

REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM  
EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW  
for  
REAFFIRMATION

University of the West  
Rosemead, CA 91770

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2008 WASC Senior College and University Commission Standards of Accreditation; however, this report refers to the 2013 Standards. This report contains its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission.

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 WASC website.

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## SECTION I

### OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

#### A. Description of Institution and Visit

University of the West (UWest) is a private, nonprofit, non-sectarian co-educational institution of higher education offering undergraduate, graduate, certificate, and continuing education programs, located in Rosemead, California. Originally founded as Hsi Lai University in 1990 in Hacienda Heights, California, the campus was moved to the current location in 1996 and its name changed to University of the West in 2004. (“Hsi Lai” refers to the transmission of Buddhist teaching to the West.) The university has no off-campus sites and offers no distance education programs.

UWest is one of four universities sponsored by the Fo Guang Shan (“Buddha’s Light Mountain”) Buddhist Order of Taiwan. Although UWest identifies itself as non-sectarian and admits students regardless of religious affiliation, the university’s **mission statement** is based in its history and tradition:

“To provide a “whole person” education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and to facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West.”

The university offers programs in religious studies and Buddhism as well as in business, psychology, and English: four bachelor’s degrees, five master’s degrees, and one doctoral degree, as follows:

- BAs in Business Administration, English, General Studies, Psychology

- MA in Psychology, Religious Studies
- MBA and Executive MBA
- Master of Divinity in Buddhist Chaplaincy
- ThD (structural change visit scheduled)
- PhD in Religious Studies.

In addition to these degree programs, the university also offers a variety of certificate programs.

UWest is a small university with a total student headcount of 393 in fall 2014. The faculty consists of 17 full-time faculty, 94% of whom hold terminal degrees, and 41 adjunct instructors, totaling 31 FTE faculty as of Fall 2014. UWest has granted 136 degrees in the past three years, the vast majority at the graduate level.

The university applied for accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and attained Eligibility in 1998. It was granted WASC Candidacy in 2002. In February 2006, UWest secured Initial Accreditation by WASC. Later in 2006, the university submitted substantive change applications to WASC proposing several additional degree programs. Consequently, two new programs were added—an MA in Psychology approved in 2007 and MDiv in Buddhist Chaplaincy approved in 2008. Most recently, UWest has requested permission from WASC to offer a ThD in Applied Buddhist Theology. Permission for this substantive structural change is currently pending.

In June 2009 the university submitted an Institutional Proposal and a Capacity and Preparatory Report (CPR) in fall of 2010 for a WASC Site Visit in December of that year. In February 2011 the Commission acted to receive the CPR report, to continue

accreditation, to reschedule the EER from spring 2012 to fall 2014, and to schedule a Special Visit for fall 2012.

The issues to be addressed by the Special Visit were as follows: **Mission** clarification and communication problems; **Board of Trustees** issues; **Leadership** qualifications; **Resources**; **Academic** curriculum issues; **Faculty** policies and procedures; **Assessment** infrastructure. The Special Visit team found that the issues were largely resolved and recommended that the EER visit remain in place for fall 2014. (See section C below.)

## **B. Quality and Rigor of the Report and Review**

The Educational Effectiveness Report was presented clearly and articulately, with the areas to be addressed conveniently presented and the materials organized and accessible to the team. The entire university community, including faculty, professional staff, and students, was active in serving on committees, submitting evidence or data, and providing information. While the institution was reviewed under the 2008 standards, the university also provided a Self-Review under the (2013) Standards and listed both the 2008 and 2013 Criteria for Review at the beginning of each thematic section of the EER. The university analyzed the evidence effectively and provided a thorough analysis of the themes; however, two of the four thematic sections did not provide any concluding summary of what was learned and future action steps. Several required portions of the report were missing initially, though the institution provided them upon request.

