

REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

ACCREDITATION REVIEW

To Academy of Art University

March 31 – April 3, 2014

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2008 WSCUC Senior College and University Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission.

The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. 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. The Team Visit

Accreditation is not mandatory in the United States; institutions seek it on a voluntary basis, and it is granted on the basis of a peer review process through which commonly held commitments and standards are evaluated. The WSCUC team, whose members were brought together from other accredited institutions in service to excellence in higher education, visited Academy of Art University (AAU) from March 31 through April 3, 2014. Through a full schedule of meetings, the team was able to hear from dozens of students, faculty, and staff on topics that are essential to a consideration of WSCUC accreditation, such as the meaning of the institution's degrees, assessment of learning outcomes at every level, student success, institutional sustainability, and strategic planning.

The team wishes to thank the members of the AAU community for willingly opening its doors to a peer review process designed to assure external stakeholders, including other educational institutions, the federal government, and the general public, that high standards of quality and effectiveness are met, and to provide peer institutions with useful frameworks and benchmarks for continuous learning and improvement. The team greatly appreciates the AAU community's generosity and enthusiasm throughout the visit and would like to express gratitude to all those who facilitated the visit and participated in it.

Description of the Institution

Academy of Art University (AAU), formerly known as Academy of Art College, is a privately owned for-profit art and design school based in San Francisco. Founded in 1929 by fine artist Richard S. Stephens with his wife, Clara, as the Academy of Advertising Art, AAU has been led since 1992 by President Elisa Stephens, granddaughter of the founder, and is owned by the Stephens Institute. AAU's mission is to "prepare aspiring professionals in the fields of design, communication and the arts by delivering excellent undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificate and portfolio development programs" (CFR 1.1). AAU strives to achieve this mission in a number of ways, most distinctively through an inclusive admissions policy, which bespeaks the institution's strong commitment to equal access to higher education in the arts (CFR 1.5).

AAU offers degrees in 23 areas of study, ranging from Fine Art and Illustration to Industrial Design, Architecture, Game Design, Jewelry & Metal Arts, and Motion Pictures and Television. Degrees are conferred at three levels: Associate (AA), Bachelor's (BFA, BA, and B.Arch [in candidacy status]), and Master's (MFA, MA, and M.Arch). Of the 23 areas of study, 17 are offered at the AA, BFA, and MFA levels; 4 are offered at the Master's and Bachelor's only (Architecture, Art History, Multimedia Communications and Art Education); 1 is offered at the AA and BFA only (Fashion Styling); and 1 is offered at the AA, BA and MA level (Fashion Journalism). Of the 64 total degree programs, all but three—the AA, BFA, and MFA programs in Acting—are offered both onsite at the distributed San Francisco campus and online through AAU's pioneering CyberCampus. In Fall 2013, AAU employed 1,496 faculty, of whom 274, or

18%, were full-time, and 1,049 staff, of whom 823, or 78%, were full-time, for a total of 2,545 employees.

The AAU student body is large and diverse, with the student success issues that might be expected of an open-admissions institution that has a significant distance education wing. In Fall 2013, 16,718 students were enrolled at AAU, 66% at the undergraduate level (vs. 34% at the graduate level), 58% full-time (vs. 42% part-time), and 64% in onsite programs (vs. 36% in online programs). Fifty-eight percent of students were female (vs. 42% male), and just under a third of new students were transfers. The student body is by any measure diverse, in terms of race/ethnicity (25% white, 25% underrepresented minorities, 20% unknown, and 30% nonresident alien), nationality (30% international), geography (representation from 50 states and more than 100 countries), and socioeconomic status (30% Pell Grant recipients). For first-time full-time freshmen, the retention rate was 71% (Fall 2012 cohort), and the graduation rate was 33% (Fall 2007 cohort). (Retention and graduation data will be discussed at greater length in Section II.)

B. The Reaccreditation Process

In the 1980s, the institution was granted candidacy by the WASC Commission (1982) but was denied initial accreditation (1989). As Academy of Art University (AAU), the institution was granted initial accreditation in 2007 for the maximum period of seven years.

The Commission's 2007 action letter praised AAU for many exemplary practices, including infrastructural support and rigorous review of online programs, robust student support services, the deployment of multiple methods of assessment, and the implementation of structures and processes for organizational learning, including the use of key performance indicators to drive improvement. The Commission made recommendations within two broad areas. In the first area, "Understanding Its Diverse Community," the Commission recommended that AAU deepen its institutional research (IR) capacity, use data to support the success of diverse student populations, and set and achieve targets and benchmarks as appropriate. In the second area, "Enhanced Program Review," the Commission recommended that AAU sustain its relatively new program review process and extend it to all onsite, online, and co-curricular programs. A scheduled interim report was accepted in Spring 2010. The Interim Report Committee commended the institution for its progress in both areas, particularly the expansion of its IR capacity, and urged ongoing development.

Having volunteered to participate in Pilot 1 of WSCUC's redesigned Institutional Review Process (IRP), AAU submitted reports to a WSCUC Retention and Graduation Committee and Financial Review Committee in September 2012, and an Institutional Reaccreditation Report to the Offsite Review Team in February 2013.

The Retention and Graduation Committee determined that retention and graduation and analyses were "not within acceptable ranges." While commending AAU for developing student success initiatives, the Committee indicated that AAU must continue to improve graduation rates at the undergraduate level, increase attention to closing achievement gaps for all sub-

populations, identify comparable institutions for MFA program graduation rates, and improve graduation rates for onsite part-time MFA students.

The Financial Review Committee concluded that “the data provided, and the ratios calculated from them, were not sufficient for the panel to review the financial condition of Academy of Art University.” No conclusions were drawn. WSCUC directed AAU to address the financial condition of the University in the Institutional Reaccreditation Report, in the essay “Ensuring Institutional Capacity and Effectiveness in the Future and Planning for the Changing Environment in Higher Education.”

The Offsite Review identified six lines of inquiry to be pursued during the Accreditation Visit, which ultimately took place in Spring 2014: academic governance and the role of faculty, open access vs. student success, quality of student learning, the ownership/management structure, the campus climate, and the vision for AAU in the future.

As noted above, AAU has a significant number of distance education programs. As per WSCUC staff direction, these programs were not evaluated independently of this reaccreditation review. AAU has no off-site locations at this time.

In addition to being accredited by WSCUC, AAU is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), with programmatic accreditations through the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) for the Master’s of Architecture program, and the Council on Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) for the Interior Architecture and Design BFA and MFA programs.

C. Institutional Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor

AAU implemented the review as a serious inquiry into student learning and achievement, with less emphasis than expected on institutional sustainability and plans for the future. AAU made a good-faith effort in the Institutional Review Report (IRR) to accurately portray the condition of the institution and respond to the prompts for the essays and data exhibits that are required components of the redesigned Institutional Review Process. The IRR and portfolio of exhibits, including an interactive exhibit of student work meeting AAU’s Degree Quality Profile (DQP), are clearly written, though voluminous (totaling over 4,000 pages) and difficult to navigate, because so many of the documents are accessible only through hyperlinks in the IRR. The team found the strategic scope and focus of the IRR to be limited, most noticeably in the essay “Ensuring Institutional Capacity and Effectiveness in the Future and Planning for the Changing Environment in Higher Education.” Moreover, the discussion of the institution’s financial condition, as requested by the 2012 Financial Review Committee, was not in evidence. In general, the team found that the IRR tended to point to evidence in the extensive portfolio of exhibits rather than effectively using and analyzing evidence in the essays themselves, with the result that the IRR, though 100 pages long, appears to be lacking in depth on certain critical issues.

An accreditation review is a monumental effort for most institutions, and AAU is no exception. The effort was guided by an eight-member WASC Oversight Team, and the report was prepared by a separate but overlapping eight-member Writing Team. AAU's extensive administrative and academic leadership were deeply involved in the review, leading special initiatives on student success, contributing data and analysis, and participating in the President's Academic Retreats. Full-time and part-time faculty were also involved, through such ongoing practices as program review and midpoint and final reviews of student work, such new projects as the DQP, and such special forums as the open session on WSCUC and NASAD reaccreditation strategies at one of AAU's annual Teaching Conferences. One opportunity for community input and team follow-up was significantly curtailed: the notice of the confidential e-mail account was sent to the AAU community the day before the visit rather than three weeks in advance, as prescribed by WSCUC. The team requested that the e-mail account remain open for approximately 10 days after the visit and followed up on issues of greatest concern, but this snag in collecting community input hampered review efforts.

As noted above, the Offsite Review Team identified six lines of inquiry to be pursued during the Accreditation Visit. AAU provided an extensive response (30 pages) with discussions of many of the issues and citations to the IRR and portfolio of exhibits where additional information could be found. The response was a good-faith effort to address the lines of inquiry, but, like the IRR, tended to point to the portfolio of exhibits rather than provide thoroughly developed answers to the questions posed. For example, in response to probing questions about succession planning, the response merely referred the team to another document where the general institutional policy on succession planning can be found rather than providing an in-depth engagement of the leadership and financial issues involved in succession at a proprietary institution.

