

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW
FOR INITIAL ACCREDITATION**

To John Paul the Great Catholic University

October 22-24, 2014

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2014 WASC Senior College and University Commission Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by WSCUC.

The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

Description of the Institution and Visit

John Paul the Great Catholic University (JP Catholic) was incorporated in 2004. The founders' vision was to build a niche Catholic university producing students capable of impacting the culture for Christ in the socially influential fields of media, business, and theology. The curriculum is designed to foster future creators, innovators, leaders, and entrepreneurs whose work and lives will be guided by the spiritual, moral and social teachings of Jesus Christ.

JP Catholic offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Business and a Bachelor of Science in Communications Media with six areas of emphasis (producing, production, screenwriting, new evangelization, acting for stage and screen, and animation and gaming). At the graduate level JP Catholic offers a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Film Producing and a Master of Arts (MA) in Biblical Theology; a majority of students in the MA in Biblical Theology attend in an online modality. Certificates in biblical theology are also available, primarily through an online program.

JP Catholic graduated its first undergraduate class in December 2009, and admitted the first students to its graduate programs in 2009. JP Catholic's undergraduate curriculum is delivered year round, with an intended time-to-degree for first time entering students of three years. JP Catholic's undergraduate programs emphasize applied learning and students are encouraged to find opportunities to combine paid employment and academic learning whenever possible. The media program curriculum emphasizes the various skills needed to take a film or web-based program from inception to completion, and students regularly receive feedback on their projects from a professional faculty who work in the media industries in Southern California. The MBA program is tightly focused on JP Catholic's core competencies in business

and media, and is intended to impart knowledge of core business principles and the competence and foundational skills in media necessary to join or create a working studio. The MA in Biblical Theology has also defined a clear niche for its program, focusing on scriptural theology in order to train students interested in working in pastoral ministry and religious education, while preparing a smaller subset of students for doctoral study. The same curriculum is offered online as a certificate.

The initial campus was located in a business park in San Diego, with students housed in a luxury apartment complex on the other side of a freeway. JP Catholic has been seeking a more appropriate space almost since its founding, with the establishment of a more traditional campus a high priority. In September 2013 the university relocated to a permanent urban campus in downtown Escondido, after it purchased a 24,000 square foot main academic building for \$1.85M and invested close to \$1M in tenant improvements. The move, with additional leased space in some surrounding buildings, significantly expanded and solidified the university's infrastructure, increasing classroom and administration facility size from 13,000 to 40,000 square feet. The number of university now leases 34 student apartments in a luxury apartment complex within easy walking distance of campus.

JP Catholic's accreditation history is quite recent. The university received notification of advancement to Eligibility in May 24, 2007 for a period of three years. The university submitted its Letter of Intent for Candidacy Review on January 21, 2008, followed by a Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) in February 2009 and an Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) in November 2010. In March 2011 JP Catholic was granted Candidacy through February 2015. In 2012 JP Catholic submitted Substantive Change Proposals for both on-campus and distance learning modalities of the MA in Biblical Theology and the MBA in Film Producing. In August

2012 JP Catholic received approval to offer Master's degrees on-campus, bringing the MA in Biblical Theology and MBA into compliance with WSCUC guidelines. The online version of the MA in Biblical Theology was approved in June 2013. In September 2012 a team conducted a Capacity and Preparatory Review for Initial Accreditation, and JP Catholic was approved for a final Educational Effectiveness Review to take place in 2014.

The five person Educational Effectiveness Review team visited the new Escondido campus October 22-24, 2014. The team received most relevant documents in advance of the campus visit and JP Catholic was responsive to all requests for further information. The team room was comfortable and well equipped and refreshments were provided. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff were all welcoming, gracious, and enthusiastic about the institution. The Compliance Audit conducted during the EER visit found no missing documents.

The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Report

Because JP Catholic is in Candidacy it did not submit a theme based EER Report. The report detailed the institution's responses to the recommendations of the CPR report and the Commission Action letter, addressed each CFR individually and distinctly, and summarized its current goals and objectives in a reflective closing essay. The report was clearly organized, well-written, and elegantly presented. It appears that faculty, staff, and administration were widely consulted in the production of the report. The report's organization and assertions focused primarily on how JP Catholic has demonstrated substantial compliance with the standards, leading to compliance-oriented sensibility rather than searching questions about the institution. While the report produced a compelling case that JP Catholic had made substantial progress toward addressing previous issues, the team focused during the visit on obtaining evidence that JP Catholic has internalized the principles of accreditation, developed a strong culture of

evidence, and become an authentic learning institution. During the visit the team was impressed by the degree to which every constituency at JP Catholic, from staff to the Board of Trustees, appeared to embrace the principles of continuous improvement.

Response to Previous Commission Issues

Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the Board of Trustees develop their understanding of board duties in a higher education environment and pursue a “best practices” structure of the board (CFR 1.3, 1.9, 3.8, 3.9).