### C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review

While the university did not initially provide a response to each issue of concern from the 2011 Commission letter in a separate section, a supplement was forthcoming. Based on this document and the Review, the team reports the institutional response as follows:

#### 1. Mission

**Communication of the Mission and Direction of the University:** The March 11, 2013, Action Letter from the Commission following the Special Visit noted that “although much has been done to better clarify and communicate the mission and direction of the university, the team found that effective campus-wide communication is still lacking. UWest needs to develop and consistently evaluate a better system of communication among its diverse constituents.” (CFRs 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 4.5, 4.6)

Narratives in the Theme I Essay, Mission and Multiculturalism (EER, pages 5, 6 and 9) and Supplementary Report (page 7) discuss the mission, vision and identity of UWest, affirming that “the current strategic process has yielded a draft vision for 2020 that recommits to this core purpose [of Whole Person Education] and formulates basic strategies to strengthen it over the next five years” (page 7). In a supplementary report dated September 18, 2014 (“Educational Effectiveness Review Report Supplement”), UWest provided a brief follow-up on the Commission recommendation, noting that the mission had been clarified and communicated primarily through the oversight work of the Mission and Identity Committee, and that the mission itself can be found posted around campus, in various publications, and is regularly discussed in reference to UWest’s goals and activities. The inclusion of UWest’s mission and direction in discussions of goals and

activities, planning process, and decision-making processes was alluded to in the supplementary report as well.

In his initial remarks to the UWest Board of Trustees on June 14, 2013, President Morgan articulated that one of his objectives was to “have better communication with the students, the faculty and all facets of the University and listening to their feedback.”

Reviewing the relevant documentation (Vision Workshop Flyer; Implications of a Vision: 3 Scenarios; Vision Worksheet Responses), team members were impressed with the depth and inclusiveness of outreach and communication demonstrated by UWest in developing its new vision as part of the strategic planning process. While the final Strategic Plan will not be available until early 2015, team members determined that the University has made a significant and positive beginning not only to communicating the mission and direction of the university, but also to actively involving campus stakeholders in its development. (CFRs 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 4.5, 4.6)

## **2. Board of Trustees**

The WSCUC Action Letter of March 11, 2013, recommended that “the university should consider continuing to work with a consultant to train board members and ensure that the university board structure is in compliance with WASC board policy. This work can include assistance to the president and the Board of Trustees in team building and strategic planning.” (CFR 3.9)

In the Supplementary Report dated September 18, 2014 (“Educational Effectiveness Review Report Supplement”), UWest provided a brief follow-up on this Commission recommendation, primarily reaffirming the changes that had been made after the CPR

visit in 2010 and reviewed by the Special Visit Team in 2012. The supplement made reference to professional development of the Board of Trustees (page 7) and documentation of development sessions (“Board Development”) of the board by Dr. Morgan acting as a consultant to the board prior to his assuming the presidency was provided by UWest. (CFRs 3.9, 3.10)

The Commission had also directed the university to ensure compliance with WSCUC board policy. In reviewing the July 27, 2014, Bylaws of UWest, several instances came to light where the extant Bylaws do not appear to be in harmony with the WSCUC Policy on Independent Boards. First, Article III, Section 17 of the Bylaws provides for removal without cause of a Trustee by two thirds of all the Trustees then in office. The WSCUC Policy on Independent Boards (page10) notes that “The board has clear procedures to select, nominate, remove and replace board members, conforming to the principles of independence.” UWest should incorporate the recommended procedures for removing board members outlined in the WSCUC Policy on Independent Boards. Second, in reviewing the biographies of the members of the Board of Trustees, the team noted that one member who is listed as an independent member of the Board was for a number of years as the Chief Financial Officer of Fo Guang Shan and has served the Order in at least three other professional positions over the years. The team believes that the long-established and continued professional and financial relationship of this trustee with the Order may represent “interests that might impair their independent decision making, create multiple and potentially conflicting relationships, or result in competing loyalties” (WSCUC Independent Governing Board Policy). However, in its interview with the