D. Response to Issues Raised in Previous Commission Actions and Reviews

AAU was commended by the 2010 Interim Report Committee for its progress in addressing the two issues identified in the 2007 Commission action letter: "Understanding Its Diverse Community" (an issue that's closely linked to student success) and "Enhanced Program Review." The 2012 Retention and Graduation Committee also identified issues related to student success. Progress since the 2010 Interim Review in the areas of student success and program review are addressed in Section II.

The 2012 Financial Review Committee was unable to draw conclusions due to the insufficiency of data provided. Although WSCUC directed AAU to address the institution's financial condition in the IRR, AAU did so in only the most general terms, stating in the IRR that "AAU's financial stability is projected to continue over the next 10 years," with no evidence cited to substantiate this claim. The financial condition of the institution is discussed in Section II.

In addition to the above, the team calls attention to a major change that has occurred since the 2007 WSCUC visit that may affect the Commission's evaluation of institutional capacity and effectiveness. This change is *dramatic growth*. In 2005, as AAU was ramping up for initial accreditation, the enrollment headcount was 8,698. By Fall 2013, six years after initial

accreditation, enrollment had more than doubled, reaching 16,718 (the high point was even higher—18,093 in 2011). During this same period, onsite degree programs nearly doubled, from 34 to 64, as did online degree programs, from 33 to 61. Total faculty (full-time and part-time) grew from 896 to 1,448, and total staff from 698 to 1,096. While the number of facilities owned by AAU during this period remained constant [REDACTED] the number of facilities rented grew significantly [REDACTED]. The revenue/expense model has grown accordingly. These steep growth curves in so many critical categories have understandably challenged AAU's leadership systems and organizational structures, as discussed in Section II.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

A. Defining the Meaning of Degrees and Ensuring Their Quality and Rigor, and Achieving “Graduation Proficiencies”

The team has chosen to evaluate the institution's approach to defining of meaning of the degrees it offers and ensuring their quality and rigor, and to ensuring the achievement of core competencies because of the apparent overlap between these two required components of the redesigned Institutional Review Process.

In these essays, AAU describes the many approaches it has taken to defining the meaning of the degrees it offers and describing the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that graduates should possess (CFRs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1-2.4). The most notable approaches are the following:

- *Programmatic Accreditation.* AAU is accredited and periodically reviewed by NASAD, which articulates disciplinary content and standards for art and design fields. Programmatic accreditation for specialized programs is provided by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) and the Council on Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA). Programmatic accreditation requires a strong commitment to specific standards for the great majority of degree programs offered by AAU.
- *The DQP Project.* AAU volunteered to pilot the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), which articulates student learning outcomes at various degree levels. AAU's DQP project has shown strong signs of being a highly promising method for ensuring the quality and rigor of the degree. Sixteen degree programs voluntarily participated in this project, which involved transposing the Lumina Foundation's general DQP, a matrix that describes expected levels of achievement for the Associate, Bachelor's, and Master's degree, to an art and design context, and then curating student work that meets or exceeds each level. Samples of student work that are posted on a special website are accompanied by written assessments that delineate the ways in which the work achieves the expected outcomes.
- *Core Competencies.* The DQP project has helped AAU define core competencies across majors and degree levels, including problem solving, technical proficiency, communication fluency, and professional readiness. Additional core competencies are defined within

specific programs, such as the Liberal Arts (art historical awareness, historical awareness, cultural awareness, and quantitative literacy) and the majors.

- *Learning Outcomes and Rubrics.* AAU has a robust internal process for developing programs with defined program and course learning outcomes that are aligned with outcomes at the institutional level. A pilot project in the Foundations Department to define student achievement levels through carefully designed rubrics, with visual examples of student work at each level, became the basis for rubric development elsewhere at AAU. The hundreds of rubrics now in use attempt to bring a high level of consistency to standard-setting and outcomes assessment across the university, both onsite and online. Assisting these efforts is a large and effective Faculty Development team, whose members work closely with faculty to develop courses that meet established criteria. Systematic studies over the years to ensure the effectiveness of rubrics are laudable and speak to the institution's commitment to continuous improvement.

The team commends AAU and the participants for their participation in rigorous programmatic accreditation, their initial efforts on the DQP project, and their commitment to using and continuously improving rubrics. The DQP project in particular promises to become a valuable tool for defining degrees and presenting achievement, and the team encourages AAU to expand this project in the coming years and to involve faculty more deeply in its development.

Core competencies are currently assessed primarily through the Liberal Arts (LA) program and the majors (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 4.6). LA has defined nine student learning outcomes (in alignment with CFR 2.2a), of which eight have been rigorously assessed. Results indicate that such core competencies as Historical Awareness, Quantitative Literacy, and others are achieved at acceptable rates (CFR 2.6). LA faculty are deeply involved in assessment activities, and the program "closes the loop" through course and program improvement, such as reducing class size, changing course content, and revising assignments and rubrics.

Assessment of core competencies in major programs, while less developed than in LA, is making progress. The IRR included assessment case studies for three Bachelor's and three Master's degree programs, and a discussion of the many ways in which AAU is seeking to improve assessment of discipline-specific core competencies. All students in Bachelor's and Master's programs are individually assessed at a formative point in their academic careers—the Midpoint Review—and at a summative point—the Final Review. This system of assessment allows students and faculty alike to take stock of student achievement and enables improvement in program design. Rubrics that have been developed for use in the Midpoint and Final Reviews articulate achievement levels and provide quality assurance. The team encourages AAU to continue developing its assessment efforts across the university.

Academic program review at AAU takes place on a 5-6 year cycle and focuses on assessment of student learning outcomes, key indicators of program effectiveness, and resource allocation and sufficiency. In addition, program leaders attend multi-day offsite meetings known as the President's Academic Retreats, intensive evaluation and planning sessions. Although not all academic programs have undergone review, a schedule has been established that includes all

programs, and those programs that have completed the process have established improvement goals. Because academic program review is a relatively new process at AAU, it remains to be seen whether improvement goals will be achieved (CFR 4.6). Several co-curricular programs and administrative units are also on the review schedule, and a few, including the Academy Resource Center (ARC), have undergone review (CFR 2.11).

Based on sample reviews, academic program review appears to be a more highly developed process than co-curricular program review, though efforts are underway to bolster co-curricular program review. Overall, the team commends AAU for the strides it has taken in the area of program review and recommends that external review by peers in the field become a required component of the process in order to provide needed outside perspective and quality assurance (CFR 4.8).

B. Defining and Promoting “Student Success”

In this essay, AAU defines student success in terms of skills mastery and quality of student work, retention and graduation rates, and relevant employment after graduation. This definition of student success is consistent with AAU’s mission, values, and character as an open-admissions institution with a focus on preparing students to become professionals in creative fields.

Retention and Graduation Rates

AAU acknowledges its low graduation rates and recognizes its admissions policy as a significant factor in the graduation rate equation. The team examined data provided in the report, as well as additional data provided upon request both onsite and after the visit. Retention for First-Time/Full-Time (FTFT) freshmen is 71% (2012 cohort), though significantly lower for other types of cohorts (for example, 41% retention for First-Time/Part-Time freshmen). FTFT freshmen are a relatively small percentage of the total population (6%) and largely bolstered by international students. Thus, these numbers, though interesting, don’t tell the story of the “typical” AAU student. While the campus has made some gains in retention rates, with this number trending up from 59% in Fall 2008, progress has been slow and possibly complicated by rapidly expanding enrollment over the last decade. First-Year Transfer retention appears stronger, with 82% of students with fewer than 30 transfer credits returning and 86% of students with more than 30 transfer credits returning (2010 cohort). Graduate student retention is 77% (both Full-Time and Part-Time, three-year average).

Graduation rates for FTFT freshmen are 5% at 4 years (2008 cohort), 32% at 6 years, and 39% at 8 years. (Notably, the 4-year graduation rate for international students in the 2008 cohort is 11%, as compared with domestic students’ graduation rate of 4%.) Online freshmen have lower graduation rates, with only 6% graduating in 6 years. According to the AAU Revised Factsheet, 33% of students in the 2007 Bachelor’s cohort graduate within 150% of normal time.

Graduation rates for students studying part-time are lower, at 3% overall in 6 years (2006 cohort). Whether part-time students enroll with the genuine intention of completing was not

ascertained. The number is noteworthy given that part-time students represent a meaningful component of overall enrollment—42% of the total AAU student population in Fall 2013.

Overall, retention and graduation rates are lower than national norms and were the source of the 2012 Retention and Graduation Committee’s concerns. As noted earlier in this report, AAU has significantly increased its enrollment over the last several years. It is difficult to compare this institution to other institutions given its large part-time and online populations. Comparisons about FTFT students may be difficult to gauge given the inclusive admissions policy and the specialized nature of arts education. That said, the team echoes earlier concerns about whether AAU can demonstrate that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion (CFR 1.7).

