
- The university is to be commended for creation of a Faculty Advisory Committee, which provides an appropriate venue for faculty to exercise academic leadership. (CFRs 3.4, 3.11, and 4.7)
- The university is to be commended for progress in delineating clear lines of authority and responsibility among leadership groups. (CFRs 1.3 and 4.6)
- The university is to be commended for a marked improvement in organizational culture and climate due to a realignment of leadership, hiring of several key personnel, and revised policies and procedures. (CFRs 1.3, 3.3, and 4.1)

Recommendations:

- Although some progress has been made, it is essential that the university continue to strengthen its hiring and retention policies and practices related to faculty qualifications and academic experience. (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)
- The university's strategic plan and academic strategic plan (which includes, but is not limited to curricular initiatives, faculty and staff recruitment goals, enrollment management goals, quality assurance processes, and co-curricular initiatives) needs to be documented and aligned with the vision of the university, and needs to be clearly informed by multiple data points across the institution. (CFRs 4.1 and 4.8)
- It is recommended that the university continue to develop and enhance the role of faculty in exercising effective academic leadership to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution's purposes and character. (CFRs 3.4, 3.11, and 4.7)
- It is recommended that the university enhance initial and emerging institutional assessment practices to assure a faculty driven, university-wide assessment strategy that should include the consistent implementation of grading rubrics, well developed program review processes and co-curricular assessment. (CFRs 2.1, 2.4, 2.7, and 2.11)
- The university needs to assess all WASC core competencies, and assure an alignment of core competency assessment and data collection with institutional outcomes and data collection. (CFR 2.2)

APPENDICES

Team Report Appendix

OFF-CAMPUS SITE

Institution: Coleman University
Name of reviewer: Les Kong

Type of Visit: EER
Dates of review: March 26-29, 2013

1. **Site Name and Address:**

Coleman University, San Marcos
1284 West San Marcos Boulevard
San Marcos, CA 92078-4073

Background Information

Due in part to competition from other local academic institutions, the board of trustees and the university made the decision to close and teach-out the San Marcos campus by December 2013. The *Coleman University Catalog, 2012-2013* lists 18 faculty and 3 laboratory assistants at this site. As of March 18, 2013 class start, the San Marcos campus has 32 students remaining to finish out their AS degrees. The university will continue to offer the following incentives to students willing to transfer to the main campus in San Diego: gas cards, free tuition (16 units), and free certification testing vouchers. The lease for the San Marcos building expires in January 2014. Discussions are taking place with the building owner and New Haven Charter School regarding a sublease beginning in June 2013. As of the May class start, the San Marcos campus will have 27 students. The university is considering four options to teach-out the remaining students in this location: 1) use of 3-4 classrooms from Hi-Tech High School; 2) use of 3-4 classrooms from New Haven Charter School (pending lease approval); 3) use of 3-4 classrooms from a local church; and 4) investigation of other areas to lease for classroom space. If the university retains the building, the October 2013 class start will be 10 students. These students will complete all ground classes by December 2013, and remaining classes will be offered in the online format.

Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed) *Coleman University Report on the Closing of the San Marcos Campus* (compiled September 24, 2012); and interviews with the vice president and dean of academics, and the accreditation liaison officer.

DISTANCE EDUCATION SUMMARY – Team Report Appendix

[Summary form for distance education evaluators. A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report. Evidence based on the information collected may be integrated into the body of the team report as appropriate.]

1. INSTITUTION

Coleman University

2. TEAM MEMBER(S)/REVIEWER(S):

Jonathan Parker (Chair)

Les Kong (Asst Chair)

Elna van Heerden

Janna Bersi

3. DATES THAT DISTANCE EDUCATION MATERIALS WERE VIEWED:

March, 26-29 2013

VIEWED IN CONJUNCTION WITH (check all that apply):

- CPR
- EER
- Special Visit
- Substantive Change review
- Other (please explain)

4. CONTEXT (for example, number of programs offered via distance education, degree levels offered via distance education, FTE enrollment, faculty numbers and composition; average class size)

Number of programs offered:

Coleman University currently offers two Distance Education (online) programs year round:

- Selected courses in the College of Advanced Studies and Education (CASE) department;
- All courses in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program.

