

**REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation**

Point Loma Nazarene University

October 9 – 12, 2017

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

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

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU) is a private, non-profit college now located in San Diego, California. PLNU was founded by Phineas F. Bresee in 1902 as Pacific Bible College in Pasadena, California. Pacific Bible College became Pasadena College in 1919. Pasadena College was first accredited by the northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools (1943) and then by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 1949.

In 1973, the president of Pasadena College, W. Shelburne Brown, was instrumental in relocating the college from its 19-acre location in Pasadena to the 84-acre site in San Diego. The institution was renamed Point Loma College, then Point Loma Nazarene College, and then PLNU. PLNU has three colleges: the College of Arts and Humanities, the College of Natural and Social Sciences, and the College of Extended Learning. There are four schools: the Fermanian School of Business, the School of Nursing, the School of Education, and the School of Theology and Christian Ministry, and 13 academic departments. The main campus also uses the Liberty Station Conference Center (2 miles away) for additional conference and classroom space. PLNU has two branch campuses, one in Mission Valley (8 miles from its main campus) and one in Bakersfield, CA. Both offer graduate and adult degree completion programs.

In Fall 2016, PLNU's enrollment was 2,650 undergraduates, 403 adult degree completion students, and 1,103 graduate students. For Fall 2016, PLNU had 135 full time faculty and 283 part time faculty.

PLNU's last comprehensive review was conducted under the 2001 WSCUC Standards and Guidelines with the Capacity and Preparatory Review in 2006 and the Educational Effectiveness Review in 2007. The letter of reaffirmation by the commission is dated February 28, 2008 and called

for an interim report to focus on assessment and program development and program review.

PLNU submitted an interim report in in 2012. The interim report review applauded the actions by PLNU in these areas since their reaccreditation and requested that the next WSCUC Accreditation Visit (AV) include “an update on the evolution of its exemplary assessment and continuous improvement efforts, as appropriate.” (CFRs 2.3-2.7, 4.1) Since that time, PLNU participated in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) pilot and their assessment website is featured by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).

B. Description of Team’s Review Process

PLNU’s *Institutional Review (IR) Report* was submitted to WSCUC in August 2016, along with a number of supporting attachments. This information was reviewed by the WSCUC- appointed Visit Team in advance of the Off-Site Review (OSR) meeting that was conducted at the WSCUC offices April 19-20, 2017. Prior to the Off-Site Review, the team requested several additional financial and student retention documents, which were provided in advance of the OSR. The OSR resulted in the Team identifying five lines of inquiry to pursue further during the Accreditation Visit (AV). In addition, they requested 14 documents and items of information, which PLNU provided well in advance of the campus visit. PLNU also provided several additional documents requested as Team members were preparing their documents.

On September 14, 2017, the Assistant Chair visited the PLNU’s Mission Valley Center, one of two branch campuses that are currently active. She met with faculty and support staff, and had an opportunity to visit graduate classes in three disciplines, Business, Education, and Organizational Leadership. PLNU had provided time to speak with students, and she used the opportunity to ask students in the MBA program about their experiences. On October 9, 2017, the AV Team was given a tour of PLNU’s facilities at Liberty Station, approximately three miles from the main campus. The Team then met for consultation and planning.

From October 10 –13, the Team conducted onsite reviews of institutional documents and interviews with administrative personnel, trustees, faculty, staff, and students to further refine its initial findings.

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

PLNU submitted a 71-page *Institutional Review (IR) Report* and a set of appendices to support their reaffirmation of accreditation. Their supporting documentation was easy to access, primarily using hyperlinks. The *IR Report* followed the eight component organizational structure outlined in the *2013 WSCUC Handbook of Accreditation*. Each section of the report specifically addressed the topic areas specified by the *2013 Handbook*.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

A. Component 1: Response to Previous Commission Actions

The accreditation history of PLNU has been one of continuous improvement since the 1970s. In the early years, prior to the move to Point Loma, San Diego, and the renaming of the institution, WSCUC accreditation concerns were focused on faculty salaries, admission practices, financial aid, administrative responsibilities, status of a librarian, upper division standards and double numbering of courses. Reaffirmation was typically given for only for four year increments.

In recent years PLNU has seen steady growth in students and the number of graduate degree programs, particularly hybrid and online programs. Additionally, PLNU has partnered with 6 of the regional community colleges to offer Adult Degree Completion (ADC) Programs. Within the past few years, the institution has appointed a Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Services, who is also the Dean of the College of Extended Learning, to organize and oversee PLNU's expansion in these areas. All WSCUC institutions have been asked to provide evidence for clear and appropriate learning outcomes and assessment strategies, including institutional and outcomes data in decision making. PLNU demonstrated the highest commitment to transparent and quality interaction with WSCUC and endeavored to respond to Commission actions with integrity.

The most recent Commission letter (March 4, 2013) stated that PLNU's interim report was "deep and broad in its responses to the Commission's requests for further analysis on the three primary issues of: (1) assessment of student learning outcomes; (2) new program development/program review process; and (3) use of evidence of student learning in decision-making." The reviewers commended the institution for the substantive progress made in all three areas. In response to the previous WSCUC recommendations, PLNU developed ILOs and learning outcomes for general education; developed a comprehensive budget to support assessment; adopted NILOA's Transparency Framework "Assessment Wheel" and deployed the Wheel effectively; and established assessment coordinators in each academic unit. As a result of these efforts, PLNU has moved its academic community to a highly-developed stage

of assessment through the meta-analysis of assessment processes. WSCUC reviewers commended PLNU for maintaining a noteworthy history of program review, and for its continuous refinement and improvement over the last 20 years. The panel commended the institution for the exemplary use of the Assessment Wheel to organize evidence of student learning in decision-making and urged them to continue this effort.

B. Component 2: Compliance with the Standards & Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

1. Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes & Ensuring Educational Objectives

Institutional Purposes

PLNU clearly defines its core values and has a well-disseminated and clearly articulated mission to: “provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.”

The vision and statement of core values speak to the educational and personal development of students. The institution is to be commended for incorporating the concept of “living out one’s call, which is about building out a meaningful life that contributes to the greater good” (p.15). One area of opportunity for the institution is related to contribution to the broader public good, which is less well articulated than the value of the educational community to the students themselves. Service is reflected in the Gen Ed Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and the institution seems to prepare students for life long service. There is some survey evidence that PLNU alumni volunteer and/or are engaged in church and community after leaving the institution. (CFR1.1) Regular follow-up with both undergraduate and graduate alumni will enhance the institution’s ability to understand their commitment to service after they graduate.

Educational objectives are clearly defined and recognized throughout the institution, and the use of

Assessment Wheels provides a common conceptual framework for review and discussion. Measures of student achievement, academic goals, programs, services and costs are publicly available on the website (CFR 1.2; 1.6). The development, assessment, and dissemination of student learning outcomes, and student attainment of these outcomes, are particular strengths of the institution (CFR 2.4, 2.6), and the university has made significant gains in generating actionable data based on these assessments for institutional decision making (CFR 4.2). In addition, PLNU has clear and easily accessible policies on grading and evaluation and on protecting student rights through grievances and complaints. PLNU might consider adding a statement prohibiting retaliation for filing complaints internally or externally (CFR 1.6).