Board, the team found that the board had considerably expanded its membership to include committed and knowledgeable independent members, all of whom share the values of the institution. Board members displayed high engagement with the institution, understanding the board's own need for further expansion, greater gender and ethnic diversity, and more local representation from the community. Given this progress, the team urges the UWest board to continue in its charted course towards greater autonomy, diversity, local representation, as well as a further addition of independent board members. (CFRs 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 3.9, 3.8, Independent Governing Board Policy)

### **3. Leadership**

The WSCUC Action Letter of March 11, 2013, recommended that “a clear and well communicated evaluation process needs to be developed and implemented by the board for the university president.” (CFRs 3.1, 3.7)

Article III, Section 3 (f) of the July 27, 2014, Bylaws of UWest specifies that among the duties of the Board of Trustees shall be to “perform an annual evaluation of the President.” The WSCUC Policy on Independent Boards (page10) requires that “the board has clear procedures for hiring, evaluating, retaining or discharging the CEO that conform to the principles of board independence and responsibilities.” UWest provided the team with extensive documentation of the presidential evaluation process, an updated version of the process, Dr. Morgan's self-evaluation report to the Board, and the Board's subsequent response. The Team commends UWest on the development and implementation of a thorough presidential evaluation process. (CFRs 3.1, 3.7, 3.9, Policy on Independent Boards)

#### **4. Resources**

UWest was asked to develop a “pro forma financial plan that matches newly forecast institutional revenues with the institutional expenses required to support anticipated growth. A strategic financial planning and budgeting process needs to be developed, and implemented before the institutional review.” (CFR 3.4)

UWest has a “5-Year Strategic and Pro-Forma Budget Report” as of June 2014. This covers the years 2013-2018 and supports the UWest “Strategic Plan” and “Strategic Action Plan.” The financial plan clearly lays out the University’s goals and the budgets needed to support them. A timeline provided demonstrates an 18-month participatory process in plan development, beginning with the Executive Team, then providing wide consultation in the institution, then approval by the Board of Trustees and revision/implementation by the Executive Team.

Major goals in the plan include increases in enrollment to support the budget and improvements in institutional expenditures to support the increased numbers of students. The major changes in the plan on the revenue side are a doubling of tuition and other revenue from increased enrollment and significant increases in tuition itself (about 5% per year) and a 25% decrease in donations from the Board of Trustees. The tuition dependency of UWest will be increased from 50% to 70% during the plan period. On the expenditure side, there are modest increases in the instructional budget and significantly larger increases in institutional support (e.g., institutionally funded financial aid and

physical plant) as UWest catches up with its infrastructure to increased enrollments and positions itself for further increases beyond the plan period.

## **5. Academics**

The CPR report raised concerns that the University offered too many degrees for so small an institution. The Special Visit team, however, noted that UWest had suspended several undergraduate programs, and recommended that program review and strategic planning needed to become an “active, permanent, and continuous part” of the University’s processes. Significantly, the Commission noted an expectation that “by the time of the EER, UWest will have completed a full cycle of program review based upon assessment of course and program level learning outcomes” (2013 Commission Action Letter, page 3). The EER visiting team found that annual review was taking place in most academic departments, based on detailed assessment plans, curriculum maps, embedded assessments, and external reviews; however, five-year review was scheduled to take place for all departments in the coming year (spring 2015). (For more details on program review at UWest, please see below in the narrative on Section II: Academic Effectiveness.) (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3)

## **6. Faculty**

Concern was expressed that “various faculty compensation components are still in their infancy and need further development. The team also recommended an increase in support of faculty development to create more expertise in assessment and support for faculty research especially at the graduate level.” (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.3)

UWest has implemented a data-driven process on TaskStream for faculty to align course learning outcomes with institutional goals. A culture of assessment is being developed, and while faculty are the major actors and participants in the development of assessment tools, there is administrative oversight and support. Both attendance by faculty at workshops on assessment and the use of external evaluators have contributed to an enhancement of faculty expertise at assessment. Significantly, both regular and adjunct faculty members are involved in these activities.

