

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM  
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

**To Stanford University**

February 20-21, 2013

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
**Reaffirmation of Accreditation**

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The team evaluated the institution under the WASC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation 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.

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## SECTION I OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

### *Description of the Institution*

Stanford University is a private university focused on undergraduate and graduate education, as well as research in scientific, technological, humanistic, and social science disciplines. Stanford's campus, located near Palo Alto, California, first opened its doors to students on October 1, 1891. Stanford University's Founding Grant stated that the university should prepare students "for personal success and direct usefulness in life" and strive to "promote the public welfare by exercising an influence on behalf of humanity and civilization." Stanford has consistently and categorically achieved these complementary goals from its inception to the present day.

Stanford currently has a student body of approximately 6,900 undergraduate and 8,800 graduate students. The university is organized into seven academic and professional schools, each led by a respective dean: the Graduate School of Business, the School of Earth Sciences, the Graduate School of Education, the School of Engineering, the School of Humanities and Sciences, the Law School, and the School of Medicine. Current University-wide educational and research initiatives focus on human health, the environment, and international affairs. Stanford also comprises 13 off-campus centers, a major medical center and the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, which it operates under the direction of the U.S. Department of Energy.

Stanford's graduation rates are exemplary. Approximately 95% of undergraduate students graduate within six years.

In addition to its outstanding educational and research programs, Stanford has developed a national and international reputation as a leader in innovation and economic development. As the anchor of Silicon Valley, Stanford plays a critical role in the global economy and is a model of excellence for dynamic institutions of higher education around the world.

### *Preamble*

This report is based on the evaluation of a significant amount of information and data provided to the team members. The information included a *Capacity and Preparatory Review Report* (CPR) submitted in August 2010 and an *Educational Effectiveness Review Report* (EER) submitted in October 2012. The team's evaluation of this material and reports were conducted online and on campus during the site visit.

The first site visit (CPR) took place in Fall of 2010 and included the following team members:

- Jean-Lou Chameau, President, California Institute of Technology
- Reed Dasenbrock, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University of Hawaii, Manoa

- Lori Breslow, Director, Teaching and Learning Laboratory, Senior Lecturer, Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Susan Jarratt, Professor and Chair, Comparative Literature, University of California, Irvine; and
- Nancy Weiss Malkiel, Dean of the College and Professor of History, Princeton University

The second site visit (EER) took place in Spring of 2013 and included the following team members:

- Jean-Lou Chameau, President, California Institute of Technology
- Reed Dasenbrock, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University of Hawaii, Manoa
- Nancy Weiss Malkiel, Professor of History, Dean of the College 1987-2011, Princeton University

This report, written upon the completion of the EER visit, includes some material from the team's earlier CPR report (December 14, 2010), as many of the sections remain applicable and the conditions unchanged. Revision and additional information were included in this report as needed.

The conclusion of the entire evaluation and this final report find that Stanford is a remarkable institution deeply committed to a spectacular education for all its students. It is a model for the country. By any measure, this institution is of exceptional quality and one of the finest universities in the world..

### ***Accreditation History and Preparation***

Stanford's accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges ("WASC") was reaffirmed in 2000, resulting in a letter dated July 2000 from the Commission outlining areas for the institution to address before the next accreditation cycle. Stanford's institutional proposal to guide the current accreditation review cycle was approved by WASC in June 2008. Since then, an Accreditation Steering Committee has led Stanford's preparation for the accreditation review. Both Stanford's president and its provost have worked closely with this committee, as well as an additional executive committee. Consultation with WASC has taken place and extensive documentation has been developed and provided, both in reports and on a dedicated web site. It is clear that the administration and faculty have shown a remarkable level of involvement and commitment to the accreditation process and to the opportunity it provides to enhance an already outstanding organization. The serious engagement of the entire University in this process is to be commended.

In August 2010, Stanford submitted its CPR report ("2010 Preparatory Report") based on a series of research studies the university wished to undertake as part of its re-accreditation process. Concerns about undergraduate pre-major advising expressed in the Commission's June 2008, letter were addressed by the institution in Appendix 8 of

the 2010 Preparatory Report. Several key steps had been taken to better serve students in this area, including improving advisor training and accessibility, as well as creating a system of professional advisors to supplement faculty efforts. The Commission's (need date) letter also praised Stanford's efforts in upgrading foreign language instruction, but the evaluation team questioned if the level of achievement could be sustained. The 2010 Preparatory Report showed (through Investigation #3 into Fundamental Skills in Foreign Language Learning and Writing) that the efforts had been sustained and the achievement level enhanced since then.

The Fall 2010 visit took place from November 30 to December 2, 2010. The CPR review team submitted its report to the Commission on December 14, 2010, which was acted upon at the February 2011 Commission meeting. The Commission's March 2011 letter concluded that "Stanford is well positioned for a highly successful EER in 2012."

Stanford submitted the Educational Effectiveness Review Report in October 2012, and purely for scheduling reasons, the EER visit took place not in 2012 but on February 20 and 21, 2013. The EER report focused on research studies ("Investigations") not addressed in its CPR report. These Investigations, discussed below, were clustered into these groups, "The 'Small College' Programs," "Away from Home: Programs Off Campus," and two quantitative studies, the Transcript Study and the Class of 2012.

The remainder of this report provides evidence of Stanford's educational effectiveness in terms of WASC Standards and in terms of the institution's self-identified research investigations.