As stated in the Academic Freedom Policy, the concepts of academic freedom are clearly couched within the limitations imposed by “the right of the Board of Trustees to insist that the religious and educational objectives of the University be carried out” and all faculty members sign an annual contract that references the Community Life Covenant, which indicates that each “faculty member accepts the responsibility not to inveigh against the doctrines, core values and ethical standards of the Church of the Nazarene indicated in the Community Life Covenant as affirmed by the Board of Trustees of Point Loma Nazarene University.” (CFR 1.3). Thus, while policies clearly state how the specific beliefs of the institution are implemented, it is less clear what the true impact may be on academic freedom and the expression of diverse perspectives.

The Board of Trustees has made significant progress in the past ten years in creating a more independent body and focusing on the appropriate policy and strategic issues facing the university. The board has reduced in number from 47 to 24 Trustees. Although most trustees must be members of the Church of the Nazarene in good standing with the local church, and Trustees are elected to the Board in a manner “to insure ensure that every district of the Southwest Educational Region (i.e. of the Church) has a minimum of one voting member of the board,” District Superintendents are now only 25% of the Trustees, and nominations for trustees come from more diverse sources than previously. (CFR 1.5) A

total of five members of the board can be not Nazarene, up to three elected members and two by virtue of office, Alumni President and President of the Foundation.

PLNU's policies related to diversity are clearly stated in the Equal Employment Opportunity sections of the faculty and staff handbooks, and a similar statement in the Community Life Covenant, affirmed by all faculty when they sign their contracts. While there are a number of diversity initiatives in place, PLNU acknowledges the need for attention to diversity in hiring of faculty and senior administrative positions, especially in light of an increasingly diverse student population. (CFR1.4) The institution is somewhat hampered in its hiring of a more diverse faculty and staff based on very low turn-over of personnel. It will, therefore, be even more important that diverse role models be present in other ways in the institution, that existing faculty are both informed regarding diversity issues and are held accountable for ensuring that they participate in the promotion of diversity on campus, and that the curriculum continues to be revised in ways that provide exposure to disciplinary experts and thought leaders from diverse backgrounds.

It seems clear throughout the Institutional Review and the accompanying materials provided by PLNU, and verified through interactions between the visiting team and members of the PLNU community, that there is a commitment to honesty and transparency (CFR 1.7). Moreover, the institution's responsiveness to past Commission recommendations as well as the thoroughness of the materials provided for this review that PLNU values the accreditation process as well as the relationship with WSCUC. (CFR 1.8)

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with the Standard.

2. Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

PLNU provided clear evidence relating to Standard 2 CFRs regarding its commitment to achieve its purposes and attain its educational objectives at the institutional and program level through the core

functions of teaching and learning (CFRs 2.1-2.7), scholarship and creative activity (CFRs 2.8-2.9), and support for student learning and success. (CFRs 2.10-2.14)

At the time of its last reaffirmation visit, program assessment was found to be a weakness for PLNU. By their midpoint review, they had developed a systemic approach to academic program assessment that is based on the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment's *Transparency Framework*; they refer to it as the Assessment Wheel. The Assessment Wheel, which is available online, presents program level assessment that includes a) program mission statement, b) student learning outcomes, c) curriculum maps, d) assessment plans, e) evidence of student learning, and f) use of the evidence of student learning. (CFRs 2.2-2.4) Academic program assessment follows a three-year cycle. PLNU uses Lumina's Degree Qualification Profile (DQP) to frame the expected competencies for each academic program; they were among the first universities in the region to pilot the DQP. Almost every program examined has well-developed curriculum maps, and assessment plans that are designed to measure student success. The syllabi examined include both the PLOs for the academic program that are related to the course and course learning outcomes (CLO's).

In the area of teaching and learning, PLNU academic program syllabi have clearly written Course-level Learning Outcomes (CLOs), syllabi, and assessment criteria. (CFRs 2.3-2.7) The course syllabi reference Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). CLOs engage students in owning their learning experience, and criteria are delineated for the knowledge and skills required to be successful as a student. For undergraduate students, General Education serves as a cohesive foundational academic program. General Education has a specified set of General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs). Each department assesses its relevant GELOs and the WSCUC five core competencies. (CFR2.2a) Most graduate programs have very well developed home pages that include the program learning outcomes, and clear descriptions of the program length and requirements. (CFR2.2b) Graduate program web pages include a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that are appropriate for prospective students.

PLNU uses a six-year cycle of academic program review; these involve both internal and external reviewers. (CFR 2.7). PLNU revised its Program Review Process after 2014-15 to be more useful and manageable for the faculty. The Assessment website includes resources including templates and guidelines for academic and co-curricular program review.

PLNU has hired well-qualified faculty for the type and level of curricula offered. It appears that new program development includes thoughtful consideration of faculty qualifications. (CFRs 2.1 & 3.1)

In its Institutional Report, PLNU did not address faculty scholarship and creative activity specifically. On site, the team was able to find evidence of support for faculty scholarship and development (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.3) Faculty indicated that PLNU has an emphasis on undergraduate research and is dedicated to supporting faculty research when it promotes undergraduate research. There is evidence that faculty who teach online and hybrid courses are provided IT support and some instruction in online pedagogy. In addition, faculty have been involved in the development of a new rank and tenure policy. At the time of the WSCUC AV, the Faculty Resources hyperlink seemed to be misdirecting. The team was told that there is a password protected portal for faculty that houses a number of faculty resources,

PLNU currently has assessment data processes relating to some of its co-curricular programs; specifically, one area in each of Spiritual Development and Student Development has completed or is completing a program review. (CFR 2.11) Student Development includes Athletics, Residential Life, Student Success and Wellness, and Public Safety. There are specified Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and they are mapped to activities and experiences using a curriculum map. Rubrics for assessing Spiritual Development include a combination of checklist items for students to complete, directions for interactions with peers and others, and self-assessment items. They could be refined to target learning outcomes.

A more comprehensive structure for co-curricular assessment, including clear specification of

resource allocation (FTE, budgets, etc.) will help PLNU make informed decisions about how student support services contribute to the effectiveness of students learning and success. (CFR 2.11) PLNU needs to increase attention to collecting and analyzing co-curricular data that will inform overall educational effectiveness.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with the Standard.

3. **Standard 3: Developing & Applying Resources & Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality & Sustainability**

Faculty and Staff

For fall 2015, PLNU had a student to faculty ratio of 15 to 1 (3,139 students and 215 faculty). During FY 2016-17, the percentage of student credit hours across all disciplines taught by faculty type is as follows: 66% by full time faculty, 11% by part-time faculty, 21% by adjunct and 2% other/unknown. PLNU's faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualifications to achieve the institution's education mission, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity, quality, and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs. Although there are a number of challenges (e.g. low faculty and staff turnover, high cost of housing, and competition from other universities,) to increasing faculty and staff diversity, it is important that the institution continue its efforts in this area to enhance the availability of appropriate role models for their students. (CFR 3.1)

Faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, development, incentives and evaluation practices are in overall alignment with the institution's mission and educational objectives. The institution has in place programs and systems to support faculty and staff development directed at improving teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes (CFR 3.2, 3.3)

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

PLNU is a tuition-driven institution with 89% of its total revenues generated by student tuition, fees and auxiliary services. Net tuition revenue grew by 10% from \$66.4 million in FY 2014-2015 to \$73.2

million in FY 2015-2016, primarily due to enrollment growth in undergraduate, graduate and adult degree completion programs. The audited financial statements for as of June 30, 2016, reflect assets of approximately \$215 million, liabilities of \$75 million and net assets of \$140 million, of which approximately \$106 million represents unrestricted net assets. For FY 2015-2016 PLNU experienced a positive change in net assets of \$7.4 million. Additional analysis on key financial indicators over the period 2011-12 through 2015-2016 can be found in Section II, Component 7 of this report. As noted in this section, PLNU has experienced a positive change in net assets from operations during this five-year period. PLNU has also functioned without an operational deficit for at least three years. (CFR 3.4)

PLNU has had unqualified independent financial audits for many years (the team reviewed audit reports from June 30, 2010 through June 30, 2016). The federal student aid compliance audits indicate that PLNU has complied, in all material respects, with specified requirements applicable to the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) programs (CFR 3.4).