In the response under “Ongoing Challenges,” the EER self-study notes the ongoing issue of faculty workload. UWest is a small, relatively undeveloped institution and the full-time faculty are required not only to have heavy teaching and advising responsibilities, but also to undertake the administrative and assessment work needed in shared governance. The extensive use of adjunct faculty is also a concern noted in the response; the institutions has plans to deal with both of these issues (e.g., lower faculty workload, fewer adjuncts).

There is no direct response in the EER self-study on the issue of faculty research; however, the committee reviewed a draft document that describes a limited new sabbatical policy for faculty. The financial plan does not have a predication of grant income, nor is there a line item for faculty research. While there is support for “conference and seminar,” it is not clear whether these are for scholarly work. While faculty are engaged in scholarship, more financial support in this area should be a strategic goal for the future. The intellectual climate of the university and retention of accomplished faculty are at risk without a commitment to scholarship.

Finally, the Visiting Team strongly urges UWest to continue on its trajectory toward hiring a body of full-time faculty sufficient to ensure the academic integrity of UWest as it increases both its undergraduate and graduate enrollments, the continued development of its faculty governance system, clearly stated expectations for teaching, research, and service, and a meaningful graduate culture as appropriate to its mission and program emphases.

(CFRs 2.2.b, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2)

## **7. Assessment**

UWest has continued to make progress in its institutional research capacity and use of the TaskStream system for collecting data since the 2011 CPR visit. Faculty are clearly engaged in assessment and have strong staff support in that area. The EER report lists several pages of improvements in the academic program taken since that time in response to assessment data, thus demonstrating a commitment to “closing the loop,” as required. A detailed disaggregation of recent retention and graduation data shows a commitment to data analysis, as recommended by the 2013 Commission letter. The University has revised its general education outcomes and recently assessed two of the core competencies, written communication and information literacy. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2-4.4)

## SECTION II

### EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE STANDARDS

#### A. Theme I Mission & Multiculturalism

The narrative discussion in Theme I is organized into three sections: the story of UWest; findings on the Multicultural Campus Climate Research Project; and a final section on how UWest promotes multiculturalism among its students. The first part of the essay, “Our Story,” is foundational for the understanding of UWest’s cultural identity and its mission, vision and values. The essay clarifies UWest’s Institutional Learning Outcomes (EER, page 8) as Wisdom and Skillful Means; Self-Awareness; Liberation; and Interdependence. (CFRs 1.1, 1.2)

The second part of the essay is based on the findings of UWest’s Multicultural Campus Climate Research Project (MCC Project) a project through which UWest sought to 1) obtain a better picture of their student body in terms of religion, family status and sexual orientation; 2) to understand student perceptions of the climate at UWest around diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism – all areas of high relevance to the institutional mission, vision and values, and 3) to determine the extent to which ILOs were being integrated into UWest coursework, as evidenced by student artifacts loaded into TaskStream.

The third part of the essay, “Living East & West: Promoting Multiculturalism on Campus,” sought to clarify how values of pluralism and multiculturalism were being promoted through the curriculum and co-curriculum. This part of the essay lays out the

ILOs and PLOs within the curriculum that are integral to promoting multiculturalism.

(CFR 1.4)

The research carried out for Theme I consisted of a survey research and focus group project as well as a comparative analysis of student artifacts housed in TaskStream, and how those artifacts mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The Team found the project to be based on a well-designed research and focus group proposal, and a survey instrument that utilized items and scales from a number of validated national climate survey instruments. The climate for multiculturalism on campus was investigated through survey research. A focus group was undertaken with those students who had difficulty with the English language survey in April 2014. Indirect evidence of student learning was also sought in the MCC survey. The first item asked students about their classroom experience regarding diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism and the frequency with which their coursework had dealt with those issues. While UWest concluded that the survey results showed too little occurrence of diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism in coursework, the lowest frequency of topics reported by survey respondents were assignments about sexual orientation and gender (EER, page 12). The frequency of occurrence of the UWest ILOs in student artifacts was also determined through an examination of a number of student artifacts loaded into TaskStream, a topic more fully explored in Theme II of the EER. In that course artifact analysis, UWest again found too little exposure to diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism.

