

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

To California Institute of the Arts

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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

A. Description of Institution and Visit

California Institute of the Arts, was founded in 1961 by Walt Disney, and there remains a linear connection to the Disney family. The Institute's Valencia campus was developed and occupied in 1971, and serves as its base of operations, with its 'REDCAT' theatre and gallery operation located in downtown Los Angeles. "CalArts," as it is generally known, is globally recognized as a leader in innovation in the arts, and is widely regarded as an international center of excellence.

The Institute offers a range of BFA, MFA and MA degrees in a wide range of programs, through its six schools – the School of Art, the School of Critical Studies, the Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance, the School of Film/Video, the Herb Alpert School of Music, and the School of Theater. In 2009 it launched a new advanced degree, the Doctor of Musical Arts. CalArts is accredited by WASC, and its various music, dance, theatre and visual arts programs are accredited by the relevant discipline-specific agencies, e.g. NASM, NASAD. CalArts does not offer off-campus or distance-learning programs.

The Institute's mission states that it is "founded on artmaking excellence, creative experimentation, critical reflection and the diversity of voices." In accordance with its mission, CalArts offers individually tailored education to emerging artists and is dedicated to "fostering brilliance and innovation within the broadest context possible."

(<http://calarts.edu/about/factsheet>) (CFR 1.1)

CalArts is located in Valencia California about 30 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. At the center of the 60-acre campus is a unique, sprawling five-level 500,000 square foot building, which houses all of the six schools. The structure includes classrooms, art and

animation studios, theatres for various performing venues, music rehearsal rooms, dance studios, galleries, costume, scenery and machine shops, photo, computer and media labs, editing suites, a digital recording studio, library facilities and a cafeteria.

In 2010-11, the Institute had an annual operating budget of \$52.7 million and an endowment of \$105 million. The Institute, which has been led by the same president since 1988, has a stable leadership (CFR 3.9), and a mature organizational structure (CalArts Academic and Administrative Org Charts) that is sufficient to support its institutional and educational objectives (CFR 1.3, 3.1, 3.10).

Fall 2011 figures show an enrollment of 1441 students (36% graduate students) from almost every state and 44 nations. International students comprise 12% of the student body. Students from the US are from diverse backgrounds. Sixty percent of students from the U.S. identify as Caucasian; 11% as Asian American, 11% as Latino, 7% as African American and 7% as bi-racial. Annual tuition for 2011-12 is \$37,684 with most students (80%) receiving financial aid (<http://calarts.edu/about/factsheet>). In keeping with the Institute's individualized approach to arts education, the student faculty ratio is an enviable 7:1 (<http://calarts.edu/about/factsheet>). The Institute has 318 faculty members, including adjuncts, and 240 staff members.

The Institute first received WASC Accreditation in 1964 and has been reaccredited for each accreditation cycle since then. The Commission reaffirmed the Institute's accreditation at its June 22-23, 2000 meeting and acted to schedule a CPR review for spring 2010 and an EER review for spring 2011. The July 10, 2000 Commission action letter identified two issues for further attention: strategic planning and faculty peer review. The Commission subsequently granted a request from CalArts to delay scheduling of the EER visit until fall 2011 to provide a full 18 months between visits.

On February 8-10, 2010 the Institute participated in a CPR visit, which served to spotlight several organizational issues that clearly required intense study and effective resolution, and which are outlined in the June 2010 action letter from the Commission that reaffirmed accreditation status. In the action letter the Commission commended CalArts for its commitment to its mission, student-centered teaching and learning environment, nimble navigating through the recent economic downturn and emphasis on diversity of voices. It also requested that the Institute include in its EER review responses to four major issues raised in the Commission action letter: decision-making processes, peer review, assessment, and planning and resources. It rescheduled the EER visit from Fall 2011 to Spring 2012 to allow the Institute more time to demonstrate significant progress in each of the four major areas.

The WASC visiting team spent three days on campus, March 7-9, 2012, to conduct the EER. The team was warmly welcomed by the ALO and Institute community, its role clearly understood, and all help was extended to ensure the team was able to get a deep sense of the culture and character of the Institute. The EER visit was efficiently organized, the team was promptly provided with all requested documents, and the institution was flexible in re-arranging schedules at the team's request. All team members reported that questions were answered fully. The team expresses its thanks to every member of the CalArts community it met, and sincerely thanks everyone for their forthrightness and candor.

The on-site visit itself was straightforward and no new issues surfaced. The team is confident that between the documents and the face-to-face meetings, it has captured a good and true impression of the institution, supported by the written and oral evidence.

B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report: Alignment with the Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

CalArts elected to organize the CPR report around three reflective themes and weave the standards within each of the themes. The team members agree that the Institute's EER report is consistent with the three reflective themes and plans set forth in the Institute's proposal of October 2007. Moreover, the plans set forth were effectively implemented and appropriately adjusted to meet on-going challenges and the recommendations of the CPR.

The EER report is of excellent quality, well organized, thoughtful and clearly written. The site visit confirmed the team's initial impression that the report presented an accurate picture of the institution and described the condition of the Institute openly and with candor. Direct questioning of the relevant constituencies showed that its assembly and final form had direct input at all stages. While the EER did not dwell on the role of the Board of Trustees, the team met with its Executive Committee and asked specifically about their role. They were able to quote minutes in which the Board had discussed the report as it was progressing, and signed off on it before it was sent to the team.

C. Response to Previous Commission Issues

The team members strongly agree that the EER has thoughtfully and conscientiously addressed the four issues raised in the 2010 action letter. The EER report openly acknowledges that many policies, processes and procedures such as faculty peer review, program review and revision of academic decision-making processes are newly developed or still works in progress. Therefore, assessment of outcomes in many of these areas is in the emerging stages.

Decision-Making Processes. The CPR visiting team noted that many organizational structures were outdated, unclear or contradictory. The Commission letter included the expectation that by the time of EER visit, "CalArts will have completed full review of its

decision-making processes and procedures and revision of relevant published documents, especially the Faculty and Staff Handbooks.” The Institute has been highly successful in producing updated Faculty and Staff Handbooks, clarifying decision-making processes and instituting mechanisms to increase the flow of information and communication between faculty and administration. These positive initiatives are discussed further in Theme Three.

Peer Review. The second Commission recommendation involved the development of a systematic, formalized model of faculty peer review, which is an expectation of CFR 3.3. The lack of such a workable model was noted by WASC as a concern over 10 years ago. The Commission’s expectation was that by the time of the EER visit CalArts would have resolved the impasse that had developed regarding peer review and developed a system of peer review. The visiting team was impressed by the great progress that the institution has made since the CPR visit in designing and implementing a flexible policy for peer review (CFR 3.3, 3.11). Details of CalArts’ peer review and evaluation process are discussed in Theme Three.

Assessment. The Commission encouraged the Institute by the time of the EER visit to have developed and implemented a comprehensive system of assessment of student learning, including learning objectives at the course, program, and institutional level. Theme One explicates the remarkable progress made in this area since the CPR visit (CFR 2.4).

Planning and Resources. Because of concerns expressed by the CPR visiting team about alignment of financial resources with new initiatives, the Commission letter suggested that “CalArts should be prepared to demonstrate the alignment of defined resources required for sustainability of each new initiative with the financial resources available for that initiative (CFR 3.4, 4.1,4.2).” The team found that greatly enhanced (though often strained) assessment capabilities have led to greater data-driven decision-making and development of strategic

initiatives. Planning and resources are discussed in sections on Themes One and Three and in the section on Sustainability.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

The CalArts EER Report is organized around three themes that span the four WASC Standards. The Team Visit Report will first discuss the themes as they relate to specific CFRs and then consider required reporting areas and other remaining issues.

Institutional Themes

Theme One: “By what measures do we align programmatic goals within assessment of student learning with the individual artistic métiers?”