Institutions participating in Title IV programs are required by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to demonstrate financial responsibility. USDE determines an institution's financial responsibility through calculation of a composite score based upon certain financial ratios. Institutions receiving a composite score of 1.5 or greater are considered fully financially responsible. The annual composite score for PLNU from FY 2009-10 through 2015-16 has been above 1.5 (CFR 3.4).

Another measure that is used to assess financial health is the Composite Financial Index, a multi-dimensional measure of financial health that combines four commonly used financial ratio including the primary reserve ratio, the viability ratio, the return on net asset ratio and the net operating revenue ratio. The CFI is used by the Council of Independent Colleges to provide benchmarking services to its members. The CFI score uses a scale from -4 to 10. A CFI score of 3 is the threshold of institutional financial health. Point Loma's CFI has been well above 3.0 since 2012-13. (CFR 3.4)

Point Loma Nazarene's cohort default rate, which reflects its graduates' ability to repay student loans, has been between 1.9 and 2.8 for the three years ending in FY 2013-2014. PLNU's default rate is less

than the national and California default rates, which approximate 11%. PLNU's default rate is also lower than the rates for 4-year private institutions that is approximately 7% based on the most current data.

PLNU's endowment has grown from approximately \$28 million and \$9 thousand per FTE student in 2009-2010 to approximately \$52 million and \$16 thousand per FTE student 2015-2016. Total growth in the endowment during this period was approximately \$24 million, with approximately \$7 million coming from contributions. As of June 30, 2017, the 1 year, 3 year and 5 year return were 10.6%, 1.9% and 5.4% respectively. PLNU has nearly doubled its endowment value in a six-year period. The Team encourages PLNU to continue the growth of its endowment both by contributions (through increased advancement efforts) and by maximizing the endowment investment return (CFR 3.4).

In 2015 PLNU hired Sightlines, a facilities management consulting firm, to assist PLNU in creating a more strategic plan for the maintenance of the university's physical plant. One of the services that Sightline offers is assisting clients in identifying their deferred maintenance backlog/renewal needs as well as providing metrics on needed annual funding to manage these renewal needs. It is common for institutions to have a list of renewal needs. The goal is to adequately manage the list. PLNU has a process to manage and fund their renewal needs. In 2015-16 a significant addition to the renewal funding was made in order to manage their renewal projects. The Team encourages PLNU to continue its journey to manage and fund their renewal needs. (CFR 3.5).

Driven by an aging student information system and a desire to utilize real-time analytics needed for decision making in a dynamic environment, PLNU assessed its information technology system needs and decided to implement a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. PLNU selected Workday to meet its financial/accounting, human resource information services (HRIS) and student system needs. Workday utilizes a Software as a Service (SaaS) delivery model and is being used by many educational institutions as well as other types of institutions. The implementation of Workday Financial and Human Resource systems were achieved in January 2016 and June 2016, respectively. The student system implementation is expected to be completed by fall 2019. The implementation of Workday will take a

significant amount of financial, human resources and time. The Workday SIS complements the mobile-friendly cloud-based learning management system (Instructure Canvas) which was implemented by PLNU a couple of years ago. The Team applauds PLNU's decision to make these strategic technology investments to assist in furthering their mission. (CFR 3.5)

Per 2014-2015 IPEDS data, PLNU is spending approximately \$500 per FTE student on library expenditures which approximates the amount of library expenditures per FTE by other Christian colleges in the southern California area. PLNU has provided access to information and technology resources sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and kind at physical sites and online, as appropriate, to support its academic offerings and the research and scholarship of its faculty, staff, and students (CFR 3.5).

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

Senior Leadership

PLNU has a committed and highly collaborative staff and management team that is well suited for the needs and future growth of the institution (CFR 3.6). As mentioned in Component 7 of this report, as PLNU was recovering from the Great Recession, it recognized financial sustainability issues that if it did not respond to, would result in an annual operating deficit of \$11 million. PLNU contracted with the firm of Noel-Levitz, a leading comprehensive enrollment management firm, to guide the college through this strategic enrollment planning process. Recognizing that comprehensive planning was not a one-time activity, in February 2013 PLNU's Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) Committee began its strategic enrollment planning journey. PLNU engaged its campus in a proactive review and self-assessment process to collaboratively find a path forward. Throughout this process, PLNU operated with three guiding principles: 1) to care for the people within its university community, 2) to create a sustainable, high-functioning organization and 3) to be mission-centered, providing a high-quality student learning experience. The results of this planning and assessment process is documented in PLNU's strategic enrollment plan: 2014 through 2019 - Executive Summary as well as a document

resulting from PLNU's prioritization process entitled "Summary of Prioritization Outcomes." As evidenced by PLNU's strategic planning and assessment process as well as other observations by the Team, it appears that PLNU's institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear and consistent with its purposes, support effective decision making, and place priority on sustaining institutional capacity and educational effectiveness (CFR 3.7, 4.6, 4.7).

The institution has a full-time chief executive officer (president) and a chief financial officer (CFO) whose primary or full-time responsibilities are to the institution. The president has served in this capacity at PLNU since 1997. The CFO has been with the university since 1988 and has served as CFO since 2004. PLNU has a sufficient number of other qualified administrators to provide effective educational leadership and management. (CFR 3.6, 3.8).

Board

The Board of Trustees is an independent governing board that is engaged, informed, and committed. The institution has developed a comprehensive board policy manual that outlines the responsibilities and duties of the board as well as the senior leadership. PLNU's Board exercises appropriate oversight over policies, operations, and institutional integrity (CFR 3.9).

Faculty

As documented in the faculty handbook, PLNU has a robust governance structure. The Faculty Governance Committee is the university's primary academic governance body. The committee is comprised of seven members and several responsibilities including the following: reviewing structure and effectiveness of the faculty governance system, reviewing proposed changes to the Faculty Constitution, reviewing structure and effectiveness of faculty committees, recommending to the faculty and/or the Administrative Cabinet changes which are necessary to continue the smooth operation of the governance system and maintenance of the Faculty Handbook. The institution, through its policies, including the Faculty Handbook, clearly defines the governance roles, rights, and responsibilities of full and part-time faculty. The institution's faculty exercises effective academic

leadership and acts consistently to ensure that both academic quality and the institution's educational purposes and character are sustained. The members are elected by the faculty and the chair is elected by the faculty committee members.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with the Standard.

4. Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning & Improvement

Quality Assurance

PLNU utilizes multiple tools to ensure a robust and thorough quality assessment process. The institution has gone through an evolution in its program assessment and has engaged in a process of continuous improvement. Most recently, in 2013, PLNU realized that through the Program Review Committee the program review process needed to be simplified and clarified; connections between assessment processes and program review needed to be more transparent. The current program review process takes 12 months and uses data from the office of institutional research as well as financial data. In addition, evidence from alumni and senior exit surveys, employer and advisory council feedback are also utilized. Recently, the university undertook a two-year university wide prioritization process that included the use of Academic Program Review data and reports. (CFR 4.5, 4.6) This resulted in some programs being sun-setted and some organizational restructuring (e.g., combining departments).

