The University of California, Riverside (UCR) benefitted greatly from the more than four years it has spent preparing and executing its Proposal for [Reaffirmation of] Accreditation, which involved the study of three Special Themes as its main approach to the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER). This EER Report is the second in the reaccreditation process and is structured according to the elements required in the WASC Handbook of Accreditation 2008. The Integrative Component\(^1\) provides a reflective summary of this Report. Copies of other UCR accreditation documents and formal WASC responses to them are found at UCR’s WASC website, http://wasc.ucr.edu.

Section 1. A description of the Educational Effectiveness approach. Institutions are to provide background descriptions and analyses of how they approach Educational Effectiveness through their own intentional system of quality assurance and improvement. This part of the Report is intended to provide the team and Commission with the basic context for examining Educational Effectiveness at the institution. This section should also serve the institution by providing an opportunity to inventory the scope and effectiveness of the institution’s processes for maintaining and improving educational quality.

The institution should broadly describe:
- a) the design and approaches the institution takes to assure quality in teaching and learning;
- b) the kinds of evidence of learning it collects; and
- c) the way in which such evidence is used to support further inquiry and improvement.

Under UCR’s system of shared governance, educational effectiveness is the shared responsibility of the academic senate and the administration\(^2\). Academic Senate committees\(^3\) and administrative offices and units\(^4\) are charged with collecting various kinds of assessment data, evaluating those data, recommending actions, and implementing them.

At its core, the faculty, teaching assistants, and academic advisors are the “foot soldiers” in fostering educational effectiveness on campus. Traditionally the faculty, with the help of teaching assistants, stimulate academic interest, assign and evaluate homework, administer and score exams, and assign course grades. The departmental and college/school academic advisors monitor student progress, suggest programs of study, and suggest remediation and/or intervention where appropriate.

\(^1\) See Section 6, pp 41-45.
\(^2\) For the formal statement of duties, powers and privileges of the Academic Senate, as set forth in the University of California Regents’ Standing Order 105.2, see Appendix B – Supplemental Information for the EER Report (p. B-1).
\(^3\) See http://senate.ucr.edu/senate_site/index.php?action=committee for a listing of Academic Senate committees. Key committees for educational effectiveness are the Graduate Council, the Committee on Educational Policy, the Committee on Courses, and the Executive Committees of the individual schools and colleges.
\(^4\) Those involved in educational effectiveness are primarily the Office of Academic Planning and Budget, the Registrar’s Office, the Graduate Division, the Student Success Steering Committee, the Office of Undergraduate Education, the Office of Instructional Development, College and School Dean’s Offices (including Offices of Student Academic Affairs), the Office of Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and the offices of individual academic departments and programs.
However, these core activities are supported and regulated by a variety of educational effectiveness processes. The campus-wide student evaluation of teaching has existed for 35 years; it was preceded by department-based student evaluation of teaching programs, some of which persist in parallel with the campus-wide program. The evaluations provide feedback to faculty for use in improving teaching and learning and play a key role in the faculty merit and promotion process. The Scholarship of Teaching Seminar Series provides faculty with assistance in improving teaching and learning and exposes them to new approaches and strategies. New teaching technologies, such as “flex” classrooms facilitate greater interaction among students and between students and faculty. The Academy of Distinguished Teachers serves as a general resource to the faculty on best practice in teaching. The office of Undergraduate Education provides grants to faculty for innovative approaches to teaching and learning.\(^5\)

The departments and programs set the curricula and define and deliver the courses. But establishment of courses and degree programs and any significant subsequent changes must be approved by the executive committee of the department’s respective school or college. Next, approval by the Academic Senate’s Committee on Courses, in the case of courses; the Committee on Educational Policy, in the case of undergraduate curricula; or the Graduate Council, in the case of graduate curricula is required. Finally, the changes must then be approved by the Riverside Division of the Academic Senate.