In its first theme, CalArts comprehensively addresses the difficult and complex task of aligning student learning with goals at all levels from the course to the institutional. In this theme the institution offers a detailed examination of CalArts intertwined assessment/program review process by looking at:

Assessment of Student Learning

Program-Level Learning Goals and Outcomes

Course-Level Learning Goals and Outcomes

Formative Assessment of Student Learning: Mentor Reports, Mid-Residence Review Reports, and Graduation Review Reports

Critical Studies Mid-Residence Review for BFA Students

Assessment of Schools and Programs

Annual Assessment Reports

Program Review and National Accreditation

Assessment of Institute Educational and Operational Objectives

Institutional Research

Student Graduation and Retention Rates

In its previous CPR report the institution discussed the (rather difficult) stages of development of a comprehensive process, and its EER report states that the institution has now committed to using standardized assessment models and has fully implemented the process that will be used going forward. The visiting team found extensive evidence that the assessment of

the quality of academic, program learning outcomes (PLOs) which was in its “initial” stage at the time of the CPR, has made remarkable progress CFR 2.2, 2.7). Although it is now only in the “emerging” stage throughout the Institute and in a few cases has reached the “developed” stage, the momentum toward a rigorous and universal progress seems clear. At this time curricular maps that detail in which course(s) the student is expected to develop particular competencies inside an academic program are still rare, but as the underlying course outcomes become settled programs will find this far easier to do. All programs examined in detail indicated that course maps would be forthcoming soon, for the simple reason that it assisted them. Outcomes are defined for all programs, but associated rubrics often use generalized terms like “excellent,” “quality,” and “competent” without specifying any indicators of attainment, or do not exist below the program level for individual courses or assignments.

While it may seem contradictory for the visiting team to be so enthusiastic about progress while noting so many assessment areas in which additional development will still be necessary, the tone of this visit was one in which a “culture of evidence” was a given. This seemed a complete turnabout from just two years ago when assessment remained a contentious issue. In such an environment full development seems inevitable. Given the short time period since the implementation of this broad-based program, the trajectory is in the direction of increasing implementation and the rate of development is rapid.

The major outcome of this alignment of all levels of assessment with program and institutional goals is that it is now possible to have resource allocation discussions that are data driven and aligned with student learning (CFR 2.10, 4.3). From the initial interview with the Institute’s president who indicated that data-based discussions are routinely part of every meeting all the way down to individual program meetings which produced and relied upon clear

data to support their positions, the team observed a culture now based in objective decision-making. This accomplishment is monumental. It relates to and satisfies a large number of criteria for review, the umbrella standard being clear objectives and indicators of achievement at all levels. (CFR 1.2) The relationship of this system to resource allocation speaks to clear and consistent decision-making processes (CFR 3.8). Perhaps the only noted exception was an observation by the team that staff development is the purview of the academic deans, whose individual policies vary widely. The team heard repeatedly from staff members in the schools that they felt the policies by which they might access professional development funding were too subjective and uneven across the institution, leading to some morale issues. While the visiting team urges some attention to this matter, which could be easily rectified, it is the general absence of similar issues in the institution that confirms greater reliance on objective decision-making.

The institution's EER report emphasizes that many structures and practices for assessment of student learning were already in place, and that the systematic alignment was largely of pre-existing pieces. Some, like student surveys (CFR 2.10) and policies on including SLOs on syllabi (CFR 2.3), had been in place by the CPR visit, but were not fully implemented. Observation by the visiting team would indicate that these are now implemented. Some are very long-standing practice – like the tradition of faculty mentoring and direct assessment of performances, exhibitions, and productions of various kinds (CFRs 4.6, 4.7). These are standard in arts institutions and disciplines, and they supply very strong building blocks for a comprehensive system. The Deans' Council, in particular, articulated during the visit the degree to which traditional practice of primary assessment of student learning in the arts constituted "best practice" in higher education. The team found it reaffirming to hear this institutional strength explicitly formulated, as confirmation of the waning of the concern expressed during the

CPR visit that assessment was undermining traditional student-mentor relationships. The faculty mentoring has some formal aspects, such as regular advising (CFR 2.3, 2.12) and many less defined aspects, which are quasi-co-curricular (CFR 2.11).

Faculty committees formally review students twice during their progress to degree at mid-residency and prior to graduation (CFR 2.2, 2.3, 2.4). The mid-residence review provides feedback and interaction with the student (CFR 2.5). All of the mentor-related pieces are captured on an electronic system of mentor reports. Faculty compliance is exceeding 95%. Plans are underway to put mid-residency and graduation reviews online by the 2012-2013 academic year. The team observed extensive progress toward this outcome already.

Since spring 2009 Critical Studies faculty members (who oversee general education) also have held a separate mid-residence review to assess BFA progress. This is not required nor integrated with the “major” review. Currently attendance has been voluntary, with only 50-60% of students exercise this option, although it is clear that the resource is available. Because there is no consequence for missing this mid-residency review, many students do so, especially those that know themselves to be behind on their studies and are worried about receiving “negative” news. The visiting team suggests that one of the easiest interventions to improve graduation rates and speed to graduation might be to place more emphasis on this review and more consequence for failing to participate.

The assessment of schools and programs was still new and controversial at the point of the CPR visit, but the EER report describes significant progress towards a more widespread embracing of the concept at this point. Annual assessment reports and periodic program review have both become standard. (Appendix B of the EER report provides a schedule of both academic and co-curricular program reviews scheduled between 2010 and 2017.) The biggest

breakthrough here is the institutional decision to work directly through the program directors rather than using Assessment Liaisons as described in the institutional proposal. The visiting team observed that this has created far greater ownership. As it is a data-driven process assisted by IR (CPR 4.5) that feeds directly into the budget allocation process, the program reviews form a significant piece of the quality assurance effort (CPR 4.4).

Since the CPR visit IR has become more focused on data collection and fulfillment as opposed to longitudinal studies. CalArts chief product, previously called the Stat Book, is now called the Fact Book and is available online for all constituents to use. This has greatly added to transparency of resource allocation. The improvement in the IR function is, indeed, observable with campus personnel now having greater access to accurate statistics and survey results, i.e. retention and graduation rates, for use in institutional planning (CFR 4.3).

This report notes that there is still no IR director, but rather a dispersed function. This minimally meets CFR 4.5, but it appears unlikely to the visiting team that the current stopgap solution can provide the services needed for the long term. During the visit it became increasingly clear that, although there is widespread respect for the individuals now assuming these duties, the new emphasis on data-driven decision-making is creating a need that these highly dedicated but already overburdened staff members cannot meet. The visiting team would emphasize that almost everyone in the programs interviewed expressed a need for more resources to be dedicated to this area. The greatest bottleneck to fully implementing a comprehensive assessment and program review system tied to budgeting and decision-making is that the IR function remains underdeveloped in response to the demand. In particular, although the data analysis is robust, the ability to disperse this information and explore its implications with programs is limited (CFR 4.5).

Now in its second full cycle of annual review reports, CalArts states the return rate of annual assessment reports is 78% from programs. While acceptable for a process that is still being institutionalized, it is not clear what consequence failing to file a report has, or what steps are being taken to improve this return rate. The Interim Provost indicated that the institution's response to non-participating programs was "more carrot than stick." The degree of progress in other aspects of comprehensive assessment in the last two years suggests that might well be an effective approach at CalArts.

The annual reports raise important issues, especially the perceived need for more technically and skills-based courses including math and science classes and concerns about capacity to serve increased enrollment in some programs. The Interim Provost explained to the team that the Institute's approach was not to create more math and science classes, as those are currently somewhat under-enrolled, but to explore the creation of more focused classes which met specific practical needs of the programs expressing this concern. In a time of tight resources, the visiting team concurs that this seems a very reasonable approach. The team observes that capacity concerns are arising mostly in relation to traditional student-faculty ratios at the Institute, and infrastructure limitations related to space and class scheduling. The economic downturn has necessitated some modest growth in student numbers, and while uncomfortable for some programs and faculty, the team's observation is that student-faculty ratios remain enviably low compared to peer institutions. The data in annual reports suggest that programs seem to be handling these changes, even as they raise the question about whether or not return to previous levels might be possible.

Annual assessment reports feed into several resource allocation conversations tying planning to evidence (CFR 4.3). The visiting team observed evidence that these reports have been important in the most recent budgeting process

In four of CalArts' six schools national arts accreditation has provided a sophisticated and highly aligned framework for periodic program review for decades. These reviews examine program depth and appropriateness (CFR 2.1), graduate achievement (CFR 2.6), levels of scholarship (CFR 2.8), linkages of scholarship to teaching (CFR 2.9), quality of advising (CFR 2.12), student services appropriate to the institution (CFR 2.13), integration of transfer students (CFR 2.14), qualifications and numbers of staff members (CFR 3.1) and faculty members (CFR 3.2), financial stability (CFR 3.5), library and other information sources (CFR 3.6), information technology (CFR 3.7), quality of planning (CFR 4.1), educational effectiveness (CFR 4.3) and research capacity (CFR 4.5). In short, national arts accreditation supplies discipline-specific examinations of many of the same issues as regional accreditation in the format of program review, but without the same degree of overall institutional emphasis that is essential for WASC accreditation. Although these discipline-specific reviews provide relevant information for WASC review, programs also must meet all of WASC's additional requirements. The NASAD (Art and Design) review is currently in process. The other three reviews, NAST (Theater), NASM (Music) and NASD (Dance) have all returned exceptionally positive evaluations from these national accreditors in the last decade.