While program assessment is a meaningful, informative process, and well-established for academic programs, it has been acknowledged that co-curricular assessment still has opportunity for growth (CFR 2.1, 2.11, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4). On-site discussions revealed that these areas may need to be supported in their assessment efforts as they move away from an "annual report" model and more toward a student learning and development and operational efficiency approach.

Institutional Learning and Improvement

PLNU has a robust system of input from their faculty, staff, leadership, and committees with

university-wide membership when gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. It is clearly demonstrated that faculty and academic leadership engage in collaborative discussions to improve student learning.

PLNU has developed a strong culture of assessment and continuous improvement. (CFR 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with the Standard.

5. Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

An inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators was completed by PLNU and included as an attachment to their Institutional Report. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are included for all programs in the course catalogs and within the Academic Assessment Wheel. Course syllabi include Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and are available for most programs via the Assessment Wheel for the program; newer programs, such as the M.A. in Clinical Counseling, do not have syllabi available for review via their website or the Assessment Wheel. PLNU should consider that prospective or current students who want to learn more about a course before enrolling in it might not find the syllabi readily, because they might not be familiar with the Assessment Wheel. (After students enroll in a course, they see the syllabus via Canvas.) PLNU can use the IEEI to ensure that assessment of student learning is planned and conducted as they continue to expand their programs.

C. Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees

PLNU involved faculty, students, alumni, staff, executive leadership and the Board of Trustees in a thoughtful consideration of the meaning, quality and integrity of the degree. The institution focused on the mission of the university and the concept of vocation, “helping students discern and prepare for their calling.” This is a campus wide effort to support students at all levels. The university’s website introduces prospective students by way of the question, “Who are YOU called to be?” on their home page where prospective students can watch a related video.

In its Institutional Report, PLNU defines the meaning, quality and integrity of the degree in the

following way:

- The *meaning (purpose)* of the degree is linked to the university's understanding of vocation. The purpose of each degree is to prepare graduates to live out their calling and make a positive impact on the world around them.
- The *quality (excellence)* of the degree is continuously reviewed and improved through PLNU's robust assessment and program review process.
- The *integrity (coherence)* of the degree is the way its various aspects are woven together to prepare students to live out their calling. For traditional undergraduates, this includes a general education program that develops habits of mind; co-curricular activities that build leadership skills, shape character, and open doors to service; and a variety of high-impact practices in curricular programs that shape students as professionals, ethical people, and effective team members. For graduate students and adult degree completion students, the synthesis of curriculum and calling is intentionally woven into the coursework and faculty/student interactions.

In 2013, PLNU received a NetVUE (Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Experience) professional development grant from the Council of Independent Colleges that facilitated the expansion and integration of vocation into undergraduate education, with a special emphasis on the first- and second-year experiences. General education writing and co-curricular programming were modified. In addition, many senior capstone experiences have integrated the concept of vocation. PLNU addresses vocation differently for the adult learners in their Adult Degree Completion and graduate programs, through a focus on real-life applications of vocation.

Within the Assessment Wheel, many academic departments include a hyperlink to a graphic representation of the relationship between the meaning, quality and integrity of the degree and the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) competencies. In on-site discussions, faculty seem to be consistent in their understanding of the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree as it relates to the mission of the University; it was less clear how this is conveyed to students.

D. Component 4: Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation

PLNU has made significant progress in the assessment of student learning. The institution presents a well-developed and articulated three-year assessment cycle that focuses on Program Learning

Outcomes (PLOs) as well as an annual assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and the WSCUC five core competencies. The use of the PLNU Assessment Wheel encourages consistency across academic and co-curricular departments in areas assessed, supports the use of data in decision making across the enterprise, and has promoted transparency with regard to assessment results since the results are available on the PLNU assessment website (CFR 2.7). It is noted that the review process includes multiple sources of evidence, including evaluations within courses, capstone performance (when required), and standardized assessments at the University level, allowing for benchmarking (e.g., Educational Testing Service Proficiency Profile, National Survey of Student Engagement, Student Satisfaction Inventory).

The PLNU Assessment Wheel is a comprehensive approach to program assessment that ties together and clearly articulates the manner in which the institutional mission drives student learning outcomes as demonstrated through curriculum maps, the program assessment plan, the collection of evidence of student learning, and, ultimately, the manner in which the evidence of student learning is used to promote improved educational quality. Rounding out this assessment is a description of the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degrees (CFR 2.2). The Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC), made up of academic administrators and faculty, reviews the quality of data presented and the department's interpretation of the results. While program faculty are responsible for the assessment of their own programs and the resulting actions to improve student learning, each review is carefully vetted by the PARC and the results broadly disseminated via the assessment website. This process is used in both undergraduate and graduate programs, and specific examples reviewed suggest a robust and thoughtful process. (CFR 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4) These highly available outcomes suggest that the majority of the PLNU graduates meet the majority of the stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance. (CFR 2.6) Evidence is also presented demonstrating that assessment outcomes are used to change curriculum and update pedagogy (e.g., Kinesiology assessment data-athletic training program) and where there are identified areas in need of improvement (per core

competency summary document, quantitative reasoning in school of education; critical thinking in music), plans are in place to close the gap. Faculty, administration, and staff across the University are committed to this process and gave numerous examples throughout the AV of how these data are used in decision making regarding courses, programs, and resources.

General education assessment has continued to evolve, with the latest iteration occurring in 2012 when the WSCUC five core competencies were incorporated into the three institutional GELOs. There are slightly different learning outcomes and assessment processes for traditional undergraduate students and for students in the Adult Degree Completion (ADC) programs, given the number of transfer courses, especially in general education, for the latter group. There is significant data presented for GELO assessment for the traditional undergraduate students and evidence that these data are used to precipitate pedagogical changes. ADC programs are relatively new so there is very limited data on the GELO outcomes or actions; however, there is a plan in place to use the collected data in Spring 2017 as part of the program reviews of four ADC programs (CFR 2.2a). Undergraduate majors reviewed were of appropriate breadth and depth, and reinforce many of the concepts represented in the GELOs.

Addressing the Core Competencies

PLNU uses the General Education curriculum as the initial touchpoint for the Core Competencies. (CFR 2.2a) Oral and written communication are embedded in specific courses and mapped both to those competencies and to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's). The AV Team found that ETS tests are used to assess Information Literacy and Critical Thinking, using a representative sample of students in the first year and in the senior year. Additionally, librarians collaborate with faculty to provide information literacy instruction specific to the disciplines. Faculty in many disciplines at PLNU have added a Capstone course that is an opportunity to assess the integration of program learning outcome and core competencies.

