

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To Marymount California University

September 22-25, 2015

Team Roster

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). 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 WSCUC website.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

Marymount California University (MCU) was established in 1968 as a two-year college (Marymount College) by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM). In 1975 the RSHM transferred responsibility for the college to a lay board of trustees. It continued to operate as a two-year college until, in the wake of declining enrollments and financial resources, the institution launched an ambitious plan to transform itself into a bachelor's level institution. In 2010, the institution received WASC-ACSCU approval for structural changes allowing the launch of its first bachelor's degree programs. Since then, it has added master's level programs and completed a name change.

MCU describes itself as an independent university standing within the Catholic intellectual tradition. It welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds and, in the spirit of the RSHM, seeks to challenge students to pursue lives of leadership and service. The university serves a student body of approximately 1100 students. It offers 2 associate degree programs, 4 bachelor's degree majors (with 10 minors), and 3 master's degree programs. MCU's long history of advising outbound transfer students has translated into a 90-unit transfer policy for inbound students wishing to complete their BA.

The university operates on three academic campuses and two additional residential sites. Oceanview is located in Rancho Palos Verdes, CA and serves as the main campus; the nearby Waterfront campus is in San Pedro, CA (within five miles); and Lakeside is in Lucerne, Lake County, CA. Both residential sites are located in San Pedro. MCU offers regular shuttle service between all of the Southern California sites.

MCU's history with WSCUC is short but robust. Significant action includes the following:

February 2010	Structural Change: Approved the BA programs in Media Studies, Business and Liberal Arts, to commence fall 2010;
February 2012	Substantive Change: Approval of the BA in Psychology (new degree program).
March 2013	Institutional name changed from Marymount College to Marymount California University.
April 2013	Substantive Change: Approved the proposal for the MS in Leadership and Community Development (Distance Education/First Master's Degree). Final Approval of the MS in Leadership and Community Development (Distance Education/First Master's Degree) and MS Community Psychology (New Degree Program/Distance Education Program).
October 2013	Substantive Change: Approved the expedited proposal for the Lakeside Campus (Standalone Location).
November 2013	Substantive Change: Granted Final Approval of the Master of Business Administration (online).

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The team met October 27-28, 2014, for the Offsite Review (OSR). In preparation, the team studied MCU's Report for Reaffirmation of Accreditation and supporting evidence, held an initial meeting via conference call and developed a consolidated worksheet for team use. At the OSR, team member assignments were confirmed and the Summary of Lines of Inquiry prepared. This was forwarded to the institution's ALO.

In preparation for the Accreditation Visit, team members reviewed updated and additional documentation supplied by MCU and then revised the consolidated worksheet in preparation for a team conference call on September 2, 2015. Following the call, requests for additional information were forwarded to the ALO and shifts were made to the schedule to accommodate additional interviews.

A site visit to the Lakeside campus was conducted on September 18 and the Accreditation Visit was conducted September 22-25, 2015. Team members met with the co-presidents, faculty, staff and student groups, admissions and marketing personnel, and with members of the Board of Trustees. The Team visited the Oceanview and Waterfront campuses and toured a newly developed art gallery as well as one of the residential

complexes. The confidential e-mail account was monitored throughout the visit and team members had access to MCU's intranet, research site, departmental files, etc. Throughout the process, team members were warmly welcomed by members of the MCU community. Requests for additional information were met promptly. The campus was well-prepared for the visit.

C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

MCU's institutional report and supporting documentation has been comprehensive and transparent. The report was well-organized and clearly written with supporting evidence easily available. Interviews with faculty and staff confirmed widespread participation in the review. MCU has been conducting its first BA program reviews, developing new programs and a comprehensive assessment plan, all while preparing for the Accreditation Visit. That work clearly shaped the report. The team did not find discrepancies between what was reported and the condition of the institution.

In the wake of the presidential transition and current budget deficit (new since the OSR), the team added lines of inquiry having to do with financial planning, enrollment and marketing. Requests for additional information or interviews were met promptly. In both the initial report and the update, the institution noted significant learning in the areas of program development and educational effectiveness. As will be noted later in this report, the team was less certain about the institution's response to financial vulnerabilities.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

This is MCU's first visit for reaccreditation since coming under the WASC Senior Commission in 2010. Structural changes prompted three site visits which occurred in 2010, 2011 and 2013. As recommended, MCU addressed issues of faculty hiring, load,

and supportive services. Substantive change panels have commended Marymount for integrated planning and the ongoing development of capacity, especially in the areas of technology, assessment, and student services. MCU has worked closely with WSCUC to respond to Commission action and to embrace best practices in the development of new programs and initiatives.

MCU experienced significant growth (nearly doubling enrollment) in the five years following the transfer of accreditation and anticipated that growth to continue. However, since submitting their Report for Reaffirmation of Accreditation, they have revised projected enrollments due to plateauing numbers and a corresponding budget shortfall. In June, 2015, President Michael Brophy resigned in order to take another appointment. The Board appointed Dr. Ariane Schauer (Provost and ALO) and Jim Reeves (CFO) as interim co-presidents and they are working to address the significant deficit anticipated for 2015-16.

Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The team commends the institution for its clarity regarding matters of institutional purpose, integrity, and transparency. MCU has a formally approved mission statement, a vision statement, and a set of core values that appear in its catalog and on its website; the mission and core values statements also appear in the university's most recent view book (CFR 1.1).

MCU has a clear set of five institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) that appear in its catalog, on its website, and on all course syllabi reviewed by the team. Syllabi also include course learning outcomes that are mapped to the ISLOs; course assignments are generally mapped to course learning outcomes and/or program learning outcomes as well. The university is currently engaged in what it calls "the core redesign

process,” developing a heavily revised set of institutional learning outcomes organized in four categories: communication, outlook, research, and engagement. Student outcome data, retention rate data and numbers of student BA graduates are reported on the consumer information page of the MCU website. BA graduation rates do not appear. In light of MCU’s recent transition to a four-year institution (the first BA degrees were awarded in spring 2012), it appears difficult for the university to establish these rates. Otherwise, MCU is making public appropriate student outcomes data (CFR 1.2).

The university has a clear academic freedom policy, in keeping with MCU’s core value of openness. Faculty also report that they are free to teach and discuss controversial or challenging topics with students (CFR 1.3).

The university’s commitment to diversity is strong. The student body is diverse in terms of race and ethnicity; an LGBTQ club has functioned on campus for about a decade; about 40% of the students are Pell Grant-eligible. It has been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The university’s non-discrimination statement appears on the homepage of the MCU website (CFR 1.4).

It is clear that education is the primary purpose of MCU, and its board functions autonomously. While the institution was established by a Roman Catholic religious order (the RSHM), that order does not currently exercise any authority over the board of trustees or the university’s administration (CFR 1.5).

MCU represents itself truthfully to students and to the larger public. Academic programs and services are clearly delineated in the catalog, as are schedules of tuition and fees, the grading policy, and the grade appeal policy. The various policies required under CFR 1.6 are presented in the catalog or (in the case of the human subject research policy) are made available to faculty and students as needed. Much of this information is also available on the MCU website. Student grievance and complaint policies and procedures

are presented clearly in the university's catalog and on its website, and the team saw evidence that student complaints are handled in a timely and effective manner (CFR 1.6).

Based on the information provided, MCU's institutional and business operations are conducted with integrity and transparency. Audited financial statements and copies of financial reports to the MCU board of trustees were reviewed and appear to be in order. As will be described later in the report, MCU could benefit from more thorough planning with regard to admissions, fundraising, and multi-year budgeting, particularly in light of recent pressures on enrollment growth, but it is clear that MCU is operating with integrity in the midst of rapidly changing internal and external circumstances (CFR 1.7).