JP Catholic took appropriate steps to enhance the governance activities of the Board of Trustees. Joining the Association of Governing Boards provided each Trustee with access to *Trusteeship*, a journal that identifies current trends in higher education, and to resources that focus on steps boards can take to improve effectiveness. In interviews with the Trustees, references were made to articles on topics such as “succession planning” and “federal regulation” that were relevant to policy formation. The board now has a conflict of interest policy in place, a revised committee structure, and is engaged in regular ongoing board development that includes recommended reading, discussions, and training. New board members have been added who have special skill sets in such areas as strategic planning, higher education, accounting, and nonprofit board governance.

2. The team recommends that JP Catholic more rapidly implement a formal, systematic program review process that includes external reviewers, involving analysis of student achievement, program learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes, as well as plans for improvement (CFR 2.7, 4.4, 4.8).

A well-developed *Program Review Handbook* describes a staggered three year schedule of program review with analyses of student achievement of the program’s learning outcomes as

well as retention and graduation rates. The faculty has been involved in all program reviews including business in 2009 and communications media in 2010. Both undergraduate majors also had comprehensive program reviews, including external reviewers, in 2014. A program review of General Education is currently underway.

The review process is designed to demonstrate student achievement of educational goals and objectives, as well as to conduct a comprehensive analysis of program and institutional learning outcomes with recommendations and plans for improvements. Each review involves both internal and external reviewers.

Faculty interviews confirm this cycle of program review has been a major change for the institution. The administration and the faculty share a positive attitude about what the process affords and look forward to external reviewer validation and recommendations. Interviews revealed the faculty has assumed a “culture of assessment,” is “committed to institutional research,” and is “truly led by institutional outcomes.” The faculty is more aware of the institutional strategic plan and budgeting process, and reports increased rigor in courses and programs because of a systematized program review process.

The faculty collects and submits quarterly course level data to the Director of Institutional Research who organizes it and returns data reports to faculty for analysis. As is depicted in the *Program Review Handbook*, faculty members described a formal process as a department to reflect on the results and plan program improvements based on the data. They shared specific examples of curricular changes based on program review data in both the MA in Theology and the Business programs, as well as in General Education even though that review process is currently underway.

3. The team recommends that JP Catholic engage in regular strategic planning involving multiple stakeholders, including faculty, staff and students. The plan should articulate measurable outcomes linked to key indicators and include a timeline for success (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5).

JP Catholic engaged in a significant strategic planning process involving Trustees, administration, faculty, and staff. The resulting plan is widely understood and positions JP Catholic within the ecology of higher education. All divisions have developed operational plans based on the strategic plan; these plans articulate measurable outcomes linked to key indicators and include a timeline for success.

4. The team recommends that JP Catholic align academic, personnel, fiscal, physical, and technological needs with the objectives defined by the strategic plan, developing quality assurance processes at each level of institutional functioning (CFR 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5).

Each division of the university is guided by an operational plan tied to the strategic plan. These operational plans align division resources with long-term objectives. The institution regularly collects data and other evidence to support decision-making and improvement, led by an effective Office of Institutional Research. Senior level administrators, academic, student life, admissions, finance, and other key personnel regularly evaluate evidence of their respective program's effectiveness and discuss alignment of resources to operational and strategic plans.

5. The team recommends that JP Catholic clarify the roles of faculty, staff, and administration, including reporting relationships, areas of joint and sole authority, and responsibilities for budget, curriculum, and personnel (CFR 3.8, 3.11, 4.6, 4.7).

JP Catholic has made significant strides in clarifying roles at the university implementing a model where the Provost is responsible for both academic administration and academic programs. The new Provost is effective and collegial and has professional experience in both of these areas. The structure has brought much greater clarity, as well as collegiality and accountability, to the organization. With a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the university completed its most rigorous budgeting exercise to date. The process followed a “bottom up” budget based on goals and objectives in JP Catholic’s strategic plan. The “bottom up” budget was then adjusted by a budget committee consisting of senior staff. This collaboratively created budget for Fiscal Year (FY)2015 was ratified by the Board of Trustees.

Other changes to clarify roles include revisions to both the *Employee Handbook* and *Faculty Handbook*, assigning full responsibility for academic curriculum to the Faculty Senate, and implementing a faculty performance review process in the 2013-2014 academic year. Although JP Catholic continues to make adjustments to its infrastructure, the modifications have improved the efficiency of the operation.

6. The team recommends further codification of policies and procedures (CFR 1.8, 3.3).

In conjunction with the WSCUC accreditation process, JP Catholic has updated documentation of policies and procedures in most areas and considers this an ongoing process requiring regular review. This includes human resources, faculty handbooks, board governance, and program review guidelines.

7. The team recommends affiliation with appropriate higher education associations in the areas of board governance, university business practices, and institutional

advancement, for the purpose of professional development and access to key resources beneficial in creating effective policies and procedures (CFR 1.3, 1.8, 3.4, 3.8).

Key administrators and staff members have joined professional organizations and are benefitting from the associations. They attend conferences, participate in webinars, and receive information from the organizations relevant to their respective roles. The individuals report the value of this professional activity has been to identify best practices and stay informed of changing regulations and developments in their areas of responsibility.

