

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 1

For Institutions Seeking Candidacy or Initial Accreditation

To Zaytuna College

October 29-31, 2014

Team Roster

Stephen Privett, President Emeritus, University of San Francisco, Chair
Sally Murphy, Senior Director Undergraduate Studies and General Education,
California State University, East Bay, Assistant Chair
Denise DeZolt, Chief Academic Officer, Laureate International Universities, Team Member
Jeffery Keith, Operating Partner (Higher Education), Sterling Partners, Team Member
Steve Pawluk, Provost, La Sierra University, Team Member
Richard Winn, WSCUC Staff Liaison

The team evaluated the institution under the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. 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. If the institution is granted candidacy or initial accreditation by the Commission, this report and the Commission action letter will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I: OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT	2
A. Description of the Institution and Visit	2
B. The Institution's Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 Report	4
C. Response to Issues Raised in the Eligibility Review Letter	5
SECTION II: EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC STANDARDS	7
Standard 1	7
Standard 2	12
Standard 3	21
Standard 4	26
SECTION III: PREPARATION FOR ACCREDITATION UNDER THE 2013 HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION	34
SECTION IV: INVENTORY OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS	35
SECTION V: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	36

SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and the Visit: Zaytuna College began in 1996 as Zaytuna Institute in Hayward, California, a community educational center co-founded by Hamza Yusuf, now president of the college and Hesham Alalusi, a noted Bay Area Philanthropist. The transformation from Institute to College took place in 2009 with the founding of Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California.

The evolution from institute to liberal arts college was driven by a strong sense of need within the American Muslim community for leaders who are thoroughly steeped in the Islamic intellectual and spiritual traditions and well grounded in the Western liberal arts so that they may be culturally competent individuals whose active and broad engagement with American society would be sustained and fueled by their grounding in Islam's scholarly and religious tradition. Zaytuna's mission was carefully crafted and effectively promulgated among a broad spectrum of stakeholders that extends beyond faculty, staff, students and the local Muslim community to embrace national and global supporters. The mission has inspired broad support and serves as a formative influence on all aspects of the college: curriculum, andragogy, hiring of faculty and staff, student life policies and opportunities, development efforts and community outreach.

Zaytuna is the first Muslim liberal arts college in America to seek accreditation. It understands itself as offering a much-needed service to the Muslim community and society-at-large by educating motivated individuals with the tools of learning, critical thinking, and eloquent expression to prepare them to contribute the best of the Islamic tradition to public conversations on the critical issues facing society. Such participation in the cultural life of society requires equally strong grounding in Islam and contemporary American culture, which

Zaytuna aims to offer its students. This dual focus is clearly articulated in the Mission Statement and reflected in Institutional and programmatic learning outcomes, which in Zaytuna's case, coincide because of the cohort model of learning and the fact that the college offers a single liberal arts curriculum.

Zaytuna's learning outcomes are strongly grounded in the mission of the institution and draw from the Islamic tradition, which is best captured and expressed in the Arabic word "adab." The team learned that this term contains a complex set of meanings that include decency, comportment, decorum, etiquette, manners, morals, propriety and humanness. As an acronym, ADAB names the desired outcome of education -- a fully human being with "adab" -- but also of the means to acquire it: "A" signals the "tools of learning," which include the ability to read Arabic, memorize key texts, qualitative and quantitative analytical skills, and social learning; "D" indicates a demonstrable grounding in both the Islamic and Western liberal arts traditions; "A" calls for the ability to analyze subjects through a lens that integrates various disciplines to address and respond to the contemporary cultural context; "B" expects students to build on theoretical knowledge through moral commitment and service to the community and society. [Catalogue, Observation, Conversation with faculty, staff, students.] The articulation of the criteria for assessing the achievement of these outcomes is in a formative stage and already the college has altered its first year seminar to include a stronger writing component, based on the faculty's assessment of student work. Thus, in this case, the assessment loop was closed.

The College represents itself clearly and accurately to its various publics through publications, public presentations, and its web presence. Its learning objectives are clearly stated in the catalogue and understood and subscribed to by students with solid understanding and deep appreciation. Indeed, it is the clarity and inspiring character of the mission that draws

students to Zaytuna; motivates faculty, staff and trustees to participate in the life of the college; and moves donors and pro-bono volunteers from across the country to support the college. A highly successful east coast developer volunteers one week per month to design and direct the dramatic remodeling project of the 2401 Le Conte facility. His in-kind service is valued at over \$250,000. The Board of Trustees includes sitting members from Tennessee, Florida, and Connecticut. The team members have rarely seen a mission statement so effectively promulgated and enthusiastically supported by all of an institution's stakeholders.

While strongly rooted in the Sunni tradition, Zaytuna values diversity of experience, thought and expression among its faculty and students, as was evidenced by a lively student debate on the question of whether a good Muslim should celebrate Halloween. Students chose contrasting sides in addressing the question without ever challenging the opposition's fidelity to the Muslim faith tradition and its beliefs. The team took this as a healthy example of the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives characteristic of a classic liberal arts education.

Zaytuna has added no new degrees since Eligibility; rather it has consolidated two degree-options into one option to guarantee that all students receive the educational experience the College faculty desires for their students (see also Standard 2 for a more complete discussion).

The College has no distance education programs or off-campus sites.

B. Alignment with the Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report: The team found overall consistency between the Letter of Intent and the approach adopted for this review. The report was thorough and direct and reported on strengths and areas requiring continued effort. In keeping with the College's commitment to a rigorous liberal arts education, the report described sincere introspection from faculty and staff and reported on meetings where

vigorous discussions were held over issues identified. The data supplied before and reported during the visit assured the Team that Zaytuna College's faculty and staff asked searching questions and responded by appropriately adjusting the curriculum and the undergraduate program of study.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Eligibility Review Committee Letter: It is important to understand that Zaytuna has only been in existence for five years and is a small-scale operation with eight full-time and ten part-time faculty members (many with administrative as well as teaching roles) and a student body of 58 at the time of the visit. The College faculty and staff desire to remain an undergraduate liberal arts college of modest size. The college has adopted and publicized policies that are appropriate to its size and age. Zaytuna understands that it is in the process of transitioning from an initial founding or start-up phase to a more institutionalized mode with the requisite structures, metrics, roles, policies and procedures that will insure stability, accountability and quality over the long haul, regardless of the presence or eventual replacement of its charismatic co-founders. In this early or foundational phase, faculty, staff, trustees, and founders necessarily wear "multiple hats" and it is not always clear who is acting in what capacity. While everyone at Zaytuna is still taking on multiple responsibilities, in response to the Eligibility Review Committee's recommendation, the Board of Trustees has responded to the Eligibility Review Committee's recommendation by appropriately refocusing its energies from operational issues, as was called for in the early years as an institute, to the key strategic challenges facing Zaytuna: sustainability and growth, institutionalization and continuity of leadership, infrastructure development commensurate with planned growth. The Board has overseen a successful strategic planning process and exercises the expected responsibilities of an

independent board of trustees, including financial oversight, annual evaluation of the president, formal review and approval of the budget.

