

WASC Report from Previous (1995) Accreditation Review

[Full Report](#) [PDF]

Summary

[Overview from Letter](#)

[Educational Quality](#)

[Faculty Issues](#)

[Mission Planning Resources](#)

[Support Services & Campus Climate](#)

Overview From Letter

GE:

Need to integrate the general education program more effectively with professional courses.

Need to link general education goals and outcomes more directly to the departmental review process.

Assessment:

Share the good practices already occurring within the University more broadly to assist departments and others to use assessment techniques and data more effectively.

Augment existing assessment efforts with an emphasis on learning-outcome assessments. The program review process is a particularly appropriate place for such assessments.

Diversity:

Implement AS resolution to support faculty and staff to become more effective in multicultural education and student support.

Technology and Library Development:

Commission supports direction taken by SJSU to make technology (distance ed, incorporating technology in the curriculum) a major priority for the future.

Faculty:

Commission supports SJSU plans to increase the percentage of full-time faculty over the next few years.

Resources:

Consideration should be given to how SJSU will allocate new revenues (from entrepreneurial strategies) to both reward the entrepreneurial initiatives and support University priorities outside the sponsoring unit.

Educational Quality

Introduction

Assessment of student learning weak. While much assessment going on, little focuses on outcomes (exception is writing area).

Significant attention to diversity as a resource and objective for student learning needed.

General Education

Lack of integration of at least some of the GE courses with the professional courses offered by the majors.

A meaningful assessment of the GE program is not completely in place.

It is important to augment existing exit surveys with learning-outcome assessment in order to gauge the overall effectiveness of the curriculum.

Program Planning & Review

Need to fully implement revised program review/planning. Should provide timely feedback to the departments and that feedback should include evaluative responses from all institutional levels: department, consultant, college curriculum committee, dean, university curriculum committee, and academic VP.

Assessment

Academic departments make noticeably infrequent use of student outcomes assessment that flow from program objectives.

Team recommends that the institution press faculty in departments to make assessments of actual student learning a formal and consistent part of the program review/planning process.

Review of GE assumed to be the sum of the review of the individual courses. This current assessment of GE program does not establish that students necessarily possess the desired skills and attributes.

The current and separate review processes for the GE program and department programs do not adequately develop the relationship between the two components of a student's experience.

Team recommends that the program planning guidelines be modified to require departmental programs to identify those student learning outcomes of the GE program that are 1) important knowledge and skills for new majors, and 2) that are consistent with the goals of department programs and will be further developed through the major.

Structural problems need to be addressed. New department level assessments supposed to be in place by 92 and begin analyzing data by 92-93 - team saw no evidence that it had occurred. Limited resources and downsizing have precluded all but preliminary analysis of data. Unclear if departments and faculty will be able to use data to substantiate program effectiveness.

Team recommends SJSU find a way for departments to analyze data they have gathered in order to better examine and document program quality.

Many different types of assessment in operation (WST, grad & senior surveys, ..). There does not seem to be an effective feedback loop that returns assessment data to the faculty.

Team recommends that SJSU find a way to coordinate and disseminate assessment information across departments and colleges and a way to assist departments to create a culture of evidence.

Team recommends that SJSU review collected assessment data to determine what is useful, what is missing, and what must be done.

Team recommends that specific help be given to those departments which are not doing an appropriate job of assessing student outcomes.

Planning for Innovation and Self Renewal

Team Asks: Is there a vision that guides innovation? Are there opportunities for innovative ideas to bubble-up as easily as they are handed down? Is there a mechanism to critically analyze the innovations that have been implemented? How connected are innovative ideas with the strategic planning process?

â€¢ *Team recommends that the University aggressively follow through on AS resolution to develop seminars to increase faculty skills in multicultural education. Staff should also have the opportunity to participate.*

â€¢ *The team endorses the effort of the campus to draw closer to the community it serves and recommends that greater attention be given to include broader segments of community - especially minority and other underrepresented groups.*

â€¢ *The team supports the integration of instructional resources, video, voice, data, and telecommunication services and support systems to the extent they assist faculty and benefit students in teaching/learning process.*

â€¢ *The team supports the concept of academic integration of the continuing education function while cautioning against a totally decentralized CE program.*

Diversity as an Educational Challenge

The current required cultural pluralism course in GE both reflects and contributes to the unfocused stage of diversity thinking at SJSU.

