

# **SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY INITIAL PROPOSAL PREPARED FOR THE WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

## **Statement of Institutional Context**

Situated in the second largest city in California, San Diego State University celebrated its centennial in 1997. Starting out as a state normal school with a two-year program to train elementary school teachers, in 1921 the University became San Diego State Teachers College, a four-year institution, with control transferred from a local Board of Trustees to the State Board of Education. In 1931, the College had grown too large for its seventeen-acre campus near Balboa Park, and moved several miles to the east, to a 283 acre donated site adjoining Alvarado Canyon. In 1935, the California State Legislature changed the name of the college, dropping the word "Teachers" to acknowledge the growth of liberal arts and sciences courses. The curriculum was broadened to offer majors in liberal arts and sciences as well as the teaching specialization. The Donahoe Act in 1950 established professional programs and curricula leading to Masters degrees, and authorized campuses to engage in doctoral instruction in cooperation with the University of California, and later with private institutions accredited to offer doctoral degrees; the first Ph.D. degree was awarded in 1967. The Imperial Valley Campus was established in 1959 to serve Calexico residents 120 miles east of the main campus. Finally, by 1972, the system became The California State University and Colleges, and SDSU was designated a "University."

Both San Diego and SDSU have grown immeasurably over the past 100 years. Reflecting San Diego's geographic location close to the Mexican border and on the Pacific Rim, and the city's thriving cultural, scientific and educational activities, the University provides a wide range of educational and co-curricular opportunities to over 30,000 students. More than 200 academic fields of study are offered through the Imperial Valley campus and the seven colleges: Arts and Letters, Business, Education, Engineering, Health and Human Services, Professional Studies and Fine Arts, and Sciences. The Division of Undergraduate Studies coordinates some cross-college interdisciplinary studies. In addition to the San Diego and Calexico campuses, the University manages four biological field stations and operates the Mount Laguna Observatory. During the 1999-2000 academic year, SDSU awarded 5,201 bachelor's degrees, 1,558 master's degrees, and 32 doctoral degrees.

SDSU differs from the other 22 California State University campuses because of its emphasis on research and doctoral programs, and is the only one designated as Doctoral-Research-Intensive by the Carnegie Foundation. The SDSU Foundation supports grants and contracts, which grew in the past year to \$124 million.

The mission of San Diego State University is to provide well-balanced, high quality education for undergraduate and graduate students, and to contribute to knowledge and the solution of problems through excellence and distinction in teaching, research, and service. The University serves to impart an appreciation and broad understanding of human experience throughout the world and the ages. This education extends to diverse cultural legacies; accomplishments in many areas, such as the arts and technology; the advancement of human thought including philosophy and science; the development of economic, political, and social institutions; and the physical and biological evolution of human beings and their environment. Shared Vision themes identified in 1997-8 include Academic Excellence; Student-Centered Learning (educating the whole person); Diversity and Social Justice; International Education; Wise use of Human and Fiscal Resources. These themes have been reaffirmed in subsequent planning measures, notably the Policy File statement of 2000.

Dependence on state funding for its operations always involves some degree of uncertainty for university planning for the future. In addition, the surrounding community sets boundaries within which the campus must grow. As part of the CSU, planning must accommodate systemwide directives, and systemwide restrictions, while responding to local contexts and priorities. SDSU has sought to moderate some of these budgetary challenges by means of its Foundation and more recent philanthropic Campanile Foundation. All-university planning provides the context for academic planning to consider budget, environment and campus expansion to accommodate both program development and support services.

Such planning has undergone significant changes in the past few years, becoming increasingly open and consultative.

Since the last review, a number of very significant changes have taken place, including the arrival in 1998 of a new Provost, Dr. Nancy Marlin, a new Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. James Kitchen in 2000, and a new IVC Dean, Dr. Khosrow Fatemi, who has undertaken many new initiatives with the campus. The Shared Vision process initiated by President Stephen Weber, which the 1997 WASC Team noted with enthusiasm as a dramatic approach to university-wide planning, has been followed by the Provost's strong emphasis on academic planning. She has established a yearly reporting process requiring all departments and programs to submit, through their deans, program plans and concomitant hiring plans to support the curricula. Her emphasis on assessment, internationalization and faculty development accords well with the values that arose from the Shared Vision process.