Program review is another key way in which the quality of educational effectiveness is assured. Evaluation of academic programs is a cooperative effort between the Academic Senate and the administration with the focus on the educational effectiveness of the individual programs. Undergraduate programs are reviewed regularly by the Academic Senate Committee on Educational Policy, assisted by the administrative office of Undergraduate Education. Graduate programs are reviewed regularly by the Academic Senate Graduate Division, assisted by the administrative office of the Graduate Division. Results of reviews are shared with deans and the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost, to inform the processes of resource allocation, where appropriate.\(^6\)

Each level of this review process has authority to insist on corrective action when problems with courses or curricula are noted. Most specifically, the external review process for undergraduate programs by the Committee on Educational Policy and for graduate programs by the Graduate Council involve recommendations to the respective departments that require corrective action by the departments, along with follow-up reports. In addition, some of the recommendations may be directed toward the deans and their staff in the college offices of student academic affairs and to the Graduate Division in the case of graduate program reviews.

As an additional quality assurance mechanism for educational effectiveness, the campus has devoted extensive effort this year to developing learning outcomes, assessment methods, and multi-year assessment plans for the undergraduate majors in the College of Humanities, Arts and

\(^5\) For further discussion of such projects or activities, see Section 2, Undergraduate Theme (pp 7-13).

\(^6\) The review processes were discussed in UCR’s Preparatory Review Report and are detailed in this Report in Section 2, Graduate Theme (pp 19-25) and in Section 3 (pp 34-36) and in Appendix A, Item (5) (A-5 to A-7).
Social Sciences (CHASS) and the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (CNAS). Learning outcomes and assessment measures were established in almost all undergraduate majors at this time and will assure and improve educational effectiveness for the undergraduate programs in the two colleges. Formal learning outcomes assessment is also required in the professional programs in the Bourns College of Engineering and the A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management. Learning outcomes assessment is explicitly required by the Academic Senate Committee on Educational Policy in its reviews of undergraduate programs.\(^7\)

In addition, the campus sometimes establishes special committees and work groups to address specific projects and opportunities regarding educational effectiveness. Examples include the Student Success Task Force, the Student Success Steering Committee, the Learning Outcomes Assessment Advisory Committee, the Academic Advising Task Force, and the Campus Vitality Committee. The activities of these committees and work groups were discussed in UCR’s Preparatory Review Report and/or are discussed in this Report. Special committees are sometimes transformed into standing committees to address ongoing issues or programs.

A wide variety of data are collected and analyzed regarding teaching and learning, including graduation and retention rates for groups of students, the effectiveness of curricular innovations, the learning gains of students, and similar information. Significant modifications are made in academic and co-curricular programs in response to these analyses.\(^8\)

Through their collaborative efforts the Academic Senate and the administration regularly assess and attempt to improve educational effectiveness on the campus. Their quality assurance processes function at several levels and in a variety of ways to increase educational effectiveness at UCR.

Section 2. Significant Engagement and Analysis of Educational Effectiveness. As part of the Educational Effectiveness Review, each institution is expected to engage the issue of Educational Effectiveness in depth. The institution is expected to move well beyond description of activities to analysis of the evidence in its Data Portfolio, reflections on how well the institution's quality assurance processes are working, and ways that those processes have led to further improvement. In addition, the Educational Effectiveness Review should provide an occasion for engagement of the institution's constituencies, especially its faculty, to further its understanding of the results of its educational effectiveness and to lead to specific recommendations for improvement. The institution is expected to work with evidence of educational results and student learning as a major part of the Educational Effectiveness Report.

The concerns of this section are addressed in the three special themes studied by UCR as part of its Educational Effectiveness Review. The results of these studies are reported below.

\(^7\) For further discussion of learning outcomes assessment, see Section 2, Undergraduate Theme (pp 4-6) and Appendix A, item (5) (pp A-5 to A-7), item (6) (pp A-7 to A-8), and item (13) (pp A-14 to A-17).

\(^8\) Examples and specific details are presented in the discussion of the themes in Section 2, below; discussion of data analysis is found in Section 5, pp 36-41, and in the responses to the concerns of the last WASC Visiting Team, presented in Appendix A, Item (1) (p A-1), Item (4) (ppA-2 to A-5), Item (7) (pp A-8 to A-9), and Item (11) (pp A-11 to A-12).