SECTION II. EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY UNDER THE STANDARDS

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

Institutional Purposes

The mission and purpose of JP Catholic, as clearly articulated in appropriate publications and documents, is: to impact culture for Christ by forming creators and innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs at the intersections of communications media, business, and theology, guided by the spiritual, moral and social teachings of Jesus Christ as preserved by the Catholic Church. (CFR 1.1) The institution has taken deliberate steps to ensure this is understood by members of the campus community as was communicated through conversations with the president's Cabinet, staff, and students. Graduates corroborate the influence the university's mission of "impacting culture for Christ" had on their vocational understanding. This continued focus on mission and core values contributes to a cohesive campus culture and educational experience. The team commends JP Catholic for building a community committed to the university's mission and for the care that is taken to integrate that concept throughout the campus. (CFR 1.1, 2.3, 2.11)

As noted in an earlier section of this report on program review, the university has clear educational objectives and indicators of student achievement that are linked between courses, programs, and institutional mission.

The addition of a full time Director of Institutional Research has resulted in a comprehensive collection of excellent data with indicators of institutional performance. (CFR 1.7) The individual responsible for this area maintains a good working relationship with all departments on campus and provides user-friendly reports that are widely used in decision-making and assessment. New enterprise resource planning software was implemented three

months prior to the visit and will allow for the addition of more key performance indicators to be used to evaluate institutional performance.

Integrity and Transparency

The university website contains a link to the National Center for Education Statistics that reports the required retention, graduation, and enrollment data. The website also provides a list of program learning outcomes for all degrees offered along with a summary of evidence of student achievement. (CFR1.2) The summary gives average student scores on a four point scale ranging from “needs improvement” to “outstanding” for each learning outcome and is a best practice that demonstrates transparency and open communication. (CFR 1.8) Graduation and retention rates compare favorably to the peer group of small, Catholic, institutions in the United States.

The team affirms that CFRs 1.3-1.8 were sufficiently addressed and met compliance during the Capacity and Preparatory Review and there have been no identifiable changes. JP Catholic’s institutional policies and practices are now well documented in faculty, employee, and student handbooks. Policies implemented to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of day to day operations are approved by the president’s Cabinet, then, documented and updated as necessary. The team reviewed the above documents and found them to be well designed and complete. (CFR 1.6)

While the Board of Trustees has improved gender diversity, women are not well represented among some of the university’s faculty. The visiting team reviewed the hiring practices of the university and recommends JP Catholic engage in proactive efforts to increase gender and ethnic diversity on the faculty and senior leadership. (CFR 1.4, 2.10, 3.1)

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

Teaching and Learning

JP Catholic currently offers two undergraduate majors (communications media and business) and two graduate programs (MA in Biblical Theology and MBA in Film Producing). Each program undergoes a three year internal and external program review process to ensure educational rigor, appropriate content and standards of performance and alignment with its mission. These review processes are at varying degrees of implementation, but all are scheduled and being carried out on a revised three year timeline.

All courses in BS and MA programs are taught by qualified instructors as evidenced by a review of their curriculum vitae (CV). Full-time faculty members all have terminal degrees and/or extensive practical industry experience. Adjunct faculty members have extensive current practical industry experience and/or Master's degrees. Evidenced by program review documents and interviews, JP Catholic has made strides to diversify its teaching faculty, though this effort still remains a focus for the university. Student interviews evidenced a desire to be exposed to a variety of perspectives and expertise in the teaching faculty.

All degrees are clearly defined and directly informed by the mission to “impact culture for Christ.” This is a coherent philosophy and expression of their mission which guides the meaning and integrity of each degree offered at the university. This mission directs the creation of institutional learning outcomes which directly inform program and course learning outcomes. Both full-time and adjunct faculty articulate their collective responsibility for setting student learning outcomes, assessing student learning and ensuring student achievement of those standards (CFR 2.1, 2.2, 2.4).

As evidenced in the catalog and program handbooks, an integrated course of study prepares students for work, citizenship and life-long learning. Instructional innovation is valued and supported and students are actively involved and challenged in their assignments as well as in internship experiences. A well-developed *Program Review Handbook* depicts an organized program review process where student work is evaluated and program improvements determined. Some adjunct faculty is formally engaged in the program review process and consistent efforts of full-time faculty to increase engagement of adjunct faculty are noted. The quality of instruction is further evidenced by high student retention and graduation rates, and by positive end-of-course evaluations by students and student interviews. Program Review data shows students achieving at a proficient or higher level in most assignments across all programs. Faculty report having made programmatic changes to gain this level of student success when assessment data revealed gaps in student learning (CFR 2.2, 2.5, 2.7).

Core competencies including written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy and critical thinking are evident in course learning outcomes across degree programs. Also evident in program and course descriptions is activity that fosters creativity, innovation, ethical and civic responsibility, civic engagement, and the ability to work with others. The General Education program and upper division coursework is integrated throughout the curriculum and specific, in-depth study makes up a significant part of each undergraduate and graduate program. Faculty interviews indicated less than desirable student writing proficiency, and students were vague in their articulation of the core skills and knowledge expected of their degree (CFR 2.2).