## **SECTION II EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

### ***Standard 1 – Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives***

Stanford University rightly claims its place among the world's great research universities. It has a clear sense of its mission, an appreciation of its institutional distinctiveness, and a straightforward understanding of its place in higher education. With an extraordinary faculty, strong and stable administrative leadership, well-defined governance structures, considerable resources, and an impressive and growing physical plant, the University is well positioned to carry out its fundamental commitments to the highest-quality teaching and research. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)

In the years since Stanford's last re-accreditation, the University has demonstrated in a multitude of ways an active, rigorous, and critical engagement in strengthening the educational experience of undergraduates and graduate students. For undergraduates, these include substantial financial investments in and faculty commitment to small-group instruction for lower-division undergraduates; institution of a new Program in Writing and Rhetoric; investments in curricular enhancements, especially in large lecture courses;

significant expansion of undergraduate research opportunities; enhancement of infrastructure to support teaching and learning; development of a more robust system of undergraduate pre-major advising; expansion of opportunities to study at Stanford's growing network of overseas campuses; and the institution of new initiatives that begin to exploit the potential of residential education. Additionally, major investments in undergraduate financial aid have led to expanded educational opportunities to enroll more students from low- and middle-income families. (CFRs 1.6, 2.2, 2.5)

Remarkably, the pace of innovation in undergraduate education has recently increased. Parallel to (and in conversation with) the WASC accreditation effort has been *The Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford University* report commonly referred to as SUES, which was commissioned in January 2010 and completed in January 2012. Aspects of this remarkably comprehensive and reflective report are already being implemented, and over the next decade, the recommendations of SUES and the results of the WASC investigations should in tandem drive far-reaching changes to further improve undergraduate education. (CFRs 4.1, 4.7)

For graduate students, the most notable development has been the establishment of the new office of Vice Provost for Graduate Education, which has led to an array of non-departmental programmatic enhancements to graduate education. This office is also spearheading a timely discussion about time to degree and completion rates in doctoral programs that promise to strengthen Stanford's already strong record on these areas of national concern. (CFR 2.10)

Stanford has demonstrated a vibrant commitment to the tradition of self-evaluation and assessment. Academic departments and programs granting undergraduate degrees are expected to conduct periodic reviews of their curricula. Each of the seven schools, as well as the larger university, also undergo regular evaluations. Standing faculty committees review specific aspects of the undergraduate educational program. Ad hoc, multi-constituency committees have been empaneled to reconsider the effectiveness of undergraduate and graduate education. For the last six years, Stanford has been fully engaged in the self-study, data collection, and analysis required for re-accreditation. The team (Feb 2013) was impressed by the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of this evaluation. Stanford's work should serve as a model for other institutions in navigating this process. (CFR 2.7)

In the years since the last re-accreditation, Stanford has manifested an institutional commitment to diversity that is most fully realized in the undergraduate student body, a group characterized by gender balance, unusually broad representation of racial and ethnic groups, and increasing socio-economic diversity. Six community centers, each with a distinctive focus, support students as they enter into the academic world of Stanford. As is true with many other leading private institutions, however, realizing similar diversity among faculty and graduate students has been a more elusive goal. Major efforts are underway to increase recruitment and retention of women and under-represented minorities at the graduate and faculty levels. A *Diversity Cabinet* was created in 2005 to "keep the issue of diversity at the forefront of the university's agenda."

(Etchemendy, Faculty Senate Minutes, 12/7/05). A recent *Quality of Life Survey* explored conditions on and off campus for faculty, and a five-year pilot program to support graduate diversity, DARE (Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence), focuses on support for the future professoriate in the “pipeline.” The team commends these efforts and is confident that Stanford will remain committed to diversity. (CFR 1.5)

Stanford has a clearly articulated system of measuring student achievement, and is transparent with its data, documenting such indices as student retention, degree completion, and student learning. It accurately represents to students and to the larger public, its academic goals, programs, and services; demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion; and treats students fairly and equitably. (CFRs 1.9, 2.10)

The university has clearly articulated its commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students. While it receives substantial financial support from outside organizations and individuals with a variety of commitments and convictions, it insures that it alone makes its own substantive decisions and determines its own educational agenda. (CFR 1.4)

The university’s senior leadership—in place for a long time, signaling institutional stability—manifests a robust commitment to high performance, effective execution of responsibility and clear accountability. The leadership team consistently exhibits integrity in its operations, as demonstrated by the implementation of appropriate policies and practices, which are subject to periodic internal evaluations and external audits. (CFR 1.3)

It is also important to note that everyone the team spoke with during both visits had a genuinely shared vision for undergraduate education at Stanford. Their vision is for the Stanford undergraduate to have—especially in the first two years—an experience comparable to the best liberal arts colleges in the country, but to have that experience in a research university marked by a much greater array of educational and research opportunities so that by the end of the student’s experience through a major, he or she, will have taken advantage of at least some of the opportunities provided by that research university context. In a wonderfully reflective moment in the *2010 Preparatory Report*, the question of whether Stanford has the “resources necessary to fulfill its educational mission” is answered in this way: “If Stanford does not have adequate capacity, then it is likely that no university does.” But the report goes on to ask whether “our educational goals are sufficiently ambitious to put these extraordinary resources to their highest and best use.” The team surmises that Stanford—far from resting on its laurels or succumbing to institutional inertia—continues to rethink programs and curriculum in a way that reflects its openness to change and exemplifies what WASC means by “continuous improvement.” The ambition to provide the best undergraduate education in the nation is a reasonable and an attainable goal. (CFRs 4.3, 4.4, 4.6)

## Summary

Stanford provided abundant evidence to show that it has clear institutional purposes, educational objectives aligned with its culture and character, and a conscious sense of its place in higher education and society at large. The team was impressed by the dedication of Stanford to higher education, and its commitment to disseminate knowledge. Overall, the team viewed Stanford as functioning with exceptionally high levels of integrity and autonomy. From a clearly articulated educational mission to an institutional commitment to the educational success of all its students, the rich array of evidence included in the appendices suggests that the Criteria for Review are all areas of good practice at Stanford.

### *Standard 2 – Achieve Educational Objectives through Core Functions*

As stated above, it is clear that Stanford has a strong commitment to undergraduate and graduate education. Members of both the faculty and administrative staff are engaged in a process of identifying student learning outcomes, collecting data to determine if stated outcomes are reached and disseminating the analysis of those data in order to improve teaching, learning and academic services. As the university wrote in Volume II of its 2010 Preparatory Report, “Stanford is committed to creating a culture of evidence, one that is based on using data to guide decision-making and improve the quality of education we offer our undergraduate and graduate students.” In fact, Stanford’s efforts in this area are notable among its peer institutions. (CFRs 2.3, 4.4)