The Eligibility Review Committee made four additional recommendations, the first three of which call for increasing the robustness of assessment processes and procedures, continued development of student learning outcomes in General Education, and, specifically, the development of formal Information Literacy outcomes. The fourth recommendation focused on development of a strong Institutional Research staff and office. The team discovered that much work had been undertaken on each of the first three recommendations. The College's progress in this regard will be discussed under Standard 2. The Team determined that the assessment component of the fourth recommendation, "Further maturation of assessment procedures through additional development of institutional research capacity" had occupied most of the College's activities since the grant of Eligibility with less done to expand the College's institutional research capacity. None the less, the Team heard of the College's reasonable plans to support the current assessment incumbent's training to respond to the Eligibility Review Committee's concern by expanding the College's institutional research capacity (see Standard 4 discussion).

The Team was convinced that one must look at Zaytuna through the lens of "transition" rather than that of a fully established college. It is moving through its foundational period and the foundation that is being laid is solid and the team believes it will support the anticipated growth in numbers and complexity that will characterize the next stage. During its first five years the college purchased two facilities in close proximity to each other at the center of "Holy Hill," which allows for close collaboration with the other professional schools and seminaries that comprise the Graduate Theological Union [GTU]. Zaytuna, though an undergraduate college, is a welcomed presence and important voice in the ongoing theological conversation that

takes place at America's most ecumenical consortium of professional schools of theology. Zaytuna clearly enjoys "location, location, location" with access to the rich resources of the University of California, Berkeley and the GTU. The move from its first rented site on the South side of the UC Berkeley campus to its current permanent location on "Holy Hill" was a strategically determined and critically important one. Both properties were purchased with minimal financial exposure on the part of the college because of a successful fund-raising effort and no-interest loans from members of the American Muslim community.

SECTION II: EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC STANDARDS

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The team noted that Zaytuna College expresses in its various documents that its primary purpose is to offer an educational experience founded on the classical liberal arts tradition, providing students with instruction in both western and Islamic studies with a goal of graduating students who are equally conversant in Islamic traditions and western culture. The institution presents a historical overview of how the classical liberal arts form the foundation for its curriculum and approach to the teaching-learning enterprise. This is published most clearly in the institution's Catalog and on its web site, and it is also addressed in varied ways in course syllabi and program outcome assessments. It is clearly stated in the institution's Articles of Incorporation. Zaytuna College asserted, in its report to WASC, that its students are "educated, not indoctrinated" (p. 18). The team's interaction with students supports these assertions. (CFR 1.1, 1.2)

The College's statements on liberal education, diversity, academic freedom, and its role on fostering the public good, combine to support the conclusion that education is the primary purpose of the institution. (CFR 1.5)

The team observed the institution's clearly stated commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students in support of the mission and aims of the institution. Zaytuna College has developed and published an Academic Freedom Policy as well as a grievance procedure that addresses instances where a member of the learning community believes that his or her academic freedom has been infringed. The institution's policies encourage respectful inquiry, seeking to strike an appropriate balance between its role as a liberal arts institution and that of a faith-based institution of higher learning, which seeks to transmit revealed knowledge and long-held truths. (CFR 1.3)

The team learned from discussions with students and through observations of student interactions with each other and with Zaytuna staff, that open inquiry is valued, taught, and modeled. Students exhibited and expressed a freedom to respectfully question and disagree with each other and with Zaytuna staff, as well as to clearly state and offer support for their opinions in order to share or try out their ideas. Observation of the students' interaction in a Student Forum provided clear evidence for members of the team that Zaytuna's students understand and are able to skillfully participate in the type and high quality of discourse that is desired in a liberal arts institution while also being faithful to the core tenets of Islam.

Student interviews made it very clear that they felt free to "push the boundaries" and to question any view. They also indicated that faculty members did not stop them from asking questions, even questions that "we cannot ask our parents," and that, on the whole, faculty

members did not offer answers as much as they explained nuances and guided students in considering the context and implications of various answers to their questions.

Similarly, faculty members explained that Zaytuna College, in some contrast with the “older” model of instruction utilized by the Zaytuna Institute which may have fostered “hyper-deference,” to authority, encourages thoughtful, informed, and respectful discussion, questioning, and comparison of a diversity of views. Faculty members expressed appreciation for students’ inquisitiveness, eagerness to know and understand, and willingness to engage a diversity of ideas from both Islamic and western traditions. (CFR 1.3)

Diversity of viewpoints and perspectives is not only valued and appropriately modeled at all levels, it is also fostered by Zaytuna’ College’s efforts to promote diversity among its faculty and students, as well as diversity of thought, within the inherent limits required by the nature of its degree programs and the core religious-cultural values that it espouses. Nevertheless, the institution’s publications and course syllabi, as well as the words and teaching methods of the faculty members, express the value of diversity of experience and thought as a way of broadening understanding and fostering rigor in the academic enterprise. (CFR 1.4)

During an interview with academic administration, team members were informed that, even in the admissions process, as important as the faith-based nature of the College is, “Education is our primary purpose. We are not seeking students whose parents are sending them here seeking some sort of ‘spiritual fix.’ Of course we want students to have a spiritual experience, but we are a college.”