For some students, the pathway to the degree will be a long and winding road. The low retention and graduation rates may indicate that students are not aware of or are not realistic about what it will take to be successful (as anticipated in CFR 2.12). Indeed, the institution readily acknowledges that attrition is part of an organic process through which students develop an appreciation for the level of skill and commitment required to be successful in the arts. This theme was amplified by students and faculty, who shared that they observe some students entering the institution believing that going to art school will be “easy” or under the influence of an idealized Bohemian fantasy about living as an artist, only to learn that going to school and making a living as an artist, designer, or other creative professional are anything but easy. Depending upon the number of students receiving financial aid and the number of students taking on debt, this is an expensive proposition when these same students are unsuccessful. (Debt upon graduation has been provided by program, not by institutional level, as anticipated in CFR 1.2. A sample review of program information on the AAU website revealed a range of debt from \$0 to over \$40,000. Following US Department of Education regulations, AAU does not report debt for programs with fewer than 10 graduates, because such disclosure risks violating individuals’ privacy.)

Student Success Initiatives

AAU has provided ample information about assessments and interventions to address retention concerns. Significant internal studies about student characteristics reflect national research in terms of risk for attrition (CFR 2.10). AAU has undertaken a commendable array of support programs for students. Of particular note are the services provided through the Academy Resource Center (ARC) and the Faculty Development Department, both of which appear to engage best practices to accomplish their goals (CFR 2.13).

Through the ARC, the institution supports general tutoring in art and general/liberal studies, as well as English as a Second Language for international students with embedded staff support in the classroom. The scope of this program in terms of staff and financial investment is significant, and most faculty encountered by the team were appreciative of the assistance. The program also appears to be a central resource for students encountering all manner of issues related to the AAU experience. Thoughtful analysis about student learning for students in this program also led to improvements in service delivery (CFR 2.10). The intensive English

language program for international students, English for Art Purposes, was amended to include art content courses along with language mastery classes in order to engage students. Initial assessments indicate that this amendment is increasing international student success.

The Faculty Development efforts, while focusing on pedagogy and faculty support, appear also to have a positive impact on student success. The development of rubrics by the faculty with the encouragement of the Faculty Development team, Program Coordinators, and Department Action Teams (DATs) provides students with clear standards about the quality and expectations of work (CFR 2.3). In discussions with students, rubrics were reported to be helpful.

The campus has also engaged external resources to improve student success. An arrangement with InsideTrack, now discontinued, provided coaches/mentors and exit interview analysis of students. Several test cohorts were piloted through this process, and the campus received some valuable data about risk factors and student satisfaction. An analysis of cohort risk factors led the institution to plan specific interventions for support through the ARC (see discussion below).

These reinforcements are well-intentioned and indicative of the manner in which the institution addresses student success challenges. Data received are taken at face value and not challenged, but still enthusiastically pursued with all the resources at the institution's disposal. For example, a cohort of students identified by InsideTrack as at higher risk for attrition is Underrepresented Minorities (URM). A closer analysis of this group would likely reveal that the success factors associated with the cohort have less to do with minority status and more to do with Low Socio-Economic Status (Low SES). AAU's intention to deliver special programs to URM students with low Estimated Family Contributions (EFC—from financial aid calculations) will notably miss any white and Asian students who also come from low-income families. AAU learned from this same review that, at least for Pell Grant recipients, finances are a challenge. AAU did not discuss the role of need-based institutional aid. Further discussion of this singular factor may be ongoing and would assist the institution in its retention planning. The institution may be addressing affordability by attempting to keep tuition rates and increases lower than those of competitors.

A commitment to improving retention and graduation is clearly articulated. AAU is targeting a 6% increase in retention by 2015. The institution has recently developed a Persistence Plan, which has been approved by the Board. The discussion of the Persistence Plan included a self-reflective analysis of internal processes and organizational challenges that influence persistence. These challenges include the following:

- An organizational culture that operates often in silos,
- Cumbersome administrative policies that frustrate students,
- Energetic and well-intentioned interventions that are reactive and singular,
- Limited follow-through on identified student issues,
- No clear pathway for students to follow to resolve typical problems, and
- A lack of uniform customer service standards.

The institution is commended for acknowledging issues and mobilizing to address them (CFRs 1.7, 1.8). The Persistence Plan identifies numerous initiatives, including technology improvements, evaluation of internal processes to remove barriers, and increased coaching support and engagement opportunities for under-performing/at-risk cohorts. The Plan also recommends a new VP level executive to lead the campus in implementing the initiatives. While this may be a logical recommendation, it is also reflective of what the team observed during the visit: a proliferation of high-level administrators, unlinked to functional/organizational identities, without significant depth of staff support (CFR 2.13).

During the visit, the team met with members of the Retention Team and later reviewed notes from meetings that occurred from 2011 to 2013. The notes document thoughtful study and analysis of retention matters consistent with an institution that is committed to a culture of inquiry (CRF 2.10). It appears that there was significant activity with the Retention Team prior to submitting the September 2012 Retention Report to WSCUC and that, afterwards, only two meetings of the full group were held. Project-oriented work (which had been initially identified by the Retention Team) was pursued by a subset of Retention Team members and other campus administrators; however, the Retention Team as a whole appears to have been inactive during the 2013-14 academic year, despite statements made during the visit indicating that the group was an active and ongoing committee with quarterly meetings. These statements may have been in reference to the multiple meetings of the subgroup, as indicated by AAU in later exchanges on the topic, but the team wishes to make record of the discrepancy and the concerns it raised regarding transparency and candor with WSCUC (CFR 1.9). Moreover, the lack of sustained work by the Retention Team as a whole raises concerns about the extent to which retention efforts have been systematized and institutionalized, though the team recognizes that the recently developed persistence plan is intended to address just such concerns (CFR 2.7).

The efforts toward improving retention are notably directed toward serving enrolled students and assisting them once at AAU. AAU has not referred to any proposals or efforts to influence student success prior to admission, either through improved pre-admission assessment, expectation management with applicants, or targeted recruiting of students with identified higher success profiles. The institution's commitment to inclusive admissions is a strong defining element in its identity and mission. That said, AAU may want to investigate ways to influence student preparation and competency at the front end of the student application process. With the present arrangement, there will be students for whom no amount of remediation will suffice, and whose resource load on the institution could be excessive. Finding a balance between the high standards of a competitive art and design university (that is regionally accredited) and the open admissions standards presents some interesting challenges for AAU in terms of resource allocation, accountability, scalability, and—importantly—sustainability.

Student Life

Increasingly, higher education recognizes the importance of the co-curriculum and the role of student affairs professionals in contributing to student success. In particular, student involvement or engagement, especially in the first year, is viewed as critical to promoting retention and graduation. Over the last decade, AAU has markedly increased its co-curricular programs, primarily through the addition of a robust athletics program at the NCAA Division II level. Regular programming is conducted through the Campus Life unit, and there appears to be proactive and effective collaboration among myriad departments, including Housing and Residential Life and Athletics. There also appears to be increasing integration of celebration of student work, career programs, and professional lectures with various student affairs units. While the organization of the student affairs function at AAU is far from ideal, the staff in these areas are to be commended for the positive way they reach across reporting lines to develop a shared co-curriculum for students. A tremendous amount of work is being done to engage students, and the team commends the staff for their efforts.

The team identified three areas requiring improvement, with specific recommendations indicated:

- *Organizational Structure.* Student development functions are disaggregated, creating a suboptimal environment for effective decision-making (CFR 3.8). Student activities, career services, alumni relations, and e-commerce all fall within one VP's portfolio; student complaints and grievances fall within the portfolio of a VP with international admissions responsibilities. Housing/Residential Life, with significant student development responsibilities, reports to the Chief Financial Officer. A wide, distributed model of service accountability has implications for daily operations, responsiveness to students, and assessment. AAU's Persistence Plan acknowledges the lack of a clear pathway to resolve low-level complaints, incomplete follow-through on individual student issues, and a lack of training and customer service expectations across the units. A stronger identity and organizational structure for programs in Student Life would promote student success and aid in co-curricular program review (CFR 2.11), which appears to be in the early stages of development.
- *Staff Qualifications and Professional Development.* With some exceptions, the AAU student affairs team leaders as a group appear to have limited professional experience. AAU's practice of promoting from within or from among alumni has likely been a strength for the institution, given its unique mission and the specialized world of arts education. However, as the institution has continued to grow and establish its place among regionally accredited institutions, the demands for co-curricular program array, regulatory compliance, risk management, and professional exposure become greater. Developing the student affairs team through recruitments and continued professional development will ensure that the institution has enough depth in this area to maintain and support its operations, legal obligations, and commitment to students, consistent with its institutional objectives (CFR 3.1).

- *Development of Student Leadership and Citizenship.* Engaging students in the life of the institution through leadership experiences is an important component of a well-developed co-curricular experience, contributing to overall student success and the development of citizenship and life-long skills (CFR 2.2a). AAU lacks a strong student leadership program outside of formal training for Resident Assistants. Notably, the student newspaper, which has the potential to serve as an important voice for student issues, is largely written and edited by staff. There is not a traditional student government. Student representatives are not elected by their peers but instead are appointed within each department. Expanded student leadership opportunities will help to develop a full co-curricular experience, one that engages students in the life of the institution and prepares them for work, citizenship, and a fulfilling life.