The final two schools in disciplines not covered by arts agencies now use an aligned process, which substantially replicates the national arts accrediting process, to complete the institution's commitment to inclusive program review. Team reviews of four specific programs

and its overall assessment of program review at CalArts is discussed later in this report under Program Review.

The major outcome reported in Theme One is that this program review process is now comprehensive enough, and based on enough objective data, that it can be used as the basis for allocation of resources and has become the principle driver of resource discussions (CFR 2.7, 4.3). The visiting team found ample evidence that this was so, along with a more subjective impression that the more transparent resource allocation was reducing internal strife and competition.

The institutional conclusion to Theme One proposes that stakeholders believe that CalArts has now instituted a complete and comprehensive system of assessment and review, which has produced a higher and more sophisticated level of conversation about programmatic commitment to the institutional mission and purpose, and alignment of resources to programmatic goals and effectiveness. This, the report suggests, is facilitated by an improved IR function. The visiting team finds that all parts of this conclusion can be affirmed. While assessment efforts, particularly at the course and assignment level, still need to mature quite a bit to achieve the “developed” or “highly developed” levels on the WASC rubric, every indication shows that they are progressing in that direction.

At the macro level, looking at overall program effectiveness, the strides have been remarkable in the last two years (particularly in developing and using data for decision-making), so that a central measure of effectiveness according to WASC standards, the development of an evidence-based culture (CFR 4.4, 4.6, 4.7), can be said to have been advanced. While improvement in the IR capacity is notable, the visiting team recommends that the Institute

develop a more extensive IR function to better institutionalize the Institute-wide commitment to quality assurance at all levels (CFR 4.5).

Theme Two: “What are we doing to prepare our students to conceive and articulate their artmaking and its relationship to the world around them?”

CalArts mission statement makes clear the institution’s commitment to teaching artists who value and demonstrate “artmaking excellence, creative experimentation, critical reflection and diversity of voices.” To this end, CalArts encourages “exploration of new forms and expression” and “urges collaboration and reciprocity among artists, artistic disciplines and cultural traditions—both on campus and in ongoing engagement with communities near and far” (CFR 1.1).

Central to Theme Two, are the strong co-curricular programs CalArts offers, particularly the highly-regarded Community Arts Partnership (CAP) and the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater (REDCAT). These co-curricular activities and programs provide students with important links between themselves and the world beyond the Institute proper, which aids student growth as “artist-citizens.” Finally, the experiences students have in these co-curricular offerings help pave “paths for life and work after graduation.”

CalArts has made progress since the CPR in developing and implementing methods for assessing and evaluating its co-curricular experiences (CFR 2.11). Some programs have developed learning outcomes, while others are still in process, just as some programs are engaged in self-studies. CalArts is committed to “growing these assessment functions . . . especially as the needs of [their] students change.”

Community Arts Partnership (CAP). Through a network of 45 public school partner sites, CAP provides CalArts students with the opportunity to teach their artmaking to diverse populations of underserved students ages 6 to 18. These teaching experiences give CalArts

students practical application in planning, designing, and implementing curriculum, as well as using a “variety of teaching methodologies”, and evaluation of participants’ creative abilities.

Each year, approximately 250 CalArts students participate in its year-long programs and approximately 75 CalArts students work in its short-term programs. In the fall of 2010, CAP began piloting new program delivery models designed to further connect CAP to the learning goals for each school at CalArts. These models include the creation of curricular integration courses, “which combine a course in pedagogy specific to the students’ *métier* with hands-on teaching experience at one of CAP’s educational partner sites.” CAP has joined with the School of Theater and School of Art in launching these curricular integrated programs in public schools and currently is developing a new curricular integration course with the School of Critical Studies, set to be implemented spring 2012.

To support these curricular changes, CAP has conducted a workload analysis and staff assessment survey to identify the resources necessary to maintain and enhance these programs. This analysis resulted in the hiring of an additional full-time coordinator, bringing the total number of fulltime program coordinators to three. These coordinators are responsible for the “direct managerial and day-to-day oversight of the each of the 55 distinct CAP programs” and one-on-one support for CalArts students including “pedagogical coaching” and assistance with career development (CFR 2.9).

CAP is now undertaking its first co-curricular program review, which is focusing on the CalArts student teaching experience in the CAP program (CFR 2.11). The results of this review will be available spring 2012, and, it is hoped, that among other goals it will help deepen students’ “understanding of the *métier*, ... sense of social responsibility as artist-citizens, their understanding of human difference and commonality, ..., and their preparation for work and

civic participation after graduation.”

The Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater (REDCAT). Located inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in downtown Los Angeles, REDCAT is a state of the art venue that showcases national and international artists, and connects them to CalArts students and alumni, as audience, technicians, volunteer or paid employees, or as participants in workshops. REDCAT is now in the process of setting learning goals and will undergo program review in 2017-18. The visiting team agrees that REDCAT is a vital link between CalArts’ students and professionals, whose interactions deepen cross-disciplinary aesthetics and artmaking.

Division of Library and Information Resources. The Division enhances the educational experience of CalArts’ students in meaningful ways (CFR 2.13, 3.6). Librarians provide instruction through individual research consultations, course-integrated instruction, for-credit courses, and student independent studies. In addition, librarians are embedded in several courses and offer workshops in consultation with Student Council and the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC). Student learning goals are found in the CalArts Library Information Literacy Rubric, and for course-integrated instruction are “assessed formally through in-class assignments and informally through follow-up conversations with course instructors and discussing lesson plans with librarians.” The Division’s assessment is aimed “towards improving individual pedagogy.” Student satisfaction/dissatisfaction surveys indicate that the majority of CalArts’ students are satisfied with the offerings of the Division. A significant enhancement in the role of the Division since the CPR visit has been to set policies and procedures that make CalArts’ significant archive accessible to more people.

Teaching and Learning Center. The TLC has undergone significant reshaping from the way it was structured at the time of the CPR. Following the observations of the CPR visiting

team, CalArts separated the areas of institutional research, faculty professional development, and academic advising from the TLC and allocated more monies to these areas to strengthen their functioning. The TLC is now primarily focused on student academic support “via tutoring . . . and computing services for students with disabilities,” and offers a Group Study Room and access to its support services through two comprehensive TLC websites.

Student Affairs. The Office of Student Affairs offers a wide range of tutoring experiences, including English as a second language, writing skills, and tutoring for students with disabilities. Student Affairs also provides support to new students through the “First Year Experience,” which is helping to educate students on the interrelationships between the various métiers; coordinates activities and organizations, including Student Council Town Halls and Transgender Awareness Week; provides essential personal counseling services and a medical nurse; and coordinates recreational activities (CFR 2.13). Career preparation also falls within Student Affairs. Significantly, in fall 2011 CalArts “received a two-year grant from the Surdna Foundation, which allows the Institute to hire a career professional to work individually on career planning with third and fourth year BFA students and recent graduates of CalArts.” It is important to note that each of the schools offers at “least one course specifically oriented towards career preparation.” However, some courses are required and some are not. In order to help assure that CalArts’ graduates are better “prepared for the world”, The Professional Preparation Task Force is exploring a requirement of a career preparation course for all BFAs.

During fall 2011 the Office of Student Affairs “engaged in a process of goal setting related to student learning via the office’s many programs and services.” Results from a 2011 Returning Student Questionnaire indicate that satisfaction was good among those who make use of the office’s services, “with 92% stating they were very or somewhat satisfied.”

Academic Advisement of Students. Academic advising at CalArts has become more formalized over the past three years, offering “one professional Institute Academic Advisor who is available 40 hours a week, four peer academic advisors available 20 hours a week” (CFR 2.12, 2.13, 2.3). In addition, there is a Peer Academic Advisement Program, which makes use of four undergraduate students who have been trained. A Peer Academic Advisement Handbook provides a foundation for this work.