Some, but not all, of Zaytuna’s students expressed the view that the curriculum would be enriched by increased interaction and exchange of ideas with representatives of other faith traditions and worldviews. While this was not a major concern, it was identified as a way to

enlarge their understanding of the context in which they will serve and represent Islam. The team encourages Zaytuna's faculty and administration to take appropriate advantage of its new location in the center on "Holy Hill" to increase the frequency with which the students may find formal and informal avenues for open discussion with others of different faith traditions and worldviews. (CFR 1.4)

The Board of Trustees, while insuring the institution's grounding in its particular faith tradition and its mission, appears to be an autonomously operating board. Current evidence indicates that its policies, financial structures, and operation are focused on the stated mission of Zaytuna College. The institution's Conflict of Interest Policy and Annual Statement clearly outline its expectations for an independently operating board of trustees. Furthermore, the board engages in periodic and annual professional development exercises in order to ensure, not only its autonomy, but also its engagement in visionary governance as opposed to its prior role as an operating board of the Zaytuna Institute. (CFR 1.7)

The one area of some concern for the team is the overlapping roles that are currently being held by some individuals as the College transitions from a foundational stage to a more stabilized institutional mode. With board members who are also founders and, in some cases, teachers; administrators who also teach and serve on the board, there is a blurring of lines of accountability that, while understandable at this point in the College's development, will need to be addressed in the near future in order to enable a healthy system of checks and balances and diverse perspectives. Similarly, team members were led to understand that the board has requested monthly reports from each campus office. This frequency and level of engagement is more typical of an operating board than a governing board. Formulating more clear distinctions

with regard to Board oversight will also protect against future potential conflicts of interest in budgetary and policy-related decisions.

The team appreciates Zaytuna College's clear and accurate presentation of its current identity and status in various venues, including the Catalog, orientation sessions, website, and published documents available to the general public. The institution is especially careful to properly identify its current WASC status, and it has taken appropriate steps to address what, to some outside observers, might be seen to be an inherent conflict of values and approaches resulting from its dual loyalty to its Islamic heritage and the liberal arts approach to the teaching and learning enterprise. (CFR 1.6)

Because Zaytuna College is a relatively new institution, information regarding student success is yet to be fully analyzed and published. This function would be enhanced, as would other functions, which rely on accurate use and analysis of data, by implementation of the College's plan to fortify the Office of Institutional Research. (CFR 1.2)

The team noted Zaytuna College's adoption and publication of appropriate policies and procedures, development of regular evaluation of programs and processes, and description of robust business practices supported by an appropriate organizational structure. Especially noted were the skillful and pervasively imbedded cultural practices of *adab* and *mabadi* as vehicles for the evaluation of operations as well as the curriculum. (CFR 1.7)

Because of the relatively short time that Zaytuna has been operating as a college, most of its structures are incipient in form, many of them appear to be relatively informal, and some seem to be in a state of fluid development. While *adab* serves a very beneficial organizing framework for the institution as it develops structures and assessment mechanisms, it will become increasingly necessary, as the College solidifies its transition from an institute into an

established institution of higher education, to review, modify, and strengthen its written protocols.

Interviews with students indicated that there were both formal and informal opportunities to express concerns and grievances, and that students were confident that the newly formed student governance body was a tremendous asset in that regard and provided them with a significant voice to influence the direction and policies of the institution. (CFR 1.7)

The team notes and appreciates Zaytuna College's willingness to provide abundant and clear information regarding its mission, aims, values, policies, and practices. (CFR 1.8)

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

The Team came away from its visit with the faculty, staff, and particularly with the students convinced of the high quality of the educational program offered by Zaytuna. Not only is its educational program appropriate in content, standards of performance, and teaching methods (CFR 2.1), the curriculum is, in many ways, an exemplar of traditional liberal arts education. Students know what their faculty expect from them and they receive regular feedback on their level of achievement. The student-faculty ratio allows for this regular feedback cycle and the faculty are clear that enrollment growth will require they carefully monitor the processes so that the high level of interaction with and support of their students' learning is not sacrificed. (CFR 2.2)

It is important to note that the faculty, while small in number, bring a wide range of experience and preparation to the curriculum's development. Both full-time and part-time faculty are responsible not only for their own but also for the curriculum as a whole. The degree of knowledge about each student and her/his individual progress is practical because of the very small student-faculty ratio of faculty to students of 9.4 based on an FTE scale developed by the

college. Students reported easy access to their faculty and the faculty's welcoming of students' questions, concerns, and need for guidance. Part-time faculty members are integrally involved in supporting student learning and achievement, curricular revisions, and share responsibility for teaching some required courses, e.g. Arabic language, memorization and recitation. (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, 3.1)

Due to the small size of the student body and the faculty, the faculty as a whole meet regularly (before the start of each semester each new year, monthly throughout the year, and for a three-day retreat at the end of the academic year) to review the curriculum, course syllabi, feedback through course evaluations and surveys, and discuss student preparation and progress. (CFR 2.4) The faculty, through academic discussion and debate, shape and adapt curriculum to achieve the College's learning outcomes. Indeed the devotion of the faculty as a whole to the mission of the College and the students' education is beyond what many of the team members have seen elsewhere. (CFR 2.5)

Zaytuna graduated its first class in 2014. Nine students received their degrees. Each wrote a senior thesis, the culminating academic experience for which the students have been preparing throughout their junior and senior years. Each member of the faculty, full-time and part-time, reads each of the theses using the same rubric for assessment. During its visit, the team saw a significant spread in the individual assessments; the faculty discussions showed them to be willing and able to adjust and adapt learning opportunities so that students acquire desired skills. The whole faculty discussed each student's thesis and its strengths and weaknesses during their annual retreat. The result of the use of the rubrics and the subsequent discussions identified common weaknesses in the theses. Based on the readings and discussions, the freshman seminar was revised to provide more opportunity for writing instruction and practice. Those

recommended changes were implemented during the fall 2014 semester. The team was impressed by the dedication of the faculty to open discussion and debate about and deep concern for the quality of students' work, as well as the speed with which the faculty made the adjustments to the curriculum to respond to weaknesses observed. (CFR 2.4, 2.6, 4.4)

The clarity of Zaytuna's mission and its commitment to a traditional liberal arts education infused with study of Islam and its central texts provides direction for the faculty and results in an undergraduate program that is clear, coherent, and consistent. The team was most pleasantly surprised that students were equally clear on why they were attending Zaytuna and what student learning outcomes they strove to achieve. They easily answered questions about what they were learning and the value of their education. In addition to current students, reports by alumnae, four of whom were interviewed by phone, indicated that they recognized the exceptional and demanding undergraduate degree program that provided them with a high quality graduate school preparatory education. (CFRs 2.2, 3.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Zaytuna's liberal arts degree is demanding and exceptional in breadth and its depth of study (three courses in logic, for example), students are required to understand the competing but not necessarily contradictory ways of knowing, both spiritual and academic. (CFR 2.6)

The team discussed issues of scalability in the degree of attention the faculty gives to the curriculum and to each student. The College is in a special time in its evolution and care must be taken to assure that growth does not undermine its ability to offer personalized support for each student. As more students attend and retention and graduation patterns emerge from more than the first classes of students, the faculty and staff must maintain the high quality of curricular engagement, design, instruction, and the speed of change as the College grows. The team notes that while there are slow growth plans that suggest careful planning to continue support for both

in-class and out-of-class learning, the intimacy of the learning environment will necessarily change in the future. The current curriculum is intentionally built to support the stated outcomes; shared rubrics are used to assess learning at appropriate levels in a scaffolded program of study. These two practices must be maintained to meet the College's own aspirations for itself and for its students. (CFRs 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 4.3, 4.4)

While the discussion under Standard 2 focuses on the thoughtful, closely monitored, and scaffolded curriculum, the College is developing an equally coherent co-curriculum that reflects the importance of learning the skills of leadership and healthy debate, as well as responsibility for self and others, providing students with opportunities to learn and practice physical skills in the traditional activity of archery, with the hope of introducing equestrianism, and swimming in the future. The three "sports" were held in high esteem in ancient times and referenced in Islamic texts. The team saw that the care given academic studies is also spent on the development of the co-curriculum.