Some reorganization of offices and functions has taken place. A Division of Enrollment Services has been established with the University Advising Center and Student Outreach Services, together with the former Admissions and Records Office, also reorganized, under an Executive Director for Enrollment Management reporting to Academic Affairs. The Center for Community-Based Service Learning has been established by Student Affairs in collaboration with Academic Affairs. Vice President Dr. James Kitchen has reorganized Student Affairs, and is establishing plans for the future.

Physical changes to the campus include the new Chemical Sciences Building, the Tony Gwynn Stadium, and significant construction involving the Campus Redevelopment Project. Particularly noticeable is the widespread construction that will bring a trolley station to the campus. Construction will continue for several years and has strongly challenged campus planning to ensure that the educational mission will not be impaired.

From a broader perspective, major changes have involved the anticipated increase in eligible prospective students (Tidal Wave II), dramatic loss of senior faculty as they reach retirement age, and the looming energy crisis. These events challenge the University on several fronts and impel action that must lead to highly significant changes. In response to the enrollment challenge, the University established principles and procedures for impaction to control the numbers of students admitted and prevent the overcrowding seen in the 1980s. With the change in leadership to the CSU system, impaction status was modified to increase local access. The University responded by seeking additional methods for accommodating students including off-campus sites, plans for growing the main campus, year-round operation, and distance learning. Preserving diversity has been a clearly stated university goal, and the change in the graduate/ undergraduate balance has instigated plans for bringing in more and better qualified graduate students.

Hiring of new faculty proceeds at a breakneck pace in attempts to replace lost expertise and also offers the opportunity for development of new academic goals in departments. The establishment of the Center for Teaching and Learning recognizes the need for support of new faculty, while also responding to more mature faculty members' needs to adapt methodologies to new learners. The University's City Heights Educational Pilot has added to the many other community partnerships in a high-profile and ambitious manner, offering new opportunities for learning.

The California energy crisis has sent energy costs skyrocketing, and the impact on the budget is of great concern not only on campus, but statewide. The campus' immediate response has been to seek energy-use reduction by a number of means, including education to change individuals' behavior, adjusting computers to "sleep mode," re-establishing temperature comfort zones, etc.

#### **WASC Team Comments and Recommendations made at the Last Visits**

The 1993 team visit immediately followed the period of disastrous budget cuts that resulted in over 100 faculty receiving layoff notices. Morale was low, and there was much campus unrest. The team identified a number of troubled areas, and an Interim Visit was scheduled.

Planning was judged noticeably absent, and the campus was urged to institute planning processes. Faculty and governance issues were noted (unsurprising in the shadow of layoff threats) and faculty development was judged inadequate. Assessment, focused on Institutional Research and Student Outcomes, was also considered to be inadequate. Other areas of concern were the balance of graduate and undergraduate programs, the challenge of diversity, and the longstanding concern with the relationship of the San Diego and Calexico campuses.

The 1997 Interim Visit took place following the arrival of President Weber, who had almost immediately addressed the planning problems with the Shared Vision process that was under way at the time of the team visit. The team was “pleased to report progress in all areas,” and “commended [SDSU] for the innovative and inclusive process it has developed for planning.” Faculty and governance issues were judged as having undergone “much progress” owing to President Weber’s leadership. The team stressed the need for a Center for Faculty Development. While the team was “pleased to see many assessment efforts under way,” noting Liberal Studies as “a model of ‘best works’ in assessment,” they remained concerned about the penetration of assessment activities. The team noted that “the question remains as to how far SDSU has moved toward an integration of assessment into its culture,” and looked also to the new Director of Institutional Research to “transform the current culture into a more ‘fact-based decision-making one.” Support for undergraduate education was considered encouraging and further attention to such areas as General Education, competencies, and support for student success was recommended.

The continuing challenges of diversity, both at the student and the faculty level, were noted. The need for hiring of diverse faculty was particularly stressed, as was the need for greater response to diversity in the curriculum.

Relations with the Imperial Valley Campus, 120 miles away in Calexico, have been a WASC issue for many years, with a Special Visit in 1991. Because of the major contrasts between the two campuses in geographical location and community needs, demographics, size, and campus goals, it is clear that tensions will always be present. However, highly significant developments, particularly in the area of faculty joint-appointments and the increase in faculty to strengthen the curricular offerings, were noted by the teams that visited. The 1997 team noted improvement, but still registered concern regarding faculty issues, particularly with regard to equality with faculty on the San Diego campus, and called attention to morale and organizational issues. The coming of the new dean of the campus was regarded with anticipation and technological and research support recommended.