The *Admissions Handbook* and the university catalog depict appropriate admissions and graduation criteria, and detail a distinct and more advanced set of criteria for admission to a

graduate program as well as a culture that promotes the importance of authentic experience and professional practice. There is an academic culture of scholarship and research among faculty and students supported by a diverse collection of on campus and online library resources that are consistently monitored and enhanced.

Six institutional learning outcomes provide the direction for all academic programs and are widely shared among stakeholders. They are:

- 1) Values and knowledge based on the teachings of Jesus Christ as articulated by the Catholic Church
- 2) Communication Fluency – Written, Oral, and Audio Visual
- 3) Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment
- 4) Leadership and Decision Making
- 5) Information Literacy
- 6) Critical and Creative Thinking

Curriculum maps show how the institution's program learning outcomes map to these six outcomes. Institutional learning outcomes are also reflected in course syllabi, curriculum maps, and assessment plans. A standardized format for preparation of course syllabi would be beneficial for consistency and clarity. Interviews with multiple constituencies confirm that learning outcomes are assessed by signature assignments, using rubrics, and results are disseminated to departments for continuous improvement. Interviews with faculty illuminate their continued efforts to efficiently and more clearly assess the institutional learning outcomes at a level of rigor adequate to a Bachelor's degree, especially in the area of written communication (CFR 2.2, 2.4, 2.5).

Departmental faculty develop course level student learning outcomes (SLOs) and evaluation standards that are incorporated into their course syllabi. These SLOs are assessed for students' level of competency and for currency and utility in the field. Assessments are both formative and summative using signature assignments, and faculty has collective responsibility

to design these assessments and the corresponding rubrics. There is an on-going effort to make consistent rubric language and to enhance inter-rater reliability so student data is reliable and valid (CFR 2.4, 2.5).

Regular monthly meetings of the Assessment Committee are facilitated by the Director of the Office of Institutional Research to identify trends in the data and to facilitate modification of procedures where needed. The visiting team considered this a commendable best practice. The periodic Program Reviews include the assessment of SLOs. The faculty in each program works together to develop curriculum maps to ensure program alignment. The learning outcomes are integrated into courses, stated in the course syllabi, and available on the website to students (www.JP Catholic.com/studentsuccess) (CFR 2.4, 2.5).

Faculty shared that external stakeholders have opportunities to assess and comment on the learning outcomes and standards of performance, giving assessment results validation and increased meaning. Examples include an advisory board established by the business department including members from business, industry, government, and the arts, within San Diego and Orange County. The communications media department invites parents and the general public to participate annually in the assessment of students' senior projects. The theology students are expected to participate in two practicum classes, to which the general public is invited.

JP Catholic academic programs actively involve students in learning through multiple modes of instruction. Many students shared that they are involved in real-world learning, leading to an authentic assessment of their learning. For instance, senior students may engage in actual business creation (business program – entrepreneurship emphasis) or create professional quality media (communications media senior projects). As feedback, faculty is encouraged to give mid-term grades to identify students in trouble as early as possible and to initiate steps to remedy

their problems before the end of the quarter. In addition to regular grading in classes, signature assignments assess progress toward program and institutional learning outcomes at the introductory, developed, and mastery levels. In addition to performance feedback at the course level, the student's Personal Plan for Success is a key process used to identify early students who are having difficulty, enabling the university to initiate intervention aimed at maximizing student success. This process is under review for efficiency and scalability (CFR 2.4, 2.5).

As noted in this report under Responses to Previous Commission Issues, Recommendation two, program review has been rigorously and systematically implemented to help demonstrate student achievement of learning outcomes as well as continuous degree program relevance. Multiple interviews with faculty made clear the development of a culture of assessment that has enveloped the institution and the positive implications for students, programs and JP Catholic as a whole (CFR 2.6, 2.7).

Scholarship and Creative Activity

JP Catholic supports and values scholarly activities of its faculty. Many have attended WSCUC professional development conferences to help them better understand the culture of higher education. Several faculty have served in research and scholarship capacities such as dissertation defense committees, panelists, steering committees and publishers of original works. As a result of substantive and energetic discussion, the Faculty Senate has refined language describing expectations for scholarly and creative activity for all faculty. In addition to the scholarly activity described above, Communications media faculty members engage in a rich and impressive array of creative activities that link teaching, scholarship and student learning, and faculty have receive strong external recognition and validation, as evidenced by the CVs. Interviews conducted with department chairs, Board of Trustees and with the Accreditation

Liaison Officer (ALO) confirm the growing workload of faculty and their collective interest to have the time and resources necessary to maintain professional productivity while engaging in teaching, service, and assessment (CFR's 2.8, 2.9).

Planned and systematic professional development based on performance reviews is evolving as a key component of the university faculty expectations. Currently, the full-time faculty meets monthly during *Tuesday Brown Bag* lunches, to which the adjunct faculty is invited, to discuss best practices in teaching and learning. Recent topics included *Modifying Your Syllabus for Transformation*, *Lessons from What the Best College Teachers Do*, and *Moodle Assessment Tools* (CFR 2.8, 2.9).