Over the past half-decade or so, Stanford has moved quickly towards a rigorous, multi-pronged system of assessing each of the university’s 63 undergraduate degree programs. Each program committed to a five-step process. First, was the development of program-level mission statements, followed by the development of learning objectives/outcomes for each program. These learning outcomes express what students should know or be able to do as a result of having completed a course of study. This along with the fact that most sets of learning objectives numbered under half a dozen is in keeping with best practices. Stanford also took the important step of consolidating staff from several offices into a central unit, the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IR&DS) and augmented support for the office with additional employees. This office provides extremely helpful technical expertise for departmental level efforts but does not seek to direct those efforts. The distributed model of assessment that has emerged is highly compatible with the culture of the research university, helping to create a culture of program and educational effectiveness research at the level of the individual department, as well as, the university as a whole. Stanford gains in two ways by using this distributed model; first, because assessment and evaluation experts take on an advisory or consulting role, their knowledge can be utilized more efficiently than if they had to design and implement studies themselves; and second, by developing learning outcomes, deciding on how data will be collected and analyzing the data is vested in the hands of faculty and members of the instructional staff, they should be more closely connected to what those

data reveal and more willing to use those results for further improvement. (CFRs 2.4, 2.7)

These first two steps in designing an assessment process was already comprehensively in place by the time of the CPR visit, and many departments had already moved into implementing the final three stages—developing the means of assessment; identifying criteria for assessment activities and finally “closing the loop” to ensure that findings guided program improvement. (CFRs 2.2, 2.6)

The team’s CPR report praised Stanford’s assessment in these terms:

The Visiting Team was supplied with the assessment plans for four programs in the School of Earth Sciences and 37 programs in the School of Humanities and Sciences. All of these programs identified learning outcomes and faculty had developed rubrics for assessing student achievement along a four-point continuum—exemplary, proficient, marginal, and unacceptable. Programs and departments have collected data and reported their analyses. Among the sources of data were student work products (including essays), oral performances and capstone papers. The descriptions of the analyses of these work products indicate that Stanford students receive considerable feedback on their assignments. Other sources of information on student learning included interviews and data from transcripts. The use of multiple sources of data (i.e., triangulation) is considered a gold standard in educational research.

Particularly noteworthy were the statements from faculty about the most valuable things they learned from the assessment process and about how their findings would be used. For example, they noted the need to provide students with more guidance on writing essays, helping them to develop testable hypotheses, and/or providing opportunities for revision of papers. These statements indicate that the process of assessment, at the very least, is creating opportunities for faculty and staff to think about how instruction—both inside and outside the classroom—can be strengthened to foster student learning.

In the slightly more than two years subsequent to the CPR visit, the continued progress on all of these fronts has been remarkable. Stanford’s departmental assessment activities are among the most comprehensive and intelligent of any institution in the country, and it is particularly noteworthy that this is taking place in a research university, which had not been the sector of higher education most hospitable to the outcomes assessment movement. In a WASC context, it is important to note that processes of program review has begun to dovetail with outcomes assessment, and this is crucial for the long-term sustainability and institutionalization of these efforts. The team was particularly interested in hearing how program review and outcomes assessment were combining as drivers of program revision and improvement, receiving reports and hearing presentations on how three very different programs—English, Earth Systems and Science, Technology and Society had used both processes to make crucial changes to improve their

undergraduate programs. This is simply a remarkable record of achievement. (CFRs 2.1, 2.6, 4.7)

### ***Assessment of Student Services***

The university has also embedded assessment into student service areas. IR&DS has worked with staff in the Office of the Vice Provost of Student Affairs to design a number of studies that are then presented to the community. These include, for example, an evaluation of the alcohol education, peer advisor, and public service leadership programs. The university has taken steps to ensure that initiatives in assessment can be maintained. Centralizing the work in IR&DS is one example of strategy in this area. Assessment has also been tied to annual program reviews, as well as school or disciplinary accreditations (e.g., ABET for the School of Engineering). (CFRs 2.11, 2.13)

### ***Distance Education***

Stanford has been involved in distance education since 1954 when the Stanford Honors Cooperative Program (HCP) began as a part-time master's degree in engineering. Online learning is now managed through the Stanford Center for Professional Development (SCPD), which enrolled 239 students in its Honors Cooperative Program from six different countries in 2011- 2012. Four educational tracks are offered: master's of science degrees; graduate credit courses; graduate certificates (three to five courses in a focused curriculum area); and audit courses. The large majority of the programs and courses are in engineering.

A technically secure system is in place to insure that the student who is registered for the course is the student enrolled in the course and doing the required assignments; this is accomplished through the mystanfordconnection portal. Similarly, a strict policy has been adopted to insure that the registered student takes the exams associated with the course. SCPD authorized and approves a person to administer exams to distant students; this person may be the direct manager of the student; a corporate HR or learning/ education representative, or a local college, university, high school, or library official.

SCPD rigorously assesses the quality of its distance education programs by administering student surveys and collecting open-ended comments. Since spring 2008-2009, courses have almost consistently scored above 4.0 (on a 5-point scale), in criteria that include, among others, selection of courses available, course advice and guidance, responsiveness of staff, and problem solving. In addition, Stanford has conducted an evaluation of the performance of distance and on-campus students. The data and evaluation clearly show that there is no difference between the performances of the student groups.

In summary the HCP has a long and successful history. It is a model for similar programs around the country. (CFRs 2.1, 4.7)

## ***Advising***

Advising had been an area of concern in the 2000 visit, and the team's CPR report noted some continuing student concerns over the variability of advising across units while at the same time acknowledging that significant investments and improvements had been made. Faculty and staff stress that significant improvements have been made in the area of student-faculty interaction and student advising. The SUES report, while not providing any dramatic recommendations in this area, provides a number of useful insights and suggestions, and the team believes that the SUES report provides a useful roadmap for additional improvements in this important and in some ways vexing issue. Appendix 9 of the EER Report describes the most recent efforts to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of advising. The trajectory in this area is clearly positive. Advising at Stanford, as well at all selective colleges and universities requires continuous attention. (CFR 2.12)

## ***Summary***

Stanford provided abundant evidence that it is achieving its institutional purposes and attaining its educational objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. The team concluded that Stanford is performing these core functions at an exceptionally high and exemplary level.