In part 3 of the Theme I essay, the discussion of “East & West: Promoting Multiculturalism on Campus,” UWest lays out the ILOs and PLOs within the curriculum

that the institution considers integral to promoting multiculturalism. Team members found that several assertions concerning impact on student learning were made without reference to supporting assessment data, for example “...students in the Buddhist Chaplaincy program gain both a theoretical understanding...” (EER, page 15), and “these are just a few of the ways that the co-curricular program benefits students at UWest...” (EER, page 16). Reviewers noted that curriculum and co-curriculum as designed do not by themselves constitute evidence of student learning, but need to be supported by concrete assessment results.

The survey research data presentation was clear, and the conclusions extrapolated from those data were generally supported by the data. However, on page 11 of the EER, a discussion of survey data on safety, inclusion, and discrimination concluded that since 73% of respondents had never felt excluded or left out on purpose at UWest, the institution was generally pleased with the results. Reviewers noted that over 27% of respondents to the survey (21.8 % + 5.3%) had reported feeling left out or excluded either sometimes or frequently. In this instance, reviewers felt that the conclusion was not supported by the data, since a sizeable proportion of the respondents had expressed those feelings of exclusion or feeling left out. (CFR 1.4)

While the team applauded the considerable amount of research done in pursuit of Theme I, team members did not find the theme to include an analysis of student success data, as would have been appropriate to this theme. An analysis of the retention rates presented to the Board of Trustees in Fall 2014 (Executive Cabinet Date, Fall 2014, available on IR site), demonstrates substantial decreases in first-year retention overall from



cohort year 2012 to cohort year 2013. Declines year over year are particularly acute among female and Latino students in cohort year 2013. These data were available on the UWest Institutional Research website, and team members wondered why extant data of such high relevance to the analysis had been omitted from the Theme I essay. Student success data are alluded to but only briefly in the discussion under Theme II of the lack of assessment data in the Business Program (EER, page 32). Team members saw a need for more integrated usage of student success data and follow-up to benchmark inclusion at other institutions. **The team recommends that the university accelerate its analysis and usage of student success data. The team found that UWest is in the early stages of understanding retention, persistence, and completion patterns of its students, and of disaggregating information so the university can take steps to improve student completion and success. The team recommends that UWest develop goals and targets by looking at other institutions, and by looking at good practices from among other institutions.** (CFRs 1.2, 2.10)

Under President Morgan's leadership, UWest has already begun a broad-based and inclusive strategic planning process, one that has featured open meetings to gather input from students, staff and faculty on the vision and direction for UWest. That process will result in a completed strategic plan in early 2015. The MCC survey has provided UWest with a much deeper knowledge of its students, their perceptions of diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism at UWest in general and more specifically within their coursework. The results of the student artifact analysis undertaken demonstrated that while the ILOs are all addressed within the UWest curricula, the ILOs are not addressed in

equal proportion to one another. The Team agreed that while the relative emphasis of the ILOs in coursework was at the sole discretion of the institution, UWest will need to decide consciously as an academic community on the appropriate emphasis of each ILO in each program, based on further analysis, benchmarking, and goal setting. (CFRs 1.2, 2.4, 3.6, 4.5, 4.6)

The Team found Theme I to be highly appropriate, even critical at this time, to the UWest mission. Team members agreed that the essay represents a timely, appropriate and honest attempt to understand vital issues confronting the institution, to rationally analyze those issues in an inclusive manner, and to plot a course to address the findings. Team members found particularly noteworthy that the research conducted had included a focus group component specifically for those students who had difficulty understanding the MCC survey, written in English, and applauded UWest's inclusiveness in that regard. However, the lack of student success data as a central component of the research weakened the research design, and Team members agreed that disaggregated student success data should be incorporated in the next phase of the project, such that UWest is able to target its interventions appropriately, develop the climate for diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism, and ensure that its students persist to graduation regardless of ethnicity, religion or gender. (CFRs 1.1, 1.4, 1.2, 1.7, 2.10, 3.6)

#### **B. Theme II Academic Effectiveness**

In Theme II: Academic Effectiveness the University asserts that “all academic and co-curricular programs are participating in learning outcomes assessment at the time of this report, and most have implemented comprehensive assessment plans” (EER page 17).