Academic Advisement counsels all undergraduate students, including first-time college students and transfer students. To help navigate the many complexities of evaluating course-to-course equivalencies, CalArts has begun entering into articulation agreements with neighboring community colleges and will continue to develop relationships with more schools (CFR 2.14). CalArts has also made a concerted effort to identify and counsel “at-risk” students and has now implemented a student success workshop to assist at-risk students. The Academic Advisement Program continues to develop new methods of advising, including developing an advising web page, which was launched in the fall of 2011, creating faculty and staff training and holding student success workshops, among others.

Equity and Diversity. At the time of CPR visit, the newly appointed Assistant Provost for Equity and Diversity reported that that his “job is to figure out what his job is.” By the time of the EER visit the Assistant Provost’s role had been more extensively developed and progress had been made in promoting equity and diversity at the Institute. Since the CPR, the Assistant Provost, has sponsored a series of lectures that bring “renowned artists and speakers to campus to address issues of equity and diversity and their intersections with aesthetics and art making practices.” He has worked collaboratively with the art school to host a curriculum mapping retreat focused on diversity issues and provided support for many faculty and students who have

raised concerns about diversity issues. It also is important to note that he has developed best practices policies on promoting equity and diversity in faculty hiring and on consensual relationships among Institute members that still need approval from the Academic and Dean's Councils. While close to 40% of students are persons of color, the percentage among faculty is much lower, about 14%. As one Dean stated, "we're aware of the lack of faculty (cultural) diversity." The team suggests that the Institute take necessary steps to ensure the speedy implementation of a revised faculty hiring policy that appropriately promotes recruitment and hiring of a diverse faculty.

Many of the successes of the Assistant Provost for Equity and Diversity are based on his strong relationships with faculty and administrators rather than established administrative structures and procedures concerning this role at the institution. Although the establishment of this position is an important first step in promoting equity and diversity, the team strongly believes that further steps are required to fully capture the full institutional benefits of these initiatives and to validate key aspects of the Institute's mission statement, including the "diversity of voices" and "new forms of expression." The team recommends that this essential Institute priority needs to be fully manifested in resources devoted to this office, including funding for development of greater faculty competence in diversity issues and comprehensive curriculum mapping to incorporate cultural diversity and equity issues into all aspects of the curriculum, including in course PLOs. In addition, the Institute might explore use of "Institute Time," a still developing idea of time to be set aside on a regular schedule for all faculty to promote collaboration and exchange among faculty, as a venue for discussion and training in diversity issues (CFR 1.5). Further, the team recommends that the Institute continue to strengthen the role of the Assistant Provost and his office both in terms of resources allocated

and involvement in decision-making structure of the Institute.

As the president noted, issues of diversity require “frank discussion.” The team urges the Institute to engage in these discussions among its administrators, faculty, staff and students and to develop and support comprehensive diversity and equity initiatives to move the Institute forward in the task of reinventing itself.

Center for Integrated Media. CIM is a supplemental concentration offered by many MFA programs at CalArts to advanced students who want to extend their creative use of technology beyond their primary métiers in art, dance, film/video, music, theater and writing. CIM offers many specialized classes, workshops, and seminars designed to support a wide-range of performative and environmental works. In 2011, CIM moved to an expanded space, which brings it in closer proximity to other related technological areas. CIM has articulated learning goals and outcomes, conducts course reviews, and holds focus groups with students regarding the CIM curriculum.

Center for New Performance (CNP). CalArts’ CNP brings together performance students, faculty, and guest artists with the purpose of creating “ground-breaking theatrical performance.” These performances are designed to demonstrate the culmination of the learning and training objectives of the various performance-based schools at CalArts. While CNP has set student learning goals and planned a program review for 2016-17 (which coincides with CalArts’ School of Theater National Association of Schools of Theater [NAST] accreditation review), “it will be important for CNP to directly and indirectly evaluate the effect that participation in CNP can have on students’ lives beyond CalArts.”

The visiting teams notes the recently acclaimed CalArts production at REDCAT of Alejandro Ricaño’s *Timboctou*, which was a unique collaboration between CNP and its bilingual

theater initiative Duende CalArts and the University of Guadalajara Foundation/Cultura UDG. This highly visual multimedia world premier featured a binational cast of professionals alongside CalArts MFA and BFA acting students and designers (CFR 2.8).

International Relations. CalArts values connecting its students to the wider world; it encourages international exchanges among students, faculty and guest artists. In response to the CPR visiting team's comments, CalArts created the Office of International Relations, which is charged with managing all aspects the Institute's international programs, including hosting cultural celebrations related to international students and handling visa eligibility documents and work permits. CalArts also employs an International Student and Programs Advisor to assist students and faculty with international programs. During the site visit, the potential for programs geared toward international students to provide additional resources and vitality to the Institute was noted by several groups and individuals.

Conclusion. CalArts continues to make great strides in preparing its "students to conceive and articulate their artmaking and its relationship to the world around them." Through CAP, REDCAT, and its other co-curricular programs, the Institute has developed goals, established forms of assessment and evaluation, and is engaged in systematic program reviews. Different co-curricular programs appear to be at different stages in the development and use of assessment processes. The schedule for review in Appendix B indicates that all co-curricular programs with the exception of equity and diversity initiatives have been scheduled for review by 2018.

Theme Three: "How can we better support the professional and artistic development of the faculty and staff to enhance student learning?"

In the third theme, CalArts describes an inclusive system for development of faculty and staff. Since the CPR, some resources have been redistributed to provide additional support for

both groups. Other improvements include clarification of governance structures, enhancement of information infrastructure, establishment of clearer communication channels, broadening of the decision-making deliberations and review of Institute policies. (CFR 3.4, 3.7)

One concern voiced by the CPR visiting team involved the student information system (SIS). During the EER visit, plans for a new SIS system were explored in multiple discussions with staff, faculty and administrative groups. The process of bringing the SIS on-line by July of 2013 is being approached in stages of development. Advising, Registrar, Admissions, Enrollment Management, IR and multiple IT providers are working with updates in current systems that will ease the transition. Some staff members commented that they had not been consulted or fully informed about the status of the new system. To eliminate some of the current confusion regarding this process, the team suggests that a shared strategic plan be developed to inform all stakeholders of the changeover schedule process and training options. (CFR 2.13, 3.7, 3.9)

A major improvement in institutional communication was the launching of the intranet mycalarts.edu in October 2011. The basic structure has been set in place to allow for growth and additions from stakeholders. Administrative and academic policies, policy initiatives, announcements, and a description of how academic policies are developed are readily available to faculty and staff via the intranet. In almost all meetings with staff and faculty, the new website was applauded as a valuable tool for faculty and staff development and communication. Staff Council meetings revealed a high level of active participation, and plans to create new sections and design possibilities to further improve user satisfaction. (CFR 3.6, 3.7, 3.11)

As recommended by the CPR team, the Provost's Office and the Academic Council have updated the Faculty and Staff handbooks, making needed revisions to reflect current policy and

eliminate redundancy. In meetings, several faculty members stated that the revision of the Faculty Handbook had clarified many policies. Meetings with the Staff Council and the open staff meeting elicited comments for further revision of the Staff Handbook that included changes in search and seizure policy, safety training and notification process, and posting of annual Clery Reports, as well as a need to have the handbook published in Spanish to meet diversity needs of staff. (CFR 3.3, 3.11)

In response to ongoing requests from the Commission, as well as a strong recommendation from the CPR visiting team, CalArts has revised the peer review process. The result of this work includes the creation of a framework “umbrella” policy by the Academic Council, Deans and faculty (CalArts Policy 3.2.8.11) that promotes development of review processes suited to pedagogy and curriculum of the specific schools. The policy has allowed each of the programs to develop its own process with a focus upon either an individualized instructional review or a review of instruction within larger curricular or program contexts. The major outcome of the adopted policy is to provide faculty with information to foster pedagogical practice within their classrooms, their programs and schools.

Peer review using the new policy began in spring 2011. Faculty have developed a variety of models of peer review across programs within each of the six schools and the Library (CFR 3.3, 3.11). Some reviews are incorporating data from student review, service to the institution, varied teaching materials, and/or teaching observations. Each faculty member who is reviewed receives a Peer Review Report that is considered by the dean during contract renewal as one aspect of “effective teaching” (Faculty Handbook ,Tab 3, Section V, B).