In summary, the team again identified planning as an ongoing issue and noted that, “more difficult tasks lie ahead. As the campus moves forward, it will need to set priorities, assign appropriate resources, and then establish measurements.” The other most important concerns identified by the 1997 team were: Creating a student-and learning-centered University; Student Assessment and Faculty Effectiveness; and the Imperial Valley Campus. It is interesting to compare these with the Shared Vision goals and values, i.e.:

- Extend and enhance SDSU’s deep and abiding commitment to academic excellence expressed through superior teaching, research, creative activity, and public service;
- Nurture a learning-centered university that supports the growth and development of the whole person;
- Create a community proud of its diversity and committed to furthering social justice on and off campus;
- Promote the growth, development, and wise use of our human and fiscal resources;
- Create a global university.

### **Goals and Expected Outcomes for the Review**

Past WASC teams have identified planning as a major problem at San Diego State University. Now that significant action has been taken to institute planning at many levels, we look for assessment of our progress toward the goals and values derived from Shared Vision, and of the planning processes we have established and their outcome, including our own self-review processes. For Educational Effectiveness we are particularly interested in how research, both disciplinary and pedagogical, contributes to academic excellence in instruction. We welcome the assistance of consultants who will

bring their knowledge and experience to suggest any necessary realignment and help us develop and/or fine-tune our process as we face the challenges of the future.

**Campus Engagement in the Development of the Proposal and the Review Process**

The first draft of this proposal was prepared by the Undergraduate Dean after initial consultation with a small task force, the Senate Chair, the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Planning (AP&P), and the Council of Deans. An initial draft was taken to a subcommittee of AP&P, who spent many hours in editing and rewriting; the full Committee then discussed and amended the document. AP&P Chair, Dr. Eve Kornfeld took the draft first to the Senate Executive Committee and then to Senate for their endorsement of the choice of Campus Planning as the governing thrust of the review. A detailed draft regarding aspects of campus planning was posted on the web. This document was used as the basis for the May 1 version of the proposal prepared by the Undergraduate Dean with support from data experts. Dialogue with WASC consultants on June 6 regarding the Initial Proposal was attended by the Chairs of The Senate and Academic Policy and Planning, by the Assessment Committee Chair/Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Dean of Graduate and Research Affairs, and a representative from Institutional Research.

As the process proceeds, there will be three modes for campus involvement. First will be through the Shared Governance process and involve AP&P and the campus Senate. (SDSU’s Senate includes faculty, staff, student, and administrative representation.) Second will be the input of departments and divisions through the deans and vice-presidents. Third will be by individual access to a campus web site. Such individuals may be part of the University, or those in the San Diego community who have interest in or concerns with SDSU.

**Staging of the Preparatory Review and Educational Effectiveness Reviews.**

The following table provides a timeline of major tasks envisioned for SDSU’s review.

SEMESTER	TASKS
Spring 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define campus planning theme areas</li> <li>• Submit proposal to WASC</li> <li>• Begin coordinating and analyzing existing data. Set up web site format of Institutional Presentation.</li> </ul>
Fall 2001 - Spring 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue analysis of existing data</li> <li>• Begin collection of any new data</li> <li>• Begin writing reports with ongoing campus consultation through committees and web page</li> </ul>
Fall 2002 - Spring 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue data collection and analysis</li> <li>• Begin integration of data analysis findings into campus operations; review with campus administration.</li> <li>• Finalize drafts of the Institutional Presentation, with AP&amp;P and Senate involvement and final approval. Finalize web page</li> </ul>
April 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional Presentation draft submitted to WASC for review</li> </ul>
Summer 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue data collection and analysis</li> <li>• Make any necessary revisions to Institutional Presentation</li> <li>• Send Institutional Presentation to the WASC team (August)</li> <li>• Prepare for WASC team visit</li> </ul>
Fall 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue data collection and analysis</li> <li>• Continue integration of data analysis findings into campus operations</li> <li>• WASC team visit for Preparatory Review</li> </ul>
Spring 2004 - Fall 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin drafting Educational Effectiveness Review report with input from relevant parties and continued reporting to and consultation with AP&amp;P (and Senate as appropriate). Web postings will keep campus community informed</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue drafting and revising Educational Effectiveness Review report</li> <li>• Continue integration of data analysis findings into campus operations</li> <li>• Submit report to WASC and Team</li> <li>• Prepare for WASC team visit</li> </ul>
Spring 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WASC team visit for Educational Effectiveness Review</li> </ul>