Student Learning and Success

The institution has an appropriate plan and timeline for degree completion for both undergraduate and graduate students, and undergraduate degrees can be completed in three calendar years. Degree roadmaps are developed to communicate clearly with students about their programs and completion expectations, confirmed by student interviews. JP Catholic collects and analyzes student data disaggregated by demographic categories and areas of study, and there is evidence of a high percentage of students completing their degrees within the specified timeline. The institution benchmarks its retention and graduation rates against its own aspirations as well as the rates of peer institutions (CFR 2.10, 2.12).

Students are regularly advised for both academic and personal progress designed to support students' personal, academic and professional development, as evidenced by the *Student Handbook*, student interviews and faculty interviews. At these advisement sessions, faculty share relevant academic requirements, spiritual and personal formation strategies, services and programs. The institution gathers data and information on satisfaction and achievement on a

regular basis through the Plan for Student Success, post-course evaluations and other self-report methods. The Plan for Student Success and Student Success Tracker are currently being reviewed for efficiency and scalability. Program Review documents depict the use of these data to improve student achievement and co-curricular programs designed to support all students' personal and professional development. Faculty and staff share in the effort to increase integration of co-curricular programs and academic programs for the purpose of students' overall success and seamless development of whole persons. Interviews confirm that the Dean of Students is working with her staff to develop data gathering methods in the co-curricular areas to add direct measures to the current data collection plans (CFR 2.10, 2.11, 2.12).

Student support is a vital part of the services JP Catholic assures for its student body. Financial aid counseling, career services, tutoring, residential life support and internship placements are adequately staffed and depicted by students to be effective and on-going. Services to transfer students are attended to primarily by a Registrar who does the intake, course transfer analysis and mapping of the course sequence the student will follow. This individual and manual attention may not be sustainable with an anticipated increase in enrollment. Student interviews confirmed that staff is available and qualified and that this process could be more efficient (CFR 2.13, 2.14).

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures To Ensure Sustainability

Faculty and Staff

Subsequent to the CPR visit, JP Catholic hired a new Chief Financial Officer and new Vice President (VP) of Student Services. JP Catholic has already benefitted from these hires in both quality and efficiency of operations. In September 2014, JP Catholic brought on a half-time

Human Resources (HR) Manager to ensure recruitment and HR compliance issues are addressed as JP Catholic grows (CFR 3.1).

JP Catholic maintains a student to faculty ratio of 15:1. There are eight full-time faculty members, five administrators and staff who teach, fourteen adjunct professors, and three visiting professors, instructing a total student population of 263. As a result of a comprehensive strategic planning process, JP Catholic has reduced targets for growth reflected in the prior strategic plan and is committed to maintaining this ratio or below (CFR 3.1, 3.2, 4.6).

JP Catholic has had challenges growing faculty and finding individuals that are both professionally qualified and appropriately committed to JP Catholic's mission. The university realizes the need for a more diverse faculty both demographically and intellectually. JP Catholic has used industry specific employment boards such as HigherEdJobs.com and the Placement Exchange (a partnership of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA)) in its recruitment efforts. JP Catholic should consider using more targeted higher education job sites that may yield more candidates of color with values in alignment with JP Catholic's mission. (CFR 3.1)

The university has recently updated both its faculty and staff handbooks and each addresses required personnel issues. JP Catholic maintains appropriate policies for staff and faculty performance evaluation. Staff annual reviews provide the opportunity for feedback and can be vehicles for professional growth. However, there are no guidelines that ensure the evaluation provides a "personal plan for success," for staff members in terms of professional development. Due to the size of JP Catholic, there are currently ample opportunities for employees to discuss professional progress with their supervisors on an on-going basis. JP Catholic responded to a WSCUC recommendation that staff participate in appropriate

professional organizations in higher education. The team acknowledges the emphasis on professional development and in-service training for JP Catholic staff and recommends this activity be incorporated into regular performance reviews as a part of individual improvement plans to perpetuate a culture of quality (CFR 3.2, 3.3).

The *Faculty Handbook* describes in detail an evaluation process for faculty, and team interviews verify the process is followed. Full-time faculty members also submit annual training requests that are discussed with their supervisors. There are no formal guidelines that ensure the annual training requests are tied to the evaluation process. Retention of top faculty is of primary importance, and JP Catholic has been successful thus far. JP Catholic has elected not to use the tenure system. In order to more effectively achieve the educational and spiritual outcomes, the retention of faculty is based on teaching performance, academic development, and the advancement of the university's mission. JP Catholic encourages professional development activities and ongoing learning opportunities for full-time and adjunct faculty in order to refine and strengthen their teaching abilities as well as to understand how their students learn. Faculty attend regular professional development meetings where best practices for teaching and learning are shared (CFR 3.2, 3.3).