Theme II focuses on academic learning outcomes assessment, beginning with the development of learning outcomes, continuing with the implementation of comprehensive assessment and the progress of individual academic departments, and concluding with an impressive list of examples of changes made to the academic program based on assessment results.

Evidence reviewed for Theme II by the visiting team include course syllabi and student evaluations, considerable student data compiled by Institutional Research, disaggregated time-to-degree statistics, assessment data from the academic departments (including assessment plans, curriculum maps, rubrics, portfolios, surveys, external evaluations, and annual reviews), learning outcomes at all levels, and a large number of assessment policies (including the campus program reviews policy and procedure and a clear set of “Guiding Principles for Assessment”). The team also had full access to UWest materials on the TaskStream site. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7)

The university is engaged in the systematic collection of both direct and indirect evidence of student learning at the course, program, and institutional level. TaskStream assessment software, with implementation beginning in spring 2012, forms the backbone of the system for gathering, organizing, presenting, and reviewing data; however, other data—from surveys; enrollment, retention, and graduation information; and program reviews—are also part of a clearly diagrammed system (“Assessment System Diagram”). (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5)

The TaskStream system requires students to upload their work and faculty to evaluate that work using rubrics agreed upon in advance by the faculty, who are notified by the

system when a student submits an artifact. Both full-time faculty (in summer) and adjuncts are paid on a *per diem* basis for assessment work. The information in the system is then available for use as evidence for identifying problems in the learning environment and changes that are deemed necessary. (CFR 3.1)

Learning outcomes have been developed and aligned at all levels based on the institutional mission as well as Bloom's taxonomy and other rubrics to ensure that Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are clear and measurable. Faculty were involved in ILO development so that alignment with Program and Course Learning Outcomes (PLOs, CLOs) would be facilitated. UWest began collecting assessment data on the revised ILOs during the 2012-13 academic year. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6)

Academic assessment processes are overseen by three committees: The University-Wide Assessment Council, which reviews assessment plans and methodologies, ensures reliability and validity, and examines survey and course evaluations; the Academic Policy and Curriculum Committee, which reviews proposed changes based on completed assessments; and the Mission and Identity Committee, which curates the ILOs through annual review based on surveys, focus groups, and co-curricular assessments. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 3.7, 4.1, 4.4, 4.5)

Comprehensive assessment based on the revised ILOs began during the 2012-13 academic year. Mapping of the entire curriculum revealed that ILO 1 Wisdom and Skillful Means is most frequently reflected in the curriculum, with approximately 50% of assessed artifacts representing this one outcome. Co-curricular outcomes are more evenly dispersed among the four ILOs. (CFRs 2.3, 2.11)

Another significant element of academic effectiveness at UWest is the Annual Program Review, implemented during the 2012-13 academic year. All academic programs at the university present these annual reviews. The Annual Program Reviews generally are based on two or more assessments, and may also include meta-assessment considerations. For example, the 2014 Annual Program Review from the Department of Psychology included direct evidence of learning from the comprehensive exams taken by students in the MA Psych program, as well as indirect evidence from a Student Self-evaluation Form. Both were used to assess PLO 9, which focuses on understanding culture.

The visiting team was able to examine annual program reviews and several other types of assessment documents for the Departments of General Education & General Studies (both of which are summarized in some detail, below), Religious Studies, Psychology, and Buddhist Chaplaincy. Two departments, English and Business Administration, did not complete comprehensive assessment activities; English because of its extremely small number of declared majors (four), and Business due to transitional issues (a new chair for the department began work on August 1, 2014).