The College has an explicit requirement that all students perform a minimum of 50 hours of service to the community. While initially students had the primary responsibility for finding service opportunities, the College now has a structured program led by the Dean of Student Life and Experiential Learning. In this role, he oversees Residential Life, Community Engagement, and Student Learning and Development outside the classroom. The Dean of Student Services oversees Student Counseling, Student Government, and supports the Academic Support Center.

The team saw many ways in which both the curriculum and the co-curriculum are being carefully developed and adapted with student feedback. Two examples demonstrate the attention which Zaytuna gives to the whole of a student's education and development. The first is a change in the curriculum resulting from feedback to faculty. The Student Government

organization brought to the attention of the faculty and staff the students' frustration with the expectations for fluency in Arabic. For many students fluency in Arabic was unattainable without more instruction and practice. Two changes were made in response: first the College revised its curriculum for the summer Arabic intensive program to align it with the undergraduate program. Second, more practice in the use of Arabic was integrated into courses, building on and practicing the skills of using the language. Both changes were a response to student feedback and in support of an essential learning outcome.

The second example arose from the first group of students' experiential learning experiences. No longer an expectation for students to meet through their own efforts, the College now creates multiple opportunities for engagement and support within communities in which the students live, rather than leaving the creation of these opportunities to the students themselves. When asked about the value of the community engagement requirement and the ease of achieving the goals of service learning, students spoke of its centrality to their learning about Islamic values and commitments. Faculty see the experiential, service learning or community engagement requirement as an opportunity for students to reflect on what it means to be a Muslim and to practice what they are learning in their studies. One student told the team that experiential learning and service was "the hidden heart of the school" which "allows internalization of their studies beyond [classroom] learning and opens them up to empathy and compassion."

The visiting team discussed on several occasions with both faculty and the administration the College's plan to do its first program review in 2022. This decision was made so that the College could look at a program with a curriculum that had been taught to a full five years of students whose work in the current curriculum would provide sufficient

information for a formal program review. The team strongly believes that 2022 is too far away to complete the first formal program review. It is clear to the team that there is on-going curriculum review and therefore the likelihood of a 5-year period of un-modified curriculum is remote. Rather, the team recommends that Zaytuna begin now to develop program review protocols to allow for a formal review of the curriculum well before 2022.

In their first four years, the faculty have already made significant changes to the program of study at Zaytuna. When the first three classes started, there were two degrees offered, one a program focused on Islamic Law and Theology, the other in Arabic Language and Literature. By the end of 2012 the faculty collectively determined that the students in each program were missing significant instruction that was provided for only one or the other of the majors. As a result, students now take a single major: Islamic Law and Theology to ensure that all students receive the same rigorous education. In addition, students expressed concerns that they were falling behind in Arabic language study. In response, the College has streamlined its summer and undergraduate program, clarified the goals and objectives of the entire program, and introduced more support through a team of TAs and the Academic Support Center for students at any level. Such changes are not a sufficient reason to postpone a formal program review. While the Team recognizes that the small number of students does not provide big numbers to assess student learning and post graduation success, it is essential that proper program review procedures be established, based on the students' work at hand rather than postpone in anticipation of larger numbers. There are already nine graduates who can be surveyed for their reflections on their undergraduate studies. Designing program review protocols now will accomplish two things: 1) inform the faculty of the goals so that the data required for program reviews so that such information can be collected systematically; and 2)

the review protocols can be adapted to allow for careful reflection on educational effectiveness of a program of study that the team expects will continue to be changed. The team has little doubt that an earlier date for program review will allow the faculty to conduct the review with the same careful attention that the curriculum now receives. (CFR 2.7)

The team noted that student research is promoted by course requirements and taught in a methods course during the junior year to prepare the students for the work expected in the institution's senior thesis requirement. (CFR 2.8)

The team also noted that faculty research is "welcomed" (Report, p. 51) but that it is neither expected nor required. The institution currently places a greater value on faculty members spending time with students in the classroom teaching and mentoring students outside of the classroom, and on faculty engagement in community service projects. The institution provided a list of papers and presentations made by various faculty members.

The team questions whether pitting scholarship against mentoring, teaching and service is an appropriate dichotomy. Faculty research is intended to support the best kinds of teaching, to offer students an opportunity to collaborate with the faculty member in research, to broaden the scope of academic dialogue, and to strengthen service to the larger community. It seems unusual for students to be asked to engage in senior theses while not expecting faculty members to model their own active research agendas. There may be significant value in considering how the senior thesis requirement might be used to enable students to work with and contribute to the faculty members' research. Opportunities to work with faculty on their own research may also better prepare students for the senior theses.