The team explored the results of peer review in many meetings and is pleased to report that the festering issue of peer review at CalArts has been successfully resolved. Programs report

that the customization of the process to fit school methodologies has been effective. The Dean's Council appears enthusiastic about the new policy. One dean stated that peer review provided an opportunity for curriculum review and for sharing best practices and innovations regarding instruction. WASC Steering Committee members were highly positive about the new system and noted that it had led to a greater sense of collegiality and an outlet for focus upon teaching artist improvement that could advance effectiveness across the institution. They also commented that a minority of faculty still do not wish to become involved and see the peer review as intrusive to program individuality. Other questions still exist regarding the required frequency and connection to the contract renewal process. The team *suggests* that the operational language describing the relationship between contract award and the faculty peer review as a *component* of the institution's evaluation of faculty, be revised for greater clarity. The written policy description was slightly confusing, while the verbal explanation given the team by the ALO was clear – they need to lock together. (CFR 3.2, 3.3, 3.11)

Since the CPR report, development workshops have been held for faculty and staff. In recent faculty workshops heavy emphasis has been placed upon the writing/publication of program outcomes and development of assessment culture. The new Teaching and Learning Center hosts workshops available to staff and faculty and assures public notice of opportunities on its webpage. The team observed a strong positive reaction to workshops with repeated faculty and staff approval of communication about the topics and processes. Staff and faculty both stated that more workshops in technology would be important in furthering their professional development. Staff show great interest in further training in multiple aspects of wellness, creation of cultural/artistic opportunities and developing educational workshops or summer seminars. One sobering note, already discussed under Theme One, is that staff members in the schools repeatedly voiced that they felt the policies regarding access to professional development

funding were too subjective and uneven across the institution and its schools. The visiting team suggests that CalArts review its policies and practices concerning staff development to ensure equity across schools and departments.

Staff satisfaction surveys have been conducted in conjunction with the Staff Development Committee. Results from the anonymous Staff Satisfaction Survey of 2011 identified areas for improvement including opportunities for advancement, matching compensation to responsibilities and assistance in workload management. Technology and software training were listed as a high priority among staff respondents. In response, IT has subscribed to Lynda.com, which offers 57,000 tutorials for Macs and PCs. Staff are invested in the tutorials and user rates are high. The increase in funding for staff development that occurred subsequent to the CPR visit was strongly applauded by staff. They also reported that conferences and additional education were costly and additional funding would be important for broader development.

The highly active Staff Council has formed several committees to investigate the topics of benefits, staff development, retirement, safety and disaster training and staff salaries. Staff have raised issues about the workload related to the sustainability of ongoing committee service. Institutional support in the form of incentives or other methods of valuing this type of staff service needs elaboration. (CFR 3.1, 3.4, 3.10)

Communication regarding decision-making had previously been identified as a major area for improvement. This year's budget was discussed with various councils, staff and faculty before final budget decisions were made (CFR 3.8, 3.11). Both faculty and staff reported that transparency and decision-making in budget planning has been greatly improved. Staff members also indicated that clearer communication with leadership has been achieved through the

representation of the Staff Council and the Staff Trustee to the Board. In various meetings with the team, staff members indicated enthusiastic approval of new avenues of communication including the first staff Town Hall meeting via Google Moderator and brown bag lunches with administrators.

In development of artistic and creative scholarship of faculty, the curricular and co-curricular opportunities of CalArts are numerous and diverse. Access to performing and exhibiting events/venues/grants allow for public presentation of new scholarship within the community (CFR 2.8). Individual faculty scholarship through the creative leave (the Institute's form of sabbatical) was partially funded by a ten-year gift that is ending this year. Next year's creative leaves are budgeted to be reduced by fifty percent. The decision-making process related to limitation of leaves has been discussed with multiple stakeholders during the open and transparent budget processes. A new process for awarding Creative Leave has been described as a priority for the Academic and Campus Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. It is anticipated that future creative leaves will be assessed for outcomes that enhance student learning (CFR 2.9). Faculty creative leave was affirmed as important to include in strategic planning. The visiting team notes that educational effectiveness and alignment of faculty artistic scholarship with institutional outcomes will continue to be a necessary part of discussion of innovative possibilities for development, including increased support for creative leaves (CFR 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11).

In conclusion, the team members strongly agree that administrators have acted to clarify decision-making through policy review, publication and higher level of transparency, as evidenced by the development of the intranet. The addition of a testing and implementation process for new and updated policies is an important feature of this work. In addition,

development opportunities for faculty and staff have been increased. Finally, peer review, the trailing issue of the CPR visit has been satisfactorily resolved and both faculty and staff generally believe that dramatic improvements in communication processes have occurred. (CFR 3.5, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10)

Other Important Issues

Program Review

CalArts has a fully implemented system of program review aligned to WASC guidelines, and in four schools is also tied to national arts accrediting. Periodic review is conducted using an institution-wide format issued by the Provost's office. Programs complete a self-study that addresses resources, facilities, faculty and staff, outcomes as measured by student surveys and formal measures of retention and graduation rates. A visiting team receives the self-study, conducts an on-site review, and prepares a report. The program may respond to the report. The president and provost review all final reports and recommendations.

The process is used to assure program quality within and across programs, align course goals and outcomes with programmatic goals and outcomes, and align resources with mission, capacity and aspiration (CFR 2.1, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3). The process has been longstanding in the nationally accredited schools, and since 2008 has encompassed all schools and programs.

Unless otherwise noted, the four program reviews below are based on written materials provided in the Team Room and interviews with program chairs or co-chairs and faculty members

BFA in Acting. Team members met with the Dean, School of Theater as well as others involved in the program. The BFA in Acting is a cornerstone course within the school. Among

the school's program goals, "acting training at CalArts seeks to prepare actors for the many possible roads ahead and to give guidance towards finding the right path for each individual artist." The program encourages the assertion of creative impulses across a wide range of media and disciplines and seeks to build bridges between the school of theater and the professional world (CFR 2.5).

The visiting team finds strong evidence that the BFA acting program is fulfilling its goals through dedicated teaching, rigorous assessment, and substantive planning for the future. The faculty have worked together to develop goals and objectives that bring a clarity of language to the assessment of student progress (CFR 2.4). Examination of course syllabi, course descriptions in the *CalArts Course Catalog* 2011-12, and the School of Theater "Learning goals and Outcomes Rubric" information sheets provides evidence that the program has designed "criteria standards" for evaluation and performance outcomes at the program and course level that are measurable (CFR 2.3, 2.4). The program has a curriculum that allows students to develop increasing sophistication with respect to each outcome and a reasonable multi-year assessment plan that identifies when each outcome will be assessed. And recent student surveys indicate that 80% of students "always" or "often" are familiar with their programs' learning outcomes (CFR 2.2).

While program goals and learning outcomes are clear, assessment rubrics are still in the emerging state in the program. Faculty should be encouraged to develop formalized assessment rubric charts for each course, as well as for signature assignments, that clearly detail the dimensions of outcomes and the levels of competency for each of the dimensions. Such examination will allow faculty to measure and document student success over time on particular goals/objectives/outcomes (CFR 2.3).

Central to assessment is the ongoing and open dialogue among BFA Acting faculty about student work and progress. In addition to course evaluation, mentor evaluation is key to student learning. In performance, all students are formally reviewed twice a year, at the end of each semester. Every faculty member who works with the student meets to discuss the student's progress. In most instances, examination of mentors' reports, which are an overall narrative assessment of a student's artistic and academic progress towards completion of the degree, show detailed, thoughtful, and specific critique that is aligned with stated goals, objectives, and performance outcomes. Mentor assessment provides clear language that students can use to guide them in their future coursework. Rounding out student assessment is a mid-residence point review conducted by faculty committee, which provides a detailed report of a student's record and work "in relation to the objectives of the program" and the student's present and future academic goals (CFR 2.12). Faculty submit written evaluations and, in addition, conduct a "review of reviews" of those students whose performance is not meeting the goals and standards of the program. A final review takes place just prior to graduation. Students in the BFA acting also present their work to an audience of theater school students and faculty, which gives students the opportunity to demonstrate in an "open and friendly atmosphere", the fruition of their full year's training. This viewing process allows the faculty to see at what level the student actor has met the performance outcomes, as outlined in their curriculum (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7). Current and final sets of evaluations are submitted to the Registrar's Office, as part of the students' permanent record.