**How will the institution present evidence to demonstrate compliance with Commission Standards including the proposed format of presentation and types of key indicators that will be included in the Institutional Portfolio?**

The University intends to prepare a user-friendly Institutional Portfolio via web presentation of materials with a narrative shaped by questions as identified. The narrative will include links to the supportive materials to enable the reader to find them easily. More extensive materials that hold relevance, but are not critical, will also be made available for further research if desired.

**Standard One: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives**

*Questions to shape the Preparatory Review:* (see pages 8-10 for data display)

The University has undergone significant planning which has identified special goals and values to shape its direction for the future. These began as the Shared Vision process and are now expressed in the Policy File, Undergraduate Catalog and Graduate Bulletin.

- i. What are these goals and objectives and how do they relate to the WASC standard requirements?
- ii. How have these goals and values permeated the institution as a whole to support its educational objectives?
- iii. How is the campus continually reminded of its commitment to the goals and values it professes?
- iv. Which elements of Standard One are not represented directly in the campus goals and values, and need to be addressed to supplement the narrative?

**Standard Two: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions**

*Questions to shape the Preparatory Review:* (see pages 8-10 for data display)

- i. How are expectations for student learning formulated, reviewed and kept current?
- ii. How are expectations communicated to students and how is their achievement in meeting them evaluated?
- iii. How are faculty supported in their professional activities (i.e. teaching, research/creative activity, service) and in the integration of these activities? How does the Teacher-Scholar model inform integration?
- iv. How does the campus support student learning and success?

**Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability**

*Questions to shape the Preparatory Review:* (see pages 8-10 for data display)

- i. How do the planning processes of the university ensure sufficient numbers of qualified faculty and staff to support academic excellence both on the San Diego and Imperial Valley campuses?
- ii. How are the faculty and staff recruitment, evaluation, development, and incentive practices organized to support academic excellence, morale, and campus goals?
- iii. How are budget and masterplanning decisions made in a collaborative way to support the goals of the institution?
- iv. How are information resources and technology organized to support student and faculty research and curriculum? How are they made accessible to students and faculty?
- v. What is the nature and structure of Shared Governance on campus, to include representation of all campus constituencies?
- vi. What is the balance between the CSU system directives and campus autonomy?
- vii. How are administrative responsibilities designated, and how are administrators evaluated in terms of campus priorities and effectiveness?

#### **Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement**

- i. How do the goals expressed in the Policy File continue to integrate and be expressed in ongoing planning of the institution? How is planning data-driven?
- ii. How well do the Provost's annual planning exercise and the academic review process shape the development of the university as a learning institution?
- iii. How are educational quality indicators used in decision-making with regard to curriculum, and program development?
- iv. How are teaching and learning optimized through research, assessment, and pedagogical support?
- v. What is the range of assessment measures employed, and how are long-term effects and stakeholder opinions involved in the assessment of program quality and student learning?

#### **The Status of Assessment at SDSU**

SDSU has long identified the "Teacher-Scholar" model as the major characteristic of its self-definition. This has found expression in the emphasis on research or creative activity as the driver for leading-edge knowledge to inform teaching; in the evidence for collaborative teacher-student research; and in the goal of establishing joint doctoral programs.

In many departments where national accreditation is involved, data including student outcomes have been required for some time, and these departments (for example Nursing, Social Work, Accounting) have sophisticated and well-developed assessment programs. In departments where creative performance is a focus, such as Music and Dance, Art and Theatre, student learning outcomes (and use of portfolios where appropriate) are a traditional disciplinary approach. In addition, the College of Education takes student learning and student outcomes as the major thrust of the disciplines.

Some departments are less advanced in the assessment of student learning, but are now required to include assessment plans and evidence in the self-study accompanying each Academic Program Review. They are supported in the development of student outcomes and their assessment by the University Committee on Assessment. In addition, some assigned time has been made available by the Provost and by College Deans to support this activity.