Secondly, it appears that the institution has not developed a clear distinction between scholarly/creative activities and service activities. Publications and presentations are not, *per se*,

scholarly. In some cases they constitute service, which is important, but which is quite different from research or creative work. (CFR 2.8)

The team found, in conversation with faculty and administrators, that a good amount of scholarship is occurring at present. Both full-time and part-time faculty are involved in discipline-related and instruction-related projects. Although scholarship and creative activities are not currently linked to the faculty members' evaluations or accommodated in their professional responsibilities, their dedication to their disciplines, to the institution, and to their students prompts them to engage in various forms of research, scholarship, and creative activity. The team believes that this needs to be formalized for the benefit of the faculty members, the reputation of the institution, and for the greater good of higher education in the United States. Further, exploration of the opportunities to publish scholarly work in the area of teaching and learning may allow more of the faculty to engage in the practical research that supports their own efforts to improve teaching and learning. (CFRs 2.8, 2.9)

Zaytuna's curriculum is an innovative sequential, cohort based, and full-time single program based on western and Islamic liberal arts traditions. Leveraging this scaffolded approach, the college is able to benchmark student progress toward degree completion. At present the college gathers student data from the pre-admission phase through graduation and beyond, tracking achievement, student satisfaction, and campus climate to support its assessment of student success. The college is formative in its development of a robust and integrated data set (Attachment 49) and intends to develop a more comprehensive approach to include further disaggregation by gender, age, preparation and other relevant factors with the intention of more focused data-driven decision-making. Prompt development of institutional research capacity will put in place data structures and forms of analyses that will be especially useful as the college

grows. This will allow the college to also use data to establish internal benchmarks as well as help in external benchmarking efforts. (CFR 2.10)

Meeting student needs, collectively and individually, is foundational to the student-centered ethos of the college from initial inquiry as a prospect through to degree completion. The Office of Enrollment Management supports prospective students from inquiry through admission. The catalog, handbook, and other web resources outline expectations and describe the requirements of the college's programs (Zaytuna College 2014-2015 Catalog, p. 7-26).

Zaytuna's clearly articulated transfer policy is outlined in the catalog (2014-15 Catalog p. 54-55.). Given the unique nature of the curriculum, typically very few credits transfer; prior learning or challenge exams cannot transfer and the college has no articulation or transfer agreements in place. Yet, the enrollment team was able to provide specific examples of the limited application of transfer of credits for the benefit of the particular students, further demonstrating the institutional commitment to the best interest of students. In the context of the cohort model, the college works with students who fail a course, withdraw, or need for some reason to take a leave of absence to get back on track and where possible rejoin their cohort. They also recognize that there are situations wherein such options may not be in the best interest of the student and work with the student to withdraw from Zaytuna. The institution has an early warning system for at-risk students that for early intervention to offer support to get back on track. Tutors, faculty mentors, and instructors also provide support. For students struggling with their studies, the College provides two mentors and support from the Academic Support Center, which offers tutoring (CFRs 2.12, 2.14).

Upon admission, students have access to a broad array of services, co-and extra-curricular activities. Students are required to complete a 50-hour Experiential Learning

component. Services include the Academic Support Center, pastoral and career counseling, campus safety and security, student development, a student council, and an array of student organizations. These experiences are administered primarily by the Dean of Student Life and Experiential Learning, the Dean of Student Services, and a faculty coordinator for the Academic Support Center. Results of the College Experience Survey using a rating scale of 1 to 5 (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree) showed variability in satisfaction ranging from 2.8 for disability services to 4.9 for services from the Vice President of the ASA (Attachment 49). Another example of student-centered support is the recently launched (2013-2014) faculty-mentoring program (Attachment 43) that provides small groups of students a primary point of faculty contact and support throughout their academic experience. The Experiential Learning requirement creates the opportunity for students to integrate and apply their knowledge to real life experiences. One student described it as the “hidden heart of the school”. The team learned from interviews with four alumni (approximately half of the first graduating class), about how highly they value their degrees. Two of them entered the college with degrees and two as incoming first time freshmen, and two of them are enrolled in a highly regarded graduate school despite receiving their degrees from an unaccredited undergraduate program. The other two are applying for graduate school even though they are currently employed and being actively recruited by other employers. (CFRs 2.11, 2.13)

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

The College is organized as a California non-profit public benefit corporation with the formal name: “Zaytuna College.” The College currently has four divisions: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance and Administration, and Development directed by the president who is

under the governance of the Board of Trustees (CFR 3.8, 3.9). The current organizational structure allows for an effective and expedient decision making process which currently works for an institution the size of Zaytuna (3.1). The Development division now reports directly to the recently hired Vice President of Development. This position is essential because the vast majority of Zaytuna's operating revenue now and in the future will come from fundraising activities.

There are several College and Board of Trustees committees on which management, faculty, staff, and in some cases, students serve to execute work-plans and initiatives that require collaboration and coordination while the College is in growth mode. These integrated efforts seem to work well as the institution has a relatively small student body. However, as the institution grows there will need to be a clearer delineation between the board, administration, students and faculty. The team recommends that the board continue to seek governance development opportunities with organizations such as the Association of Governing Boards (AGB).

The team finds the institution to be financially stable and operating at a surplus for fiscal years 2013 and 2014 (year ending July 31, 2014) (CFR 3.4). Unqualified independent audits are conducted on an annual basis (CFR 3.4). The board and administration of the institution have proven they can grow and sustain Zaytuna College in support of its long-term plans. For example, two building acquisitions in Berkeley were completed between FY12 and FY14. The addition of space and the million-dollar plan to construct new classroom and meeting spaces in the buildings bode well for the future growth plans of the institution. A unique characteristic of the College is its ability to derive the vast majority (over 95% in FY 2014) of its revenue from non-tuition and fees sources. Successful fund-raising activities allow students to attend the

college for relatively little or no cost. Zaytuna is committed to graduating students debt-free and being universally accessible to qualified students without regard to their capacity to meet tuition costs. This commitment is consistent with Islamic values about the importance of education and the need to avoid debt when possible.

The reliance on donation revenue means Zaytuna must have a robust development team. The College has hired four strong candidates to lead its development efforts. A seasoned leader who has an extensive high net-worth network across the United States heads the development efforts. Fundraising is broken into 4 categories: fundraising events, seasonal campaigns, monthly recurring donations and high net-worth individual contributions.

- A. *Fundraising Events.* Five fundraising events were held across the United States to help support the institution in FY14 with 9 planned for FY15. The total amount derived from these events in 2014 contributed over 30 percent of total gift revenue.
- B. *Seasonal Campaigns.* The Ramadan Campaign is the largest revenue generator for the College. It supports student financial aid and merit scholarships. The *Zakat Fund* (obligatory alms) is used exclusively for students in financial need, in accordance with Islamic teachings. Financial aid reduced tuition and fees from \$1.1 million to a net of \$350,000 for fiscal year 2014. This means that Zakat financial aid reduced tuition dependency by close to 70%.
- C. *Monthly Recurring Donations.* Zaytuna has made significant efforts in developing a monthly, recurring donor base of over 1,000 individuals. The Development staff forecasts that the fund will reach \$1.4 million in FY15. The effort called “12,000 strong” is meant to be a donor base of 12,000 individuals who donate \$30 per month resulting in annual unrestricted funds of \$4.5 million. The long-term goal of the monthly recurring

donor base is for it to generate 25% of total operating revenue. The unique culture of giving in the Islamic community has created a situation for the college where a vast majority of its donation revenue is either unrestricted or temporarily restricted. Please see below for the preliminary unaudited FY 2014 donation revenue breakdown:

Donation Revenue

Unrestricted	\$3,603,073	47.8%
Temporarily Restricted	\$3,928,409	52.1%
Permanently Restricted	6,875	.1%
Total Donation Revenue	\$7,538,358	
Total Revenue and Support	\$8,207,313	

The total donation revenue as a percentage of the institution’s operating budget is over 91 percent, well above the average for regionally accredited undergraduate institutions (CFR 3.4).