The culminating experience in the BFA acting curriculum occurs in the fourth year, when students prepare to enter the profession through a specially prepared course, Showcase. Here they engage with industry professionals, learning about self-marketing, headshots, resumes and

interview techniques. They then present their work in New York and Los Angeles to casting directors and agents. (CFR 2.9)

Enrollment on average has grown in the Acting program in the past four years, with 28 enrolled for 2011/12, and indications from institutional research are that theater is a key area where future growth is expected. Program administrators are encouraged that the Institute is responding to needs of the program, and, that as CalArts enters into its new strategic planning process, the institute will support the program's initiatives and goals to meet the ever increasing demands that technical innovation offers for deeper interdisciplinary work between the métiers.

MFA in Art. The MFA at CalArts is available in Art, Art and Technology, Graphic Design, and Photography and Media, with an optional Integrated Media Concentration available to all MFA students. Students select a program of studies approved by their mentor and complete the work in two-three years. The assessment plan of MFA coursework includes published PLOs for each of the programs, descriptive syllabi, course SLOs, mid-residence review in the second semester, followed by a thesis proposal for MFA2 students which is approved by faculty (CFR 2.3, 2.4). The final year of residence is spent in creating a body of work, to develop the thesis that is assessed by faculty.

Faculty are engaged in intensive program review and are completing ongoing curricular assessment that incorporates further alignment of course and program outcomes. They continue to develop materials that clearly define developmental assessment and a shared language of assessment across the curriculum. Faculty expressed a strong commitment to continue program self study. They described this work as important to building interdepartmental faculty development and student success. Results of data from returning and graduating student surveys has been included in the program's annual assessment reviews and used to develop strategic

plans for hiring, facilities development and professional preparation curricular development. (CFR 2.3, 2.7, 4.4, 4.6)

In addition to building a strong culture of evidence and assessment, the Art programs also have a strong informal assessment culture. Faculty describe a lively peer review process, which is completed during open house presentations that allow for connections between MFA and BFA students. The open house, exhibitions, quality faculty, and student engagement are all central components of open dialogue. (CFR 2.5, 2.9)

Given that programs in the visual arts are often very difficult to assess in terms of “outcome metrics,” the faculty commented on the necessary cultural change of attitude. The value of the approach was mentioned by several of the art faculty and leadership, one noting that it had significantly strengthened the Art Program, and brought people together as a community of art professionals who directly applied their joined experience to “commonalities” that drove the curriculum. It also settled issues of priorities in negotiations with the college administration about resources for the Art Program, with agreed targets. This process was also highlighted as providing greater transparency in the budgeting and resource-allocation processes.

At the time of the site visit, it was clear that the Art Program was almost ready for an April 2012 NASAD re-accreditation visit to the School of Art. Upon review of the face-to-face discussions and the actual workbooks for the program, it was manifest that the Art Program was notably successful and thriving.

Critical Studies: General Education Courses for BFA Students. The School of Critical Studies is responsible for the 46-unit general education curriculum of all BFA students at CalArts. Critical Studies has developed learning outcomes well suited to the creative mission of the Institute and to demonstrations of student learning of undergraduate students. The school is

well positioned to develop its framework for comprehensive assessment into a sustainable model of verifiable student achievement, across a wide breadth of Critical Studies/Critical Studies métier courses and developmental levels.

Rubrics for assessment include an Undergraduate Grading Rubric that incorporates criteria for assessment of writing (papers) at foundation, 200-300 levels and 400 level courses. This rubric presents a design strategy of providing students with increasingly complex opportunities to demonstrate beginning, intermediate and advanced outcomes. Program co-chairs and faculty state they plan to continue the development of rubrics to cover the other skills and learning goals. Curriculum mapping is in initial stages and the program is encouraged to continue to align curriculum with key course assignments and course outcomes that correspond to PLOs (CFR 2.7).

In review of the diverse and exciting courses within Critical Studies, it is clear that course options are designed to build writing and thinking skills, and include multiple disciplinary theory and application to student métier studies. While syllabi reflect a growing inclusion of course level outcomes, there are significant inconsistencies in assessment language. The standardized inclusion of course outcomes, grading rubrics, PLOs, and relevant tutoring or student advising options would support curricular alignment with program outcomes. (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.6)

Since spring 2009 the mid-residency review has been a component of overall assessment of BFA student progress. Currently attendance has been voluntary, with only 50-60% of students attending. Moreover, some students fail to bring requested writing samples or reports. The program's most recent annual assessment report suggests that a goal will be to develop attendance strategies and new formats for the mid-program review. Critical Studies can maximize the opportunity for demonstration of learning outcomes through additional curriculum

mapping that prepares students to select key performance examples and rubric design that would allow for inter-rater reliability and increased comparative data. (CFR 2.7, 4.4)

Critical Studies faculty have successfully used program review information to strengthen its first year writing course through hiring of a new composition specialist as of January 2011, and the use of writing rubrics to facilitate early success skills needed for completion of the program (CFR 2.2, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7). The training of writing tutors in Student Affairs was the direct result of the Critical Studies' program review. In 2011, the program also launched a summer program, in response to data showing that many students were missing a small number of credits, which led to graduation delay. The summer program offers a focused opportunity for students to complete missing requirements, get ahead in the program or receive additional assistance. CS faculty plan to continue to assess best practices for scheduling to meet student needs and explore space issues, as well as limited technology resources that create challenges to the pedagogy of the program. (CFR 2.7, 4.4)

The interviews and materials provided demonstrate the reflective process of faculty in the Critical Studies BFA Program, and their dedicated dialogue for monitoring and improving student learning. The changes in the first year program, development of mid-residency review, and collaboration with métier faculty and student support services signify the potential for enhanced development of assessment planning that fully supports student learning across the entire Critical Studies program. (CFR 2.4, 4.4, 4.7)

MFA in Film Directing. The School of Film and Video is the only major métier area that is not covered by the National Associations group, (NASM, NAST, NASD, and NASAD) so their recently completed program review process was built from scratch. The School aligned its major areas of review with those of the nationally accredited disciplines so that there was clear

parallelism, but had a somewhat looser framework for commenting. With no external standards to which it had to demonstrate compliance, the narrative of the self-study was tailored to concentrate on the major issues rather than the comprehensive coverage found in self-studies of the other schools.

The Film Directing MFA self-study was notably candid, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The major emphasis was on the shortage of specialized staff members critical to the operation of the program. In interview with the visiting team, the Dean, program Co-Directors, and faculty members provided their perspective on the process. The group was in general agreement that the extremely small size of the program and tight interaction of the faculty provided extensive communication.

PLOs are clearly identified and published, along with assessment rubrics for the outcomes. The faculty use these rubrics to guide assessment, but they are not grids or “check sheets.” Their primary application is to provide a framework and vocabulary for the mentor’s reports. Given the narrative-driven nature of this discipline, it is not surprising that the faculty prefer to work within broad areas of evaluation and respond in prose paragraphs rather than “check off” levels of accomplishment (CFR 2.4, 2.6, 2.7).

These reports are aggregated into an annual assessment report. The most recent assessment report discusses many pertinent issues, but focuses on the implementation of a new curriculum structure, situated within a program that has undergone “radical revision” in the past six years. The conclusions arise both from objective data and from extensive close observation of trends by very involved Co-Directors and faculty members. Like the program review itself, this annual report also reflects on the resource needs of the program – especially the lack of trained staff members to support the highly technical process of film-making.

Among the most interesting of observations is the trend for students to take a leave of absence between their second and third years to actually make their thesis film. The faculty note that this is practical, in that students are not paying tuition while essentially working independently, but that it greatly skews their enrollment and retention reports. While the majority of these students return and finish their degrees after one or two years, only a rather subjective shadow system is really able to track long-term trends.

The Co-Directors of the program openly acknowledge they were the primary authors of the program review self-study, wanting to keep the workload from increasing on their already heavily burdened faculty. The faculty members in the discussion generally agreed that because of the close knit nature of the program their opinions were known to their directors and expressed. They also had the opportunity to read and respond to drafts.

The process appears to work quite well in this program, but it works because of the small size of the program. Less than forty students are working with virtually all faculty members in the program continuously. The communication between faculty and students, and in intra-faculty discussion, is so constant and detailed that the program review consisted – more or less – of simply writing down the discussion. It is doubtful that is really replicable in other parts of the Institute where enrollments are larger and faculty interactions more limited.