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

Stanford has more than adequate resources to ensure sustainability of its program. The university's intellectual and financial resources are exceptional, and leadership at all levels of the institution is excellent. (CFRs 3.1, 3.5, 3.8)

#### ***Fiscal and Physical Resources***

Because of the nature of Stanford, its sources of income are diverse and well managed. At a time when many universities are still struggling financially, Stanford is experiencing operating surpluses. Stanford's level of resources is significant and one of the best in the country. This careful management is clearly recognized and appreciated by the leadership of Stanford's units, faculty, and staff. (CFR 3.5)

Communications from the president and provost on budgetary and financial matters are very open and transparent and should be commended. In addition to a proactive and early response to the recession in 2008-09, these communications played a key role in a very

effective budget-reduction process that helped keep morale high on the campus. (CFR 4.1)

Since 2000, Stanford has completed an impressive number of capital projects that position the university at the cutting edge of many disciplines. Major progress has also been made in student and faculty housing, campus life, and sports facilities. Renewed adherence to the guiding principles of the original Stanford Master Plan and to high-quality, energy efficient buildings are also to be commended. Stanford takes an impressive long-term view in all these projects. The strong support of private donors and alumni toward financing new building is obviously a key element of Stanford's success in this area.

Differentiating Stanford from its peers is the extraordinary resource it has in terms of land. It has the space to grow for the foreseeable future, and the improvement in the quality of the physical plant over the past decade is simply remarkable, with a number of new buildings marked by high functionality, a commitment to sustainability, and high aesthetic value. The new buildings are well thought out from every angle, with a strong sense of how to create community and spaces for learning with informal gathering places, eating places and cafes, as well as formal instructional and research spaces.

### ***Faculty and Staff***

Stanford has an extraordinary faculty and a very strong support staff. Stanford is able to recruit, support, and develop many outstanding individuals. It gives the faculty ample resources to succeed and encourages excellence in both research and teaching. Teaching excellence is highly valued on the campus and influences promotion and tenure decisions. The enhancement of undergraduate education beginning in the 1990s has certainly played a positive role in reinforcing Stanford's commitment to high-quality teaching. (CFRs 3.1, 3.4)

### ***Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes***

The budgetary processes are led by the provost, along with the significant involvement of Stanford's academic and supporting units. It is a participatory process reinforced by transparent and positive communications to the community, including Stanford's faculty senate. Organizational and decision-making processes seem to be well understood and respected. Based on the discussion with the deans and other campus leaders, as well as the information provided for this review, it is apparent there is a correlation between budget allocations and the strategic plans and goals of the university and its units. (CFR 3.8)

Stanford also benefits from a distinguished and dedicated board of trustees. The trustees are clearly engaged in all of the important matters affecting the university. The team met several trustees during the Fall 2010 visit and was impressed with their knowledge of the university, level of engagement, and commitment. The trustees appear to provide strong

oversight, as well advice and guidance to the leadership of the university. The team was impressed by their interest and focus on the long-term health of the institution. (CFR 3.9)

There is a strong sense of shared governance between Stanford's administration and its faculty. The faculty senate provides strong oversight on all academic matters and is also a consultative body for the administration on important issues affecting the university. There seems to be an open, healthy, and collegial relationship between the senate and the president and provost. This enhances the decision-making process and spirit of collaboration that exists on the campus. (CFR 3.11)

### ***Summary***

All the evidence included in the CPR Report and its appendices, as well as the information gathered during the Fall 2010 and February 2013 visits, show that these are areas of good practice at Stanford. Stanford sustains its operations and supports its considerable achievements through ongoing investments in human, physical, fiscal and information resources. In addition, Stanford has an effective organizational infrastructure to support decision-making. The university has created a high quality environment for learning.

### ***Standard 4 – Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement***

Nothing sounds simpler than the goal stated in Standard 4: What could a university be other than an organization committed to learning and improvement? Yet in the context of the “multiversity” with its myriad of commitments and external attachments, especially a dynamic and global research university such as Stanford, the challenge is creating a singular focus (an organization) and ensuring that this focus is on improving the environment for student learning.

What Stanford has done since its last external accreditation offers impressive testimony to its organizational commitment to learning and improvement. Particularly important for WASC is the commitment that has been made to developing a thorough and complex system of assessment at all levels of the university as has been described above. The team commends Stanford for its reasonable approach to assessment processes that participate in the genuine spirit of the standards and create the conditions for reflection. It is clear that this work is now grounded in the culture of the university—much more thoroughly than at Stanford's peers—and that real work of program improvement is now taking place as a result of the assessment system, not just for the university-wide programs which are the subject of the investigations but also at the department level. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6)

Most importantly, Stanford has just completed a very thorough examination of virtually all aspects of the undergraduate experience. This has proceeded along two different vectors. First, is the effort over the past half-decade that has gone into the reaccreditation process. This is comprised of two main components. As mentioned previously, Stanford has put in place a remarkable assessment program, and this, though campus-wide in scope, will by its distributed design be having effects on individual programs and majors in a way that no report of this kind can capture. In addition, the accreditation process has focused on assessing the effectiveness of a number of distinctive programs in or aspects of undergraduate education at Stanford, the teaching of foreign languages and writing programs being the focus of the CPR report and a much broader range of programs—discussed below—in the EER report. (CFRs 2.2, 2.3, 2.6)

In parallel with this is the equally ambitious Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford (SUES), and only an institution with Stanford's commitment to reinventing itself would commit itself to this at the same time as the investigations into undergraduate education that were part of the WASC reaccreditation effort. In January 2010, the provost and the former vice provost for undergraduate education constituted an 17-member task force of faculty, students, and staff to engage in a major review of the undergraduate educational program. The charge to the task force was to “articulate an updated set of goals for a Stanford undergraduate education” and “to suggest how these goals might best be achieved and reflected in Stanford's undergraduate curriculum.” This was a faculty-led process, with seven subcommittees supporting the overall committee, and the final report was issued in January 2012.