General Education assessment using the TaskStream system and based on a five-year assessment plan included an external peer review and a review of PLO 3.2 Information Literacy and PLO 4.1 Written Communication during the 2013-14 academic year. The external review, conducted by reviewers from the University of La Verne, focused on the mission of the university and the effectiveness of the GE assessment plan. Reviewers found that while the outcomes for the GE program are aligned with the mission, one department (Business Administration) relies too heavily on the GE curriculum to integrate the mission

into its programs. The reviewers also recommended the addition of new courses integrating creative and artistic expression. Such a class was added in fall 2014. Finally, the external reviewers found that while the assessment plan looks effective theoretically, it is “untested” and will require continuous monitoring and refinement. Further, the number of PLOs (19) is too ambitious for realistic assessment. The university has since reduced the number of GE PLOs to 9. Assessment of the Information Literacy and Written Communication PLOs was based on artifacts from upper-division GE courses and a GE exit survey. While a few recommendations emerged from this review, the GE chair found that “this first assessment may be useful largely as a baseline for future assessments” (EER page 26). (CFRs 2.4, 2.7, 4.5)

The Religious Studies Department was selected by the university to demonstrate the assessment practices currently in use. A five-year assessment plan for the department was approved in September 2013. The plan includes five elements: (1) External Peer Review; (2) Course Review (TaskStream); (3) Student Portfolio Review (TaskStream); (4) Internal Self-Studies and Program Reviews; and (5) Meta-Assessment. .

The February 2014 external review of the Department of Religious Studies, conducted by professors from California State University, Fullerton, and the Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture at the University of Southern California, provided a discussion of the proposed new ThD in Buddhist Studies, including a detailed philosophical discussion of whether or not the term “theology” can be used in relation to Buddhism. More practical concerns were also addressed; the reviewers found that dissertation quality had improved since a 2010 review, and that the REL course offerings

were too numerous and out of date in the current catalog (corrected in the 2014-15 catalog).

The Religious Studies Department also did an Annual Program Review in spring 2014. The process resulted in several findings and actions, principally the development and implementation of new assessment method for the dissertation and the removal of the preliminary exam for the PhD program, which was deemed no longer relevant. Concerns were also noted regarding time to degree for PhD students; the department plans to review the data in a fall 2014 faculty meeting. (CFRs 2.4, 2.7, 4.5)

The visiting team observed considerable assessment activity, data collection, and review taking place at the university through the annual program review. Five-year program reviews are scheduled to take place in Spring 2015 for all departments in conjunction with the strategic planning process. Given the intensity and volume of assessment and program review activity already underway, **the team recommends that the university examine and streamline all processes involving program review, external review, and assessment, and look for crosswalks between ongoing assessment, program review, and annual reporting. The team also suggests that the university consider a staggered system of in-depth program reviews on a recurring cycle.** (CFRs 2.7, 2.10, 4.1, 4.4)

The university presented an exhaustive list of the number of implemented changes to curriculum and pedagogy, including the hiring of new faculty, changes to course offerings, and increased budget that have occurred since the CPR visit in 2011. This “closing the loop” section is a response to the Commission action letter of March 2013. Clearly many improvements have been made in the academic programs, including the creation of a

summer Bridge to University program for underprepared students, increased faculty salaries, the addition of several professors and support personnel, a large increase in instructional spending, and many more. (CFRs 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 3.1, 4.3)

UWest concluded Theme II by outlining what it considers to be on-going challenges in the area of learning outcome assessment. The university notes that it is “grappling with...faculty workload” (page 34), and concludes that it needs to continue to hire new faculty as part of the forthcoming strategic plan. Enrollment caps in some departments and workload policies are also in place. Support staff will also be helpful in easing faculty overloads. (CFRs 3.1, 3.2)

Another ongoing challenge involves adjunct professors, who are not always “as deeply embedded in the university culture” as full-time faculty, and may not be as able to initiate students into the unique mission and outcomes of UWest, yet are teaching introductory-level courses. Adjuncts are also not required to shoulder administrative duties such as advising, committee work, and so on. The university is dealing with this challenge by providing incentive pay for adjuncts to help with some activities but acknowledges that the strategic plan will need to call for more classes to be taught by full-time faculty. (CFRs 2.1, 3.1, 3.2)