Conclusion. After examining the program review policies, looking cursorily at a large number of program reviews and examining four programs in depth, the team concludes that the process at CalArts is robust and effective. None of the programs examined used processes that were precisely parallel, which suggests that the process is sufficiently flexible to be useful institute-wide. The team observed extensive evidence that program review materials are used in

data-driven decision-making, especially resource allocation, and believe that it will become a more deeply imbedded part of the culture as it plays through more cycles.

Student Success

Since the CPR visit, CalArts has taken impressive actions to ensure and assess the success of its students. The commitment to student success is at the core of the Institute's individualized student-centered learning model and is actualized through ongoing quality assurance processes. CalArts' efforts to develop and utilize a comprehensive model of Institute-wide assessment have already been discussed in the team's analysis of Theme One (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.5). The Institute's excellent array of co-curricular programs and activities that support and enhance student success are considered under Theme Two (CFR 2.1, 2.13, 3.6, 4.3).

The visiting team found significant evidence that the Institute keeps detailed student graduation and retention rates and is making meaningful use of them in planning and assessment. These statistics are provided in the EER report, on the Summary Data Form, in the CalArts *Fact Book*, and on individual reports that are given to individual schools and programs. All rates are disaggregated by gender and race (CFR 2.10). The EER report states that predicted six-year graduation rates differ for first time-freshman (58.9%), transfer students (73.6%) and graduate students (86.8%). The report also notes that when international students are excluded, graduate level students of color have a somewhat lower six-year graduation rate (83.5%) than Caucasian graduate students (88.2%). The Institute did not provide evidence any comparison of its graduation and retention rates with rates at peer institutions. Such comparative data from peer institutions would be available from the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD), of which CalArts is a member.

Retention and graduation rates as reported in the EER report have not changed significantly since the CPR visit, although the EER report proposes that retention data suggest the Institute's graduation rate is increasing in recent years, but the data seem inconclusive to the visiting team. Several of the programs appear to lose up to 20% of their students within the first year (often after the first semester) due to findings that the program is more intensive than entering students anticipated, but given the rigor of their programs these non-retention levels neither surprise nor particularly worry the programs. It would, interviews suggested, be cause for concern if transfer students had lower retention rates, as they are further along with academic study and should have a better idea of their direction and discipline. Transfer students, however, graduate at significantly higher rates than “native” students.

Once the new SIS is brought on-line, accurate data will be more readily available in a timely matter to all constituencies who need to use the information in their planning. While the visiting team encountered some opinion that program heads and faculty did not know how to “read” data reports, meetings with members of enrollment and IR indicate that faculty and administrators are provided with workshops on how to use and interpret data. Regardless, there is strong evidence from the Institute's EER report, Summary Data Form, and Graduation and Retention Rate Study, Fall 2001 to Spring 2011, that CalArts engages in detailed collection and analysis of student graduation and retention rates—and makes substantive use of the results in its forecasting and understanding of how best to improve in areas they have identified (CFR 2.10, 4.5).

Accurate Marketing

The visiting team examined several CalArts documents, including the CalArts *View Book*, *CalARTS*, *the Magazine of California Institute of the Arts* (2009-2012), the CalArts

Course Catalogue (2011-2012), the *Student Handbook* (2011-2012) and the *Fact Book*, to determine the accuracy of CalArts marketing. Interviews with Enrollment Management, Retention Committee, Institutional Research, and members of Students Affairs (The Learning Center/First Year Experience/Career Resources), as well as review of statistical reports from enrollment management and the registrar's office corroborate that CalArts truthfully represents its academic goals, programs, and services to students and to the larger public. Team findings also verify that CalArts accurately reports that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion; and that it treats students fairly and equitably through established policies and procedures addressing student conduct, grievances and refunds (CFR 2.2). Unfortunately, no students took the opportunity to meet with team members in the open forum, which would have allowed the team to interview them directly about their views of CalArts's accuracy in marketing—although student satisfaction surveys provide evidence that students are well satisfied with the CalArts experience (CFR 1.7).

Financial Response to the Economic Downturn

In the period immediately before the CPR, and through the period of assembling the EER, CalArts, like all institutions, was responding to the economic downturn in the US, and notably how it had affected Southern California. The Institute embarked on a series of internal cost-cutting exercises, as one would expect, while simultaneously making greater efforts to grow the enrollment from US-based and international students, and increasing annual fund donations, restricted and unrestricted gifts. Among a number of initiatives described by the president, a reduction in “creative leaves” (i.e. “sabbatical leaves”), across-the-board salary freezes, and strategic holds on renewing vacated positions were all deployed. The president noted that two principles guided their financial downturn response in tactical and strategic planning: firstly, that

CalArts protected its teaching so that there was no dilution of effort or commitment to its students, and, secondly, that no-one was laid off. As far as the first point is concerned, there has been no discernible diminution in the studios and classrooms.

In the period between the CPR and the EER, CalArts regained some financial momentum, largely as a result of the initiatives previously noted. However, it became clear that the college is involved in a very serious internal discussion about how it will “fund our future” (CalArts’ president). This academic year, the institution set its annual tuition increase at 2%, and while this protected students and enrollment, it was implemented after a campus-wide understanding that budget cuts and salary freezes were inevitable. The team draws the Commission’s attention to an open letter from the CalArts’ president to the CalArts community (see Appendix), which the president noted had derived from internal discussions about the “state of the school” relative to the EER. This letter is a call to the Institute as a whole to build upon the work of the EER report, and embark on crafting a new Strategic Plan as the institution moves on from the current re-accreditation process. With the arrival of a new CFO and a new provost, the Institute will embark on its Strategic Plan with the issue of “fundable education” as a key metric.

Sustainability to the Next Visit

The team discussed with the institutional leadership the issue of “sustainability.” The president, Chief Operating Officer and the Interim Provost all spoke to this, and additionally the matter was brought up with the Admissions Officer in relation to student enrollment numbers going forward. The Institute has more than adequate application numbers, in combination of US and international students – though its current enrollment number of 12% non-US students is low compared to other niche colleges – and CalArts currently has existing relationships with

Japanese, European and other colleges, and new initiatives with Korean and Chinese schools, which already appear to be bearing fruit. The economies implemented by the Institute to trim budget, freeze salaries etc. have worked, and the school is on a solid footing. The coming Strategic Plan will drive at new revenue sources, and a hinted-at capital campaign is the logical next step after the Strategic Plan establishes a clear and attractive re-missioning. With a new provost about to join CalArts, there is more than adequate ‘momentum’ paired with an assurance of stability and sustainability.

CalArts has a very engaged and committed Board of Trustees who impressed the team with their dedication, willingness to ask difficult questions, and grapple with the big issues that face the Institute in the years ahead (CFR 3.9). The Board appear completely bonded to the need for a Strategic Plan, and, while they are the stewards of the institution with ultimate executive authority, they are a ‘hands-on’ board that will be watchful and involved as the planning discussions progress.

The team determined that as the EER was being assembled, the responses to the specific CPR issues spawned a wider debate. In a lively meeting with the Board Executive Committee, it was clear that it was very hopeful of a good outcome from the EER visit. Board members commented several times that the EER exercise had been important in guiding their thinking about the future, and the debate about that future would be challenging. In various meetings during the site-visit we noted the repetition of themes and issues that the team had also heard at the board level – the value of having a working governance structure, a progressive democracy, collegiality, respect for impassioned discourse, limiting tuition levels, greater relevance of measured student outcomes, balance of US and international students, entrepreneurial thinking, synergistic relationships with other colleges, deeper analysis of the needs of the ‘future student’,

designing new pedagogies driven by the digital revolution, greater diversity among the faculty, leading a national debate about where the professions are going, and addressing all of these things in an institutional ‘culture of evidence’ instead of “the usual old laid-back California style.” It was clear, therefore, that there was an institution-wide debate emerging about the “spirit and life” of CalArts and the change in culture needed to drive that debate.

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

CalArts is a national center of excellence, and an internationally-acclaimed and highly-influential arts college. It has a track record that is enviable, a dynamic present and exciting future. As several faculty and staff stated “It is a privilege to work here.” Its influence in progressive pedagogy and practice is widespread, and its faculty and alumni are luminaries in the fields of performing and visual arts, while its programs in media, technology, character animation and special effects experimental film and animation are legendary. It is worth quoting the most-distinguished artist John Baldessari, in regard to the explosive development of the arts in Southern California in the past forty years; he stated – “what made the difference was the existence of CalArts.”