The CPR report had cautioned that “it will be important as well to manage the process of faculty approval of the SUES recommendations so that this important process yields constructive educational improvements,” and the team is happy to note just a short time later that the faculty have endorsed the SUES report and remarkably, some of the ideas contained in that report are already being implemented. The most substantial is that a key element of Stanford education since 1996, the Introduction to the Humanities program (IHUM), has been replaced by a new program, Thinking Matters, which already began in Fall 2012. Thinking Matters strikes the review team as a remarkable program: it fits the Stanford culture in being broadly interdisciplinary and being as well grounded in science as well in the humanities. The courses look fascinating (the team would like to take most of them!), and the whole program is deeply impressive in being broadly integrative, carefully considered, already funded, and moved into implementation with impressive speed yet with careful design and what looks like impressive execution. The previous Stanford general education redesigns generated considerable national publicity; this one ought to as well, but with a chorus of acclaim. (CFR 2.2)

It falls well outside the purview of this report to describe the other recommendations made in the SUES report, but several points should be made. First, the report is in close dialogue with the work that has gone into the WASC accreditation process. For instance, the report suggests only incremental improvements to the writing requirement, in sharp contrast to the replacement of IHUM by Thinking Matters, and clearly the work that went into the study of writing for the CPR influenced this decision (one the team endorses).

The report makes essentially no recommendation to change the foreign language requirement, directly reflected the assessment in the CPR report that Stanford was doing a remarkable job with its foreign language instruction. The recommendations concerning matters such as Study Abroad and other ‘small college’ programs reflect the work done in the investigations reported in the EER as well.

What happens next is a function of the university’s planning and budgeting as much as anything else. The team’s sense is that the SUES report has been fully embraced by the administration as well as by the faculty, and there is a complex multistage implementation underway. Undoubtedly, there will be some changes of course as this proceeds, with some recommendations revised in the course of implementation, and this is precisely as it should be.

But Stanford deserves commendation for its willingness to reexamine every aspect of its undergraduate curriculum, to replace some programs that may have been working well with programs that should work better, but also to have the wisdom to leave many high performing programs as they are. (CFR 4.4, 4.6, 4.7)

### *Summary*

This is indeed the sign of an organization committed to learning and improvement. All of this evidence shows that Stanford has a strong and appropriate commitment to planning, and the team concluded that the planning is effective. Stanford is engaged in ongoing, evidence-based, and widespread participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its educational goals. These activities inform both institutional planning and evaluation of the university’s educational effectiveness. Stanford has ably demonstrated how it uses the results of its institutional inquiries and investigations to establish priorities and make ongoing improvements.

### *Investigations*

Over the past 15 years, particularly since the last WASC visit in 2000, Stanford has continued to develop new programs in and new approaches to undergraduate education. In its Institutional Proposal, Stanford committed to a number of detailed studies of the effectiveness of these programs. The proposal divided these into three overall categories: studies of “Fundamental Skills” in foreign language learning and writing, studies of “Variations in Educational Environments”; and studies of programs “Away from the Home Campus.”

By the time of the CPR report, the study of Fundamental Skills had been completed and was included in the 2010 Preparatory Report. As evidence of its capacity for self-review, Stanford presented extended assessments of two crucial areas in undergraduate general education: foreign language proficiency and writing. Both studies stand as striking examples of consequential inquiry: i.e., they engaged questions of teaching effectiveness with high potential to lead to improvement. A discussion of these investigations contained in the CPR report follows, edited slightly to bring them up to date.

After the 2000 WASC accreditation, Stanford set a higher standard for language proficiency, shifting from a required number of quarters to standards-based criteria for assessing student proficiency in the multiple competencies necessary to function in a foreign language in a real world setting. The Stanford Language Center, established in 1995, conducted a set of studies aimed at gauging oral and writing proficiency under a number of conditions. Using the Foreign Service Institute/American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages scale, these studies set out to determine oral and written proficiency after one and two years of instruction, for students with prior knowledge of a language, and for students who studied abroad.

The results of these multiple assessments show specific achievements for students at various levels and in different contexts. After one year of study in a cognate language, most students have gained the ability to write at the paragraph level. Second-year students are demonstrating oral abilities beyond those of language students in other universities. Students who study at Stanford programs abroad with a “language pledge” (to speak only the foreign language) make the greatest gains.

These assessments address significant issues for foreign language education and are based on solid methodology. The process of review in this area is exemplary. Two aspects of this examination of foreign language proficiency demand especial praise at the outset. First is that the success of the language programs in creating a high level of foreign language proficiency is tied successfully to core aspects of Stanford’s undergraduate education. One cannot create global citizens without instilling linguistic fluency in languages other than English. The team therefore commends Stanford for putting foreign language assessment front and center in this report and viewing it as a central rather than a marginal university concern.

The second aspect in which this experience is unique, was the extension of the analysis of the success of language teaching to the results of study abroad experiences in enhancing linguistic fluency. There is a commendable desire to ensure that the study abroad experience produces genuine gain in linguistic fluency. It is particularly noteworthy that the Overseas Programs and the Stanford Language Center are working together to ensure that appropriate changes in the study abroad centers are being made, particularly the pledge they are asking students attending the centers to make concerning using only the language they are studying while studying abroad.

The study of language skills in Spanish, French, and Chinese is well designed and well executed; it is a model in its comparative dimension, especially the attempt to analyze the relative success of cognate and non-cognate languages. The study exemplifies the commitment expected by the Standards to being a learning organization, to quality assurance, and to continuous improvement, even of already outstanding programs. The Stanford Language Center is already known as a national leader in the teaching of languages other than English, and both this study and the central role it has played in Stanford’s re-accreditation effort will only enhance its deservedly high standing.

The team posed a question in the CPR report: Has changing to a standards-based evaluation without changing the requirement pushed foreign language education for Stanford undergraduates far enough? The program has set an admirable goal: real-world competence or “the ability to initiate interactions with persons from other cultures” (2010 Preparatory Report 11). So the team raised the question as to whether that can be accomplished with a one-year requirement. It is clear from the SUES report that this question has been considered and answered in the affirmative, as the report recommends that the current requirement be kept intact. There are, of course, those who would disagree, but the team’s sense is that the question has been posed, it has been studied, the studies point to this conclusion, and so the SUES recommendation makes sense.

### ***Writing***

Under the aegis of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR), undergraduate writing at Stanford has undergone major changes in several areas since the previous WASC review. Policies exempting students from composition courses were revised so as to assure that every student begins with a writing course grounded in rhetoric that requires research-based argumentation. A new, sophomore level course in writing, research, and oral presentation was added in 2003, and a third required course, Writing in the Major (WIM), is offered in departments across the disciplines. WIM course syllabi are vetted by the PWR, which provides suggestions about the incorporation of revision and other writing pedagogies to faculty who are proposing such courses. TAs for WIM courses are paid more than their peers teaching in other courses, and funds are provided from the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education to create new WIM courses and to support creative ventures coming from existing courses. WIM courses are a place for students to practice various forms of disciplinary and professional writing. Institutional support for writing was enhanced by the opening of the Hume Writing Center in 2001, providing tutorial and other forms of support for student writers at every stage.