There are several areas of opportunity for the institution in understanding student learning. The assessment of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) is not as consistently and robustly represented in

the assessment process as are the PLOs. Since the ILOs are most closely tied to mission, greater attention may need to be directed here in subsequent assessment cycles. (CFR 2.3) Out-of-class learning experiences (such as clinical work, service learning, and internships that receive credit), particularly at graduate levels, seem to be adequately resourced, developed, subject to appropriate oversight, and evaluated. The Division of Graduate and Professional Studies has helped to support these efforts. (CFR 2.3) Finally, as acknowledged by PLNU, although assessment of the impact of co-curricular programs has existed for more than a decade in the form of annual reports, the assessment of student learning and development outcomes is less well developed than that of academic programs. (CFR 2.11)

E. Component 5: Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation

PLNU does not have a clear definition of student success in relation to its mission, values and character, however, it uses four categories to monitor student success: “(1) Graduation and retention rates disaggregated by sub populations and demographic groups; (2) The achievement of student learning outcomes; (3) participation in high-quality learning activities that include high-impact practices such as internships, student research, and cross cultural experiences; and (4) student embodiment of the distinctive PLNU mission expressed in professional preparation, student engagement and alumni outcomes.” It is apparent through the multiple sources of evidence that PLNU not only accurately tracks but values student success. (CFR 1.2)

PLNU provided through both its institutional report and supporting documentation 15 years of retention and graduation data. Among 1st time freshman the one year retention rate improved from 81.3% in 2000 to 86% in 2015. Additionally, 1st time freshman graduation rates went from 52% in 2000 to 69.8% in 2012 (most recent data available). PLNU’s 6-year transfer student graduation rate is approximately 73%. However, there is a strong disparity among students who transfer in their junior year with a 3-year rate above 80% and freshman transfers at 36%-56% for the past few cohorts. The institution should be commended for its LEAP (Learning Experiences for Academic Progress) program

that serves “underprepared, first time freshman”. In comparison to a comparable non-LEAP sub group in 2015 LEAP students had a one year retention rate of 81.8% compared to the sub groups’ 64.7%. (CFR 2.10, 4.1)

The most recent graduation rates (2010) disaggregated by demographics showed some disparities among men and women, with women graduating at an average of 73.9% vs. men at 66.2%. Additionally, in 2010 Latino students graduated at a rate of 67.6%, African American students at 66.7% compared to White students who graduated at a rate of 71.1%. Asian American students graduated at a rate of 88.9% in 2010 compared to White students. (CFR 2.10, 4.1)

PLNU acknowledges disparities among its traditional undergraduate sub groups and has recently created an associate vice president for enrollment and retention to address these issues. PLNU has also incorporated several programs and initiatives to promote student success. In addition to the LEAP program, the institution has established a Diversity Council along with a Faculty Committee on Diversity, and the institution has included in its strategic plan a theme centered around “diversity and cross-cultural competence”. The institution has also used questions from the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities that “center on missional items related to spiritual formation of undergraduate students.” Through the utilization of these questions with students it has identified areas of strength such as faculty interactions outside of class and areas to improve to include the incorporation of faith in general education courses.

F. Component 6: Quality Assurance & Improvement: Program Review, Assessment, Use of Data and Evidence

Academic Program Review

PLNU regularly engages in a program review cycle for academic programs, and more recently co-curricular programs, and also regularly reflects on the effectiveness of this process. The review is comprehensive in terms of areas and data assessed, as required by WSCUC (CFR 2.7), and is the mechanism whereby resources needed to implement action steps for improving student learning and

other outcomes are identified and elevated by the Provost to the President's Administrative Cabinet for consideration in the next budget cycles. Because the review process has been revised several times (due to the complexity and time burden of previous approaches) the cycle time for review appears to vary by department. The institution may want to consider a shift to the common standard of five years or an even more frequent schedule, particularly for its graduate programs.

The commitment to a comprehensive and regular assessment of academic programs as described is a strength, suggesting a culture of continuous improvement (CFR4.3). There is appropriate Institutional Research support as shown by the data gathered for each program review (CFR 4.1). The institution presents evidence that the results of the assessment are tied to improvements in pedagogy, curricula, services, processes, and resources (CFR4.2). Faculty and leadership at all levels are engaged in the reviews through direct student assessment, departmental reviews, assessment committees, academic leadership reviews, and ultimately review of outcomes and resources by the President's Administrative Cabinet (CFR 4.3, 4.4, 4.6). However, the engagement of other stakeholders, including employers, practicum/internship/service learning supervisors, students, and alumni is less clear (CFR 4.5). The Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees reviews recommendations arising from the academic program reviews, especially as they are related to need for resources. Moreover, the Board has been very engaged in working with the university administration in considering the implication of changes taking place in the higher education environment and responding to these changes with strategic initiatives, such as the move to off-campus programs and blended programs to cater to adult learners. (CFR 4.6, 4.7)

As evidenced in the institutional materials reviewed, the program reviews have a well-defined and articulated process, present significant amounts of data and use multiple means of assessment both within courses/programs and using external benchmarks. Action steps for improvement are identified and documented in an MOU between the provost and the academic unit leader, which includes additional resources that may be needed. Several examples of the use of the reviews to make curricular

changes are presented and at least one example of increases in resources (space and faculty) was presented. At the time of the visit, not all programs had completed a program review for which an MOU had been developed. More progress in this area is expected as the process matures.

One significant shortcoming in the outcomes assessment for PLNU is the presentation of only aggregate data in the assessments. As the institution increases in ethnic/racial diversity, attracts more non-traditional students, and offers more delivery modalities (e.g., on-line; secondary sites), the ability to assess student success for key student groups and delivery models will enhance its ability to make more effective decisions regarding resources, curriculum, and pedagogy (CFR 2.10).

As noted in the Institutional Report, assessment of co-curricular programs and centers are less well developed than academic programs. This is identified by the institution as a long term, and still unresolved, challenge with regard to program review. In some cases, the co-curricular reports include large amounts of data, but they are only collected for first year students. There is a different set of data collected for alumni (e.g., Spiritual Development Assessment Data). Since these areas are so key to the institutional mission, they deserve further attention and development. In addition, there remains some unevenness in the quality of the assessment done by academic departments. Some are excellent, and while there are reports available for all departments, some are lacking in detail, supporting documentation, and possibly rigor. Moreover, as PLNU itself indicates, there is a lot of data involved in these reviews and timeliness in order to take actions may be of concern (CFR 2.11). These serve as other areas of opportunity for the institution program review process.

Institutional Research Capacity

As noted in its Institutional Report, PLNU created an Office of Institutional Research and hired a director for the office within the last four years. The intention is to improve the institution's ability to generate dependable and consistent data that are actionable and that supports decision-making. For the five years it has been in existence, Institutional Research has reported to the Vice Provost for

Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness who oversees the university-wide assessment efforts.

During the AV, the team confirmed that Institutional Research is an integral part of all assessment and university decision-making. (CFR 2.1, 4.2)

G. Component 7: Sustainability: Financial Viability, Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

As previously mentioned, PLNU has demonstrated financial responsibility both by maintaining a USDE Financial Responsibility Index composite score of 1.5 or greater as well as by maintaining a CFI score in the range of 2.8 through 6.0 during the last seven years. (CFR 3.4)

Although PLNU had successfully navigated the financial crisis, in 2012 the University realized that the higher education landscape was changing and that a new normal had emerged. Annual tuition increases in the range of 5% to 6%, which had been enjoyed by many higher education institutions for decades, would be difficult to attain, except for very selective institutions. Instead, tuition growth would most likely remain in the 3% to 4% range for the foreseeable future. The university began to closely examine its long-term budget assumptions. As a result of this analysis, PLNU determined that if PLNU made no changes in its business model, within six years the university would have an annual operating deficit of nearly \$11 million. Consequently, in 2012, the university leadership engaged its community in various planning efforts, resulting in a plan to strategically increase revenue and decrease costs. The plan involved filling the approximate \$11 million gap as follows:

- \$3.4 million increase in revenue by increasing its undergraduate population by approximately 300 FTE students, through the lease of the Liberty Station Conference Center.
- \$3.1 million in cost savings identified by prioritization process (approximately \$1.2 million from administrative areas and \$2 million from academic affairs). In the areas of academics, the savings were anticipated to come from phased retirements, faculty attrition, and curricular adjustments. Some of the identified changes in the academic programs included the following: phasing out of a limited number of academic programs, changes in the academic programs,

adjustments for efficiency in academic programs, general education changes and identifying strategies to improve efficiencies and increase external funding in order to reduce the support that is required from the university operating budget. The savings from administrative areas were identified to come from efficiency and cost savings from the administrative departments. Some of these changes included reducing staff overtime hours, extending replacement cycle of computers, and reductions of staffing outside of academic units.