D. *High Net-Worth Individuals:* Zaytuna’s President travels across the world seeking donations from wealthy individuals who support the College’s mission and purpose. In FY14, \$250,000 in funds were received from private individuals from the Middle East to help purchase the Euclid property. Zaytuna anticipates that it will be able to accelerate its efforts and increase gift revenue both domestically and internationally (e.g. the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Turkey) if the institution were to receive regional accreditation.

Overall, the institution has placed itself in a financially sustainable position as evidenced by a robust fiscal year 2014. Total revenue equaled \$8,207,313 with expenses of \$5,052,184 as follows:

<u>Expenses</u>		
Academic	\$3,008,302	59.5%
Institutional Advancement	\$1,100,802	21.8%
Management & General	\$943,080	18.7%
Total Expenses	\$5,052,184	

As is illustrated above, the institution spends over 59.5% of its total expense allocation on academics with an additional 21.8% on institutional advancement (CFR 3.4). It is critical for the College to seek further expenditures in the areas of administration as it continues to grow. Currently there are many individuals in the institution who perform multiple duties. This is acceptable and even expected for an institution as small as Zaytuna but investments in technology and human resources will continue to be needed in the future in order to support growth. Overall, the institution had a forecasted surplus of \$3,155,129 on total revenue of \$8,207,313 for fiscal year ending July 31, 2014. The five-year strategic plan and financial model forecast the institution to have continued surpluses and revenue growth (CFR 3.4). Currently the plan calls for a student body of 125 by 2018 while keeping the student to faculty ratio low at 8 to 1. The total revenue generated in 2018 is anticipated to be in excess of \$14 million with a projected surplus of over \$5 million. A critical part of the College's future efforts should be in creating an endowment to ensure financial stability during years in which revenue could decrease. The board is well of aware of this and is confident in its ability to raise an endowment will increase dramatically if Zaytuna were to become regionally accredited.

Zaytuna College's balance sheet is well positioned for future growth. The unaudited FY 2014 numbers show an institution that has a relatively low amount of debt versus property and equipment:

Property and Equipment, Net \$9,605,145

Short Term and Long Term Debt \$2,828,344

Also, the cash position of the institution is well situated for future years with Cash and Equivalents of \$4,342,443. The current ratio is a healthy 2.53 (please see below):

Current Assets \$4,852,919

Current Liabilities \$2,143,344

Current Ratio 2.26

Finally, it is rather impressive that the institution has been able to generate Total Net Assets of approximately \$12 million for FY ending July 31, 2014 given a new institution that is not regionally accredited. This is a testament to the support of the Islamic community and the dedication of its faculty and staff.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, institutional Learning, and Improvement

Quality Assurance Processes: The team observed that Zaytuna College has put into place a variety of policies that will support a robust quality-assurance program. Development of an Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, a list of Assessment Activities, audits of operations and finances, and assessment of program outcomes all provide evidence of intentional review of the institution and its processes and outcomes. (CFR 4.1)

Although discussion and evaluation are prevalent, it is less clear that the most critical data are being collected and that a robust system of trend analysis and evidence-based decision-

making is fully in place. The team observed that some offices make better use of key metrics than others and that some decisions may be based on shared opinion and consensus. Because of the clear sense of mission among faculty and staff, this approach has been productive, but the team believes that it is neither efficient nor sustainable as the institution matures. (CFR 4.2)

The basic structure of a comprehensive academic program review is in place, although there are no plans to engage in that process until 2022, 8 years from the present. Academic administration explained that this was due to recent changes in the program, specifically the reduction of the academic program from two majors to one, and the belief that it is necessary to allow current innovations to settle in. However, a systematic review and alignment of the current curriculum is being undertaken under the framework of *mabadi*. *Mabadi* can be understood as a way or process of studying a discipline's content. The faculty have already developed *mabadi* for each class, and are now undertaking the creation of chapter-length narratives based on them with the intent of creating a text that will be read by all administration, faculty, and students. The text will assist students in their reflection on the learning outcomes and an understanding the intentional scaffolding of the curriculum. The team heard from the Dean of Faculty that they are interested in bringing in external reviewers in the coming academic year for a preliminary review of the Arabic program, and will solicit reviews of the narrative text representing the entire curriculum, including educational philosophy and index of texts, once it is ready within the next five years. The team encourages this.

The collaborative development of Student Learning Outcomes and the three-day retreat at which the institution's academic effectiveness are considered are commendable. Interviews suggest that the annual discussions were both collaborative and productive, enabling results from upper division courses and from collaborative scoring of the senior project to prompt

adjustments in the freshman seminar and lower division courses as well as in the sequencing and scaffolding of courses.

Interviews by the team of both faculty and administrators led to our understanding that, in general terms, the vision for the institution is produced by the founders of the institution and by the Board. The team found remarkable belief in and commitment to that vision among all faculty and staff. Less clear to the team was the process used to derive the strategic plan from the vision.

Simultaneously, “bottom up” needs and budget requests appear to result from a vice president conferring with his or her team, soliciting a list of needs and requests, which are then brought to the budget committee and “rolled into the following year’s plan”. The leadership team firms up the budget in January or February of the prior fiscal year and the Board formalizes it in the budget in May or June. Fundraising for budgetary needs is undertaken seriously during Ramadan.

The team is less clear on how the vision of the founders and board and the needs and budget requests of the faculty and staff intersect. The team believes that sometimes the President, sometimes the President’s Cabinet, and sometimes the Board and Founders make the decision. Who decides what and when is not precisely defined. The team recommends that the College clarify and formalize its planning and decision-making processes to provide for greater transparency and accountability.