Commendations

1. In the two years since its CPR visit, there have been significant changes at the institution.

While the Institute grasped the challenges of the issues conveyed by the Commission, it also contended with internal realignments and major administrative staffing changes.

Additionally, the Institute was engaged in program reviews required for discipline-specific course reaccreditation by NASAD, NAST, NASD and NASM. The looming problem of the economic downturn was ever at their shoulder – the nasty poltergeist in every room. Given that all of the above were crowded into, basically, far less than 24

months, the team commends CalArts for the amount of work and the highly credible progress made.

2. The team repeatedly heard that the two years between the CPR and the EER had been one of serious introspection, led by the specific need to address not only the Commission letter, but also issues that derived from it that were more general to the culture and character of this institution. It is worth reporting that on numerous occasions, the team remarked that “this CalArts is not the CalArts we visited two years ago.” The team commends CalArts for the institution’s “commitment to engage in serious self-review and improvement.”
3. Since the CPR visit the Institute has successfully resolved some difficult and contentious issues, the most divisive being peer review. The team commends the CalArts community for developing and implementing a peer review process that fits the unique character of CalArts and its different schools.
4. The team believes that CalArts is now significantly committed to a collegial dialogue about its way of working, and, more importantly, has created a climate in which it can take on the greater challenge of a new strategic plan. The team commends CalArts for these accomplishments.

Recommendations

1. **Institutional Research.** The greatest obstacle to fully implementing a comprehensive assessment and program review system tied to budgeting and decision-making is that the IR function remains underdeveloped. The visiting team recommends that the institution be asked to devote more resources to the development of an enhanced IR function that

better meets the long-term needs of the institution for a comprehensive assessment and program review system that facilitates data-driven decision-making (CFR 2.7, 4.3, 4.5).

2. **Equity and Diversity Initiatives.** The Assistant Provost for Equity and Diversity has spearheaded notable initiatives since the CPR visit. The team recommends that these initiatives be further developed and the role of the Office of Equity and Diversity in the life of the institution be additionally supported and clarified, both in terms of resources allocated and involvement in the decision-making structure of the Institute (CFR 1.5).

Team Report Appendix
CREDIT HOUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Institution: CalArts

Kind of Visit: EER

Date: 3/7-9/2012

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all CPR, EER and Initial Accreditation Visits. 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.

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?	Y
	Comments: As outlined in CalArts "Academic Credit and Limitation" document.	
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)?	Y
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? Through program review, new course approval and audits.	Y
	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?	Y
	Comments: CalArts Catalogue; syllabi	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? How many syllabi were reviewed? What degree level(s)? What discipline(s)?	NA
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	
	Comments:	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)	What kinds of courses? Lecture, Studio, Individual Lesson, Independent Study How many syllabi were reviewed? 16 What degree level(s)? BA, MFA What discipline(s)? Theater, Film, Art, Music	Y
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	Y
	Comments: As outlined in CalArts "Academic Credit and Limitation" document.	

Team Report Appendix

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT LAVINE TO THE CALARTS COMMUNITY

February 23, 2012

Dear _____,

I am writing today in hopes of clarifying CalArts' current situation and to suggest some steps that will help carry us to higher ground in the years ahead.

This fall, CalArts set the 2012-2013 tuition increase at 2%, a rate lower than inflation for probably the first time in the Institute's history. I think and hope everyone understands the logic of this decision: students are carrying ever heavier burdens of debt, a development that needs to be slowed at minimum and ideally reversed. As the Dean's Council and Academic Council joined the Administration in supporting this low tuition increase, there was a clear understanding that the likely result would be salary freezes and budget cuts. It is a tribute to how deeply faculty and staff care about the welfare of students that they supported this action even though it would make their own circumstances more difficult. Each program and department is now identifying where to make the necessary 1% cut in their budgets.

What may have been less well understood is what a fundamental change in CalArts direction this decision reflects. For the past two decades, virtually all private colleges, including CalArts, have built their budgets on the assumption that tuition could be increased annually at a rate 2-3% above inflation, that fundraising could increase by 5-10% per year, and that the size of the student body could grow each year. With all three elements in place, colleges could each year improve the education and broaden the opportunities offered students, faculty, and staff.

As we enter the fourth year of the worst recession since the Great Depression, none of these assumptions is viable any longer. Families across the country are being forced to settle for lower cost colleges even knowing that greater quality is available elsewhere. Annual giving to colleges and arts institutions fell by more than 20% in the current recession, and, even with some improvement in the economy, neither annual giving nor endowment income have returned to the 2008 level. And we are all aware that only if we learn to share facilities more flexibly across programs will there be space for enrollment growth within the our current facilities.

Looking forward, there are many signs that, even should the economy improve further, the overall situation for private colleges may actually worsen. Voices on the left and the right are calling for cuts in the federal deficit, which are likely to have a direct impact on government support for student loans and direct grants. At the same time, state budgets are in trouble, which in California's case is leading the state legislature to propose cuts in the Cal Grant program from which many CalArts students benefit. Cuts in services at the federal, state, and local level may

well lead to the decision by foundations and some individuals to direct a larger portion of their giving to basic social services. And, all the while, the rising costs of benefits, insurances, utilities, and physical plant improvements are increasing pressure on existing funds at CalArts as at other colleges.

The greatest risk CalArts faces going forward is to do nothing, allowing the budgetary pressures to grow and hoping, in effect, for a miraculous financial contribution that would fundamentally change our situation. The alternative is to say: okay, we have to pursue those small, medium and large contributions more actively than ever, and, if those contributions come, so much the better, but let's not leave our future to chance. Together we need to look rigorously at our programs and policies, exploring whether our historical ways of doing things are optimal and whether further improvement is possible without increased cost. Simultaneously, faculty, staff, and students must explore collateral activity--summer programs, low residency degrees, shorter-term intensive programs--that have a potential to generate fresh revenues to help underwrite our core educational programs.

Already, we are seeing the beginnings of these activities, with the short summer session offered last year, and the month-long intensive in motion graphics offered to students from Korea's Hongik University this past January. Virtually every week now, we are approached by at least one university abroad which seeks ways to tap into our ability to bring out the creativity of individual students. Our challenge is to develop the flexibility to take advantage of these opportunities, both on campus and at alternate sites off campus.

This coming fall I will ask our incoming provost, Jeannene Przyblyski, working in close conjunction with a Chief Financial Officer whom we hope to appoint shortly, to lead an Institute-wide strategic planning process. We will ask ourselves what CalArts needs to do now to insure its leadership in the education of artists not only now but in 2020, in 2030, and long into the future. In the process, we will have a lot to learn from the research on changing patterns in who is attending college in the United States now and what, when, where, and how those students now choose to learn online, at multiple institutions, on their own. CalArts' own students will likely prove to be our best guides to the future.

We are awaiting Jeannene's arrival to design this planning process, but surely it will have to proceed school by school, program by program, department by department, gradually merging toward a comprehensive strategy to make the most out of what is most unique at CalArts. My hope is that, while the formal planning process will not begin until fall, each of the Schools and departments will start to ask these questions yet this spring, in faculty and in staff meetings, in daylong retreats, whatever works best in each area. The more ideas, possibilities, and questions we can raise and debate now, the more likely it is that we will arrive at imaginative and forward-looking conclusions this coming year. You--faculty, staff and students--are the source of CalArts creativity. Now is the time to turn some of that creativity toward designing our future.

One final point: in response to the rising cost of higher education, pundits are questioning the value of a college degree. Voices across the political spectrum are offering well meaning (and not

so well meaning) economic measures of that value. Misguided as many of these proposals are, the CalArts community must passionately hold itself to its own high standards while doing a much better job of communicating these standards to applicants and the general public. We can't wish away the economic pressures; what we can do is imagine brave new possibilities for programs and policies as we expand the new more collaborative budget building process (piloted this year) to achieve a broad strategic plan for the future.

I look forward to being part of this process.

With warm wishes, hopes, and beliefs that we will all create something new, even better and sustainable,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven D. Lavine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

Steven Lavine
President

P.S. Please plan to join us for our Community Forum on March 15th if you are able.