which members of the campus community are involved in and committed to the assessment of student learning, through sponsorship of special workshops and visiting consultants and reports on successful campus assessment programs.

Early in the process of planning for reaccreditation the campus identified the Special Themes approach as the most productive Educational Effectiveness Report model, especially since the Special Themes could be linked to recently completed academic planning and enrollment management task force efforts and reports. The Educational Effectiveness Subcommittee will conduct a comprehensive study of three Special Themes.

The identification and definition of the three themes (see below) resulted from feedback regarding iterative postings of possible Special Themes topics on the campus reaccreditation website, discussion of possible Special Themes at a campus retreat, and discussion and evaluation of the Special Themes by the WASC Steering Committee and the subcommittees. All three Special Themes extend recent campus planning efforts and task forces and follow up on the recommendations of these task forces. The Special Themes represent the issues of greatest educational concern to the campus, as discussed under Section **1. Institutional Context Statement**, above. All of the Special Themes will contribute to the culture of evidence and related learning; both components of the third Special Theme focus particularly on student learning.

The three Special Themes are as follows:

(1) Learning within a Campus Culture of Diversity

The campus has a long history of commitment to high achievement by a diverse student body. The goals of this study are to articulate, measure and evaluate learning outcomes within a diverse undergraduate student body, so the campus might play a leadership role in higher education as a model for incorporating diversity into a research university setting. The focus is on learning about diversity as well as the learning process in a diverse environment. The study would include such dimensions of diversity as ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, economic, English as a Second Language, parental education, and learning styles. It would include increasing the degree to which members of the campus community develop better understanding of the religions, cultural histories, sexual orientations, and other cultural dimensions of other groups and devising ways of assisting members of the campus community to bridge cultural differences. It would also include ways in which the learning process should be modified to take advantage of and address the challenges of a diverse student body. Although the campus probably has a more diverse faculty, staff and graduate student population than most research universities, the study would also focus on possible ways of increasing the diversity of those groups and using that diversity to further develop the campus culture of diversity and the employment opportunities of graduate students.

Researchable questions involved in Theme 1 include determining (1) the degree to which exposure to diversity contributes to understanding of differences and ability to achieve broad success in a diverse environment, (2) the ways in which we can demonstrate that diversity serves as a pathway to excellence in individual and group performance, (3) determining if successful strategies for increasing the diversity with respect to one parameter (e.g., ethnicity) are applicable to increasing the diversity with respect to other parameters, (4) the role of experiential learning (tutoring, etc.) in expanding the understanding of diversity, (5) ways of encouraging cultural sensitivity in the teaching and learning process, and (6) the degree to which experience with and understanding of diversity increases the employment and educational outcomes of undergraduate and graduate students.

The methodology includes (1) a detailed review of the literature on diversity and excellence; (2) data collection and analysis to quantify the diversity of undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff in a number of the dimensions of diversity and then a comparison of the levels of diversity with those of other campuses and institutions; (3) surveys of attitudes and experiences before and after efforts to develop approaches to dealing with the challenges of diversity, increasing understanding of differences, and developing respect for others; and (4) experimentation with new approaches to recruiting and retaining a more diverse graduate student body, faculty, and staff.

(2) Growing and Improving Graduate and Professional Programs

The campus has been attempting to increase the number and quality of its graduate and professional programs and students, but the percentage of graduate and professional students has declined because of the much greater increase in numbers of undergraduate students. The goal is to identify and promote best practices in graduate and professional program development and graduate and professional student success. Activities would include identifying the parameters and processes of successful graduate and professional programs and generalizing these to other programs, with special attention to interdepartmental graduate programs; identifying successful graduate and professional students and determining the reasons they are successful; and improving the recruiting of graduate and professional students.

Researchable questions involved in Theme 2 include (1) identifying and promoting best practices in graduate and professional program development and graduate and professional student success, (2) determining the strengths and weaknesses of interdepartmental and interdisciplinary graduate programs relative to departmental, more specialized programs, (3) devising ways of increasing the success of interdepartmental and interdisciplinary graduate programs, (4) discovering the best ways in which to expand professional education and programs on the campus, and (5) developing better strategies for graduate and professional student recruitment.

The methodology includes (1) a detailed review of the literature on graduate and professional student performance, (2) a detailed review and comparison of UCR's