#### **How will the Educational Effectiveness Review be undertaken, including the format of the institutional self-review, the particular themes or issues to be addressed in the Educational Effectiveness review, and ways in which the institution will address student learning?**

##### **Format for the Educational Effectiveness Presentation**

The campus has identified "Research and Relevance for Academic Excellence" as the theme for the Educational Effectiveness review.

##### Our Goals:

- We want our faculty to search for new knowledge and to model continued intellectual growth through research; and
- To use the research to inform their teaching and to guide the direction of their programs;
- We want to support a well-prepared diverse student body in fulfilling their potential and being successful at SDSU and their careers;
- We want to offer an education that establishes the basis for life-long learning.

##### Our Questions:

- How does faculty research inform our teaching for academic excellence?
- How do our faculty and students explore new perspectives and pedagogies, ways of knowing, ways of learning to enhance student success and educational effectiveness?
- How do our programs remain contemporary and engaged by addressing local community and global community issues from a research perspective?
- How has academic planning helped shape programs for optimal research and teaching?

### Evidence and analysis:

- Evaluate faculty-reported analysis of the ways in which their research informs their teaching (PDS reports);
- Examine the involvement of students with faculty in collaborative research activities;
- Assess research-guided innovation in learning, for example: Language Acquisition Research Center; IECC (Interdisciplinary Experimental Curriculum); General Education revision; Community-Based Service Learning. Request their self-assessment;
- Examine the impact of the Center for Teaching and Learning programs on the teaching effectiveness of new and established faculty;
- Analyze the effectiveness of representative Student Success programs: EOP, TBD Freshman Success, Faculty Student Mentoring, College Readiness, Compact with Sweetwater, Mandatory Advising, Remedial-Developmental programs; Retention Initiative.
- Identify and request self-assessment of significant research activities that impact the broader community – Engaged Research (e.g. City Heights; Entrepreneurial Business; Border Issues; Peace Institute). Examine student achievement in the broader academic and professional community;
- Evaluate the growth of international aspects to academic programs;
- Identify five academic programs and trace their planning processes and outcomes including student outcomes assessment and the ongoing development of graduate programs.

### **Examples of some specific anticipated Data Displays to be referenced in the reflective, analytic essays.**

- A. Faculty PDS data regarding research-teaching connection;
- B. Sciences handbook of collaborative student-faculty research;
- C. GE Criteria and suggested assessment measures prepared for assessment-driven program (2001): evidence of revision demonstrated in selected courses; statistics on courses submitted, accepted, denied, revised, etc.; Longitudinal Student Information Literacy Survey; 2000 Diversity essay analysis;
- D. Interdisciplinary Experimental Curriculum (IEC); IEC assessment reports; retreat materials for faculty orientation;
- E. Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) information materials: participant assessment of Center's impact on their teaching; detailed description of 2-3 representative workshops and analysis of effectiveness; CTL book of faculty essays on teaching for diversity (Office of Diversity and Equity & CTL);
- F. EOP self-assessment reports;
- G. Thomas B. Day Freshman Success Programs student recruitment materials; class evaluations, Data analyzing program effectiveness in terms of retention and GPA, Longitudinal student information literacy survey;
- H. Faculty-Student Mentoring Program recruitment materials, long-range analysis of student success and retention, program-wide mentor training and activities; mentor assessment of effectiveness; faculty meetings – sample agendas; faculty assessment of program effectiveness;
- I. Remedial programs: Remedial curricula designed and adapted in terms of student outcomes; group finals with scoring criteria; analysis of student success;
- J. College Readiness Programs: surveys of high-school teacher satisfaction with collaboration with SDSU Associates; identification of "best practices" in teaching; teacher satisfaction with tutoring program; pre- and post-testing of students (EPT, ELM, MDTP, CSU Writing Assessment)
- K. Center for Community-Based Service Learning: analysis of data collected by Center; analysis of CBSL data from 1999 SNAPS survey and SDSU Student Poll, Spring 2001; exhibits of student papers representing community-based service in class assignments.
- L. Assessment reports from Engaged Research as selected;
- M. Exhibits of student achievement such as: portfolios, contests, capstone exams or courses; study abroad; Business Reno Team contest; Engineering Concrete Canoe and Steel Bridge Building contests; CPA exam results; licensure pass rates for Social Work and Nursing; Psychology graduates' acceptance in Ph.D. programs; record of student-faculty joint projects;
- N. Specific exhibits of departmental curricular and program plans, status of assessment plans and implementation, analysis, and program improvement.