- \$4.5 million annual increase in revenue by engaging in a strategic enrollment planning process, which identifies new sources of revenue. Examples of new sources of revenue include the following: Expanded summer school, increase in transfer students, 5th year MBA program, MS in Kinesiology, MA in Strategic Organizational Leadership, Doctorate in Nursing Practice, School of Education credentials, certificate in Software Engineering, Criminal Justice online program, and other programs. The increased revenue was forecasted over several years, with the programs becoming increasingly profitable by FY 2018-2019. (CFR 3.4) More than four years after the plan was developed in 2012, significant progress has been made as noted below.
- The \$3.4 million revenue target, resulting from increasing its undergraduate population, has been exceeded. Undergraduate enrollment increased by over 200 from 2,350 in fall 2012 to 2,579 in fall 2016. Fall 2016 tuition rate was approximately \$34,000, with estimated discount rate of 27%.
- Management informs that the initial \$3.1 million annual cost savings is an evolving target. The actual savings for FY 2015-2016 was approximately \$2.1m and the 2017-2018 savings target is approximately \$3 million.
- Management estimates that the initial target of \$4.5 million from new sources of revenue may increase to \$5 million. PLNU has seen a positive impact on the bottom line, which is evidenced

by the increases in enrollment in the following non-bachelor degree programs.

	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Adult Degree Completion (full-time student)				1	13
Adult Degree Completion (part-time student)				103	403
Graduate Degree (full-time student)	155	186	193	290	398
Graduate Degree (part-time student)	702	617	613	606	705

As noted above, after the Great Recession, PLNU began several initiatives to strengthen the long-term financial sustainability of the university. The positive results of these changes are shown in the following key numbers from the college's audited financial statements.

PLNU Key Financial Indicators (In thousands)						
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Compound Growth Rate
Net tuition	\$59,419	\$60,326	\$63,578	\$66,386	\$73,214	5.4%
Total revenue	83,980	87,922	93,520	96,436	102,782	5.2%
Total expense	(80,228)	(81,042)	(83,681)	(85,829)	(92,704)	3.7%
Other changes *	(3,481)	4,483	3,705	(522)	(2,649)	
Total change in net assets	\$271	\$11,363	\$13,544	\$10,085	\$7,429	129%
Change in net assets from operations-unrestricted	\$2,619	\$4,943	\$7,025	\$7,329	\$7,130	28.5%
Change in unrestricted net assets	(751)	\$7,885	\$10,191	\$12,272	\$5,535	
<i>* Includes net unrealized gains and losses on investment, trust, annuity and swap agreement liability adjustments</i>						

As can be see above, PLNU has had a healthy growth in both net tuition and total revenue. By managing its expenses, with growth in expense trailing growth in revenue, PLNU has been able to generate a positive total change in net assets (i.e. net income) for all of the five years reflected above. More importantly, PLNU has been able to maintain a positive change in operating unrestricted net assets (CFR 3.4).

H. Component 9: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

Since the last reaffirmation visit, PLNU has made impressive progress in maturing its culture of assessment by developing data for program learning outcomes, general education, and core competencies. The institution continues to further mature assessment of its co-curricular programs, a process that clearly focuses on the mission, vision and values of the University.

Observations made during previous interactions with WSCUC have raised concerns that the amount of energy and resources devoted to assessment at PLNU may not have realized a perceived positive ROI. Extensive efforts to refine the “Assessment Wheel” while engaging in campus and program expansion has drawn heavily upon the energy of faculty and administrators to the point that “PLNU recognizes that its last four years of intensive work and planning has created some level of fatigue on the part of faculty and staff,” (p.71 Self Study). During the Team’s visit to PLNU, faculty and staff were interviewed regarding this putative heavy assessment and planning burden. Responses were unanticipated and clear. Most faculty said that the detailed and regularized assessment process was now no longer a burden but has resulted in a sense of calm and certainty. The finely developed culture of the “Assessment Wheel” has resulted in an on-campus elevated confidence in their ability to collect and analyze assessment data around learning outcomes and that data are strategically used in decision-making--resulting in institutional improvements. The Team congratulates PLNU for this achievement; when assessment brings calm and assurance to a campus, students are likely to reap positive benefits.

PLNU’s recent planning efforts, as stated in the concluding remarks of the self-study, demonstrate that the University is capable of setting priorities and making clear decisions that impact the University’s future. From financial decisions to dealing with perceived threats, the institution’s strategic planning has set clear priorities for the future, which are consistent with its mission and passion to serve local and on campus communities. These priorities strategically focus on student success through academic planning that maximizes graduation rates, retention and curricular review.

Most importantly, the WSCUC visiting team appreciates PLNU’s commitment to issues of diversity.

The Team recognizes the challenge of achieving diversity among faculty and staff when rates of turnover are low. Currently, it is observed that 19.4% of full-time faculty and 16.5% of part time and adjunct faculty are diverse. Focus on diversity throughout the University is evidenced in diversity statements, policies and through co-curricular activities. Diversity in all dimensions of the campus will take time as well as concerted efforts. All indications ranging from Board members to students interviewed that PLNU's Christ-centered philosophy will guide its significant challenge to achieving its inclusiveness goals.

SECTION III – OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS AND DISTANCE EDUCATION REVIEW

Some description and analysis of PLNU's online and hybrid Graduate and Adult Degree Completion programs has been included in the broader discussions in Sections I and II of this report. While these programs are housed in multiple academic units, all of them are coordinated by the Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Services, who is also the Dean of the College of Extended Learning. This structure is fairly recent and has added a cohesive way to organize these programs; both kinds of programs are tailored to the needs of working adult students. Most graduate programs are hybrid programs, a combination of online and face-to-face experiences. PLNU has agreements with six of the regional community colleges to offer adult degree completion programs in specific fields.

The kind of information prospective graduate and adult degree completion students need is readily available on the website (i.e., expected completion time, format, location(s), units required to graduate, and cost per unit, course synopses, faculty information, and career possibilities). Information about Financial Aid and other Student Support Services is easy to navigate to. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are embedded after the program descriptions.

In September, the Team Assistant Chair spent a few hours at PLNU's Mission Valley campus. Because it was the first week of classes for the term, there were many opportunities for students to learn about academic and student support services as they entered the building. PLNU provided food and encouraged students to participate in chances to win prizes, most of which had the PLNU logo on them. After a tour of the facilities, she had an opportunity to observe a few classes for hybrid graduate programs in Education, Business, and Organizational Leadership at the Mission Valley site. She was able to talk to graduate students in the MBA program about how well they feel supported to learn and success. On the first day of the AV, the Provost gave the team a tour of the facilities used by the University at Liberty Station, also in San Diego, and only three miles from the main campus.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the campus visit and a review of Point Loma Nazarene University's accreditation history, Institutional Report, and supporting documents, the Team has developed the following commendations and recommendations.