These changes have put undergraduate writing on firm ground, assuring continuity in approach and consistency in practice. Courses are grounded in a rhetorical approach to writing, meaning that communicative arts—writing, speaking, and visual forms—are presented in terms of situation, audience, and purpose rather than as decontextualized academic exercises. The courses presented by the PWR are particularly suitable for Stanford students because of the emphasis on research.

PWR has engaged in systematic review since its inception. In 2001, PWR began a five-year longitudinal study of student writing, collecting all written work from 189 students throughout their undergraduate careers. The bank of writing collected for the longitudinal study is very impressive—only a few institutions in the country have made as complete a compilation of student writing. The questions addressed in the assessment presented in the 2010 Preparatory Report came from a preliminary analysis of this ongoing longitudinal study that showed student writing ability suffering a mid-career dip in quality. How successful is the newly conceived first-year course? Would the new sophomore level course prevent this mid-career slump? And did students in writing-in-the-major courses retain a level of ability equal to that of students in earlier years? Did

they improve over ten weeks of an upper-division writing course? These are the questions driving the studies presented in the 2010 Preparatory Report.

The data presented in the assessment come from trait-based numerical evaluation of writing samples from the three courses in the writing sequence. One study compared pre- and post-course writing in the first quarter and another, two versions of the WIM course. Student writing was scored on four measures of rhetorical competency along with a holistic score. Raters were experienced PWR instructors. In both studies, students showed significant improvement over the 10-week courses. A significant finding that links the two studies shows that students in the upper-division WIM course retained levels of writing skill from the first-year course. Using the Stanford Longitudinal Study as a third data source, the PWR evaluated 190 source-based arguments using ten domains, including, for example, acts and data, theory and concepts, focus, and rhetorical awareness of readers and of source. The findings of this process show a statistically significant improvement in half of the categories.

Other modes of analysis will be applied to the data from the longitudinal study in the future. Interviews with students revealed that students learned the most from writing in dialogic interaction in one-on-one conferences with writing teachers. A broader impact of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric is the advent of a culture of writing at Stanford, a climate in which “writing” broadly construed is performed, noticed, and valued across the campus. A number of campus and community writing initiatives have grown out of the PWR since its inception.

Our questions during the CPR visit focused on asking how the results of the writing study would be disseminated to the faculty and to students at large and how the data would be incorporated into the SUES initiative. That question has now been answered. The SUES report’s recommendations for writing at Stanford envision more change than for foreign languages, but they are incremental changes, not a radically new approach. Specifically, it calls for the Study of Writing contained in the CPR report to be continued and extended, one more sign that a culture of assessment has taken hold at Stanford. The major issue that seems unresolved in the SUES recommendation is the proper approach to the teaching of oral communication, and it seems to us that this is an area that will require additional discussion as the SUES recommendations are implemented.

### ***Investigations conducted for the EER***

By the submission of the EER report in Fall 2012, Stanford’s original plan for these investigations had grown somewhat more complicated. The studies of “Variations in Educational Environments” were completed and were presented to the team as “The Small College Experience.” These and the studies of “Away from Home—Programs Off Campus” were complemented by two additional studies, a Transcript Study and a detailed Study of the Class of 2012. A discussion of these reports follows.

## *The Small College Experience*

Four programs launched in the 1990s exemplify Stanford's great strides in enhancing undergraduate education in the last two decades. Growing out of the 1994 report of the Commission on Undergraduate Education (CUE) established by then-President Gerhard Casper, these programs – Introductory Seminars, Sophomore College, undergraduate research, and Honors College – are the focus of one of the major investigations undertaken for the Educational Effectiveness Review.

A common thread among the four programs is the opportunity for students to work closely with members of the faculty in settings that bring the resources of a great research university to the service of undergraduate education. Introductory Seminars and Sophomore College put undergraduates in small classes (12-15 students) early in their college careers – IntroSems in quarter-long courses during the academic year, Sophomore College in three-week intensive courses in September, before the beginning of fall quarter. Undergraduate research and Honors College afford opportunities for directed research, normally for more advanced students. Faculty members in the four programs come from all seven schools of the university, a boon to students, but also to the faculty, who are able to draw undergraduates into their research and to engage in curricular innovation and intellectual exploration in subject areas at the heart of their scholarly interests.

### Introductory Seminars

On average over the past decade, Stanford has offered 113 Freshman Seminars and 97 Sophomore Seminars a year. Some 70 percent of undergraduates take at least one IntroSem before graduation.

For the EER, Stanford conducted a focus group study with undergraduates and a survey of faculty who have offered IntroSems. The focus groups found that the seminars “significantly and positively promote students’ intellectual and personal development” (2012 EER Report, p. 11) through the application and selection process as well as the pedagogies specific to the seminars: discussion-based learning; close engagement with a faculty mentor and highly-motivated peers; and immersion in close reading, original research and writing, hands-on learning, and real-world problem-solving. In comparison with other class settings, students in IntroSems have a higher degree of self-confidence and are more motivated and engaged in their academic work. Experience in IntroSems shapes students’ intellectual ambitions and academic and career trajectories as well as their willingness to engage with faculty during the remainder of their time at Stanford. The faculty survey “provided very strong evidence that IntroSems promote student-faculty relationships” (2012 EER Report, p. 13), with connections between students and faculty reinforced through course enhancement activities (e.g. meals, field trips) and continuing well beyond the seminars through such interactions as recommendation-writing, informal mentoring, and (less frequently) employment of students as research or teaching assistants.

## Sophomore College

Sophomore College (SoCo) enrolled 241 students in 20 different sections in September 2011.

Earlier studies of alumni of the program (1995 and 1999 SoCo cohorts) showed that in comparison with non-participants, SoCo participants had “closer relationships to and more interaction with faculty” and “greater satisfaction,” and that they were more likely to pursue undergraduate research, honors programs, and disciplinary graduate study (2012 EER Report, p. 14). For the EER, Stanford conducted pre- and post-surveys designed to control for selection effects into SoCo and to assess what students value about SoCo, what they learned from the program, and how the experience affects their post-graduation plans.