Ethnicity is correlated with perception of campus climate at SJSU. African Americans seem especially disenchanting.

â€¢ *Team recommends that consideration of ethnic diversity in the curriculum be broadened beyond the current focus in the cultural pluralism requirement.*

Student Perceptions vs. Educational Goals

â€¢ *Institution must find ways to better ensure effective connections between the programs designed by faculty and studentsâ€™ actual educational experiences (quality of experiences).*

Team asks: How are students oriented to the institution? Does each student come to feel part of a lively educational community within the larger institution. How can institution ensure that each student is effectively advised? How can the divide between GE and major be bridged? Are students working together within cooperative educational groups? Are there unintended barriers within departments to inclusion and cross-cultural participation?

Finding of campus climate survey should be made public and discussed.

Both the colleges and departments offer as yet undeveloped possibilities for defining educational homes within the institution - should be further developed.

Sources suggest that students in particular ethnic groups feel silenced in their classes, including those in their major.

Much of the advising about GE technical - need more educational advising - help students make good choices.

Students poorly informed of importance of WST and/or about times to take.

Colleges should address the challenge of effective advising (Business applauded)

With a conspicuous lack of diversity among department chairs, departments may need external assistance in flagging and examining local climate issues.

Team recommends that any reorganization of academic support structures be accompanied by a change in the definition of mainstream.

Faculty Issues

Faculty Governance

Team struck by the great amount of time that faculty devote to committee work despite what may be described as an existing workload overload.

Some claim the Senate's role in budgeting more symbolic than tangible.

Faculty felt conventional mechanisms bypassed when distance learning introduced.

Under-represented faculty expressed belief that their concerns more likely to be ignored than represented in University decision making.

Minority faculty reported feeling that the environment does not help them achieve their professional goals.

Team suggests 1) streamline committee structure so faculty spend less time, but, more directly impact governance, 2) invite appropriate segments of the faculty to make recommendations to improve faculty participation in governance, 3) SJSU vies governance as an evolving issue.

Faculty Workload

Some units have resources to address workload. Team cautions that not all units have equal resources or flexibility to support faculty.

Minority faculty felt that their guidelines for tenure are "Do everything, twice as much, twice as well".

Team suggests SJSU initiate a systematic effort to ameliorate faculty overload. One model - establish a task force to examine the roles and functions of probationary faculty.

ARTP Review and Mentoring of Junior Faculty

â€¢ SJSU has undertaken praiseworthy efforts to streamline the ARTP process. The team supports considering going even further, e.g., to reduce periodicity and/or levels of review.

The self study reports that the university has a serious program to mentor junior faculty, but specific supporting examples are elusive.

â€¢ The team recommends that SJSU find a way - perhaps through ITL - to help departments offer mentoring experiences which are more consistent across the institution. This mentoring might acquaint probationary faculty with how evaluative criteria are assessed across the multiple levels of review.

â€¢ A range of under-represented groups among the faculty regard the campus climate - including the ARTP process - as non-supportive. SJSU must move to deal with this perception.

Mission, Planning, and Resources

Mission

â€¢ The team recommends that the university develop mechanisms to reinforce to its various publics the institution's determination to continue to offer educational opportunities to the students it is required to serve.

â€¢ While the team commends the efforts of the university to communicate its decisions and processes to the campus, it recommends that further attempts be made to include the views and seek responses from the widest possible constituency in the future.

â€¢ The team recommends that the University develop mechanisms to ensure that the mission statements from the various professional schools and other units be analyzed to ensure that they are, in fact, consonant with the larger mission.

â€¢ Schools and colleges should examine the breadth of their vision, especially in relation to previously underserved populations in the area.

Planning and Effectiveness

Despite communication efforts, there was no general campus awareness of the Strategic Planning Task Force's process or results.