A. Commendations

The Team commends PLNU for:

1. the institution's commitment to and articulation of its mission exemplified throughout faculty, staff, administration and students.
2. the progress that has been made in courageously restructuring the Board of Trustees to achieve independence to better address the strategic needs of the university in the 21st century.
3. the leadership of the institution, under the direction of President Brower and Provost Fulcher, for its strategic, transparent, and inclusive direction of the university.
4. critically and collaboratively reviewing its financial forecasts in light of the changing financial landscape of higher education and for developing a strategy to respond to these financial challenges, which has led to strengthening of its financial viability. These initiatives included expanding its traditional undergraduate population, engaging in a collaborative and comprehensive campus-wide cost prioritization process and a strategic enrollment planning process, and identifying significant revenue from new academic programs.
5. exemplifying strong faculty shared governance in institutional decision-making.
6. the creation of a Diversity Council with student representation, and intentionally creating student growth and support opportunities related to inclusion and diversity.
7. its robust assessment efforts, including establishing an Office of Institutional Research, providing for the extensive use of data by faculty, staff, and administrators for student success efforts and institutional decision-making.

B. Recommendations

The Team recommends that:

1. PLNU continue to apply its collective energy toward expanding the institution's culture of inclusion across the campus (students, staff, faculty, administration, and Board).
2. PLNU continue to enhance onboarding and providing professional development for adjunct faculty, particularly within graduate and adult degree completion programs.
3. PLNU continue to examine faculty policies and resources, including the new rank and tenure policy, to support scholarship and development to ensure faculty success.

APPENDICES

- A. Federal Compliance Forms
 - 1. Credit Hour Review
 - 2. Marketing and Recruitment Review
 - 3. Student Complaint Review
 - 4. Transfer Policy Review
- B. Off-Campus Locations Review
- C. Distance Education Review Form

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? The policy is located in undergraduate and graduate catalogs and from most syllabi.
	Comments: Undergraduate Catalog: Graduate Catalog:
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)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: PLNU indicates that staff not related to specific programs conduct periodic reviews of credit hours for courses and programs for accuracy and reliability.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Course schedules and syllabi show that they meet for the prescribed number of hours. Syllabi are available through the assessment wheel: http://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/
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? 6
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? both
	What degree level(s)? Graduate
	What discipline(s)? Nursing, Biology, Ministry, Education)
	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
	Comments: Academic policies are either included within the syllabus or linked electronically from all syllabi reviewed. Syllabi are available through the assessment wheel: http://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 6
	What kinds of courses? Private Music (Violin, Trombone), Labs, Fieldwork
	What degree level(s)? □□□□□□□□□□
	What discipline(s)? Music, Kinesiology, Education, Counseling (no syllabi available)
	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
	Comments: Syllabi are available through the assessment wheel: http://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 8
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Undergraduate, Graduate, Adult Degree Completion
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? What discipline(s)? Business, Chemistry, Education, Kinesiology, Music, Integrated Studies with an Emphasis in Education
	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: Information in the catalog is very clear in terms of requirements for each of the programs. Catalog and other information is available on the website.

Review Completed By: [Paula S. Krist](#)
Date: [September 27, 2017](#)

2. MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

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

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: PLNU Admissions counselors' pay is not incentivized by recruitment of students. They are not offered commissions, bonus payment, merit salary adjustments or promotions based on number of students recruited.
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Graduation rates (4, 5 and 6 years) are available on the website. Projected length of time to degree are presented for all graduate programs. Undergraduate Tuition Cost is easy to access online and straightforward. Overall costs of Graduate Degree programs are difficult to find. Per credit costs and fees are listed on the website and in the catalog.
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Information about types of jobs that undergraduates are qualified for varies by program, with some giving only student anecdotes (Humanities - Journalism, and Modern Languages) and others links to professional associations (Mathematics) Unable to locate graduate employment data, just a few testimonials. (CFRs 2.13, 4.5)

*§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: [Cynthia Baum](#)

Date: [August 10, 2017](#)

3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

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

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Is so, where? The policy and procedures are in the graduate and undergraduate catalogs
	Comments:
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, please describe briefly: There is a student consumer complaint procedure on the home page of the website. "...If you have a complaint regarding Point Loma Nazarene University you may present those concerns to the University Consumer Complaint Compliance Officer at infovpaa@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2568. The Compliance officer will provide you with a written explanation of the campus process for addressing your particular complaints and answer any questions you may have to assure you a fair process. Link to grievance process not working 10/6/2017
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? The records are maintained by the Provost and the Deans.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly:
	Comments:

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

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

Review Completed By: [Cynthia Baum](#)

Date: [August 10, 2017](#)

4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

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

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publically available? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? The policy is located in the online school catalog: https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=28&navoid=1763&hl=Transfer+Credit&returno=search
	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? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: The PLNU Transfer Credit Policy is easily accessible. It provides clear information about the process for having possible transfer credit evaluated, and criteria for what types of credit will be accepted.

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

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

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: [Kristina Lopez-Smith](#)

Date: [October 7, 2017](#)

B. OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS REVIEW-TEAM REPORT APPENDIX

Institution: [Point Loma Nazarene University](#)
Type of Visit: [Accreditation Visit](#)
Name of reviewer/s: [Paula S. Krist](#)
Date/s of review: [September 14, 2017](#)

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all visits in which off-campus sites were reviewed¹. One form should be used for each site visited. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report.

1. Site Name and Address

[Point Loma Mission Valley Campus](#)
[4007 Camino del Rio South](#)
[San Diego, CA, 92108](#)

2. Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a branch campus standalone location, or satellite location by WSCUC)

[PLNU has two branch campuses, one in Bakersfield, CA and the other in Mission Valley, San Diego, CA. The institution has partnerships with a large number of community colleges in the San Diego area. They are Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, and Southwestern College. In addition, in 2013, PLNU started leasing rooms for classroom space in the nearby Liberty Station Conference center, where it houses the School of Nursing and offers some graduate programs.](#)

[The graduate programs offered in Mission Valley are the MBA, MA Educational Leadership, MA Special Education, Master of Ministry, MA Teaching, MA in Strategic Organizational Leadership, and \(as of Fall 2017\) MA in Clinical Counseling. Most of the programs are offered in a hybrid format, with both face-to-face and distance learning expectations.](#)

Table 1 shows the enrollment trends overall for online and hybrid graduate and adult degree completion programs, which are housed at the branch campuses and community colleges.

Table 1

	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Adult Degree Completion (full-time student)				1	13
Adult Degree Completion (part-time student)				103	403
Graduate Degree (full-time student)	155	186	193	290	398
Graduate Degree (part-time student)	702	617	613	606	705

¹ See Protocol for Review of Off-Campus Sites to determine whether and how many sites will be visited.

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<i>For a recently approved site.</i> Has the institution followed up on the recommendations from the substantive change committee that approved this new site?	PLNU has offered courses at this site for many years. The recent change has been to formalize Graduate & Extended Studies under one dean.	
<i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1)	PLNU develops programs at its branch campus with close adherence to its mission and to service to the community.	
<i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)	When students start their courses each year, there is a welcoming event with faculty and staff that involves the opportunity to win items with the PLNU logo. The values are stenciled on the walls, and the artwork reflects the mission and values.	
<i>Quality of the Learning Site.</i> How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5)	The site is much like a regular college building, with classrooms. Clinical Counseling students have practica and on-site experiences in the building next door through and arrangement with a counseling center.	
<i>Student Support Services.</i> What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)	This site provides personnel to assist students with registration, financial aid, counseling, and other student support services. The start of each term provides a welcome that includes an opportunity for students to become familiar with support services. There is also a prominent link on the main page for programs that says Student Support and links to a list with descriptions and contact information. (https://www.pointloma.edu/graduate-studies/financial-aid-student-support)	
<i>Faculty.</i> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty is involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)	Many courses are taught by full time or part time faculty. Adjunct faculty are typically regional professionals with expertise in a specific subject.	
<i>Curriculum and Delivery.</i> Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1-2.3, 4.6)	Online and hybrid courses are developed by academic faculty collaborating with instructional designers from the Office of Instructional Design. Each program has a specific instructional designer assigned to the program and this designer works with all faculty designing courses for the program.	
<i>Retention and Graduation.</i> What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)	Because the programs are graduate programs, completion data are most meaningful.	
<i>Student Learning.</i> How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)	Graduate programs are expected to follow assessment and reporting in the same manner as face-to-face courses. They are all scheduled for Academic Program Review (APR) in the next two years. ADC programs are assessed as their departments complete their regular assessment cycles and APR. Tests are given face-to-face.	