Nevertheless, many positive plans, processes, timelines, and intentions are in place and create a solid foundation for the future. Fortified by an intense commitment to Zaytuna College’s mission by all faculty, staff, and students, the College has accomplished an impressive list of tasks, including curriculum design and redesign, effective teaching and mentoring, student

development opportunities, community engagement, marketing and public relations, and fundraising. The team encourages the College to build on its successes and on its dedicated staff to refine and enhance its quality-assurance processes for academic and non-academic components. The team believes it is essential that the College follow through on its commitment to hire a new staff member in institutional research or support a current staff member to develop greater competencies in the nuances of institutional research to assist the College during the coming years.

Zaytuna College has established an Office of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation and an Office of Program Management. There is currently not a separate Office of Institutional Research. It became increasingly evident to the team that the Office of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation is not sufficiently staffed by individuals with specific training in data collection, organization, and analysis that would support the quality-assurance and institutional research needs of the College. The team believes that a highly qualified institutional researcher/analyst would provide important direction and support for the College, assisting the many areas that need to make data-informed decisions and choices in designing robust and scalable models and methods of analysis of their effectiveness. The present is a good time to establish such a service before the institution grows in size and complexity with the consequence that development of the institutional research function would be much more difficult to implement. (CFR 4.2). Additionally establishing this unit may result in reliable data to support and influence decision-making as the college grows, rather than needing to make corrections based on inaccurate or missing information.

Institutional Learning and Improvement: Self-assessment is inherent in the Islamic tradition therefore the institution embraces the importance of being a learning institution focused

on continuous improvement. Across all levels and departments of the college, there is a deep commitment to providing the highest quality educational experience to each and every student. Although the college uses a multiplicity of measures such campus climate surveys, evaluation of reflection papers, and senior thesis assessment, the institutional research function is incipient as observed by the team and reported by members of the Zaytuna academic affairs unit. That being said, the college community currently uses what data it has available to be responsive to student and curricular needs. One such example of change made from survey results is a division of labor in the Office of Student Life based on feedback of student satisfaction with services. Specifically, recognizing that the unit needed more staff and that the existing leader (as Director of Student Life) was not able to leverage his considerable talent as effectively as desired, the college promoted him to Dean of Student Life and Experiential Learning and hired a separate Dean of Student Services. Responsibilities between the two deans were aligned based on skill sets and identified needs of the student body. The college recognizes the need for systematic, robust institutional research capacity to support the planning and development needs of the campus. To that end, using a strengths-based, contextually relevant approach to leveraging internal, well-vetted talent, the college has decided to support Sumaira Akhtar, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, in a certificate program in institutional research with the potential for a master's degree also fully supported by the college. Ms. Akhtar is also considering participation in IR conferences and applying for the WSCUC Assessment Leadership Academy, both actions the team supports. Zaytuna is now in the process of developing an outcome assessment plan under the leadership of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Colleen Keyes, based on the ADAB model that includes:

- Acquiring tools for lifelong learning (Arabic language, memorization, and the qualitative

and quantitative disciplines of the classical liberal arts)

- Demonstrating grounding in both the Islamic and the Western scholarly traditions
- Analyzing subjects in relation to each other and with attention to contemporary relevance
- Building on theoretical knowledge through moral commitment and service to the community and society

Additionally the institution has implemented several initiatives related to assessment, including a rubric based senior thesis assessment, an Experiential Learning reflection paper rubric, and a campus climate survey. Further, individuals have participated in WASC conference activities and workshops related to this area. (CFR 4.3 and 1.2)

Although the institution does not yet have a comprehensive approach to evaluating teaching and learning and making evidence based improvements, it has leveraged its small sized, deeply committed faculty as a body of the whole to consider teaching and learning over one day and three day meetings to assess student work and consider curricular changes. One major curricular change was the move to teaching classical Arabic rather than modern standard Arabic to align language learning with texts being used. Most recently they used a 3-day faculty retreat to review all senior theses against a rubric, working to come to consensus on ratings. These examples further demonstrate the deep commitment of the faculty to ensure student learning outcomes, individually and collectively. (CFR 4.4)

Research/Scholarship: The team found that the college considers itself first and foremost a teaching institution, thus faculty are not expected to engage in traditional research, though in the future there may be more formal expectations. Rather, the focus is on teaching and learning, excellence in teaching, involvement in service to the community, and as an organization, providing resources and thought leadership on Islamic higher education. For example, various

faculty members are engaged in such initiatives as a textbook curriculum series, translation texts, and development of materials for course instruction. The focus on teaching and learning is further reflected in the highly engaged deliberative process of course consideration. A prime example of this is the mabadi framework, from traditional Islam learning, that consists of 10 foundational elements of course content. The framework has been applied to every subject under study including logic, freshman seminar, jurisprudence, and theology. As a next step, given the revised curriculum, each course will have the mabadi framework associated with it in narrative form, and these will be published for the Zaytuna community and perhaps also for the wider public. In many respects the institution is a learning organization with an emphasis on the scholarship of teaching and learning. From interviews with faculty and academic leadership, however, it is clear that the college as yet does not have a differentiated model of scholarship, research, creativity, and service, nor do faculty assignments, compensation models, and evaluation take these into consideration. (CFR 4.4)

Although the institution does collect some data related to institutional effectiveness, it is not yet done systematically. Plans for program review that extend to 2022 include consideration for broad based stakeholder engagement. Although this is 8 years away, the timeline allows for multiple cohorts to have completed the program. During that time, the faculty will engage in on-going review of the curriculum, inviting where appropriate external review, where appropriate. According to academic leadership, should they identify a need to move that timeline earlier, they will do so. (CFR 4.5).

The institution engages in a top-down bottom-up strategic planning process that includes using data and key performance indicators based on data that are currently available to them. The Board of Trustees approves the priorities and the Finance Committee approves the related

budget. It is unclear how a range of other decisions are made or how key stakeholder involvement is ensured. Given that the institution is transitioning from an institute to a college, the staff size is small, requiring these very dedicated individuals to assume multiple roles. For example, founders serve the institution as board members, faculty, and administrators. The DACI framework (Attachment 23) described in the self-study provides a useful mechanism further clarify of roles, responsibilities, and decision-making pathways. Such a framework may also prove useful as the college grows and considers how to scale its functions while maintaining its caring, individual focus on each of its students. (CFR 4.6)

Because of its grounding in Islamic tradition and knowledge as well as preserving or restoring the Sunni scholarly traditions, Zaytuna considers itself somewhat insulated from trends and issues in higher education in general but sees itself as leading the restoration of a much older tradition that has relevancy for contemporary times. The focus on a single program and minimal use of technology or outsourcing of instructional delivery coupled with small size and an intense and personal instructional model informs planning and resource allocation. The college community fully recognizes and embraces its role and responsibility as a visionary institution, not only in its mission and academic model, but in providing access to an educational experience that to date has not been available to students looking for this approach to learning and focus on bringing the worlds of western and Islamic traditions together. These factors position it to lend a unique and much needed voice in higher education. (CFR 4.7)

SECTION III. PREPARATION FOR ACCREDITATION UNDER THE 2013 HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION

The team found that Zaytuna has positioned itself and its faculty and staff to give careful consideration to and reflection upon the meanings and goals of full accreditation. The team found that senior staff and the administration understand themselves as at a beginning where first attention must be about their students' learning and the need to develop processes to support their educational vision must happen concurrently. No concern that the team expressed surprised the faculty or staff at Zaytuna. They know they are a start-up institution and that building processes to assure they can sustain their vision is their immediate work. They anticipated each area of concern in their self-study and in their conversations with the team, it was clear that either planning or implementation of plans was underway during the visit.