In summary, AAU's efforts to promote student success are at the early stages of development, though positive strides have been made in this area, and ongoing, focused work is recommended.

C. Ensuring Institutional Capacity and Effectiveness in the Future, and Planning for the Changing Environment in Higher Education

In this essay, AAU adequately discusses events and trends in higher education and the institutional plans now taking shape to adapt to a changing environment. For example, the institution's already well-developed CyberCampus is cited as enabling AAU to meet an anticipated increase in student demand for distance education in the coming years. Through its growing international student population and connections abroad, AAU is embracing a more globally oriented society as well. But the essay only superficially addresses such issues as financial stability (which the Financial Review Committee had explicitly called for) and the systems and processes for ensuring institutional capacity and effectiveness in the future. The team therefore dedicates this section of the report to discussing several issues related to institutional capacity and effectiveness, which the team believes warrant significant and immediate attention.

Financial Condition

Stephens Institute d/b/a Academy of Art University (AAU) is a California corporation whose tax designation is sub chapter S. The sub-S designation offers the owners a tax efficient structure, which avoids double taxation. The institution has seen a great deal of growth over the past decade, with total enrollment more than doubling. This has led the institution to grow to ██████ in revenue for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2013, with approximately 94% of the income coming from tuition and registration fees and the remaining 6% from dormitory revenue. The almost exclusive reliance on tuition as a source of revenue is common in privately held postsecondary institutions. Overall, for fiscal year 2013, AAU generated net income of ██████ and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) of ██████. The EBITDA percentage as a total of revenue was approximately ██████ for the year ending December 31, 2013.

AAU has a long history of operating as a growing and profitable organization (CFR 3.5). This bodes well for a future of financial sustainability and reliability. The EBITDA margin is considered to be on the low end for a regionally accredited private institution. A large part of the lower margin can be attributed to the fact that the owners have decided to place a large portion of the real estate ownership in corporate entities which are not part of the university. The lease payments are then made to the off balance sheet entities which leads to an overall occupancy cost of [REDACTED] in the fiscal year ending December 31, 2013, which is [REDACTED] of total revenue (well above the industry standards). It is understandable to a certain extent that the occupancy costs are high, given the location of the institution (City of San Francisco) and the need to move costs into more tax efficient off balance sheet structures. However, the almost exclusive reliance on tuition revenue coupled with the higher occupancy costs means AAU is susceptible to reductions of enrollment greatly impacting cash flow, operations, and financial sustainability. In similar financial operating situations, it is appropriate to examine the balance sheet in order to determine the ability of the university to leverage its assets to secure financing in times of lower enrollment in order to determine financial sustainability (CFR 3.5).

The AAU balance sheet has the capacity to secure longer term financing in order to cushion itself versus declines in enrollment. However, AAU has not secured a long-term financing mechanism in which to assure itself of the ability to fund projects through cyclical enrollment downturns. At the end of 2012, AAU had borrowed [REDACTED] from its line of credit, and at the end of 2013 borrowed [REDACTED] with a cash balance of [REDACTED]. The Chief Financial Officer indicated that AAU was working to increase the line of credit [REDACTED] in order to assure cash flow was not a continuing issue. The low cash balance, coupled with the draws on the line, significant accounts payable, and accrued expenses [REDACTED] leads to a current ratio which is only .3. A current ratio well below 1 suggests the institution is struggling to pay off its current obligations in a timely manner and is more vulnerable to short-term variations in revenue than an organization which takes a longer term view of financing.

All of the above does not mean the institution is not financially sustainable (CFR 3.5). The issue which needs to be focused on by AAU is a longer term view of budgeting and capital structure coordinated with the need to create an efficient and off balance sheet tax structure. The team did not see evidence of a multiyear budgeting process and/or financial model. This tends to coincide with the capital structure, which is very focused on the year-to-year budgeting cycle. So, if enrollments do not come in for the term, then departments are required to cut expenses commensurately in order to remain in line with the original proposed budget. This leads to cutting areas which might be worthy investments for the longer term but, absent a longer term financing mechanism, must be reduced. The recommendation would be to secure a longer capital structure and to commence a process to develop a longer term financial budget which is tied to the strategic plan.

Organizational Structure and Effectiveness

The governance structure of Stephens Institute d/b/a Academy of Art University consists of two separate boards of directors. The Stephens Institute board of directors exists to represent and

protect the interest of the shareholders. The AAU board of directors exists to maintain the integrity and academic quality of the university and to represent such to the students and public served by the institution. The two boards are separate entities but may have overlapping membership. The AAU board of directors includes a majority of members who are not shareholders and are independent as defined by WSCUC. The board of AAU has the full authority to appoint and, if necessary, replace the president of the institution (CFR 3.9). The team found the board members to be very engaged and highly qualified individuals. The relationship between the board and president seemed healthy and constructive.

The organizational structure below the president is extremely flat with the total number of direct reports to the president numbering 27. The nexus of decision-making seems to rest primarily with the president. Communication to the management team which reports to the president is disjointed due to the lack of a president's cabinet and regular meetings with the executive management team as a whole (CFR 3.8). The flat organizational structure and top-down approach to decision-making also concerned the board of directors, which has discussed the issue with the president. Through these conversations, the institution decided to engage an organizational consultant to evaluate and recommend changes to the management structure in order to create a more effective and efficient leadership system and decision-making process. The team believes the management structure composition was effective when the institution had 2,500 students but was not sufficiently reorganized at the level directly below the president as the institution grew in complexity and size to over 16,000 students. The team recommends that AAU continue to pursue external advice on the executive management reporting structure. The results of the advice will, it is hoped, lead to presidential reporting changes over the next two years in order to create a more robust executive management structure, allowing for more effective decision-making and the continued growth of the institution.

Strategic Thinking and Planning

AAU has in place—or is developing—many elements of an effective process for strategic thinking and planning (CFRs 4.1, 4.2). The team found a clear commitment to engaging the University's constituencies in the form of meetings with alumni and with employers and others in the professional community for the purposes of gathering reaction to curriculum and to quality of student work, as well as meetings with staff to focus on particular issues, and with faculty, again to focus on particular issues. More often than not, however, AAU follows a top-down model of strategic planning, and meetings of faculty, while very appropriately concerned with issues central to the educational enterprise, such as curriculum development, student success, and assessment, are conspicuously not concerned with broader aspects of institutional planning (CFR 4.1).

The reliance on a limited number of people (president, program directors) to envision the programs that others are relied upon to implement has not only the obvious limitation of a limited perspective, but also carries the risk that the university will not have a mature planning process in place in the event of personnel changes. This is not a matter of either the president or the directors not "knowing" enough to perform their current functions, but rather a matter of ensuring that many people both contribute to and support AAU's goals and direction, and

that the institution ensure its sustainability. Further, a reimagined structure might focus on eliminating the silos in the current structure by bringing AAU constituencies together to consider the institution's strengths, challenges, and future courses of action, including in that process an analysis of data, which AAU seems to have the potential to collect and to interpret in a way that will align the University's academic, personnel, fiscal, physical, and technological resources (CFR 4.3).

The Faculty Role

Faculty play a key role at AAU in supporting educational effectiveness. In addition to being responsible for education delivery, faculty participate in the development and improvement of new and existing curricula. But the team found significant shortcomings in how the faculty role is understood and implemented at AAU:

- With no institution-wide faculty governance body and no formal institution-wide committee structure in place, the AAU faculty are unable to exercise effective academic leadership (CFR 3.11) or take collective responsibility for student learning and attainment (CFR 2.4).
- Despite the apparent requirement that AAU faculty are expected to be working artists and designers, no support system exists to provide faculty—in particular full-time faculty—with the resources necessary to pursue scholarly or creative activity (CFRs 2.8, 2.9). Moreover, full-time faculty teach year-round, providing no stretches of time during which to pursue artistic or scholarly work.
- AAU apparently lacks a faculty promotion system, a formal faculty performance evaluation system, or a formal mechanism for faculty salary increases (CFRs 1.3 and 3.3). Full-time faculty workload is high (up to 7 courses/semester) and, like salary increases, seems to be individually negotiated, with no institution-wide standards.

The team was struck by the fact that, although numerous academic department directors and curriculum coordinators, most or all of whom serve on the faculty, attended meetings during the team visit, full- and part-time faculty without administrative appointments were largely absent. Those faculty who participated in the meeting on the Degree Quality Profile (DQP) project were eloquent and inspiring in their discussion of student work, but many were unable to adequately describe the purpose of the DQP project and its impact on their programs, suggesting a limited institutional and programmatic outlook.

The team recommends a deep reconsideration of the faculty role to bring it into alignment with WSCUC standards. Doing so will enrich the faculty-student relationship, which is the center of the educational enterprise, and promote student learning and success.