Degree Levels offered via distance education:

- Two degree levels offered (undergraduate and graduate)

Student Enrollments according to Coleman:

Dates: March 16th 2013 - May 24th 2013

Total Enrollment:	83
Undergraduate:	80
Graduate:	3

Faculty Numbers and composition

Current Faculty

Currently Teaching

Total:	8
Full Time:	0
Focused:	2
Part Time:	6

Number of DE Faculty members that are also teaching on-ground: 5

Current average class size

Total:	10.375
Undergrad:	11.428
Graduate:	3

(The maximum student-teacher ratio for the online program is 20:1, the same as for the residential courses, *EER*, p.75.)

5. DESCRIPTION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION INTERACTIONS (what was viewed, description of formats, other details to help describe nature and context of the review):

Nature and context of review

Prior to the visit Coleman University created an observer account that provided “read only” access to all Coleman University distance education courses that started over the last 20 weeks (prior to visit date). All team members had access to the account to review the online courses. The institution provided a secure password and login information to the team.

What was viewed

- *Coleman University EER Reflective Essays* (December, 2012);
- *Coleman University EER Reflective Essays, Appendix B: Distance Education Report* (December, 2012)
- Distance Education Courses that started over the last 20 weeks (prior to the visit date); *Coleman Analytical Data Portfolio* in particular:
- Exhibit 1.5.1 *Student Demographics*
- Exhibit 2.2.a1 *General Education Report*;
- Exhibit 2.3.1 *Institutional Outcomes*
- Exhibit 2.3.2 *Sample Syllabi for Technology, General Education and Graduate Courses*
- Exhibit 2.3.3 *Programmatic Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Maps*
- Exhibit 2.4.1 *Academic Competencies Expectations Rubrics*

- Exhibit 2.7.1 *Coleman University Program Review Guide*
- Exhibit 2.7.2a *CIS Program Review Self-Study Narrative*
- Exhibit 2.7.2b *CIS Program Review Data Portfolio*
- Exhibit 2.7.2c *CIS Program Review Final Recommendations*
- Exhibit 2.7.3a *MBA Program Review Self-Study Narrative*
- Exhibit 2.7.3b *MBA Program Review Data Portfolio*
- Exhibit 2.7.3d *MBA External Review Report*
- Exhibit 2.7.3e *MBA Program Review Final Recommendations*
- Exhibit 2.10.1 *Associate Student Retention, Graduation and Time to Degree*
- Exhibit 2.10.3 *Graduate Student Graduation and Time to Graduation*
- Exhibit 3.3.2 *Student Course Survey Forms*
- Exhibit 4.5.3 *Coleman University Academic Data Base Report*
- *WASC EER Evaluation Team Information Packet*

Description of formats

Undergraduate courses are taught in a 10 week/10 topic format. Graduate courses are taught in an accelerated 5 week/5 topic format. (*EER*, p. 72) The courses are presented in various formats, including .PDF, .PPT, .DOC, XLS, .SWF. Each topic includes readings, assignments, forums, and/or quizzes for a week. Instructors load additional resources and reply to students based on topic subjects. (*EER*, p.72)

Distance Education instruction is delivered via *Moodle* and runs on a Linux network server, located at the San Diego Campus. There is a three-year back up policy and the legacy *Moodle* installation will not be removed until May, 2015. (*EER*, p.73) A helpdesk service (Buchanan Technologies) offers 24/7 support and students can also request to meet with DE technical staff. (*EER*, P.73)

Communication between students and faculty takes place through email and asynchronous threaded discussions, and faculty occasionally also utilize real chat sessions. (*EER*, p. 75) “Coleman University utilizes a distance education auditor who reviews faculty and student correspondence, response time and quality of the faculty member’s response.” (*EER*, p.75) Measures are in place to follow up if issues arise with regard to any of these audited items.