The team's analysis is rooted in full confidence that the College is regularly and conscientiously maintaining the meaning, quality, and integrity of its degree. The processes are newly instituted in the last two or so years but embraced by faculty and staff with full willingness to make changes when and where needed to improve the quality of student outcomes. In this particular case, the team encourages the College to stay with its intended goal of slow and intentional growth so that its administrative infrastructure grows in concert with its enrollment and educational goals. Specifically, the team recommends that Zaytuna delay any move to develop a graduate program until the educational effectiveness of its undergraduate curriculum and the processes needed to assure its effectiveness are well rooted in the institution.

The question of sustainability is more interesting because of Zaytuna's unique place in the higher education landscape in the United States and the world. Its mission is unique and its goals are both lofty and worthy. Its uniqueness insulates it from many of the changes in and

forecasts for the Higher Education environment in the US. Zaytuna seeks accreditation not for access to federal funding; they intend to fund their students' education through private donations. Their small size and specialized goals protect them from many of the demographic changes that pose challenges to other colleges and universities. Indeed, as the only accredited Islamic institution of higher education in the Americas, the changing demographics are a potential advantage for the College. Zaytuna's development is being watched by many in the Muslim community in the US and abroad. Their Board is comprised of a national rather than a local set of directors. Their funding comes from donors both in the US and abroad and comprises over 90% of their operating budget. They have little doubt that accreditation would solidify an already sound financial base. Equally important, accreditation will give them a place in academic and societal conversations that will help to shape the future of the planet and its people.

SECTION IV. INVENTORY OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS

In the team's evaluation, Zaytuna is in substantial compliance with each of the four standards. While there is variability in the individual components of each standard, the team's overall assessment and consensus is that Zaytuna is as compliant as any college or university could be at this point in its existence.

SECTION V: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Zaytuna College has been in existence for the last five years. It displays the characteristics to be expected of any new institution of higher education. And yet, the team found that Zaytuna had seriously engaged its students, faculty, administration and Board in significant work to report on the establishment of a college worthy of initial accreditation. We found the preparation of the self-study thorough and specific. We met more than once with almost all students, including almost half of the first graduating class, and all faculty and staff. We met with many of those faculty and staff more than once, reflecting the many roles some members of the Zaytuna community perform. We saw a universal passion for the College's mission; we heard strong student support for the mission; and we found institutional recognition of the need to do more to secure Zaytuna's accreditation. Moreover, we found openness to our questions and transparency in response that was beyond reproach. The commendations listed below represent Zaytuna's significant growth from a community institute to a college that equally serves equally its many communities.

1. The team commends Zaytuna College for the seriousness with which it has prepared for and engaged with the accreditation process. The college clearly capitalized on this opportunity to improve the overall quality of the institution and enhance the institution's capacity to contribute to the conversation and the work of higher education in the United States.
2. The team commends Zaytuna College for a mission that inspires all stakeholders, local and national, and is a formative influence on all aspects of the college, including hiring of faculty and

staff, curriculum design, pedagogy, development efforts, and policies and procedures. Rarely has team seen a mission that has been so enthusiastically appropriated and advanced.

3. The team commends Zaytuna College for its mission-driven, unique and scaffolded liberal arts curriculum that brings together western and Islamic traditions. The curriculum creates a culture of respect, intellectual humility, and critical inquiry that empowers students to draw their own conclusions. We further commend the integrity with which the community lives that curriculum, intentionally embracing, examining, and amending the curriculum to deepen faculty and student engagement in learning.

4. The team commends the faculty's strong commitment to students as exemplified by its careful monitoring of individual student achievement, personal mentoring, and promotion of a culture of continuous improvement of student learning.

5. The team likewise commends the Student Life staff for drawing from Islamic traditions to develop and sustain their strong commitment to students' holistic personal development and safety, as exemplified by the individualized support which each student receives and the great care taken to enhance meaningful co-curricular and extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, with special notice of the benefits of experiential learning.

6. The team commends Zaytuna College for developing a strong statement on academic freedom and for its clear understanding of its ground-breaking responsibility as an Islamic liberal arts institution serving the public good.

7. The team commends Zaytuna College for its efforts to moderate the cost of attendance through its financial aid and fundraising efforts and its commitment to assuring students graduate debt free.

None of the recommendations listed below were a surprise to Zaytuna's President or to the wider community that assembled to hear the team's final statement. As noted in the team's report, the faculty and staff knew well their own strengths and weaknesses. Rather than add to the work needed at the College, these recommendations reinforce the accuracy of the College's faculty and staff's self-knowledge.

1. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees continue to seek professional development opportunities in the area of best practices in college governance.
2. The team recommends that the administration take steps to develop an institutional research capacity capable of designing systems for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data to inform evidence-based decision-making and planning.
3. The team recommends that the college articulate a policy that appropriately defines research, scholarship, creative activity, and service; and also incorporate these activities into faculty work assignments and evaluations.
4. The team recommends that the college consider engaging a human resources consultant to review its policies, procedures, and practices to ensure they are consistent with statutory regulations and best practices across higher education.

5. The team recommends that Zaytuna maintain its thoughtful approach to seeking diversity of experience, thought and expression within the college community while remaining true to its faith tradition and continue to provide opportunities for free and open discussion of issues.

~~~~~

The team ends this report with hope, grounded in the vision and care with which this College is being created and the clear commitment of the students, faculty, and staff to the vision, that Zaytuna will help create new, more realistic images of Muslims in the West and in the world, images arising from the contemporary application of ancient writings and traditions of Islamic teaching and learning, accompanied by the foundational knowledge of the Western liberal arts curriculum.