D. Integrative Essay

The team found the Integrative Essay to be inadequate. In this essay, AAU briefly notes progress and next steps related to the two issues identified in the 2007 Commission action letter: “Understanding Its Diverse Community” (i.e., student success) and “Enhanced Program Review.” AAU also uses the Integrative Essay to briefly affirm and refer to evidence of its commitment to WSCUC’s Core Commitments. This evidence consists of links to AAU’s self-assessments using the following tools: Self-Review under the Standards, Compliance Audit, Educational Effectiveness Framework, WSCUC Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes, and WSCUC Rubrics for Assessing the Use of Portfolios and Capstones. Finally, AAU cites the planning document “AAU Strategic Focus Areas, 2013-2023” as its roadmap for continuous improvement over the next decade.

SECTION III – EVALUATION OF ELECTRONIC EXHIBIT PORTFOLIO

As noted in Section I, the electronic exhibit portfolio was voluminous and difficult to navigate. AAU provided additional materials on site, adding to the volume of documentation. Despite the challenges of wading through so much material, the team can affirm that AAU undertook the compliance-oriented activities of the review with seriousness, though the team notes several significant self-reported departures from common practices in AAU’s approach to many issues.

A. Compliance Audit

AAU has provided a Compliance Audit that accurately lists locations and links for required documents. The Audit includes notations regarding departures from common practice, such as the following:

- AAU no longer disseminates a printed Course Catalog but instead publishes and posts an online Catalog, which can be downloaded or printed (CFR 1.7).
- AAU doesn’t employ recruitment scripts (CFR 2.13).
- AAU doesn’t have a staff development policy (CFR 3.1), though Human Resources provides a management training session every other year, and AAU offers tuition remission to eligible employees.
- There’s no faculty governance body (such as a Faculty Senate or Assembly) (CFR 3.11). Faculty are convened only at the program level, and only for the purpose of discussing teaching and learning (not institutional policy- or decision-making).
- The strategic plan is developed at the top of the organization, by the president with input from the Board, and the institution has no formal operations plan, no centralized academic plan (though academic plans are developed and implemented at the program level), and no formal technology plan (CFR 4.1).

Some of these issues, such as faculty governance and planning processes, are discussed in Section II.

B. Self-Review under the Standards

AAU has provided a thorough self-review under the Standards, though the team notes that its own review of AAU under the Standards differed significantly at times from AAU's, suggesting a misunderstanding on AAU's part of some of the CFRs. For example, AAU gives itself the highest rating—a 1 (“We do this well; area of strength for us”)—and the lowest priority—an NP (“Does not need to be addressed at this time”)—in areas that the team believes are high-priority items requiring significant and immediate attention, such as the following:

- CFR 1.3 The institution's leadership creates and sustains a leadership system at all levels that is marked by high performance, appropriate responsibility, and accountability.
- CFR 2.8 The institution actively values and promotes scholarship, creative activity, and curricular and instructional innovations as well as their dissemination at levels and of the kinds appropriate to the institution's purposes and character.
- CFR 3.11 The institution's faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution's educational purposes and character.

The issues referenced here are discussed in Section II. AAU is advised to work with WSCUC, whether with the institution's staff liaison or through WSCUC workshops and retreats, on developing a deeper understanding of the CFRs and the scope and nature of the institution's commitments as a WSCUC-accredited institution.

C. Required Data Exhibits

All required data were provided. Issues related to retention and graduation rates are addressed in Section II.

D. Response to Previous Reviews, Including Commission Actions, Finance Review, and Retention/Graduation Review

Information regarding this area is incorporated in Section II.

E. Continues Momentum or Assessment of Student Learning and Program Review

Information regarding this area is incorporated in Section II.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

AAU undertook this reaccreditation review with seriousness of purpose and a strong commitment to using the process to bolster educational effectiveness, with less of an emphasis

on issues of institutional capacity and sustainability. The team makes the following commendations and recommendations based on the discussion in the body of the report.

A. Commendations

The team was struck by the extent to which the mission drives AAU and the passion for the mission that permeates the institution. Although some might assume that mission is central in any institution, it is not a universal phenomenon—thus the team commends AAU for the centrality of its mission in the life of the institution.

Based on interactions with the students, the team commends the community that exists among both onsite and online students. They were engaged both with the subject they were studying and with one another as a community of learners.

The team was struck by the clear commitment of the faculty and staff to center their work on students and their learning. The evidence in support of this commendation is abundant. The strides the institution has made in terms of assessment of student learning outcomes, program review, institutional research, faculty development, and support for student success illustrate the commitment to student learning and programmatic and organizational improvement. One ambitious and impressive effort in this regard is the DQP project. The team commends this effort and encourages AAU to build on it in the years with deep faculty involvement. The DQP project is just one illustration of the fact that this is an academic community that is not afraid to take on new things. The team also commends the institution for delivering an education that focuses on industry needs and relevance.

As did the last team to visit AAU, the present team commends AAU's pioneering efforts in the area of distance education. AAU has built an impressive system for supporting online learning in art and design. The team is confident that AAU will recognize that the continued success of online education will depend on the sustained and significant involvement of the faculty both as developers and as implementers of the University's academic programs.

B. Recommendations

1. Leadership and Organizational Structure and Effectiveness (CFRs 1.3, 1.7, 1.8, 3.4, 3.5, 3.8, 3.10, 4.6)

AAU demonstrates a clear commitment to, and a great respect for, the president of the institution, whom many refer to as a visionary and who enjoys widespread loyalty from faculty and staff. Because of the president's own vision and values, the culture of AAU is characterized by a strong shared commitment to student success and a dedication to the mission of the institution. The team's overall sense of AAU is that its success in growing to its current enrollment of 16,000 students makes it a profoundly different institution from the one that had 8,000 students in 2005. While the infrastructure has expanded to support that growth, the infrastructure has expanded horizontally and not vertically, resulting in a flat structure that slows decision-making and planning.

As a large and complex institution, AAU must now respond not only to its own increased complexity, but also to the current climate of higher education, especially if AAU is to remain innovative and relevant. Viewing AAU as an increasingly complex institution that confronts an increasingly challenging environment, the team recommends that AAU evaluate and evolve its administrative and governance structures to make certain that it makes decisions efficiently and effectively, and to guarantee that it builds upon its committed staff and its highly qualified faculty to ensure it continues to offer academic programs that, commensurate with a WSCUC-accredited institution, are educationally effective. The team was delighted to learn that the institution has undertaken a study of how to structure itself going forward. This step indicates that the institution knows it has changed significantly as it has grown and knows it has a unique opportunity to position itself to continue to serve the student populations it values.

2. The Faculty Role (CFRs 1.4, 2.4, 2.8, 2.9, 3.3, 3.11, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8)

The team commends the faculty for their clear commitment to the quality of the educational programs, high academic standards, the integrity of the curriculum, and ensuring that the student is prepared and industry-relevant. Moreover, the academic programs reflect the faculty's ability to innovate. And the team found the faculty's support for the strong social mission of the institution especially commendable. The team was concerned, however, with the continued ability of the institution to sustain this mission, since sustaining the mission depends upon meaningful involvement of faculty in every facet of students' education and the institution as a whole—as drivers, not just as participants.

In keeping with the institution's commitment to providing students with a curriculum that is both challenging and relevant, the faculty must continue to be developed not only as teachers but also as professionally active artists and designers, and to be engaged as partners in institutional planning and decision-making. The faculty's opinions and professionalism need to be valued—faculty must be significant players in ensuring that the institution's academic programs continue to keep pace with the institution's commitment to accessibility to higher education and excellence in art and design education and outcomes. One of those risks requires faculty to teach classrooms of students who reflect diverse levels of preparation. Sustaining the faculty's commitment to those classrooms requires taking what is now a relatively unformed faculty governance structure into the next stage of maturity. Accordingly, the team recommends a deep examination of the faculty role at AAU in light of WSCUC Standards.

3. Student Success (CFRs 1.5, 2.6, 2.10, 3.6, 4.5)

The open-admissions policy signals the courage of this institution to admit all willing students who are interested in developing into artists and designers. This commitment carries risks, which the institution understands. Further, the commitment the institution expresses to student success provides a strategic advantage in the current climate of education, with its emphasis on persistence, completion, post-graduate employment, and life-long learning. The focus on student success was apparent in the increased institutional research capacity, the

development of a Persistence Plan, and the creation of many initiatives aimed at supporting students on their educational journey.

While commendable progress has been made in the area of student success, much work remains to be done to improve low completion rates, especially in certain student subpopulations, and to close achievement gaps.

4. Student Life (CFRs 1.7, 2.11, 2.13)

The commitment to student success extends to every aspect of the student experience, including the students' lives outside of the classroom—to the places where they live, learn, and find community. Within a short period of time, the institution has created a suite of robust programs that address the co-curricular components of students' education: career, housing and residential life, student activities, and athletics. The staff's commitment to coordinating these programs with each other to maximize student involvement is commendable and signals a high level of professional success.

The team recommends that AAU further develop and deepen the integration of the curriculum and the institution's co-curricular programs. The continuing maturation of the co-curriculum requires maturity not only of services, but also of the means of evaluating and assessing the co-curriculum, both of which require the development of a coherent and distinct professional student affairs identity and organizational structure and to provide the basis in mission for developing, evaluating, and assessing programs. Assessment requires that AAU look for evidence that the co-curriculum integrates with the curriculum and, in fact, enhances the student's education. And, of course, as with all assessment activities, the results of the assessment of the co-curriculum must be a significant part of the planning and budgetary processes.