The curriculum developer develops test questions and the faculty members of each college are involved in the assessment of student work, which include the assessment of key assignments with a rubric. (*EER*, p.76) Onsite students take a quiz and an examination. “Online students do not take the quiz but take the test as on open book exam.” (*EER*, p.76)

6. OTHER MATERIALS REVIEWED OR PERSONS INTERVIEWED CONCERNING DISTANCE EDUCATION (prior to visit, on-site, or after the visit):

During the visit questions about Distance Education were directed to the:

- Associate Director of Curriculum Development;

- Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator;
- Associate Dean, College of Advance Studies and Education (representing undergraduate distance education);
- Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies (representing MBA distance education);
- Director of Institutional Improvement and Compliance
- Institutional Research Specialist

Suggested Lines of Inquiry: Please address each of the following. Representative CFRs are noted in each cell below.	Observations and Findings	Check (X) here if follow-up is needed.
<p><i>Quality of the Learning Infrastructure.</i> Is the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to the fostering of learning and dialogue between faculty and students? (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, and 3.5)</p>	<p>The Office of Curriculum Development assures that the courses are at an appropriate level of academic rigor (<i>EER</i>, p.76) and DE faculty members assure that student work are at the appropriate level of academic rigor.(CFRs 2.1, 4.1, and 4.4) The university implemented “<i>Turnitin</i>” software to assist with plagiarism detection (<i>EER</i>, p.76) and published an Academic Dishonesty policy in the <i>Catalog</i>. The CLOs are listed on the course syllabi (CFR 2.4) and students complete course evaluation forms at the end of each module. (Exhibit 3.3.2) (CFRs 4.3 and 4.4)</p> <p>Since the CPR visit, the university improved access to tools by faculty for course customization and revised the GE course content to reflect its diversity initiative and redeveloped GE courses to be more student-centered. (<i>Coleman EER Team Package</i>) (CFR 2.2)</p> <p>Since the CPR visit, the university also restructured the course grade book, and implemented a rubric tool in <i>Moodle</i>. (CFRs 2.1 and 2.5) Course-specific assessment methods are projects, research assignments and exams. (<i>EER</i>, p.76) Online courses also indicate the estimated time it may take for typical students to complete learning tasks. (CFR 2.2)</p> <p>The university intends to implement more interactive learning experiences in the future, and current examples of interactive learning experiences in online courses are: a marketing simulation (with feedback throughout the exercise) and a curricular practical training course.</p>	<p>Increase faculty participation in determining the academic rigor of courses (in addition to the assessment of student work as stated in <i>EER</i>, p.76) (CFRs 2.1, 4.4,4.7, and 4.8)</p>