MCU's communication with WSCUC has been clear, forthright, and thorough, as evidenced by WSCUC's approval of eight Structural and/or Substantive Change proposals since the university began its transition from a two-year institution to a bachelor's and master's degree-granting institution (CFR 1.8).

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

The transformation of MCU's academic programs has resulted in university SLOs, program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes for all of the degrees. The institution's educational programs are appropriate in content, standards of performance, rigor, and nomenclature for the degree level awarded. For example, the Psychology BA curriculum is closely aligned with Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) as well as the American Psychological Association's (APA) *Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major* (2007) and students have successfully transferred from the institution to other prestigious universities or state universities. A review of the psychology program syllabi reflected the alignment described above, with each syllabus clearly aligned to the overall MCU and BA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) which are in turn aligned to the APA learning goals. This level of transparency is rare, and is a

testament to the commitment to excellence of the BA program faculty. Such transparency provides clarity of focus for faculty and students alike, and provides clarity for ongoing program development and evaluation. The institution has a solid foundation for their online degree offerings. In particular, the MBA is offered face-to-face and hybrid in Southern California, online for Lakeside students, and online through an educational partnership with the University of Nicosia in select International markets (Africa, Eastern Europe). In all cases, the MBA carries the same curriculum, admission criteria, programmatic learning outcomes, assessment protocol, and faculty standards.

Staffing for the degree programs is a concern for the institution. There are only 32 full-time faculty, a number that corresponds to the 2010-2011 academic-year level and is down from a high of 39 in 2009-2010. The drop in numbers is due to retirements and other turnovers. Faculty in the business program teach at all course levels so that students have courses from full-time faculty each year of their degree. The number of adjuncts has increased to staff the courses (26 adjuncts are listed in the Faculty Directory in the MCU catalogue). The adjuncts provide real-world experience and opportunities for the students especially with regard to fieldwork and engagement with the community (CFR 3.1).

There is a strong commitment to increase full-time faculty according to the institution's 2020 plan. In spite of a budget shortfall for 2015-16, the institution is planning to hire three new faculty. In order to retain faculty, they have been assured that their raises for this academic year will be honored (CFR 2.1, 3.1).

The MCU catalog contains clearly defined entry-level requirements and levels of student achievement necessary for graduation. Student programs also include opportunities for study abroad, service learning, internships, field practicum, and independent study. Undergraduate degree programs are comprised of a common liberal

education core plus degree-specific requirements. Each degree program also offers a choice of concentrations or emphases. It is evident that the faculty have been very deliberate in the development of the degree programs, ensuring that student learning in the program is philosophically linked to that of the institution and its mission. Interviews with faculty, adjunct faculty, administrators, staff, and most importantly students attest to the congruency between the mission, the curriculum, and the culture of the institution (CFR 2.2).

The Liberal Arts core consists of 36 lower division units that provide the common foundation for all AA, AS, and BA degrees. Upper division courses continue the focus on writing, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning for each of the majors, which is the continuation of the common core within the major courses. The capstone project is where all of the institutional SLOs are assessed. For most of the majors, the capstone courses have been implemented only a few times and are undergoing revisions to provide students with the opportunity to integrate across the general education core (CFR 2.2a).

The institution's goals for undergraduate students are to develop principled thinkers in the Catholic liberal arts tradition, to build skills for lifelong learning, and to assist students to reach their goals in higher education. The institution strives to graduate students who embody the virtues of integrity, respect for human dignity, and commitment to justice. The graduate program goals are distinct from the undergraduate ones as the institution seeks to prepare students for professional and leadership roles by equipping them with a rigorous array of quantitative, qualitative and participatory approaches to research and analysis to prepare for professional practice and doctoral study; appreciation for the complexities of organizational and community dynamics; principles for ethical and cross-cultural leadership, skills applicable to both private and public organizational settings; a community of practice for case-based and collaborative learning; and direct

practice-based research experience with faculty mentoring. MCU is committed to further hiring and development of business/Leadership/MBA faculty, a goal which points to their understanding of the need for full-time faculty to manage and teach in the MBA program, though this may be on hold given the current budget situation (CFR 2.2b, 3.1).

One of the institution's strengths is that their student learning outcomes and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and institutional level as evidenced by the program review data, MCU catalog, and the course syllabi. Out-of-class learning experiences, such as lab work, service learning, and internships that receive credit, are adequately resourced, well developed, and subject to appropriate oversight. Study abroad trips are organized by faculty who accompany students and review curricular aspects and final student products (CFR 2.3).

Under its current academic leadership, the institution has developed a culture of assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment in support of academic and co-curricular objectives. The institution is gathering, analyzing, and interpreting information to improve its teaching and learning model through program reviews and by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). The institution has clear, well established policies and practices in place, and has created a culture of evidence and improvement. Faculty are responsible for course reports using *Desire 2 Learn* grading rubrics that involve learning outcomes for their course each semester that they teach that course. Faculty are trained in assessment during the start-up week activities. Also assessed are writing and quantitative reasoning by faculty with the support of the OIR, Associate Provost for Educational Effectiveness, and Educational Technology staff (CFR 2.4, 4.3, 4.4).

All SLOs are connected with performance in each course. During each course, students are provided with appropriate and ongoing feedback about their performance

and how it can be improved. The OIR monitors each course each semester that it is taught and programs are reviewed on a three-year cycle. The capstone courses and many of the experiential courses actively involve students in learning, take into account students' prior knowledge of the subject matter, challenge students to meet high standards of performance, and offer opportunities for them to practice, generalize, and apply what they have learned. Capstone projects are reviewed by second readers in addition to the faculty member who grades the project, and the results are reported and analyzed.

Program reviews have rubrics for evaluating the capstone projects as well (CFR 2.5, 4.4).

Assessment is valued at the administration and faculty levels. The Faculty Senate has an assessment committee and plans to focus this coming academic year on assessment along with service, scholarship, advising, and teaching. Faculty, both full-time and adjunct, are provided with training around assessment during each start-up week. All the major pieces are in place for assessment and should be ready to incorporate the core redesign. The OIR is working with faculty to have them discuss the findings of course reviews and program reviews. It will take time and effort to realize the use of results by faculty (CFR 2.6, 4.4).

Presently all academic programs at the institution are subject to program review on a three-year cycle. This ambitious cycle may reflect the earlier pattern of the two-year college and the desire for early feedback on the newly established 4-year programs. Given that students are expected to graduate in four years and with another year for graduates to have begun an advanced degree or employment, a five-year cycle could be more advantageous to the institution. For example, the program reviews completed in spring 2015 do not have reviews of capstone courses or input from employers or information about advanced degree involvement. The components of the program reviews do address the other aspects of program reviews: analyses of student

achievement of the program's learning outcomes and of retention and graduation rates (CFR 2.7).

Full-time and adjunct faculty can apply for rank advancement, but tenure is not part of the institutional culture. Faculty are hired for a three-year term. The faculty senate is concerned with terms of employment in relationship to workload and scholarship and is working to shift to a 24-unit workload rather than the current 27-unit load. This direction has the support of the administration and the Board of Trustees (CRF 2.8).

Currently, the institution is focusing on professional development around assessment, but there are other opportunities for faculty to develop professionally. According to the Professional Development at MCU memo from the Provost office dated 9/21/15, the highest priority is with fostering a culture of learning, reflection, and innovation. Professional development funds are allocated to divisions; each distributes according to pre-approval process. Faculty and academic staff apply for funds through the Academic Affairs PD Application process, with applications reviewed by the Provost's Council. Faculty may apply for one-semester sabbaticals and to present at conferences and attend webinars. The institution has a budget for supporting these activities (CFR 2.9).