5. Strategic Planning (CFRs 3.5, 4.1, 4.2)

AAU has developed a set of "strategic focus areas for 2013-23," including institutional effectiveness, students and faculty, organization and facilities, and finance and regulatory compliance. But this encompassing strategic plan was developed at the top of the organization, with little direct input by faculty and staff. Moreover, AAU appears not to have a centralized academic plan, formal operations plan, or formal technology plan, nor is a process in place for developing a longer term budget.

The team recommends that AAU develop a planning process that will result in a meaningful vision for AAU's future and for how AAU will achieve that vision—a process required for accreditation. The success of this recommendation rests on AAU's commitment to the previous recommendations, especially the recommendation of the meaningful inclusion of faculty in the University's planning processes.

APPENDICES – COMPLIANCE CHECKLISTS

1 - WSCUC Compliance Checklist

**Academy of Art University_ WSCUC Compliance Audit Checklist
Directions**

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
1.1	Mission statement	See p. 6, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	Also published in the Faculty Handbook
1.2	Educational objectives at the institutional and program level	Institutional learning outcomes Program learning outcomes Undergraduate Liberal Arts outcomes http://www.academyart.edu/degrees/liberal-arts-learning-outcome.html Graduate Liberal Arts outcomes http://www.academyart.edu/degrees/graduate-liberal-arts-learning-outcome.html	Published on the homepage for every major & in the Student & Academic Policies section of the website & links in all syllabi
1.2.1	Public statement on student achievement (retention, graduation, student learning)	AAU website, “Disclosures” http://www.academyart.edu/disclosures.html http://my.academyart.edu/assets/pdf/graduation-rates.pdf	
1.3	Organization chart (See also 3.8, 3.9, 3.10)	Org charts: AAU Org chart Academic management org chart Academic org chart Academic Directors org chart ARC org chart	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		<p>ARC EAP org chart Cyber Campus org chart IT org chart Financial Aid org chart Student Services org chart General Admin org chart</p>	
1.4	Academic freedom policy	<p>See p. 57, Student & academic policies, AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies</p> <p>Also published on p. 29 of the Faculty Handbook http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf</p>	
1.5	Diversity policies and procedures: procedures for special accommodations	<p>Student & academic policies, AAU website See p 38 for Diversity policy See pages 48-49 for Procedures for special accommodations http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies</p>	Also published in the Employee Handbook & the Faculty Handbook
1.6	Documents setting forth the authority of a corporate, governmental, religious organization or system that is affiliated with the accredited institution		Not applicable
1.7	Catalog (online) with complete program descriptions, graduation requirements, grading policies (X 2.10.1)	<p>School of Acting http://www.academyart.edu/acting-school/index.html School of Advertising</p>	AAU has moved away from using a traditional academic Catalog. Our students browse classes electronically in the Learning Management System (LMS). The

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		http://www.academyart.edu/advertising-school/index.html School of Animation & Visual Effects http://www.academyart.edu/animation-school/index.html School of Architecture http://www.academyart.edu/architecture-school/index.html School of Art Education http://www.academyart.edu/art-education-school/index.html School of Art History http://www.academyart.edu/art-history/index.html School of Fashion http://www.academyart.edu/fashion-school/index.html School of Fine Art http://www.academyart.edu/fine-art-school/index.html School of Game Design http://www.academyart.edu/game-design-school/index.html School of Graphic Design http://www.academyart.edu/graphic-design-school/index.html School of Illustration http://www.academyart.edu/illustration-school/index.html School of Industrial Design http://www.academyart.edu/industrial-design-school/index.html	<p>academic homepage for every major has links to program learning outcomes, program descriptions, graduation requirements, sample graduation plan and sample 8 semester breakdown.</p> <p>Grading policies are published in the Student & Academic Policies section of the website & are also linked to all syllabi.</p>

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		<p>School of Interior Architecture & Design http://www.academyart.edu/interior-design-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Jewelry & Metal Arts http://www.academyart.edu/jewelry-and-metal-arts-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Landscape Architecture http://www.academyart.edu/landscape-architecture-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Motion Pictures & Television http://www.academyart.edu/film-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Multimedia Communications http://www.academyart.edu/multimedia-communications-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Music for Visual Media http://www.academyart.edu/music-for-visual-media/index.html</p> <p>School of Photography http://www.academyart.edu/photography-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Visual Development http://www.academyart.edu/visual-development-school/index.html</p> <p>School of Web Design & New Media</p>	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		http://www.academyart.edu/computer-arts-school/index.html Grading policies http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
1.7.2	Student complaint and grievance policies	See p. 49, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
1.7.2.1	Policy for grade appeals	See p. 45, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
1.7.2.2	Records of student complaints	Grievance checklist Sample page from student grievance log	
1.7.3	Faculty grievance policies	See pp. 51-52, Faculty Handbook http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf <u>Complaint & EEO statements</u>	Published in the Employee Handbook & the Faculty Handbook
1.7.3.1	Record of faculty grievances	AAU complaint procedure	
1.7.4	Staff grievance policies	AAU complaint procedure <u>Complaint & EEO statements</u>	Published in the Employee Handbook
1.7.4.1	Record of staff grievances and complaints	See CFR 1.7.4	HR maintains a confidential file of staff grievances, available for review onsite as needed.
1.7.5	Employee Handbook	Employee Handbook	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		statement	
1.7.6.1	Up-to-date student transcripts with key that explains credit hours, grades, levels, etc.	BFA transcript MFA transcript Transcript legend Credit hour policy See page 22, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	Credit hour policy : also see CFR 1.7.6.6
1.7.6.2	Admissions records that match stated requirements; complete files	Graduate admissions record (sample) Undergraduate admissions record (sample)	
1.7.6.3	Policies and procedures to protect the integrity of grades	Grading integrity procedures	
1.7.6.4	Tuition and fee schedules	See pp. 14-15, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
1.7.6.5	Policies on tuition refunds	See p. 17, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
1.7.6.6	Policy on credit hour/award of credit; processes for review of assignment of credit; review of syllabi/equivalent for all kinds of courses	See pp. 22, Student & academic policies , AAU website Credit hour policy http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	See CFR 2.2 for samples of all the types of courses offered by AAU
1.7.6.7	Policy on human subjects in research, if applicable	http://gradstudents.academyart.edu/institutional_review.html	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
1.8	Independent annual audits of finances (also see CFR 3.5)	Independent annual audits	See CFR 3.5 Please note that these audits have been reviewed in 2012 by the WSCUC Finance Committee
1.9	Policies to ensure that WSCUC substantive change policies are followed	Program change proposal form	All new programs must be approved by the EVP of Compliance (who ensures that WSCUC sub change policies are followed, since he works closely with the WSCUC ALO) See highlighted sentence on the attached Program Change form; this form must be approved by the CAO before a new program is authorized
1.9.1	Documents relating to investigations of the institution by any governmental entity and an update on the status of such investigation	N/A	
1.9.2	List of pending legal actions by or against the institution, including a full explanation of the nature of the actions, parties involved, and status of the litigation	List of pending legal actions	
2.1	List of degree programs, showing curriculum and units for each (also see CFR 1.7)	See CFR 1.7	
2.2	Syllabi for all courses offered	Sample syllabi	These are samples of all types of courses offered at AAU, graduate & undergraduate. The team will have access to the AAU syllabus database, on the Learning Management System, at the time of the site visit
2.2.1	For associate and bachelor's degrees: General education requirements (Also see	Liberal Arts program learning outcomes http://www.academyart.edu/degrees/liberal-	Published on the website—link on each degree homepage

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
	CFR 1.7)	arts.html	
2.3	Student learning outcomes for every program	See CFR 1.2	Published on the website—link on each degree homepage
2.4	Grading standards	See p. 42, , Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
2.5	Class participation policies if available	See p. 40, Student & academic policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies <u>Online class participation policies</u>	
2.6	Placement data if available	N/A	The Department of Education has not yet released the formula that schools will be required to use when calculating placement rates for all programs. The Academy of Art University is in the process of gathering data to calculate placement rates. Upon receipt of the required Department of Education placement rate formula the Academy of Art University will calculate placement rates for all programs.
2.7	Program review process/guidelines	Academic program review guidelines Assessment app screenshot Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness	
2.7.1	Schedule of program review (including reviews of non-academic units)	Program review schedule	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
2.8	Policies re. faculty scholarship and creative activity	See p.11, Faculty manual Faculty development resources & tuition remission program http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf See pp. 12-13, Academic director resource manual	
2.9	-		
2.10	-		
2.10.1	Data on retention and graduation, overall and disaggregated (link to the standard templates for retention/graduation reports)	WSCUC retention & graduation package, September 2012	
2.10.2	Collection and analysis of grades at the course or program level, as appropriate	Grade distribution sample	
2.10.3	Policy on student evaluation of faculty	See p 18, Faculty manual http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf See p. 73, Department director resources manual	
2.10.4	Forms for evaluation of faculty by students	Course evaluation forms	
2.11	List of student services and co-curricular activities	Campus life urls Student clubs NCAA Division II athletics	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		teams Campus wellness and recreation classes Industry and career development events	
2.11.1	Financial aid policy and procedures	Financial Aid Guide 2012-2013 See p. 14, Student & Academic Policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
2.12	Academic calendar (also see CFR 1.7 catalog)	See p. 13, Student & Academic Policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies See p. 36, Faculty manual http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf	
2.13	Recruitment and advertising material for the last year, including scripts for recruitment	Ad samples	<p>Sample advertising material attached</p> <p>At AAU, we do not use a recruiting script in our admissions processes. Our best practices have always been focused on effective engagement. Utilizing a script is insufficient to fully engaging our students in finding out what they are truly passionate about and what kind of support they have to fulfill these goals.</p> <p>Therefore, we provide our reps with the training, resources and knowledge to sustain genuine, organic conversations with each unique student. We strive to create solid partnerships, assisting each prospective student in defining their</p>