<p><i>Student Support Services.</i> What is the institution’s capacity for providing advisement, counseling, Library, computing services and other student services appropriate to the modalities of delivery? (CFRs 2.13 and 3.6)</p>	<p>Since the CPR visit, the university appointed a full-time associate librarian, developed a library <i>Moodle</i> course, and developed a “know your Library presentation.” participated in curriculum-embedded library workshops, and added EBSCOHost subscription databases. (CFR2.13 and 3.6)</p> <p>Information literacy in the MBA program is supported in a “Master’s Corner” in the library. Students also have access to student services that are identical to the services for residential students and have access to Career Services and Financial Aid. (<i>EER</i>, p.74) (CFRs 2.12 and 2.13)</p>	
<p><i>Connection of Faculty to the Institution.</i> In what ways does the Institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 3.1 and 3.2)</p>	<p>The university provides both instructional support and curriculum guidance to faculty. The Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator trains faculty to continuously improve their teaching skills and the Office of Curriculum Development provides curricular guidance to faculty. (CFR 3.1 and 3.2)</p>	
<p><i>Relationship of Institution's goals for CPR/EER Reviews to distance learning activities.</i> In what ways, if any, do the institution's efforts to build capacity and enhance educational effectiveness through the reaffirmation process on the home campus carry over to distance learning activities? (CFRs 4.1 and 4.8)</p>	<p>Coleman University’s efforts to enhance the educational effectiveness are evident in the Distance Education processes that it developed since the CPR visit.</p>	
<p><i>Context of distance learning to the broader Institution.</i> How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, other current and potential remote sites, and administrative structure? How is this operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, and 3.8)</p>	<p>Distance Education appears to be more embedded in the faculty training and curricular practices at Coleman University than during the CPR visit. The University states: “<i>All Course Developers are required to take DIS301 which describes the curriculum development process at Coleman and the pedagogy specific to web-based courses.</i>” (<i>EER</i>, p.77)</p> <p>During the EER visit, faculty indicated that the University’s Distance Education practices may also impact on ground teaching and learning practices (CFR 4.1), such as the on ground companion course and use of grading rubrics in <i>Moodle</i>.</p>	
<p><i>Educational Effectiveness Preparedness.</i> How has the institution organized itself to address student learning and educational effectiveness for distance learners? What are the quality and nature of institutional data analysis systems, quality improvement systems and systems to evaluate student learning in distance learning courses and programs? (CFRs 4.6 and 4.7)</p>	<p>Since the CPR visit, Coleman University enhanced its capacity to monitor retention data for DE and reported DE enrollment and retention rates in Exhibit 4.1.1 of the <i>EER</i>. Initial efforts are developed to use DE data in institutional assessment practices, for example, in recent program reviews. Since the CPR visit, the university appointed an institutional research specialist, who gathers data and makes data available on an internal wiki.</p>	

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Additional Findings, Observations or Comments. Please provide any other information that you believe it is pertinent to note. Also, if any of the boxes above are checked, elaborate here. Finally, please include any recommendations you might have for subsequent team members/reviewers concerning distance education courses and programs.

It is evident that Coleman University systematically addressed concerns about Distance Education that were raised in the CPR visit report. A suggestion to Coleman University is to:

- Increase faculty participation in determining the academic rigor of courses (in addition to the assessment of student work as stated in *EER*, p.76). (CFRs 2.1, 4.4, 4.7, and 4.8)

CREDIT HOUR REVIEW - TEAM REPORT APPENDIX

Institution: Coleman University
 Type of Visit: Educational Effectiveness Review
 Date: March 26-29, 2013

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on credit hour	Does this policy adhere to WASC policy and federal regulations?	Yes
	Comments: Consistent with WASC, federal, and ACICS credit hour policies, the institution has developed and implemented university policies on Academic Credit Hour, Assignment of Designations, and Expected Hours for Out-of-Class Work.	
Process(es)/ periodic review	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)?	Yes
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes
	Comments: Appropriate procedures for implementation of the above policies have been established and are documented.	
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?	Yes
	Comments: All San Diego campus schedules were reviewed (morning, afternoon and evenings)	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? On the ground and online How many syllabi were reviewed? 6 syllabi were reviewed What degree level(s)? Undergraduate and graduate What discipline(s)? NET 208, COM 340, HUM 115, MAN 300, MBA 640	
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	Yes
	Comments:	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)	What kinds of courses? How many syllabi were reviewed? What degree level(s)? What discipline(s)?	N/A
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	
	Comments:	