The institution collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study. The data suggests a perception that MCU is still a two-year pathway to the institution of choice for graduation, although some students who take this path ultimately transfer back to MCU. The institution will need to continue its work to change its image as a two-year college and recruit students for a four-year degree. The Office of Institutional Research is beginning to collect data using NSSE and comparing their data with comparable institutions. These data are for freshman

and may assist the institution with retaining those students through four years of college (CFR 2.10).

The institution offers many opportunities for co-curricular activities such as study abroad, service learning, internships, field practicum, and independent study options. Likewise, faculty try to engage students in community-related service projects, but there are no reports or formal evaluations of any of these experiences. Many of these are part of programs, but the program reviews do not include these co-curricular activities in the review. Students are made aware of these opportunities through the MCU catalog and from faculty who are involved in the activities (CFR 2.11).

Students have ready access to accurate, current, and complete information about admissions, degree requirements, course offerings, and educational costs through the MCU catalog, available online. The administration as well as faculty (as evidenced by comments in program reviews) are concerned about advising. In addition to faculty advising during start-up week, an office of advising and career development has been established and makes use of technology to deliver timely service to students. Some programs have designated a staff person for advising and others are instituting an office of advising to handle day-to-day questions and concerns of students. It remains to be seen if budget constraints affect these advising changes. A strong residential life program provides opportunities for on-campus students to have activities and diversions from their academic experiences. Timely technological support is provided across all campuses and residences (CFR 2.12).

As programs have been added, service needs have been recognized and established. Advising and Career Services offers workshops and maintains a digital career library. The Marymount library has extended its operations for support for students during midterms and finals by staying open seven days a week (currently the library does

not operate on Saturday). Services for students with disabilities, financial aid counseling, residential life, athletics, and other services have evolved given the needs of a four-year student body. For the 2015-2016 academic year, new athletic programs and international students have contributed to the budget problem. The institution recognizes that there is a need to cut back and advance more slowly when resources are available to grow (CFR 2.13).

MCU is adept at advising transfer students and has worked to make the transfer process (both in and out) a manageable one. Transfer policies are spelled out in the MCU catalog. Unfortunately, some students continue to view MCU as a springboard to other universities. While international students have been a source of revenue, they are also increasingly a part of the budget problems, in part due to deep discounts negotiated by the contract with Kings College. Still, the institution has success with graduating transfer students. At present, 44% of the students in the Business capstone course are transfer students, according to the Business program review document. The institution should consider ways to recruit international students who are interested in more than a two-year transfer to another institution. International students who are interested in obtaining a four-year degree at MCU should be a priority for the institution (CFR 2.14).

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

MCU has made major investments in its operations, academics, and support services to achieve its educational objectives. The University has hired faculty and staff, invested in new facilities, technology, and information resources. These help the institution in decision making and providing educational services. However, the institution is facing tough fiscal issues that will challenge the executive leadership in the academic year 2015-2016 and beyond.

The institution has 32 full-time faculty. Sixteen are new faculty members, hired in the last five years. In spite of aggressive hiring, MCU has experienced considerable turnover due to retirement and other factors. The institution needs to hire additional full-time faculty in the next three years. However, current budget constraints may limit planned hiring (CFR 3.1).

The institution has appropriate faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, workload, incentives, and evaluation practices, which are aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives. Evaluations are consistent with best practices in performance appraisal, including multisource feedback and appropriate peer review of rank eligibility by the sub-committee of the faculty senate. Faculty evaluation processes are systematic and are used to improve teaching and learning (CRF 3.2).

The institution has a number of faculty and staff development activities in place designed to improve teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes. These include a fall start-up week where faculty are re-oriented to the university, their task and responsibilities. They meet with the president, provost, and review the capstone, which is a major academic work assigned to the students. They conduct workshops on assessment and faculty evaluations. Orientation and identity sessions provide an opportunity for new faculty to understand the mission and culture of the institution. Faculty members also receive learning management system training, which orients them to the teaching and learning model on the online platform (CRF 3.3).

The institution has undertaken an aggressive growth strategy, and as a result its financial picture is not entirely clear and of some concern. The team was pleased to see that MCU has qualified independent financial audits and resources in place, and that the Board has finance, investment and audit committees. However, the development of long-term financial stability will require more than oversight and controls, as evidenced by

existing financial challenges. The team also noted that according to the Composite Financial Index dated August 15, 2015, the university has encountered difficult financial positions three out of the last five years. While this is cause for some concern, it should be noted that operating revenues have improved consistently through this period, with the CFI Consolidated Financial Index most notably impacted by necessary balance sheet adjustments associated with construction entitlements. These adjustments did not impact the availability of operating resources or day-to-day operations. MCU is extremely tuition-dependent, which has created financial challenges when enrollment has grown more slowly than planned. The team believes it needs to undertake more realistic budgeting, marketing and enrollment management. While research on new academic programs and their potential market has been thorough, the actual outreach and results have been mixed. Overall, the aggressive growth, hiring, and infrastructure work – which have been entirely necessary for MCU’s path forward – does not appear to have been accompanied by robust financial contingency and multi-year planning models. The institution’s challenge in responding to unexpected budget issues is illustrated in the current fiscal year, where flat enrollment combined with a spike in the discount rate have led to a very challenging budget scenario and the likely outcome of a deficit budget for the year. Along with more nuanced budgeting, the team is concerned that, to date, MCU’s attempt to diversify its revenue sources has not resulted in sufficient gains. The team noted that there does not appear to be a sophisticated marketing and recruitment plan for either the main campus or the Lakeside campus. Coordinated planning among marketing, admissions, and advancement teams seems necessary -- and is perhaps lacking at this time. For the current year, the team noted a considerable deficit and strongly encourages the leadership team to develop a detailed and realistic plan to address it. This will require

transparent conversations with faculty and staff as well as the unwavering support of the Board of Trustees (CFR 3.4).

The institution has done impressive work on technology and providing resources to student, faculty, and staff with special attention to the distributed educational model practiced by MCU. The institution provides access to information and technology resources sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and at physical sites and online to support its academic offerings and the research and scholarship of its faculty, staff, and students. For example, Lakeside Campus in Lake County, California is fully integrated into the information system of the university. Faculty, students, and staff have high-speed access to the career services, library, learning management system, and database of the university in real-time. There is consistency in the technology across the all distributed services and student housing. In addition, the Waterfront site, where the graduate programs are housed, is technologically integrated into the overall IT system. The institution has done an impressive job and is to be commended for the job well done. Faculty and staff members are provided with training and resources to use the technology effectively for both academic and non-academic work (CFR 3.5).

MCU is experiencing a leadership transition due to the unanticipated departure of its president in June 2015. The CFO and the CAO are leading the institution as interim co-presidents. As noted, the institution is facing difficult budget issues that are a result of shortfalls in projected new student enrollment. Due to duality of leadership, it is difficult to characterize the level of accountability at this point. While the co-presidents appear to be working collaboratively, the shared appointment may be delaying the institution from making the decisions that would respond effectively to the current budget challenges and position it well for new leadership (CFR 3).

The institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are grounded in its Catholic faith. Consistent with its purposes, MCU has been engaged in comprehensive capacity building. The institution has appropriate structures in place for educational effectiveness. The institution has clear lines of authority on the academic side, however, the marketing, admissions, financial aid, and development have suffered from turnovers in leadership and the absence of long-range planning (CFR 3.7)

MCU has a chief financial officer, whose primary full-time responsibilities are to the institution. In addition, the institution has a well-qualified chief academic officer. Both are currently serving as co-presidents of the institution. The institution has a number of newly hired qualified administrators to provide educational leadership and management. Since there are a number of new leadership appointments, it will take a while to assess their overall effectiveness. The board is undertaking a search process to hire a new president and has engaged AGB Search, a national and respected search firm. A search committee has been appointed for the selection process. The team encourages the university to work closely with AGB Search in managing internal constituencies and expectations as well as candidates as they identify a new president. The delicacy of this search process cannot be overstated, as the current plan is primarily associated with the previous president, and existing senior leadership needs an appointment that will reinforce the expertise and considerable work that has already been undertaken on behalf of the university (CFR 3.8).

The institution has an independent governing board, consistent with its legal and fiduciary authority and exercising appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, and ongoing operations, including hiring and evaluating the chief executive officer. The team was impressed and moved by this volunteer Board's history with the university and their commitment to MCU's mission and future. Trustees seem fully

engaged and understand their fiduciary responsibilities. The board has a diverse membership and it is seeking additional board members. There are three advisory boards, where individuals might be identified and groomed for future board membership (CFR 3.9).

According to the MCU governance wheel, all academic and administrative units report to the president's (currently co-presidents') office. MCU faculty exercise academic leadership through a faculty senate which meets monthly and consists of all full-time faculty, staff members who teach at least one course, and all adjunct faculty who can attend. All members (including adjuncts) have the right to vote, though according to one adjunct professor, "We abstain from voting on issues related to full-time faculty load." The faculty senate president and vice president serve on the fifteen-member President's Cabinet. One additional faculty members serve as delegates during the annual budgeting process, which involves reviewing new budget initiatives and voting on recommendations to the president. New academic program proposals are initiated by departments, reviewed by the Curriculum Committee (consisting of division chairs, deans, and faculty representatives) and then the Provost Council (deans and division chairs plus the dean of students, Dean of the Waterfront campus, Associate Provost for Educational Effectiveness, and provost). If approved, they are presented to the President's Cabinet for final approval. At least 75% of current full-time faculty serve on various committees, including Rank, Teaching/Learning/Assessment/Education Technology, Terms of Employment (i.e., faculty contract and load), Budget, Nominations, and the Institutional Review Board. Faculty are deeply engaged in governance-related questions; it is also clear that all administrative bodies and committees are advisory to the president's office, and that all academic decisions flow through the provost's office (CFR 3.10).

Standard 4: Quality Assurance Processes

MCU has quality-assurance processes both in academic and non-academic operations in place for new curriculum and program approval, program review, and assessment of student learning. The institution has a new program development form that must be approved by the program chair, CDRC, the Provost and President's Cabinet. It has an instructional board with clear and defined policies. Through the Core Redesign Taskforce, the institution has taken a systematic approach to review and re-define its overall curriculum. Student learning is assessed in an ongoing process and information is analyzed to improve and enhance the learning process. The institution has developed writing rubrics, learning outcomes, assessment plans, and grading rubrics throughout its degree programs. It is strong in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; tracking learning results over time; using comparative data from external sources; and improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results. MCU has also built a strong foundation for distance education and technology-mediated instruction with well-developed policies and procedures in place to conduct online instruction. The institution has a learning management system in place and appropriate level of training, development, and support are provided to faculty, students, and the staff (CFR 4.1).

The institution follows the substantive change policy of WASC. It has a well-planned follow-up process on substantive change recommendations (CFR 4.1).

The institution has an institutional research office charged with collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; and tracking enrollment. The office operates consistent with institutional purposes and characteristics. Data are disseminated internally and externally, analyzed, interpreted, and incorporated in institutional review appropriately for academic purposes. The team encourages the institution to build this strong base and

focus further on enrollment planning and budgeting to help mitigate the likelihood of unexpected budget outcomes (CFR 4.2).

Throughout the visit, leadership at all levels, including faculty, staff, and administration demonstrated strong commitment to improve its learning and teaching based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation. Under its current academic leadership, MCU has developed a culture of assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment in support of academic and co-curricular objectives. The institution is gathering, analyzing, and interpreting information to improve its teaching and learning model. It has clear, well established policies and practices in place and it has created a culture of evidence and improvement (CFR 4.3).

MCU regularly analyzes student projects and artifacts in order to foster a culture of evidence. Each semester the university conducts a comprehensive analysis of course grades and student persistence and success rates at the course level. Faculty seem engaged in the assessment process, though important work remains to be done in program- and institutional-level assessment, especially as MCU is in the midst of redesigning its general education curriculum around a new set of learning outcomes (the Core redesign). MCU has presented evidence that assessment findings are used to improve curricula, pedagogy, and the assessment process itself, though as program-level assessment continues, more can be done to “close the loop” (CFR 4.4).

The institution has developed processes to collect, analyze, and incorporate information from appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, faculty, and students. There are three advisory boards consisting of local leaders and stakeholders that provide ongoing feedback from external constituencies. In addition there are student surveys in place that provide feedback on student satisfaction (CFR 4.5).

MCU has demonstrated that it is a learning organization. The institution's transformation from junior college to university has required systematic processes, guidelines, policies, and procedures and has been propelled through what they describe as an "ongoing data collection, internal inquiry, external review, continuous self-study, and culture of action research and innovation." Institutional research is based on action and relevant to the population the institution is serving. The Student Government Association, Staff Advisory Council, and Faculty Senate have clear bylaws and policies in place. All three provide input and engage with the administration to provide information and advice. MCU periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including the governing board, faculty, staff, and others, in institutional reflection and planning processes that are based on the examination of data and evidence. These processes assess the institution's strategic position, articulate priorities, examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions, and resources, and define the future direction of the institution (CFR 4.6).

The transformation has been a massive undertaking for an institution with limited resources. MCU has made major strides and has developed comprehensive processes, policies, and procedures in academics and student services. It has demonstrated an ability to provide technological services to its distributed multi-campus operations. The institution, within the context of its mission rooted in Catholic faith, is offering a coherent educational experience to its student population. Students who were interviewed shared a high level of satisfaction with the academic programs, staff support, and student services. However, the structural and financial realities of marketing, admissions, and enrollment management appear to suffer from lack of clear, concise, and precise planning as well as a sense of direction. The institution has taken an approach in filling "seats" that has resulted in a wide variety of initiatives, not all of which are successful but all of which draw on the resources of the entire university. The institution has a concrete system for

collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data and information on its enrollment, however it has not been proactive in anticipating or preventing budget deficits. For example, in the current year a 4% salary increase was implemented even as the campus is facing a considerable financial shortfall. The team encourages MCU to base budgeting on the larger context of higher education and realistic assessments, and not projections that can often be overly optimistic. The fundamental issues of declining high school graduates, stiff competition in degree completion, and a saturated adult market must be acknowledged in order to develop a strategy that will be successful. (CFR 4.7)

As always, final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees

The university has invested considerable time and energy in defining the meaning of its degrees as it made the transition to a senior level institution. MCU has clearly articulated mission, vision, and values statements, developed in 2008 and reaffirmed in 2013. These statements describe the institution's identity as one "rooted in the Catholic intellectual and faith tradition," which "educate[s] and challenge[s] students to think critically and grow spiritually," "welcome[s] freedom of inquiry and diversity of experience," "strives for academic and professional excellence," and "encourage[s] our students to ... lead lives of service to others" (CFR 2.2).