The *Staff Handbook* discusses plans for individual improvement. However, the plans are described more in the context of correcting deficiencies in performance than improving skills. There is no discussion of integration of the professional development into the staff evaluation process. The *Faculty Handbook* mandates one-year probationary and routine three-year evaluations. Faculty present evidence of professional growth and submit plans for future development. In this process there is no formal integration of the training plan into the three-year evaluation process. The team suggests that these discussions be formalized and the staff and

faculty handbooks be updated to ensure all faculty and staff have “personal plans for improvement” integrated into the evaluation process (CFR 3.3).

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

Overall, the university has had careful, calculated, and increasingly measured growth policies. Long-term sustainability is considered much more important than short-term rapid growth. JP Catholic has sustainability as one of its key strategic themes, and to that end financial stability is key. JP Catholic’s Strategic Priority #4, which is to “expand our sustainable financial model with selective growth and increased philanthropy,” is underpinned by the a three-fold operational focus that strives to implement timely, accurate, and responsive financial processes and systems. More importantly, budgeting and planning are based on evidence, where assumptions are critically challenged and documented. Material financial decisions are data-driven, and approved by the Board of Trustees. Resource planning is integrated with other institutional planning by way of combined discussions with open participation and cooperation of all administrative and academic departments (CFR 3.4).

The university bylaws require an annual audited financial report be completed no later than 120 days after the end of the fiscal year, June 30. JP Catholic has consistently met this requirement. A San Diego firm, Guerrera & Associates, which the university has engaged since it became Title IV eligible, performs the audit and provides the management letter. (CFR 3.4)

In 2013, the university relocated to a permanent campus in downtown Escondido, in North San Diego County. This move significantly expanded and solidified the university’s infrastructure increasing classroom and administration facilities from 13,000 to 40,000 square feet. JP Catholic ensured that the selection process for the campus was not simply “space driven” but ensured that the space would meet the strategic goals of the campus (CFR 3.5).

The university library has grown rapidly in support of student learning. The library is both a physical space and a virtual space. The 27,000+ volume on campus physical collection has grown primarily through select acquisitions and donations. JP Catholic uses Koha, an open-source Integrated Library System (ILS), which has made the library catalog accessible to all students and searchable online (CFR 3.5)

The university chooses technology initiatives carefully and collaboratively to further its mission. The Information Technology department (IT) identifies the current and future technology infrastructure demands. The university identified a need to better integrate their financial and student information systems and moved them to a common application package. JP Catholic realizes the need to leverage technology in the future and has allocated additional resources in the information technology area. JP Catholic is in the process of reviewing its data needs in all functional areas and may benefit from the development of a formal information technology strategic plan to ensure that technology is “consistent” in all functional areas (CFR 3.5).

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

The university uses a data-driven budget and resource allocation process. An Enrollment Management working group, involving the VP of Admissions, the VP of Finance, the Dean of Students, the Director of Financial Aid and the Registrar, provides weekly enrollment and retention projection updates, which are incorporated into the university’s statistical financial forecasting models. The forecasts determine the budgets available for each operational unit in their pursuit of the university’s educational purposes and guide the allocation among academic, personnel, fiscal, physical, and technological needs. The President’s Cabinet, in a collegial fashion, determines the relative distribution of the available financial resources, providing a

strong quality assurance control with cross-departmental review and approval of the budgetary needs, prior to recommending a budget to the Trustees (CFR 3.6, 3.7).

The JP Catholic President reports and is accountable to the Board of Trustees. The President's Cabinet includes the Chief Financial Officer, VP of Administration, VP of Student Affairs, VP for Admissions, VP for Technology, and the Provost. The new Provost brings extensive experience in higher education and a clear understanding of both assessment and accreditation expectations. Since the CPR visit, JP Catholic has strengthened the quality of its management team and clarified areas of accountability. (CFR 3.6, 3.7, 3.8).

The university has made great strides in improving the quality and function of the Board of Trustees. Board governance has been adequately codified in the *Board of Trustees Handbook*. The Board of Trustees has increased in size adding new members with significant non-profit and for-profit executive leadership and board experience. The Board's zeal for the university's mission along with the depth of real and diverse experience is a valuable asset to the university. The Board meets quarterly on the first Monday of February, May, August and November and holds special meetings as necessary. Responding to a WSCUC recommendation, most work is done through Board Committees: an Audit Committee, a Nominating & Governance Committee, a Finance & Planning Committee, an Academic Affairs Committee, and an Executive Compensation Committee. (CFR 3.9).

The university utilizes a structure in which the academic departments of business, theology, and communications media report to the Provost through their respective department chairs. The Faculty Senate deliberates and implements academic policy. The faculty, through the Faculty Senate, exercises shared governance, effective academic leadership and strategic planning. All full-time faculty are members of the Faculty Senate. They play a central role in

developing and delivering high quality curriculum and relevant student learning experiences. They are actively involved in program assessment and the fine-tuning of programs. They participate in the hiring of full-time and adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty serve as academic mentors for students and eagerly support a host of student projects and ventures. Faculty roles, rights, and responsibilities are defined in the *Faculty Handbook*. JP Catholic has made substantial progress in transitioning from an administration driven to a faculty-driven academic institution. Where previously the President and co-founder was an active member of the Senate, the President has divested himself of involvement in the Senate. The Provost serves as the non-voting administrative representative on the Senate. The Faculty Senate is the academic policy making body and is guided by its mission (CFR 3.10).