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
			<p>passion for art and design. In this process, we actively guide students to their area of interest and prepare them for the full commitment of following their dreams, excelling in our program and doing what they love for a living.</p> <p>We focus the conversation in two main areas: what inspires and motivates the particular student.</p>
2.13.1	Procedures for students to register	See p. 32, Student & Academic Policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
2.14	Policy on transfer of credit	See p. 9, Student & Academic Policies , AAU website http://www.academyart.edu/student-and-academic-policies	
3.1	Staff development policies		<p>AAU does not have a staff development policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Human Resources Department, in conjunction with outside legal counsel, provides a Management Training session once every 2 years • AAU offers tuition remission to eligible employees to develop and enhance their art, design and communication skills and knowledge
3.2	List of faculty with classifications, e.g., core, full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenure track, by program (link to relevant data exhibit)	Directors, coordinators and FT faculty AAU PT faculty	<p>AAU does not have a tenure system. Faculty members are classified as either full-time or part-time.</p>
3.3	Faculty hiring policies if available	See p. 42, Faculty Handbook http://faculty.academyart.edu	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf Non degree faculty qualifications samples	
3.3.1	Faculty evaluation policy and procedures (Also see CFR 2.10)	Faculty observation program	
3.3.2	Faculty handbook or equivalent	Faculty manual http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf	
3.4	Faculty development policies	Faculty development See CFR 2.8	
3.4.1	Faculty orientation policies and procedures	See p. 9, Faculty manual http://faculty.academyart.edu/export/sites/faculty/assets/faculty/Faculty-Manual-2012-2013.pdf	
3.4.2	Policies on rights and responsibilities of non-full-time faculty	PT faculty job description See CFR 3.2	Faculty roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Faculty Manual. AAU does not have a specific policy statement on the roles and responsibilities of part-time faculty. PT faculty job responsibilities are attached.
3.4.3	Statements concerning faculty role in assessment of student learning	Role of PT faculty in assessment Department director job description Faculty coordinator job description FT faculty job description	
3.5	Last two years audited financial statements	See CFR 1.8	

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
	(Also see CFR 1.8)		
3.5.1	List of financial records maintained		AAU has an audited statement done by an external auditor with a clean opinion.
3.5.2	Last two years' financial aid audits	Financial aid audits	
3.5.3	Last federal composite score if applicable		<p>2010 composite score is 2.3 (2010 audit report- Page 11)</p> <p>2011 composite score is 2.1 (2011 audit report- Page 11)</p> <p>Both years' scores are well above the required 1.5 composite score</p>
3.5.4	Last report of two- and three-year cohort default rates	Cohort default rate Cohort default rate DOE letter 2010	
3.5.5	Campus maps	Campus map	
3.6	Inventory of technology resources for students and faculty	<p>Computer networking & facilities</p> <p>Online orientations for students http://online.academyart.edu/oso/</p> <p>Online orientations for faculty http://online.academyart.edu/newfeatures/</p> <p>Online help desk http://online.academyart.edu/contact.html</p> <p>Online Student Academic Support http://arc.academyart.edu</p>	Computers for general student use: 1,720

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
		/online/index.asp	
3.6.1	If online or hybrid courses, information on delivery method		AAU's distance learning courses are delivered 100% online. WSCUC reviewed AAU's online program in depth during the FastTrack approval process (2009).
3.6.2	Library data/holdings, size	Library holdings Library databases	
3.7	Inventory of technology resources and services for staff	IT org chart Online education org chart	Resources for staff: Peoplesoft SalesForce.com IT Help LMS Systems Administration (network)
3.8	Organization chart (Also see CFRs 1.3 and 3.1)	See CFR 1.3	
3.9	List of governing board members	Board of Directors 2014	
3.9.1	Governing board member biographical information	Board of Directors bios	
3.9.2	List of governing board committees with members	Board of Directors committees 2014	
3.9.2.1	Minutes of board meetings for last two years	Board of Directors meeting minutes	
3.9.2.2	Governing board bylaws and operations manual	AAU Board policy manual 2013 Bylaws of the corporation Jan. 2011	
3.10	CEO biographical information	See CFR 3.10.2, Executive Bio for President Elisa Stephens	
3.10.1	CFO biographical information	See CFR 3.10.2, Executive Bio for CFO Martha Weeck	
3.10.2	Other senior administrators' biographical information (e.g., cabinet, VPs, Provost)	Executive administration bios	
3.10.3	Policy and procedure	Policy and procedure for	The President reports at each board

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
	for the evaluation of president/CEO	the evaluation of president	<p>meeting on the Strategic Focus Areas and Critical Success Factors of the AAU Statement of Purpose. The Board conducts an evaluation of the President at the first meeting each year based on the performance expectations set forth in the AAU Board Policy Manual (see CFR 3.9.2.2). The President fields questions and the Board goes into executive session (the two employees who are Board members and the President are excused from the executive session). After the executive session the results are shared immediately with the President and documented in the meeting minutes.</p> <p>Sections 3.2, 3.3 and all of 4 of the Board Policy Manual speak to this (see CFR 3.9.2.2).</p>
3.11	Faculty governing body charges, bylaws and authority if applicable	N/A	
3.11.1	Faculty governance organization chart if applicable	N/A	
3.11.2	Minutes of the last year's faculty meetings	Department Action Team (DAT) records	A complete record of Department Action Team (DAT) meetings will be available in the team room; sample records of these departmental faculty meetings are attached
4.1	Strategic plan	2013-2023 strategic priorities AAU strategic vision President's annual strategic goals & progress reports	<p>See CFR 4.2</p> <p>Institution-wide goals are articulated in the President's Annual Strategic Goals, which align with AAU's Long Term Strategic Priorities document (established jointly by the President and the Board of Directors). Progress is reported annually to the Board of Directors.</p>

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
			AAU addresses strategic academic priorities at the President’s Academic Retreats, which occur 2-4 times a year. Strategic academic priorities for each academic department are addressed in the Program Review documents and Priority Action Item charts.
4.1.1	Operations plan		AAU does not maintain a formal operations plan.
4.1.2	Academic plan	See CFR 4.1	<p>AAU does not maintain a centralized academic plan. Institution-wide goals are articulated in the President’s Annual Strategic Goals, which align with AAU’s Long Term Strategic Priorities document (established jointly by the President and the Board of Directors). Progress is reported annually to the Board of Directors.</p> <p>AAU addresses strategic academic priorities at the President’s Academic Retreats, which occur 2-4 times a year. Strategic academic priorities for each academic department are addressed in the Program Review documents and Priority Action Item charts.</p>
4.1.3	Technology plan	AAU IT vision	AAU does not maintain a formal technology plan.
4.1.4	Facilities plan	Institutional Master Plan http://zasfplan.sfplanning.org/IMP/IMP_docs/AAU_2011_11_17.pdf	The Institutional Master Plan (IMP), submitted to the San Francisco Planning Commission, provides an overview of the Academy’s programs and facilities, as well as five-year and ten-year plans for future growth that guide decision-making regarding future facilities and site

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
			<p>improvements. The Planning Commission accepted the 2011 update to the 2008 IMP in November 2011.</p> <p>There are 13 areas (hubs) within San Francisco that have been identified as areas of possible interest for additional AAU facilities. These are detailed in the draft Economic Impact Report (EIR) that is currently being prepared (not yet available for review).</p>
4.2	Description of planning process	AAU planning	The Board-adopted Entrepreneurial Planning Model describes the AAU planning methodology (see Appendix 3 of the Board of Directors Policy Manual)
4.2.1	Process for review and monitoring of strategic plan/metrics		<p><u>The Board acquires monitoring data from internal reports provided by the President and from reports of external agencies that monitor AAU compliance with federal and state regulations and accreditation standards. At each Board meeting the President reports on the Critical Success Factors of the Focus Areas that support the AAU vision and mission (see Appendix 1 of Board of Directors Policy Manual). The Board may request data on a specific topic as relevant. External reports routinely presented include the annual financial audit, budget parameters, US Department of Education audits, State of California audits, and accreditation reports (Western Association of Colleges & Schools, National Association of Schools of Art & Design, National Architecture Accrediting Board, Council for Interior Design Accreditation).</u></p>
4.3	-		