The findings:

- “SoCo succeeds at promoting students’ membership in an intellectual community and offering them an experience in rigorous academic inquiry” (2012 EER Report, p. 15).
- Student participants value having a small class experience, connecting intellectually with peers around shared interests, and developing close relationships with members of the faculty.
- Students report that SoCo had a significant effect on their intellectual and personal development, with particular gains in ability to engage discussion with multiple viewpoints, synthesize ideas, apply theories, and engage deep questions.

## Undergraduate Research

Summer undergraduate research programs give undergraduates the opportunity to engage in hands-on research under the guidance of members of the Stanford faculty. Students experience the life of a scholar and extend their learning well beyond the opportunities afforded by formal course work. Projects run for ten weeks. Students receive stipends from the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education under three rubrics: departmental grants, faculty grants, and student grants. Projects may continue into the academic year, when academic credit substitutes for funding, and may (but need not) become part of a student’s honors project or senior thesis.

Today the number of student participants in the VPUE-sponsored program approaches 1,000. The projects and faculty mentors are lodged in all seven schools of the university. Some students (number unknown) engage in faculty-mentored research without VPUE funding.

For the past decade, VPUE-funded students have been surveyed annually about their research experiences, with the findings fed back into subsequent project review and funding cycles. For the EER, all undergraduates participating in VPUE-funded research were surveyed to collect reflections on intellectual opportunities, engagement with

faculty, and other aspects of their research experience. A follow-up study interviewed a smaller group of participants in the program.

While student experiences vary depending on field, project, supervisor, and funding type, at its best, the overall impact of the program is clearly positive.

### Honors College

Honors College is the functional equivalent of a senior thesis boot camp: a three-week block of time in September when rising seniors focus on thesis work under the supervision of a member of the faculty. Students “attend department/program seminars, learn about university resources, conduct independent research and writing, meet with faculty and TAs for individualized instruction, and participate in Honors College-sponsored activities. Students in the program live together in a dorm, creating an opportunity to develop supportive relationships with one another. This unique curricular architecture is designed to advance students’ progress on their theses, increase students’ confidence in their research capacities, and bolster their ability to complete their theses” (2012 EER Report, p. 20).

Honors College enrolls an average of 100 students from 18-20 departments. For the EER, Stanford conducted a post-program survey of participants in the September 2011 Honors College. The survey addressed motivations for participating, time spent and specific kinds of work accomplished on the thesis prior to and during Honors College, the nature and quality of interactions with faculty members, and overall progress made on the thesis project as a result of Honors College. Overall, students reported making progress “on key milestones . . . such as compiling a bibliography, completing an outline, and defining research questions” (2012 EER Report, pp. 21-22). They learned about university resources that would be helpful to their progress during senior year and developed important relationships with an intellectual community of faculty and fellow students. Additionally, they developed or reinforced the scholarly habits that would serve them well in completing successful senior theses.

### Summary

Taken together, these four programs described above have made a major contribution to the quality and effectiveness of undergraduate education at Stanford. The team applauds the university’s continuing commitment to reviewing, refining, and improving the programs and to growing them in a judicious fashion so that more Stanford students can benefit from their high impact.

### *Away from Home*

#### Bing Overseas Studies Program (BOSP)

Stanford’s philosophy about study abroad is that it is a continuation of the student’s Stanford education, not a break from it. What this means is that study abroad for Stanford

consists almost exclusively of programs run by Stanford, and the program now consists of quarter-long programs in 11 countries, 6-9 three week Overseas Seminars and two consortium programs. For a research university, Stanford sends a high percentage of its students overseas, about 50%, and much of the discussion during the EER visit focused on Stanford's desire to move this number even higher.

The results reported in the EER clearly show that BOSP is a highly successful program, well regarded by its alumni, popular among students, and supported by the faculty. Its 11 locations span the globe, and as a university with global reach, Stanford has moved decisively beyond the continuing Eurocentric focus of many other study abroad programs.

The research results studied growth in language proficiency and in cultural knowledge, showing unsurprisingly that one's preparation coming into a program was a large predictor of how large the proficiency gain was. A more interesting result is that students in home-stay situations tended to have larger proficiency gains, and there is some discussion about whether this finding should push BOSP towards a greater use of home stay as opposed to more dormitory-like arrangement.

The ambition to move the percentage of students taking advantage of study abroad even higher than its current 50% is a worthy goal but a challenging one, given the sequential nature of so many STEM majors that make taking even a single quarter away difficult. This is where the Overseas Seminars come in, and this program, like some of the Small College Programs, is an excellent example of Stanford making creative use of its quarter schedule, which leaves September open for alternative kinds of instruction and activities.

### Stanford in Washington

Stanford in Washington is an extraordinary program, taking advantage of some spectacular facilities to create a unique program for Stanford. This program takes advantage of the full range of internship possibilities in Washington and is therefore less focused on the Congress than many other Washington programs. The team views this as a strength, and the program seems very well designed to maximize interaction among the participants so in a sense they each learn from their colleagues' experiences in Washington as well as their own.

The "Away from Home" programs are very successful aspects of a Stanford education. They are well designed, well run, and though distinct well integrated into the larger sense of a Stanford education.

### ***Transcript Study and the Class of 2012***

These studies provided a fascinating evaluation of the whole picture of a Stanford undergraduate education that complemented the more targeted investigations discussed above. The transcript study focused on what courses Stanford students actually took and revealed some fascinating patterns that shed light on the undergraduate experience. The

basic lesson learned from the study is that Stanford students have by and large taken quite good advantage of the opportunities provided to them. A couple of findings stand out: one is how many STEM students are nonetheless strongly interested in the arts and take their electives in the arts. Strong arts programs are not necessarily the first thing one thinks of when one thinks of Stanford, but the arts have emerged as a focus for investments in recent years, particularly in facilities, and this finding would underscore the wisdom of that decision. Another fascinating finding was how many Stanford undergraduates are also completing co-terminal master's degrees (22%), a number which is higher than the number taking a minor and more than three times the number doing a double major. This is primarily in Engineering but is a remarkable statistic, one not at all typical across the country.