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

Quality Assurance Processes

In the eight years since its decision to pursue accreditation, JP Catholic has made good progress in developing and implementing a range of processes to ensure quality. The university has evinced a consistent commitment to building a quality teaching and learning centered institution, and has conscientiously worked to translate WSCUC standards into processes appropriate to the JP Catholic mission and student population. As of the EER visit, all degree programs reviewed had well-defined course learning outcomes that are mapped to the institutional learning outcomes, which in turn flow from the university mission. JP Catholic has demonstrated particular commitment to reviewing its academic programs using rigorous and thoughtful program review standards, and has acted on the findings of these reviews to improve student learning. As detailed in section two of this report, annual assessment of student learning within degree programs is consistent, thorough, authentic, and relies upon direct evidence;

following the hiring of a strong institutional research professional, the findings of annual assessment are now carefully collected, aggregated, and distributed in forms that encourage effective closing of the loop. In interviews the team learned of multiple examples of learning outcome assessment leading to changes in courses or assignments and was able to verify that the faculty is both tracking assessment results over time and regularly evaluating the ongoing effectiveness of the curriculum (CFR 4.1, 4.2).

The university's institutional research capacity has expanded since the CPR. In spring 2013 JP Catholic hired a full-time, qualified Director for the Office of Institutional Research. This office provides essential support to all assessment efforts, strengthens the consistency of data usage in program review, and formalizes data collection, analysis, and accessibility for planning and decision-making processes. The Director of Institutional Research also maintains data on student success for the institution and distributes it broadly, including a public student success website posting information on enrollment, retention and graduation rates, assessment data, data collected by external agencies, and reports from internal surveys. The Director maintains data using general higher education protocols and ensures consistent reporting to external agencies, including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). JP Catholic demonstrates a clear commitment to use the data it collects and maintains; the Assessment Committee meets monthly to analyze student course evaluations, signature assignment scores and reflections, enrollment information, and retention and graduation rates (CFR 4.2).

Institutional Learning and Improvement

Both the documents provided by JP Catholic and the interviews the team conducted during the visit reveal an institution that has developed a consistent culture of evidence,

particularly with regard to evaluation and improvement of student learning. Conversations about learning outcomes and assessment are natural, informed, and widely shared. JP Catholic has a small faculty so the team spoke with every full-time faculty member multiple times during the visit, and also met with many of the core adjuncts. Everyone directly involved in teaching and curriculum design was focused authentically on using evidence to engage in continuous improvement. It was clear from multiple examples that this commitment expresses itself in revision to courses and assignments. Faculty review processes, as detailed in the *Faculty Handbook*, support this orientation toward continuous improvement, and the team was able to verify these processes are followed. Finally, while JP Catholic's earlier efforts at assessment and improvement were sometimes episodic and driven by administrators, it was obvious to the team that the current assessment regime is owned and managed by the faculty and is fully integrated into their workload expectations and planning (CFR 4.3, 4.4).

In addition to regular collection of student artifacts for learning outcome assessment, JP Catholic has begun to collect information and input from other stakeholders. The university conducts an annual survey of alumni to evaluate currency of their skills in the marketplace and has plans to develop a regular survey of employers. The program reviews have all included qualified external reviewers. JP Catholic has formed an Advisory Board for the business program which includes members from business, industry, government, and the arts within San Diego and Orange County. This board meets regularly to provide feedback on student projects and has served to place interns in local businesses. The Advisory Board is eager to support future evaluations of the effectiveness of the business programs. Plans are in progress to form similar advisory boards for the other programs (CFR 4.5).

During the CPR visit the team expressed concerns about the quality of strategic planning processes and the realism with which JP Catholic evaluated its place within the ecology of higher education. Since that visit JP Catholic engaged in a significant, sustained, and inclusive strategic planning process, led by a new Board member with significant expertise in this area. Faculty, staff, and Trustees met in April 2013 to assess JP Catholic's strategic position within the higher education landscape, articulate key priorities emerging from mission, examine the alignment of limited resources with core purposes and primary functions, and define the future direction of the university. This retreat generated three themes to guide the strategic planning process: student formation, cultural impact, and sustainability. The final strategic plan, adopted in July 2013, is thoughtful, realistic, consistent with the mission and values of JP Catholic, shared publicly on the website, and widely understood by a range of university constituents. More important, the plan is guiding daily operations, as each major division leader was required to develop an operational plan tied to the objectives of the strategic plan. These plans, which the team reviewed, are (with few exceptions) detailed translations of strategy into tactics, and appear to genuinely guide resource prioritization and decision-making. The operational plans also include key metrics by which progress is measured. The divisions that were unable to articulate satisfactory operational plans were reorganized or placed under new leadership, which demonstrates the seriousness with which JP Catholic now takes strategic planning and the consideration of addressing challenges within the changing landscape of higher education (CFR 4.6, 4.7).