These elements are evident in the written materials presented to the team and in discussions with faculty, staff, and students during the site visit. MCU's Chief Institutional Mission Officer participates in many faculty and administrative teams, and co-chairs the Core Redesign Task Force currently revising the undergraduate general education program. The student body is highly diverse – MCU has become a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) within the last few years, and the university sponsors a student

LGBTQ club. Faculty are engaging students in research projects and international experiences that foster global understanding, and MCU is engaging in frequent program review on a three-year cycle in an effort to drive academic quality. Students are required to participate in service activities as part of the first-year seminar course, with the result that the student body has logged an average of more than 10,000 hours of service per year over the past four years. Many students' senior capstone projects also involve a service component (CFR 2.2).

MCU's five institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs), which were adopted in 2009 as part of the institution's move to four-year status, appear in the catalog, on the website, and in all syllabi. ISLOs are mapped to WSCUC's core competencies. All programs have program-level learning outcomes, and course syllabi include course-level learning outcomes. The university is in the midst of revising its institutional-level learning outcomes as part of its core redesign process, which began in the spring of 2013 with faculty/staff forums. A "Meaning of the Degree" survey was administered to faculty, staff, and students in fall 2013, and the results were discussed at a faculty/staff charrette and used to inform the work of the Core Redesign Task Force, which also examined the Degree Qualifications Profile as part of its process. By spring 2014, the task force and the faculty had developed a revised set of student learning outcomes grouped under the categories of communication, outlook, research, and engagement. In fall 2014, five pilot GE courses were revised and taught with the four core outcomes in mind. By the time of the team visit in September 2015, the task force had developed seventeen criteria grouped under the four main SLOs (CFR 2.2a, 2.3).

Task force members report that their next steps involve mapping these criteria to general education courses and proposing GE revisions that will ensure that students engage with all the criteria as they complete their general education. There seems to be

faculty consensus around identifying, teaching toward, and assessing the communication and research outcomes, which include all five of the undergraduate core competencies identified by WSCUC. The task force reports that the Outlook-related criteria (there are six, including global/cultural awareness, diversity, and spiritual/religious literacy) will take more work with the full faculty. In addition, the unexpected departure of President Brophy in June 2015 and the subsequent appointment of MCU's provost and chief financial officer as interim co-presidents, has slowed progress in a number of areas. Accordingly, the launch date for the Core GE system has been moved back a year, to fall 2017.

The task force is also aware of the need to reinforce the basic GE competencies in MCU's undergraduate majors; some of this mapping has already been done in the psychology and business majors. The required senior capstone will address competencies such as written and oral communication, and the task force is considering an outlook-related seminar to integrate the various criteria under that learning outcome. Engagement, which includes both service and ethics, is addressed in various places, including the first-year seminar and in the ethics courses required in each major. The task force has engaged the full faculty in the redesign project, beginning with the initial discussions and surveys. Faculty Senate support and CDRC approval of the final design will be sought. The task force acknowledges that the core redesign is an ambitious project; it will be challenging to teach and assess all seventeen criteria, and as MCU enrolls more incoming transfer students, it will be challenging to show how those students meet all of the core outcomes without having taken MCU's general education curriculum. The institution needs to address both of these critical issues as it finishes designing and implementing its revised general education program (CFR 2.2a, 2.4).

MCU seeks to demonstrate the quality and integrity of its degrees in several important ways. It has adopted an ambitious assessment program along with an aggressive three-year program review cycle. This is moderated somewhat by the relatively small number of degree programs currently offered. As the university adds additional bachelor and master's degrees, it may be necessary to adjust the review cycle's timeframe (CFR 2.7).

In 2015, MCU conducted a review of all four undergraduate majors: Business, Media Studies, Psychology, and Liberal Arts (which includes multiple emphases). The BA Commission compiled an update of progress made on the eleven recommendations from the 2012 program review; it reviewed findings from the 2014 CIRP College Senior Survey, in which MCU's seniors compared favorably with those from a comparable group of institutions. It identified MCU's current graduation rate of around 35% as something that "could pose an existential threat to the University if not managed proactively," and noted that MCU has set a goal of raising that rate to 50%. The low graduation rate is affected by MCU's history as a "transfer-out" school and by its relatively short history as a four-year, BA-granting institution (its first bachelor's degrees were awarded in 2012), and both faculty and administration are aware of the need to make substantial improvement in this area. The BA program review also examined the fall-to-fall freshman retention rate, which improved from 57% in fall 2008 to 69% in fall 2014, and it analyzed student success in terms of term-by-term GPA (CFR 2.7, 2.10).

The fall 2015 BA program review also evaluated faculty qualifications and achievements, noting that 71% of the full-time faculty hold terminal degrees. The percentage of course sections taught by full-time faculty has declined from 57% in 2008-09 to 38% in 2014-15. MCU has added 16 of its 32 full-time faculty in the past five years, and university leaders are aware that they need to continue to increase the number

of full-time faculty in order to keep pace with recent increases in enrollment and to offset impending faculty retirements as well as recent departures. Both co-presidents and members of the Board of Trustees assert that MCU will continue to add full-time faculty in 2015-16, even though the university faces a significant budget deficit this year (CFR 2.1).

Each program assesses student academic performance relative to its program learning outcomes, which are mapped to the current ISLOs. The university also compiles course-level data on student persistence rates (percentage of students who complete a course) and student success rates (percentage who earn an A, B, or C). These rates are disaggregated by program, though it is not clear from program review documents just how this information is used by faculty to make changes in curriculum or pedagogy to help students improve. The report does note that faculty have been given the ability to opt out of student advising, a task that was commonplace and time-consuming when MCU was a two-year, transfer-out institution; about half the faculty have chosen to teach an additional course instead of advising. The advising load is being shifted to a professional advising staff, though some faculty continue to advise students in their program or major. The BA program review concludes with a set of recommendations that address the weaknesses identified in the report and that restate MCU's commitment to adding full-time faculty, improving graduation rates, completing and implementing the core general education program, adding new BA-level programs (a BA in Criminal Justice is being proposed for Fall 2016), and improving the student support infrastructure required by a growing and diverse student population distributed among several campuses. The university's goals are ambitious, and it will be challenging for MCU to address all these recommendations in a time when relatively flat student enrollment will make it difficult

for the university to generate the revenue necessary to hire additional faculty and staff to carry out all its plans in the suggested time frames (CFR 2.6, 2.12).

MCU's graduate programs are also guided by the university's ILOs, with program- and course-level learning outcomes identified. MCU admitted its first four graduate students in fall 2013; as of fall 2015, MCU has a total of 40 graduate students, thus the university has not presented retention or graduation rate level for its graduate programs. Based on the course syllabi and other curricular information presented, MCU's graduate programs are thoughtfully designed, with an appropriate emphasis on scholarship and research (CFR 2.2b).

Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

MCU has clearly articulated student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels. The university has invested significant resources in assessing these SLOs in a variety of ways, and it has used findings from some of its assessment work to improve student learning.

MCU has assessed three WSCUC core competencies at the institutional level: Written Communication and Quantitative Reasoning in 2013-14, and Oral Communication (with additional work on Written Communication) in 2014-15. MCU's Associate Provost for Educational Effectiveness, hired in 2013, led these efforts, with the support of leaders among the faculty and the university's Director of Institutional Research. The Written Communication assessment system was designed in collaboration with the English faculty, who adapted an Association of American Universities and Colleges value rubric for the purpose. The first round of assessments using the rubric generated inconclusive results, though one key finding – that students needed additional writing support in the form of a full-time writing coach – was implemented promptly with positive results. Faculty report that the Written Communication rubric is being

redesigned, and there is still discussion (and some debate, it appears) about this and other institutional-level assessment systems. Repeated redesign of rubrics may be a symptom of faculty's preference for debating philosophical aspects of assessment, rather than moving on to the application tasks of collecting and analyzing assessment data and using their findings to "close the loop." Assessment leadership reports that the original plan to conduct an institutional-level project every semester is moving to a once-per-year approach, in order to alleviate some of the assessment fatigue experienced by faculty. Full-time faculty carry most of the assessment burden, though adjunct faculty in some departments are also engaged in assessment work. Many adjunct and full-time faculty are relatively new to MCU, and it will take some time to bring them fully into the university's culture of assessment (CFR 2.2a, 2.4, 2.6).