The study of the Class of 2012 was an important capstone to the more specific studies because it enabled a broad analysis of how involvement in these programs correlated with success at Stanford. Its conclusion that involvement in the "small college experiences is significantly related to both objective and subjective measures of success at Stanford" (2012 EER Report, p.48) provides an important validation of the findings of the specific investigations.

All in all, the team concluded that the Investigations presented in the CPR and the EER reports are extraordinarily useful. They show that these programs work and that their findings will lead to improvements in the programs as they move forward, and they have contributed substantially to the process of reflection represented in the SUES report.

### **SECTION III**

#### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The team's central finding is that Stanford is in extraordinarily fine shape. Its prominence as a premier research institution continues to impact society. The team is encouraged by the commitment of the leadership and dedicated faculty to providing every student with a superb educational experience. It is evident that the standard of excellence was reinforced during this process and thoughtful inquiry allowed for a culture of innovation to prevail.

Rather than describe commendations in a separate section, the team has chosen to identify throughout this report areas worthy of significant praise. Quite frankly, almost everything at Stanford is a model of excellence. However, undergraduate advising, as mentioned previously, vexes all large universities and the team suggests that Stanford keep an eye on this area.

In terms of recommendations, the team simply wishes to encourage Stanford to continue its path and the good work that is underway. In addition, the team hopes that Stanford can

make available to a wider audience its effective strategies and practices in assessment of student learning, program review, and innovation in undergraduate education.

## APPENDIX 1: CREDIT HOUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Institution: Stanford University

Kind of Visit: Reaffirmation of Accreditation; Educational Effectiveness Review

Date: February 20-21, 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: <b>Stanford's policy is published in the Stanford Bulletin and is also available on the Student Affairs website.</b>  |                 |
| 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:   |                 |
| 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:   |                 |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses  | What kinds of courses (online or hybrid or both)?<br>How many syllabi were reviewed?<br>What degree level(s)?<br>What discipline(s)?  |                 |
|   | Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?  | Yes             |
|   | Comments: <b>Online courses were reviewed as part of the Distance Education review.</b>   |                 |
| 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 kind of courses? <b>Independent study, internships, design projects, practicums, studio courses, externships, curricular practical training and clinical practice</b><br>How many syllabi were reviewed? <b>24</b><br>What degree level(s)? <b>Undergraduate and Graduate</b><br>What discipline(s)? <b>Business, education, law-graduate and professional; geochemistry, chemical engineering, civil and environmental engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, international relations, art, biology, printmaking.</b> |                 |
|   | Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?  | Yes             |
|   | Comments:   |                 |

## APPENDIX 2: DISTANCE EDUCATION

Institution: Stanford University

Type of Visit: Reaffirmation of Accreditation; Educational Effectiveness Review

Name of reviewer/s: President Jean-Lou Chameau

Date/s of review: 2/21/13

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all comprehensive visits to institutions that offer distance education programs<sup>1</sup> and for other visits as applicable. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report. (If the institution offers only online courses, the team may use this form for reference but need not submit it as the team report is expected to cover distance education in depth in the body of the report.)

1. Programs and Courses Reviewed (please list)

School of Engineering and other courses (most courses were in Engineering).  
The courses and curricula are the same as regular courses.

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

One hundred and fifty six graduate courses from 12 departments, the majority in engineering. About seven percent of degrees in engineering are earned through the program. With 70 to 80 graduates per year, enrollment has been stable. The program has a solid history (initiated in 1963)

3. Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

Information on program provided prior to visit. The curricula and course contents are the same as regular courses. Visit included presentation and discussion with staff and faculty

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<sup>1</sup> See Protocol for Review of Distance Education to determine whether programs are subject to this process. In general only programs that are more than 50% online require review and reporting.

## Observations and Findings

| Lines of Inquiry   | Observations and Findings  | Follow-up Required<br>(identify the issues) |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 3.8, 4.1)   | Totally integrated in the mission.<br>A long and solid history.      |   |
| <i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution? (CFR 1.2, 2.10)   | Part of the regular program and academic units.                      |   |
| <i>Quality of the DE Infrastructure.</i> Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups? (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, 3.7)   | Superb.  |   |
| <i>Student Support Services.</i> <i>CPR:</i> What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? <i>EER:</i> What do data show about the effectiveness of the services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)   | Excellent model for other schools.                                   |   |
| <i>Faculty.</i> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? 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? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6) | Regular faculty support is exceptional. Same curricula as on campus. |   |
| <i>Curriculum and Delivery.</i> Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (CFRs 2.1-2.3, 4.6) (Submit credit hour report.)  | Faculty ad academic units.<br>Same as regular program.               |   |
| <i>Retention and Graduation.</i> What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)  | No disparity. Well maintained and detailed information               |   |
| <i>Student Learning.</i> <i>CPR:</i> How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? <i>EER:</i> What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)  | Comparable to regular program.                                       |   |

|  |                                 |  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>Contracts with Vendors.</i> Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on <i>Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations</i>?</p>                    | <p>No.</p>                      |  |
| <p><i>Quality Assurance Processes: CPR:</i> How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? <i>EER:</i> What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)</p> | <p>Same as regular courses.</p> |  |

### APPENDIX 3: STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW

Institution: Stanford University

Date: 2/21/13

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report.

| <b>Material Reviewed</b>     | <b>Questions/Comments</b> (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)   | <b>Verified Yes/No</b> |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Policy on student complaints | Does the institution have a formal policy on student complaints?  | <b>Yes</b>             |
|                              | Comments: <b>The student grievance policies for academic and non-academic matters are published on the Stanford website. The policies define a grievance, describe the process for submitting a grievance, and list a contact person for more information or questions.</b>           |                        |
| Process(es)/ procedure       | Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints?  | <b>Yes</b>             |
|                              | Does the institution adhere to this procedure?  | <b>Yes</b>             |
|                              | Comments: <b>The published policies describe the procedures for submitting a grievance. Students are encouraged to explore informal resolution. If that is unsuccessful the student can bring the grievance to the appropriate administrative official where it will be reviewed.</b> |                        |
| Records                      | Does the institution maintain records of student complaints?  | <b>Yes</b>             |
|                              | Comments: <b>Records are maintained by the appropriate offices.</b>   |                        |