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

Commendations

1. The team commends JP Catholic for its well-developed program review process that evaluates student acquisition of learning outcomes, comprehensively examines program and institutional learning outcomes, generates recommendations and plans for improvements, and involves both internal and external reviewers (CFR 2.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6).
2. The team commends the JP Catholic Board of Trustees for engaging in governance leadership as demonstrated by its involvement in strategic planning and program review, and for embracing board development as demonstrated by the diversity and professional expertise of its members (CFR 3.6, 3.9).
3. The team commends JP Catholic for implementing an effective, widely inclusive, and integrated strategic and operational planning process that details clear expectations tied to defined outcomes (CFR 1.1, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7).
4. The team commends JP Catholic for building a community committed to the university's mission of impacting the culture for Christ and the care with which the community integrates that concept throughout the campus culture (CFR 1.1, 2.3, 2.11).
5. The team commends JP Catholic for developing a selection process to identify the site for their new campus that took into account both space needs and the potential to advance strategic goals (CFR 1.7, 3.5, 4.6, 4.7).

Recommendations

1. The team acknowledges the emphasis on professional development and in-service training received by JP Catholic staff and recommends this activity be incorporated into regular performance reviews as individual improvement plans to perpetuate a culture of quality (CFR 3.3).
2. The team recommends that JP Catholic continue to build a culture of data-driven decision making and become increasingly proficient in using evidence to assess financial sustainability, progress in operational plans, and student learning outcomes (CFR 1.7, 4.1, 4.2).
3. The team recommends that JP Catholic carefully manage the growing workload of faculty to ensure they have the time and resources necessary to maintain professional productivity while engaging in teaching, service, and assessment (CFR 2.4, 2.8, 2.9, 4.4).
4. The team recommends JP Catholic engage in proactive efforts to increase gender and ethnic diversity on the faculty and senior leadership (CFR 1.4, 2.10, 3.1).
5. The team recognizes that co-curricular programs utilize data to make decisions in many important ways, and recommends the university develop a more sophisticated suite of methods, including direct assessments, to evaluate and co-curricular areas of student life and spiritual formation (CFR 2.11).
6. The team recommends that JP Catholic define expected proficiency for undergraduate core competencies (oral communication, written communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, critical thinking) at a level of rigor adequate to a Bachelor's degree, and ensure graduates obtain that level of competency (2.1, 2.2, 2.6).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW

Institution: John Paul the Great Catholic University

Date: October 24, 2014

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? YES
	Where is the policy located? CATALOG PAGE 57
	Comments:
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through Program Review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? See Comments
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? YES
	Comments: John Paul the Great is integrating this into its Program Review procedures.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? YES
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? THREE
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? BOTH
	What degree level(s)? BACHELOR AND MASTER
	What discipline(s)? THEOLOGY AND BUSINESS
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? YES
	Comments:
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g.,	How many syllabi were reviewed? NOT APPLICABLE
	What kinds of courses?
	What degree level(s)?
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?

<p>internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i></p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)</p>	<p>How many programs were reviewed? ONE</p>
	<p>What kinds of programs were reviewed? CATALOG</p>
	<p>What degree level(s)? BACHELOR</p>
	<p>What discipline(s)? THEOLOGY</p>
	<p>Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? YES</p>
	<p>Comments:</p>

APPENDIX B
STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW

Institution: John Paul Catholic University

Date: October 24, 2014

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

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: JP Catholic has a formal process to address student grievances. This policy is found in the Student Handbook, see "Student Complaints and Concerns", pg. 38. The Handbook is available on the JPCatholic website: under Student Life http://www.jpatholic.com/studentlife/studentlife.php and Key Documents http://www.jpatholic.com/keydocs.php . Students sign acknowledgment of the Handbook after enrollment and hard copies are available upon request.	
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly:	Yes
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes
	Comments: There are 3 steps to the process: Informal, Formal, and the Grievance Hearing. With some important exceptions (e.g., sexual discrimination), the process requires a student to attempt to address the complaint with the University official involved before filing a formal grievance. After a formal grievance is filed, it is examined by the Grievance Review Committee, and if found to have merit, it is brought to a hearing. Protections and guidelines are in place for both sides in the hearing. Appeals of the decision of the hearing are heard initially by the University President; final appeal rests with the Board of Trustees. Modifications to the process are articulated for grievances involving the Title IX Coordinator.	

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
	Comments: To date there have been no formal student complaints. When such formal grievances are filed, they will be tracked by the Department of Student Life in a Student Complaint Log and reviewed annually by both the Department of Student Life and the President's Cabinet to assess trends, possible interventions, etc.	

APPENDIX C
MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

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

Institution: John Paul Catholic University

Date: October 24, 2014

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:	
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: Dr. John Derry

Date: October 23, 2014

**APPENDIX D
TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW CHECKLIST**

Institution: John Paul the Great Catholic University

Date: October 24, 2014

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

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.	Verified Yes/No
Transfer Credit Policy (s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for reviewing and receiving transfer credit?	Yes
	Is the policy publicly available? If so, where?	Yes Catalog p 74
	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: JP Catholic also has program advisors who ensure that the students have the proper number of credits transferred when entering the program.	