â€¢ The team recommends that efforts continue to inform the faculty and staff about the importance of strategic planning.

â€¢ The team recommends that specific plans be developed to make planning an ongoing process.

Resources

While the strategic planning exercise could be said to have developed some funding priorities, justifications of these allocation decisions are not being made in terms of the strategic plan as part of a budget process. What is missing is a greater sense of accountability of resource decisions to the strategic plan. One of the major blocks is the number of allocation mechanisms now being used.

â€¢ The team suggests that the university continue with its comprehensive budgeting direction, its use of projections, and its benchmarking projects. This information could be used to look more carefully and the effect of the increase of market-driven resource allocation decision making on less market-advantaged units and central units and to continue to develop mechanisms to protect and foster these areas.

Responses to Funding Reductions

â€¢ The team recommends that the University reinforce the informal rewards for creativity.

â€¢ The team recommends that the new financial projection system become a cornerstone of a culture of anticipation and scenario development.

The institution has been too busy reacting to the last crisis to develop contingency responses to the next.

Lack of Resources

â€¢ The team recommends that the University look for ways to reduce the uncertainty of resource levels that are within its ability to control.

Earlier decisions on enrollment levels and other allocation formulas may relieve some of this uncertainty.

Athletics and Resources

â€¢ The team suggests looking more closely at the possible risks (joining WAC) and develop contingency plans on how best to respond. Plans should ensure that the financial integrity of the institution be preserved and that the gender equity settlement be unharmed.

â€¢ The team recommends that the University develop a financial model which lays out the secondary costs and benefits of athletics such that the level of debate on this questions can be more inclusive and based more on any data and assumptions that are available.

External Relations

â€¢ SJSU should continue to look for areas of synergy with its many neighbors.

â€¢ SJSU must be willing to expend upfront dollars to build for its future. Fundraising will cost money. Benchmarks should be provided for measuring results of fundraising efforts. Benchmarks should help University community understand progress compared to the amount of institutional dollars expended.

â€¢ University should take a pro-active role in informing the citizenry of the consequences of shrinking budgets and increased enrollment pressures. It must include information to help the public better understand the trade offs required in a situation where enrollment and budgetary pressures lead to difficult decisions being made.

Support Services and Campus Climate

Campus Climate

There is an attitude expressed that there is a lot of talk about diversity but nothing is being done.

Work with underrepresented students and their particular needs must be seen as part of the mainstream work done at SJSU

There were consistent expressions of concern regarding the lack of people of color and women at the higher, decision making levels of the University, particularly at the senior and management/department head level of the administration.

Team heard concerns that minority staff were systematically passed over for promotion, that minority staff are not mentored nor set on career paths as some white staff are.

â€¢ The team recommends that the University move aggressively to establish and promote a culture of communication, collaboration, cooperation, and trust so that all SJSU community members feel they are full participants. The university needs to explore the way diversity is defined and redefine their notion of mainstream.

â€¢ The president should broaden his base to reach students. Although the associated students may be the formal voice of the students, it is not the only voice.

Services to Disabled Students

Considering the budgetary climate, the team commends the institution and encourages it to continue to improve its services and support to this constituency.

Staff

Communication between staff and management must be improved. Staff need to feel that they have input into decision making processes and can make decisions about their day to day functions. SJSU should develop a system of structured and regular communications with staff and vigorous efforts should be taken to ensure that the pathways of communications and input established are safe and open.

Information Technology

While decentralization of many aspects of the University is to be applauded, the infrastructure to manage the technology required for instruction, research and operations, must be designed centrally.

Faculty connection to library and other computing resources is essential for a instruction and professional development.

SJSU should consider making the implementation of information technology on of the institution's top priorities. Support for the information technology plan must come from the leadership of the institution as well as from the user community, with particular emphasis on faculty.

Plans proposed for a new library building include the concept of a University Information Center which will incorporate and emphasize new technologies.

The plan integrates the library, the IRC, information systems and computing , and the television network.

The team recommends that the planning of the new library, which integrates all of the academic technology functions, continues, and thus enables the full integration of technology into SJSU academic programs.