<p><i>Quality Assurance Processes:</i> How are the institution’s quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)</p>	<p>No modifications have been needed for assessing these programs. The same assessment process that is used for traditional programs is followed by the online and hybrid programs to ensure quality.</p>	<p>For the three programs that have traditional on-site programs, MBA, BA in Organizational Management, MA in Organizational Leadership, be sure to compare student outcomes and the data become available.</p>
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3. Nature of the Review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

Prior to the onsite visit, the website for each program and, more broadly, for the entire College of Extended Studies was examined. This included a large number of Adult Degree Completion programs. The Assessment Wheel items, including student learning outcomes, and syllabi with course learning outcomes were examined for all programs except the MA Clinical Counseling, which has not yet posted its assessment information at that site.

PLNU Programs that use a fully on-line or hybrid delivery housed within a specific organizational structure that is completely focused on the adult learner. The Division is headed by a Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Services, who is also the Dean of the College of Extended Learning. He was available at the onsite visit and for follow-up questions.

The on-site review of the Mission Valley campus coincided with the first week of classes for the graduate and adult degree completion (ADC) students. The environment was very welcoming with balloons, pizza and cookies available for students. There was a raffle with prizes of PLNU clothing and other items that promoted a Representatives of all student support services, including financial aid, were present to orient new students to what services are available to them and to provide information on how to obtain support.

Review Completed By: Paula S. Krist
Date: October 13, 2017

C. Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: **Point Loma Nazarene University**

Type of Visit: Accreditation Visit

Name of reviewer/s: Paula S. Krist

Date/s of review: October 10-13, 2017

1. *Programs and courses reviewed (please list)*

a. Graduate Programs:

- MA, Education (hybrid)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (online)
- MS, Kinesiology (online)
- MBA (online)
- Master of Ministry (online)
- MA, Organizational Leadership (hybrid)

b. Undergraduate Program:

- BA, Organizational Management

c. Courses reviewed:

- EDU420/610 Methods of Teaching Reading and Writing
- EDU602 Foundations of Special Education
- CMI635 Christian Scripture
- BUS670 Financial Management, BUS 695 Strategic Management

2. *Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)*

Table 1 shows the enrollment trends overall for online graduate and adult degree completion programs.

Table 1: PLNU Online Degree Programs			
Majors & Degree Levels	Year Initially Recognized by WSCUC	Fall 2017 Enrollment	Percent of Total Fall 2017 Graduate Enrollment
Master of Business Administration	2017	19	1.4%
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)	2017	12	0.9%
MS, Kinesiology	2017	23	1.7%
MA, Organizational Leadership	2015	43	3.3%
BA, Organizational Management	2016	14	2.9%*

*percent of Adult Degree Completion enrollment

Figure 3: PLNU Hybrid Degree Programs			
Majors & Degree Levels	Year Initially Offered as Hybrid	Fall 2017 Enrollment	Percent of Total Fall 2017 Graduate Enrollment
MA, Education (3 specializations)	**	288	21.9%
MS, Biology	2006	18	1.3%
Master in Ministry	2016	15	1.1%
MA, Special Education	**	46	3.5%
MA, Teaching	**	463	35.2%

**The coursework in education has evolved over time to include more online learning as a supplement to face to face interaction so it is difficult to pinpoint a time when the programs formally became “hybrid”. Student still take classes in a variety of modalities, online, hybrid, face to face, and clinicals in classrooms.

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

The Team reviewed a variety of program and course level documentation for PLNU’s online programs, which are on line and in their submitted materials prior to the visit. This included policy manuals, sample syllabi (where available), assessment summaries, enrollment, retention and graduation data (as appropriate). At the time of the review, none of the online or hybrid programs have undergone Program Review since they started being offered in these modalities.

PLNU Programs that use a fully on-line or hybrid delivery housed within a specific organizational structure that is completely focused on the adult learner. The Division is headed by a Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Services, who is also the Dean of the College of Extended Learning. He was available at the onsite visit and for follow-up questions.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFRs to assure comprehensive consideration)	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<i>Fit with Mission.</i> How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?	Faculty and students use Instructure’s Campus Learning Management System (LMS) to manage course assignments, chat rooms for class discussion and faculty-student interaction.	
<i>Connection to the Institution.</i> How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?	Some of the primarily online programs and all of the hybrid programs have a requirement of a face-to-face experience at one of the campuses. Online programs require class interaction through discussion and group work.	
<i>Quality of the DE Infrastructure.</i> Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	The Campus LMS is conducive to faculty-student and student peer interaction. Education courses use Task Stream for collection of student artifacts for the credential programs.	

<p><i>Student Support Services:</i> What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?</p>	<p>PLNU provides all student support services to students enrolled in on-line and hybrid courses. No data are available at this time to demonstrate the effectiveness of the services.</p> <p>There is a link on the Graduate studies page to Student Support. (https://www.pointloma.edu/graduate-studies/financial-aid-student-support)</p>	<p>This is an area that will need to be monitored carefully as the hybrid and online programs expand.</p>
<p><i>Faculty.</i> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?</p>	<p>Courses in the on-line and hybrid programs are primarily taught by regular, full-time faculty or experienced adjunct faculty with long relationships with PLNU.</p> <p>Faculty are provided course development instruction and assistance.</p>	
<p><i>Curriculum and Delivery.</i> Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)</p>	<p>Online and hybrid courses are developed by academic faculty collaborating with instructional designers from the Office of Instructional Design. Each program has a specific instructional designer assigned to the program and this designer works with all faculty designing courses for the program.</p>	
<p><i>Retention and Graduation.</i> What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions' online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?</p>	<p>Most of the fully online programs are fairly new. The College of Extended Learning will monitor program completion rates, which are more relevant to graduate programs.</p>	<p>PLNU will want to compare online and on ground course results to determine if students are learning equally in the online environment.</p>
<p><i>Student Learning.</i> How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?</p>	<p>Hybrid courses have face-to-face tests. Online and hybrid courses have assignments that are comparable to those that would be expected in courses offered in a traditional format.</p> <p>There are only three programs that exist in both Modalities: the MBA, MA in Organizational Leadership, and the BA in Organizational Management. Comparisons are planned after enough data are available for the online programs.</p>	
<p><i>Contracts with Vendors.</i> Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on <i>Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations</i>?</p>	<p>No vendors are contracted. PLNU is evolving their own capacity for offering online and hybrid programs, particularly at the graduate level and for Adult Degree Completion programs.</p>	
<p><i>Quality Assurance Processes:</i> How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?</p>	<p>No modifications have been needed for assessing these programs. The same assessment process that is used for traditional programs is followed by the online and hybrid programs to ensure quality.</p>	

Review Completed By: [Paula S. Krist](#)

Date: October 3, 2017