CFR	DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	LINK	NOTES FROM AAU
4.4	New program approval process		See WSCUC Essay 1 for a detailed description of this process.
4.4.1	Program review process (Also see CFR 2.7)	See CFR 2.7	Also see program review section in Essay 1
4.5	Description of institutional research function and staffing	Institutional research directors Director of assessment	
4.6	Process for review and analysis of key data, such as retention, graduation (Also see CFR1.2)		<p>IR engages in review and analysis of key data and provides comprehensive analytical data packets for the Presidential Academic Retreats (held 3-4 times per year) and the retention team.</p> <p>Retention and graduation data is analyzed at the executive and the department level by and results in policies and program changes designed to improve retention. InsideTrack also provides weekly reports and end of semester summaries of retention-related data.</p> <p>The Office of Institutional Research creates and archives each semester an archival data set that includes all necessary data elements necessary to report to federal and accrediting agencies relevant information regarding course enrollments, faculty/staff employment, student demographics, student progress and success indicators, program completion, and student persistence/retention. Annual and semester summaries of this information are provided departmental and executive administrators in a timely manner, and are used in the University's program review process.</p>
4.7	-		
4.8	List of major industry or advisory committees	Presidential advisory board bios	

2 - Credit Hour and Program Length Review Checklist

Under federal regulations, WASC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

Credit Hour - §602.24(f)

The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

(1) The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-

(i) It reviews the institution's-

(A) Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution awards for courses and programs; and

(B) The application of the institution's policies and procedures to its programs and coursework; and

(ii) Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

(2) In reviewing and evaluating an institution's policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments, an accrediting agency may use sampling or other methods in the evaluation.

Credit hour is defined by the Department of Education as follows:

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Credit Hour Policy.

Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)

Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor's degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master's degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that

available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW CHECKLIST

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	<p>Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Where is the policy located?</p> <p>Online at: http://www.academyart.edu/assets/pdf/catalog_supplement_and_academic_policies.pdf</p> <p>Here is how students and faculty can find it on their website:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homepage (www.academyart.edu) 2. Degrees & Classes Tab: Choose Class Search & Catalog 3. At the bottom of that page, choose: Download a pdf of the Academic and Student Policies(PDF) <p>It is also apparently provided as a link when they log into the LMS.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The policy is in the Student and Academic Policies (pg 22): A unit credit hour is defined as a class meeting for 50 minutes per week in a 15 week semester. A class offered in a term of less than 15 weeks contains the same contact hours, preparation time, content and requirements as the same course offered over a 15-week semester.</p> <p>It is further specified for different modes of instruction (e.g., lecture, studio, etc.).</p>
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	<p>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)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Their policy: AAU ensures that they are accurate and reliable and in compliance with 34 CFR 600.2 through the new course approval process and by periodic analysis of existing courses conducted by the Director of Curriculum on behalf of the EVP of Financial Aid & Compliance. In addition. CyberCampus conducts periodic audits of all online classes to ensure that the AAU credit hour policy is being followed.</p> <p>Does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>They last conducted a review in 2012.</p> <p>Comments:</p>
Schedule of on-	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number

<p>ground courses showing when they meet</p>	<p>of hours? Generally YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO .</p> <p>Comments: The schedule that was reviewed contained units earned and number of hours but no information about the course mode (which is what determines the correlation between units earned and time the course meets). However, the ALO sent the following information about the schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hour classes are lecture/demonstration • 5 hour classes are lecture/studio • 6 hour classes are studio <p>Review of the schedule revealed four courses (AMN 29, IAD 612, LA 293, PH 40) that met for four hours/week and were listed as 3 unit courses. The ANM and PH courses are “art experience” courses for high school students and the other two appear to be anomalies. One is moving to a 6-hour format (which would be the correct format according to their policy) and the other appears to be a 3-hour lecture with a (free) 1-hour workshop component for which there is no provision in their policy. There was no indication that this format would be changing, so it appears to operate outside of the credit unit policy.</p> <p>There also appeared to be some unusual scheduling with EAP 601 (English for Art Purposes), which is the course international students take to become more proficient in English. There are eight of these courses and only two fit the existing credit hour policy (EAP 1 and 4). The others are EAP 2, which is 6 units but meets for 9 hours, EAP 601, which is 9 units but meets for 18 hours, EAP 602 & 603, which are both 6 units but meet for 9 hours, EAP 600A and EAP A, which are both 9 units but meet for 30 hours. The latter seems like an excessive number of hours so certainly doesn’t fall short, but also needs further examination to ensure students are being treated fairly.</p> <p>Further review of how EAP courses are scheduled as well as an overall review of the transparency of correlations between course units, mode and hours scheduled for all courses is warranted.</p>
<p>Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i></p>	<p>How many syllabi were reviewed? Six</p> <p>What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Online</p> <p>What degree level(s)? Bachelor’s and Master’s</p> <p>What discipline(s)? Drawing, Photography, Liberal Arts, Graphic Design, Graduate Liberal Arts, Fashion</p> <p>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: Their definition on online credit meets above specification: “One credit hour is</p>

	<p>associated with one hour of class time per week in a 15 week semester. Each hour of class time requires a minimum of two hours of preparation or other out-of-class coursework. Online class time refers to the time in which students are logged in and engaged in reading course content, watching demonstrations and media presentations, taking quizzes and participating in discussions.” From Student and Academic Policies manual pg. 22.</p> <p>Here are the grading policies of every course reviewed (they were all the same): “Students are graded on their skill level relative to industry standards. The student's skill level comprises all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of conceptualization as it relates to assignments. • The quality of craft and design skills. • The quality of a student's presentation. • The student's mature ability to interact with peers and faculty members. • The student's mature ability to receive and act upon critiques. • The student's participation in and contribution to the class. • The student's ability to meet weekly and final deadlines. • The student's attendance record.” <p>These are quite generic with no specific participation or attendance expectations provided for students, though AAU has indicated that specific grading and participation expectations for students are provided in individual courses. The campus tracks student participation in a variety of ways using their online system (number of pages of an assignment read, times accessed, number of posts, etc.). It appears they have correlated onsite and online participation in terms of units (as per communication with the ALO). A review of screen shots of online student participation validated the types of metrics they use. The lecture information and demonstrations are essentially the same for online (delivered via video) as for onsite. Homework assignments are also the same. However, it would be useful if AAU added more specific expectations regarding participation and its relationship to grading were made to students in the syllabi of online courses.</p>
<p>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></p>	<p>How many syllabi were reviewed? Four “syllabi” were reviewed (letters from internship host sites)</p> <p>What kinds of courses? Internships</p> <p>What degree level(s)? Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees</p> <p>What discipline(s)? Animation and Visual Effects, Web Design and New Media, Photography, Motion Pictures and Television</p> <p>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Three out of four “syllabi” indicated 20 – 40 hours/week were expected from the interns, which far exceeds the 3.0 unit specification for Internships. The fourth</p>

	"syllabus" did not specify any hours.
	Comments:
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Six
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Undergraduate and master's degree
	What degree level(s)? BFA, MFA, Associate's Degrees
	What discipline(s)? advertising, photography, game design, fashion, motion pictures/television, graphic design
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: BFA programs reviewed were 132 units, MFA programs were 63 units, AA degrees were 66 units

Review Completed By: Susan Elrod
Date: 29 April 2014

3 - Marketing and Recruitment Review Checklist

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.	Verified Yes/No
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?	YES
	Comments:	
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree?	YES
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree?	YES
	Comments: THE REVIEWER SELECTED SEVERAL SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO REVIEW. ALL MET THE STANDARDS.	
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?	YES
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?	YES
	Comments:	

*§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: STACEY FOSTER

Date: APRIL 3, 2014

4 - Student Complaints Review Checklist

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.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?	YES
	Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where?	YES
	Comments: POLICIES ARE FOUND NOTABLY IN THE UNIVERSITY CATALOG, EASILY LOCATED BY REVIEWING THE INDEX. THE CAMPUS ALSO LISTS HIGH LEVEL (STATE/BUSINESS) COMPLAINTS IN THE DISCLOSURES SECTION OF THE WEBSITE.	
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly:	YES
	THE CAMPUS HAS A FIRST LEVEL RESPONSE AT THE FACULTY AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR LEVEL. IF UNRESOLVED OR IF THE STUDENT DESIRES, THE COMPLAINT CAN BE SENT TO A SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR WHO OVERSEES A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE PROCESS.	
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	YES
	THE RECORDS ARE MAINTAINED BY THE SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS.	
	Comments:	
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? Where?	YES
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly:	YES
	THE CAMPUS TRACK COMPLAINTS AND KEEPS RECORDS THROUGH THE SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS.	
	Comments:	

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

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

Review Completed By: STACEY FOSTER

Date: APRIL 4, 2014

5 - Transfer Credit Review Checklist

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.)	Verified Yes/No
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit?	YES
	Is the policy publicly available? If so, where? WEBSITE	YES
	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?	YES
	Comments: VERY CLEAR AND ORGANIZED	

*§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 WSCUC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Susan Elrod

Date: April 3, 2014