CFR	Documents Required	Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
1.7.4.1	Record of staff grievances and complaints		Records of employee (comprising faculty and staff) grievances going back to June 2011 were examined with the Accreditation Liaison Officer.		
1.7.5	Employee handbook		<i>Employee Handbook</i>		
1.7.6.1	Up-to-date student transcripts with key that explains credit hours, grades, levels, etc.		Sample student transcript provided in the team room.		
1.7.6.2	Admissions records that match stated requirements; complete files		Sample record provided in the team room.		
1.7.6.3	Policies and procedures to protect the integrity of grades		<i>Coleman University Policy 9.4.1: Integrity of Student Grades</i>		
1.7.6.4	Tuition and fee schedule		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
1.7.6.5	Policies on tuition refunds		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
1.8	Regular independent audits of finances (X 3.5)		Financial statements, reports, schedules, and independent auditors' report for year ended June 30, 2012 provided in team room.		
1.9	WASC-related policies to ensure sub change policies		Not provided.		
1.7-1.9	Documents relating to investigations of the institution by any governmental entity and an update on the status of such investigation A list of pending legal actions by or against the institution, including a full explanation of the nature of the actions, parties involved, and status of the litigation		No investigations or legal actions reported.		
Standard 2					
2.1	List of degree programs, showing curriculum and units for each (X 1.7)		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
2.2	Complete set of course syllabi for all courses offered		Available in team room.		
2.2.1	(For associate and bachelor's degrees) statement of general education requirements (X 1.7)		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
2.3	SLOs for every program		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i> ; internal SLOs publication; program data sheets		

CFR	Documents Required	Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
2.4	-	-	-	-	-
2.5	-	-	-	-	-
2.6	-	-	-	-	-
2.7	Program review process with clear criteria, which include assessment of program retention/graduation and achievement of learning outcomes		<i>Coleman University Program Review Guide</i>		
2.7.1	Regular schedule of program review (including for non-academic units)		<i>Coleman University Program Review Guide</i>		
2.8	Policies re faculty scholarship and creative activity		Included as brief statement in instructor job descriptions.		
2.9	-	-	-	-	-
2.10	Data on student demographics		<i>Summary Data Form.</i>		
2.10.1	Data on retention and graduation, disaggregated by demographic categories and programs		Internal records provided on disc prior to the visit.		
2.10.2	Collection and analysis of grades at the course or program level, as appropriate		Internal records provided on disc prior to the visit.		
2.10.3	Policies on student evaluation of faculty		<i>Institutional Effectiveness Plan; Employee Evaluation and Training Plan.</i>		
2.10.4	Forms for evaluation of faculty by students		Coleman University mainframe computer system; sample forms provided in team room.		
2.11	List of student services and co-curricular activities		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
2.11.1	Policies on financial aid		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
2.12	Academic calendar (X 1.7 catalog)		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
2.13	Recruitment and advertising material for the last year		Internal publications provided in team room.		
2.13.1	Registration procedures		Included in Student Services Policies and Procedures Manual, Revised, 1/11.		
2.14	Registration forms		Provided in team room.		
Standard 3					
3.1	Policies on staff development		<i>Employee Evaluation and Training Plan; Employee Evaluation Form.</i>		
3.2	List of faculty with classifications, e.g., core, full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenure track, by program		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
3.3	Faculty hiring policies		<i>Faculty and Employee Handbooks</i>		