The university also conducts other institutional-level assessment projects, such as administering the CIRP first-year and senior surveys and administering an annual President's Survey that addresses various aspects of student satisfaction (including academic programs and services). Assessment leaders are already aware that, as the Core Redesign Task Force completes its work, MCU will need to develop an institutional-level plan to assess the new core competencies and their various criteria.

At the program level, MCU faculty assess students' senior capstone projects for evidence of achievement of both program learning outcomes (PLOs) and ISLOs. The projects are reviewed by second readers in addition to the faculty member who grades the project, and the results are reported and analyzed. Some of the findings from capstone assessment are being used to "close the loop" – for example, weaknesses in students' written communication are being addressed by having them do a small writing project weekly, rather than focusing solely on the final draft of the capstone paper. Capstone assessment also functions as institutional level assessment near the time of graduation, as

all students are required to complete a capstone project successfully in order to graduate. MCU's various BA programs have developed or are developing curricular maps and assessment plans for their PLOS. In most cases, however, the collection and assessment of student artifacts for PLOs not covered by the capstone has yet to be implemented, and the departments will need to make this work a major focus of attention in the next few years, both for bachelor's and master's level programs (CFR 2.4 , 2.6, 4.3).

At the course level, a course student learning outcome (CSLO) report is generated for every section of every course, every semester, by the faculty member who teaches it. More than 500 CSLO reports are written every semester. The CSLO shows how course-level outcomes are mapped to ISLOs; it also includes student persistence and success rates in the course, together with analytical comments by the faculty member. CSLOs are used in the faculty evaluation process, where they are reviewed by department chairs, deans, and the provost; faculty also use them to reflect on ways of improving student learning the next time the course is taught. Student success and persistence rate data presented in the CSLO reports are also examined at the program and institutional level; one faculty member described these reports as "necessary to establish a culture of assessment and learn by doing." However, it does not seem that CSLO reports are used to assess student learning outcomes at the program or institutional level, and MCU's academic leadership is encouraged to review the use of CSLOs to determine whether the faculty time and energy spent on them might be better invested in expanding assessment efforts at the program level and institutional level.

A key challenge facing MCU's faculty lies in keeping assessment manageable and sustainable. The team observed some evidence at MCU of a tendency common at many institutions: faculty tend to focus on designing and perfecting elaborate methods for collecting and assessing large amounts of data, which prove to be labor-intensive and

unsustainable over time. In addition, in some cases, faculty are assessing ALL student artifacts rather than a selected sample (e.g., capstone projects, CSLOs), which may not be necessary to develop valid and actionable findings. MCU's academic leadership is commended for bringing the university's assessment efforts a long way in a relatively short time, and for paying careful attention to the results of assessment projects. The team recommends that MCU focus its efforts on designing streamlined and efficient assessment systems at the program and institutional level, determining which student artifacts will be most useful for this purpose, reducing sample sizes to manageable levels, developing ways to present data in usable forms, generating findings and recommendations that go beyond redesign of the process to ways of improving teaching and learning, and "closing the loop" by implementing those recommendations as time and resources permit(CFR 4.3).

Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation

The institution has been tracking graduation and retention rates by entering freshman and transfer students. MCU's FF 6-year graduation data is as follows: 2008 FF cohort at 37%, 2009 FF cohort at 39%, and 2010 so far (5-year) at 32% with a projected 6-year rate estimated at 34%. The average graduation rate is 36% while the average transfer out rate has been calculated at 43%. In 2012, the first graduating class with BA degrees had 27 graduates, which does not equal 16% of the entering freshman class. Forty-four percent of the students in the Business capstone course entered the institution as transfer students. What the rates suggest is that the institution is still considered to be a two-year college by those students enrolling as freshmen. Until the entering freshman class is more like one from a four-year institution, the graduation and retention rates will not be useful data to the institution.

Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

At present, there are four BA degree programs and three graduate degree programs, reviewed on a three-year cycle. The university may want to consider a shift to a five-year schedule, especially as it continues to develop new degree programs. A five-year cycle would allow for graduate follow-up, which is not feasible under a three-year cycle with new programs. For example, the Psychology program was reviewed in spring 2015 after the program began in fall 2012 and before there were graduates.

The institution fosters a culture of assessment during its start-up week and by professional development offerings on Wednesdays during the class-free period. Each semester faculty members are expected to provide a report on SLOs for the courses that they have taught. At the beginning, the data collection was not uniform and difficult to compile. The IRO has moved to utilize the grading tool in the *Desire 2 Learn* course management system to gather the faculty reports thus streamlining the process. What

remains to be solved is how to work with faculty to discuss the findings of the SLO reports and make changes.

Additionally, the full-time faculty and adjunct faculty are addressing how writing and quantitative reasoning are being assessed. Issues around the use of the rubric for these two areas have arisen and need to be resolved. Faculty are using the assessment data in their third-year portfolios when they select one course and discuss what they have learned over the span of the three years. Although the faculty is beginning to use the assessment data to make course improvements, the institution needs to improve on the processes for using the information for enrollment planning and budgetary decision-making. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

MCU has experienced a rapid pace of transition that shows little sign of slowing. While current services are adequate and students are “happy” and content, the institution suffers from a lack of long-term financial planning grounded in current realities. It appears that major organizational or financial decisions may be deferred in spite of the current deficit. The Marymount 2020 plan, which has guided the transition from a junior college to a senior university, assumed steady enrollment growth. In the wake of plateauing enrollments, the institution has been slow to develop realistic marketing and admissions plans, relying on last minute consulting services and deep discounts to fill seats. The board has raised the issues of budget deficit and charged the co-presidents to assess the financial status of the institution and devise a plan, which includes targets, metrics, and timelines to close the budget deficit.

The team has concerns about the current financial stability of MCU; however, qualified independent financial audits and resources are in place. Still, it appears that the current system is not sufficient enough to prevent the institution from experiencing financial challenges. A re-assessment of marketing, admissions, and development

operations should be considered. The institution should also consider the development of a comprehensive three-year blueprint complemented by an execution plan with clear metrics and assessment. It needs to strengthen its budget to ensure that educational effectiveness will continue in the period leading up to the next reaffirmation of accreditation. The team is concerned that operations remain financially sustainable over the next 6 to 10 years. The team sees a multi-year financial plan as a priority for the long-term viability of the institution (CFRs 3.1-3.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6)

The institution's financial allocations align with institutional priorities of meaning of its degree, quality, and integrity of degrees offered; student learning and success; and processes for academic quality assurance and accountability. The institution has provided ample evidence of academic integrity, student learning, and student services. It has identified and enhanced the competencies that students will need to succeed in the future and the institution has instituted appropriate program review for individual programs and for the institution as a whole (CFR 1.2, 2.2, 3.4, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7).

The institution has committed resources to the assessment of learning and the improvement of student performance. The Institutional Research Office is charged with collecting data and information, which is shared with key members of the leadership as well as the faculty. Whether this level of support can be maintained in times of constrained resources remains to be seen (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 4.3, 4.4).