CFR	Documents Required	Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
3.3.1	Faculty evaluation policies and procedures (X 2.10)		<i>Employee Evaluation and Training Plan; Employee Evaluation Form; Classroom Visitation Form.</i>		
3.3.2	Faculty Handbook if available		<i>Faculty Handbook</i>		
3.4	Faculty development policies		<i>Employee Evaluation and Training Plan; Employee Evaluation Form; and Faculty Handbook.</i>		
3.4.1	Faculty orientation policies and procedures		<i>Coleman University Policy 3.1.10: Employee Orientation Policy; and Coleman University Orientation Schedules.</i>		
3.4.2	Policies on rights and responsibilities of non-full-time faculty		Included in instructor job descriptions.		
3.4.3	Statements concerning faculty role in assessment of student learning		<i>Coleman University Policy 3.2.4.6: Role of faculty in the assessment of student learning.</i>		
3.5	Audited financial statements (X 1.8)		Internal publications provided in team room.		
3.5.1	Appropriate financial records		Internal publications provided in team room.		
3.5.2	Appropriate policies and procedures for handling of financial aid (X 2.11)		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
3.5.3	Campus maps		Internal publication in the team room.		
3.6	Inventory of technology resources for students and faculty		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
3.6.1	If online or hybrid, information on delivery method		<i>EER Reflective Essays, Appendix B.</i>		
3.6.2	Library data/holdings, size		<i>EER Reflective Essays, CFR 3.6 – Information and learning resources; and Coleman University Library Report, Exhibit 3.6.1.</i>		
3.7	Inventory of technology resources and services for staff		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013</i>		
3.8	Organization chart (X 1.3 and 3.1)		Updated charts provided in team room.		
3.9	Board list		<i>Coleman University Official Catalog, 2012-2013; and internal Publications in team room.</i>		
3.9.1	Board member bios		Internal publications provided on disc prior to the visit.		
3.9.2	List of Board committees		Internal publications in team room.		
3.9.2.1	Minutes of Board meetings for last two years		Internal publication available in team room.		
3.9.2.2	Governing board bylaws and operations manual		<i>Policy Governance Manual.</i>		
3.10	CEO bio		Internal publications provided on disc prior to the visit.		

CFR	Documents Required	Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
3.10.1	CFO bio		Internal publications provided on disc prior to the visit.		
3.10.2	Other top administrators' bios (e.g., cabinet, VPs, Provost)		Internal publications provided on disc prior to the visit.		
3.10.3	Policy and procedure for the evaluation of president/CEO		<i>Policy Governance Manual.</i>		
3.11	Faculty governing body charges, bylaws and authority		<i>Coleman University Policy 1.2.6: Faculty Advisory Committee Policy; and Faculty Advisory Committee Bylaws.</i>		
3.11.1	Faculty organization chart (if applicable)		Updated chart provided in team room.		
3.11.2	Minutes of last year's faculty meetings		Provided in team room.		
Standard 4					
4.1	Strategic plan		<i>Coleman University Annual Plan 2011-2012; Institutional Effectiveness Plan, Coleman University.</i>		
4.1.1	Operations plan		Included as part of Strategic Plan.		
4.1.2	Academic plan		Included as part of Strategic Plan.		
4.2	Description of planning process		<i>Annual Plan Policies and Procedures.</i>		
4.2.1	Process for review of implementation of strategic plan		<i>Annual Planning Conference; Institutional Effectiveness Plan Quarterly Review, December 2012.</i>		
4.3	-	-	-	-	-
4.4	New program approval process		<i>Coleman University Policy 4.2.4: New Program Proposal Policy.</i>		
4.4.1	Program review process (X 2.7)		<i>Coleman University Program Review Guide</i>		
4.5	Description of IR function and staffing		Internal publication in team room.		
4.6	Process for review and analysis of key data, such as retention, graduation (X1.2)		<i>Institutional Effectiveness Plan</i>		
4.7	-	-	-	-	-
4.8	-	-	-	-	-

Comments:

Related to Substantive Change					
		Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
1	Locations of all off-campus sites and programs offered at such sites (more than 50% of program)		Coleman College; 1284 W. San Marcos, CA 92078		
1a	Number of students enrolled at such sites		32		
1b	Date of first offerings		1986		
2	Names of all programs for which 50% of the program is offered through distance education		Select ed CASE course s; MBA		
2a	Number of students enrolled in each		83		
2b	Date each was first offered				
3	Names of all hybrid programs				
3a	Number of students enrolled in each	0			
3b	Date each was first offered	0			
Accuracy and Availability of Records					
		Cand.		I.A.	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
	Policies and procedures for students, faculty and staff are stated consistently in all media				
	Policies, procedures, and information are readily available to relevant constituents				
	Records are accurate and up to date				