The institution can hardly fail to be impacted by the changes taking place around the world. MCU is a tuition-driven institution and relies heavily on a mix of local and international students. The institution possesses skills in recruiting and catering to international students. However it needs to develop better processes for engaging in collaborative efforts with international recruitment agencies to make sure they are aligned with its mission and financially viable. MCU must prepare to deal with world events and

a possible drop in its international student pipeline due to political, economic, and social changes that may occur globally. The institution may want to better align or discontinue its current international collaboration with Kings College to ensure it supports MCU's mission and maximizes return on investment (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 4.6, and 4.7).

Component 8: Optional essay on institutional specific themes

N/A

Component 9: Reflection and plans for improvement

Marymount California University is at a crucial point in its evolution from a two-year institution to a university that grants bachelor and master's degrees. The vision of MCU 2020 continues to be inspiring, and the transformation of the institution was entirely necessary for its survival. However, the path it has chosen is not an easy one. The University faces key challenges as it continues to focus on building programs and enrollment while establishing a clear identity as a university.

The accreditation team is impressed with the progress made within the academic program to date, particularly in creating BA and MA degree programs in strong partnership with WASC/WSCUC, focusing on strengthening the faculty and supporting more full-time faculty, developing some important technology infrastructure, and establishing a strong footprint on the Waterfront campus. In addition, the team noted genuine good will and eagerness to move forward as features of the campus and its community. The team was impressed by the care for students and colleagues evident throughout the institution.

However, there are also areas of significant concern and challenges, areas that will need to be addressed as MCU moves into a new era of leadership and of institutional identity. Perhaps the most crucial is financial stability.

MCU has begun a number of new ventures to explore possibilities for growth and development as a university. Even as the institution continues to build that development, the team strongly believes campus leadership must closely evaluate programs and partnerships to determine if they can all continue in the present vein. Some have beautiful conception but no clear audience; others may have been more suited to the institution as primarily a feeder campus; still others may have great potential for further growth and strengthening. In order to invest in those areas with the most promise, MCU must also make the hard decisions to change or disinvest in some of the new enterprises that have not gained traction, unless there is a clear and near-term plan for them to become academically and financially viable.

Along with the programmatic evaluation, MCU needs to more fully develop a three-year financial plan, including contingency options. In addition to being strongly enrollment-driven, many budget decisions appear to be short-term and tactical, when a more developed longer-term budget (including contingencies) would help guide strategic decisions. MCU is envisioning aggressive enrollment growth in a higher education environment that is not only highly competitive, but one in which the market is shrinking. Enrollment and financial plans need to consider the full challenges of the existing environment.

Presidential transitions are always important to institutions, and for MCU the current transition comes at a particularly crucial time. New leadership will need to embrace key elements of the existing vision so as not to de-stabilize the institution. However, any new president will also need room to bring his/her own vision to the fore, and will need to address lingering campus climate issues concerning the pace and style of change. Given the institution's vulnerable financial position, a new president may need to make early and challenging decisions. Campus leadership and the Board of Trustees

will need to work closely together and with the presidential search firm to identify and then support an effective new leader.

The sense of connection and identity that the entire MCU community feels toward this institution is evident, and the commitment to students is tangible. For MCU to become stable and thrive well into the 21st century, the university will need to nurture this good will and commitment while facing the complex and often difficult challenges of launching what is effectively a new institution -- and doing so in a crowded and cacophonous higher education environment.

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS (such as Substantive Change)

N/A

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

1. The team commends Marymount California University for the ambitious path it has chosen in moving from a two-year institution to a University granting both bachelor's and master's level degrees; for a willingness to seize new opportunities and accept new challenges.
2. The team commends MCU's academic leadership for managing this transition, for leading the challenging work of academic program development and implementation, for aligning this work with WASC protocols and best practices in higher education.
3. The team commends MCU's clarity around mission and identity, evidenced in the way new faculty are oriented, for attention to issues of social justice and change rooted in Catholic faith and practice, and for community engagement as evidenced in faculty scholarship and student service learning.

4. The team commends faculty and staff for living out the “Marymount Way” in service to students that seeks to “meet them where they are,” often going beyond what might be expected in order to help students thrive.
5. The team commends the work done in the area of technology to develop the online services needed to support a distributed campus, including training, maintenance, library access, and career services.

Recommendations

1. Lay the groundwork for a new president’s success by addressing outstanding issues, most importantly the deficit; create appropriate flexibility in the 2020 plan so that new leadership can own and refine Marymount 2020 (CFR 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 4.7).
2. Fully evaluate the Marymount 2020 plan to adjust program and enrollment targets appropriate to the context of the broader environment of higher education, an environment which anticipates declining numbers of high school graduates, a saturated degree completion market, and growth of Pell-eligible and first generation students (CFR 1.4, 4.2, 4.7).
3. Individually evaluate the variety of initiatives taken to expand enrollment and make decisions to eliminate, redistribute or invest as appropriate CFR 4.6, 4.7).
4. Evaluate the long-term viability of the Lakeside Campus. Develop appropriate plans to make it financially viable or create an exit strategy (CFR 4.7).
5. Develop a strategic approach to creating a three-year budget plan that realistically reflects enrollment scenarios for a tuition-driven institution (CFR 4.2, 4.6, 4.7).
6. Develop a comprehensive three-year undergraduate and graduate admissions and marketing plan aligned with the institution’s strategic plan and with its academic programs (CFR 4.7).

7. Reorient the assessment process to streamline the collection of data, refining and implementing recommendations so that you can close the assessment loop and sustain a culture of evidence-based decision-making (CFR 4.2, 4.4).
8. Complete the faculty-led review of terms of employment to align with institutional vision and strategic plan (CFR 2.8, 2.9, 3.2).
9. Develop a strategy for international recruitment that aligns more closely with MCU's mission and vision and budget realities (CFR 4.7).

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Federal Compliance Forms

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? P. 65-66 of 2014-15 catalog, public website
	http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/sites/default/files/academics/2014-2015_MCU-Catalog_082014.pdf , http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/catalogs%23summer
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	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)? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Curriculum Development and Review Committee (CDRC) reviews credit hour at time of initial course approval. Division chairs conduct spot checks, in addition to review when new faculty/adjuncts are hired for a given course.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: MCU Student Portal, http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/sites/default/files/ACADEMICS/summer/Summer_2015_Classes_Offerings-2.pdf
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 10
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? both
	What degree level(s)? XX AA/AS XX BA/BS XX MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Communication, Interdisciplinary, Behavioral Science, Psychology, Business
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Sample Syllabi_Federal Compliance_Online_Hybrid.pdf
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) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 5
	What kinds of courses? Lab science, studio art, fieldwork, directed study
	What degree level(s)? XX AA/AS XX BA/BS XX MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Biology, Media Studies, Business, Psychology
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Sample Syllabi_Federal Compliance_Internships_Laps_IndependentStudy.pdf Some syllabi show discrepancies between university policy and course expectations
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other	How many programs were reviewed? 7
	What kinds of programs were reviewed?
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS XX BA/BS XX MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral

program materials)	What discipline(s)? Business, Psychology, Liberal Arts, Media Studies, Leadership/Global Development
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/sites/default/files/academics/2014-2015_MCU-Catalog_082014.pdf (2014-15 catalog, p. 7-53; pdf p. 29-75) http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/academic-programs , Program Information_Federal Compliance.pdf

Review Completed By: Peter Senkbeil

Date: 9-25-2015

2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: University indicated that they comply with the federal regulations on full disclosure
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The institution has extensive career services information on the web as well as Career services office.

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Dr. Ezat Parnia

Date: 9/25/2015

3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? School catalog
	Comments: Procedure to access policy is prominently displayed on the front pages of the catalog. Procedure and policy can be located via three online paths: through the "students" item on the banner menu of the public Marymount California University page, through "student resources" and through the registrar's office page. http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/student-complaint-procedure
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? XXX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, please describe briefly: students (and others) are encouraged to begin with the respective department out of which the complaint arises. Students are informed that at any time they can bring a complaint forward to the VP of Student Affairs, to the Title IX Coordinator, or to the Associate Provost for Academic Policies. Policy outlines both complaint and appeals process. This is tracked in the Associate Provost's office.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Records	Comments: Procedure outlines multiple paths by which a complaint can be lodged as well as varying levels of administrative authority.
	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Policies.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: Associate Provost maintains an electronic spreadsheet tracking complaint, where referred, action taken, resolution, etc. Hard copy files are kept of any material submitted.
Records	Comments: Hard copy files are maintained, access to the spreadsheet is limited to the Associate Provost and one additional staff member.

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Valerie G. Rempel, Ph.D.

Date: Sept. 25, 2015

4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publically available? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where?
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? XX YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Catalog – Acceptance of Transfer Credit (p. 58-59 of the 2014-15 Catalog) http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/sites/default/files/academics/2014-2015_MCU-Catalog_082014.pdf http://www.marymountcalifornia.edu/transfer-students

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

- (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
- (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.
Review Completed By: Patricia Busk
Date: September 25, 2015

Appendix B.

OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS REVIEW – TEAM REPORT APPENDIX (2013 Standards)

Institution: Marymount California University

Type of Visit: Physical

Name of reviewer/s: Dr. Ezat Parnia

Date/s of review: 9/18/2015

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all visits in which off-campus sites were reviewed¹. One form should be used for each site visited. 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.

1. Site Name and Address

Marymount California University Lakeside Campus
3700 Country Club Drive
Lucerne, CA

2. Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a regional center or off-campus site by WASC)

Three undergraduate programs:

Psychology
Business
Liberal Arts

Graduate

Community Psychology
MBA

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

The persons and groups interviewed is below. I also reviewed marketing materials, binders on press releases and document of community meetings and interactions. A sample of student work also examined.

The groups and individuals, who were interviewed is listed below:

M10:00 - 10:30 am **CMU Provost & ALO**
Campus Executive Director
Community Dining Room

Dr. Ariane Schauer
Michelle Scully

10:30 – 10:45 am	Campus Tour w/Executive Director	Michelle Scully
10:45 – 11:15 am	Enrollment & Transfer - Classroom Enrollment Coordinator	Michelle Scully Sharon Maher
11:15 – 12:15 pm	Lunch w/Advisory Board/Board of Trustee Members	
	<i>Community Dining Room</i>	Kelly Cox, Michelle Scully, Annette Hopkins, Dr. Ariane Schauer
12:15 – 1:00 pm	Faculty Meeting <i>Board room</i>	Dr. Emma Ogley Oliver Dr. Jon Westover
1:00 – 1:45 pm	Students <i>Classroom</i>	
1:45– 2:30 pm	Academic Support Services - Board Room Academic Advising & Learning Center Assistant Director of the Library Director of Career Services Director, Educational Technology IT	Dr. Emma Ogley Oliver <i>Gary Medina</i> <i>John McCrudden</i> <i>Maury Hillstrom</i> Mike Ricci
2:30 – 3:00 pm	Provost Dr. Ariane Schauer <i>Office</i>	
3:00 – 3:45 pm	Document Review <i>Learning Center</i>	-

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<p><i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of this and off-campus site relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.4, 4.6)</p>	<p>The university has made a major commitment to open the Lakeside campus. MCU is offering its programs and courses in reduced rates to accommodate the local population. The Lakeside Campus is well planned and operationalized as evident in beautiful facilities, IT infrastructure and connectivity to the main campus. The campus is student-centered, which is stated in the University's Mission statement. meets CFRs 1,2,3.1, 3.4, and 4.6</p>	
<p><i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)</p>	<p>CFRs 1.2, and 2.10 are met. Given the distance from the main campus and focus adult students, Lakeside campus has developed more effective processes to cater to adult students it serves. Connection to the main campus was evident by presence of 2 full-time faculty on campus, video conference capabilities and great sound system, and access to staff on the main campus. Director visits main campus a few times a year. Main campus leadership visits Lakeside campus.</p>	
<p><i>Quality of the Learning Site.</i> How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.7, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4)</p>	<p>CFR 1.7, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4 are met. Excellent classroom facilities, computer labs, internet and intranet connectivity, ample office space for full-time and adjunct faculty. The site is visited by Provost and full-time faculty. Director is in contact with the Dean on the main campus. The faculty members are recommended by the site Director and interviewed and approved by the Dean on the main campus</p>	
<p><i>Student Support Services.</i> CPR: What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? EER: What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.5)</p>	<p>CFRs 2.11-2.13, and 3.5 are met. Students, who were interviewed indicated direct access to faculty for advising in addition to the Director and one staff member. Career and support services are available to Lakeside Campus students. Extensive online library services with access to chat, phone call, and email available to off-campus students. Evidence provided by IT, Library, and Career services directors' s presentation from the main</p>	

	campus in addition to staff member at Lakeside Campus	
<i>Faculty.</i> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty are involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.3, 4.3)	At the time of visit there were two full-time faculty members and Director stated that there are total of 9 adjuncts. The current faculty members are adequate for number of students served	As the campus grows, it will need additional adjunct faculty members. The institution should continue having one or two full-time faculty members from main campus in residence
<i>Curriculum and Delivery.</i> Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1-2.3, 4.6) [Also submit credit hour report.]	The Lakeside courses undergo the same process of development and delivery as courses on the main campus. Courses are designed by faculty with the same curriculum which is then assessed and reviewed by the CDRC - Curriculum Design and Review Committee. There are face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses available to students. According to the faculty members, who were interviewed It appears that courses are comparable in content and outcomes and quality to those on the main campus. Adjunct faculty are reviewed by full-time faculty and faculty at the site report to Dean and chairs on the main campus with dotted line to the Site Director	
<i>Retention and Graduation.</i> What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)	The campus is very new and too small for data to be of any value at this time. The site lost only three students over 2014-2015 academic year, which is the first year of operations for this site. ; One student transferred to the main campus, one is expecting a baby and taking this semester off; one taking a semester off due to family financial reasons. The two taking a semester off have stated they will be back in spring semester. It seems stop-outs are anything other than major life changes outside the scope of the program.	A review within three years required to assess retention and graduation.
<i>Student Learning. CPR:</i> How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? <i>EER:</i> What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.3, 4.4)	Students express that they are very pleased with faculty and indicated that the learning provided is hands-on and practical. According to faculty The assessment at the site follows policy and procedure of the main campus.	A visit in the next two years will be very helpful to review the result of student learning and assessments

<p><i>Quality Assurance Processes: CPR:</i> How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? <i>EER:</i> What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.1-4.7)</p>	<p>The campus has been opened for less than 18 months. The campus offer small classes of 5 to 15. Because campus has been opened for less than 18 months there was not enough evidence to assess programs and courses and the educational effectiveness at this time. More data required before an adequate assessment can be undertaken. However, Dr. Lynn DellaPietra, Dean of Business, Leadership, and Psychology from the main campus supervises the assessment of courses.</p>	<p>A focus visit required in two years to evaluate evidence of the effectiveness of the programs and courses. The Lakeside Campus expected to graduate a few students in Spring 2016. A visit in Spring 2017 will be very helpful to assess CFRs 4.1 and 4.7</p>
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