Further, the university notes that the “often turbulent adjustment many of our students make to college life” (page 34) is also a challenge it is trying to address. More local, first-generation students, often underprepared by their high schools, require more bridge courses, tutoring, and co-curricular support program. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.13)

Finally, UWest notes that graduate students (who constitute the majority at UWest)



would also benefit from the hiring of more full-time faculty, especially in the Psychology and Buddhist Chaplaincy programs, as well as from increased opportunities to gain practical experience in their fields, as provided by internships, assistantships, clinical experiences, and practica. (CFRs 2.1, 2.5, 2.10, 3.1, 4.4)

### **C. Theme III Co-curricular Integration**

A separate chapter in the UWest EER self-study was devoted to co-curricular issues. In addition, a report from Hightower Consulting on enrollment efforts was examined. Staffing was also considered, based on current occupants of positions. The visiting team interviewed all staff and faculty involved in co-curricular activities.

UWest formed a Co-Curricular Taskforce in 2012 to examine outcomes for co-curricular activities and assess them in regard to the ILOs. This group has carefully evaluated needs in the co-curricular area. As a result, there has been a large increase in professional staffing in the past two years in areas such as student services, including Student Life, Residence Life, Advising, Wellness Center, and Career Center. These programs appear to be mostly in their infancy, as the people heading them have been hired only recently. Appropriately, these newly hired professionals have been educated as to the ILOs and the roles of such experiences as first year activities, service learning, and study abroad. The goals are ambitious. (CFR 2.11)

In addition, the Taskforce has set up an assessment mechanism for evaluating the success of the co-curricular activities. This group has produced a survey document that can be customized for any activity, such as a field trip. Drop-down menus are used to generate a survey specific for the ILO and activity and the results of the survey can be used to assess

the effects of the activity on the students who undertook it. The university should take this one step further and analyze the effectiveness of each particular program. (CFR 2.11)

Special programs for first-year student orientation and identification of students in need of assistance have been set up and are operational. Of special note is a new emphasis on admissions and marketing. A frankly critical report from Hightower Consulting has been taken seriously and the hiring of a Dean of Enrollment is the first response. Other staff hiring has also been recommended by Hightower. While the enrollment and outreach issues permeate the institution, they are relevant to the co-curriculum in terms of attracting and retaining a diverse student body committed to the distinctive ILO's of the university. The Office of Institutional Research has recently conducted an environmental scan that indicates great potential for attracting the right kind of student. (CFR 2.13)

The team visited the library and interviewed the librarian and her assistant. This small library is a gem. Specialized holdings in Buddhist texts are at a research level, and the availability of online materials is excellent. Membership in local library groups allows access to books within a day or two from world-class libraries at other universities. Both undergraduate and graduate students praised the personnel and facilities at the library. (CFRs 2.3, 3.5)

The graduate programs at UWest have been successful at placing students in careers relevant to their education. The team met several alumni and was deeply impressed not only with their careers, but with the values that they had retained from their experience at UWest. Career services for undergraduates are more problematic, in part because the number of bachelor's degree graduates has been very low (29 in 2011-2014). But

undergraduate enrollments are rising and the university has hired a career planning staff member.

The team was impressed with several curriculum enhancement activities that can be described as service or experiential learning. A University of the West Socially Responsible Investment Fund along with a trading room gives students real-world investing experience in the context of the values inherent in the institutional mission. The Buddhist Chaplaincy program places interns in hospitals and prisons. The psychology faculty has proposed an outpatient clinic for the Marriage and Family Therapy students on campus. These activities already in place are to be commended, as they not only provide students with practical, career-oriented experience but also bring the university to the wider world. The team found a need for continued enhancements to the graduate programs and professional preparation of the graduate students, **including enhanced resources for research and increased numbers of full-time graduate faculty. As enrollments continue to climb, the team recommends that the university consider providing additional opportunities, such as student teaching for the doctoral students, developing plans for an outpatient clinic that would utilize psychology students, and experiential learning for the business students.** (CFRs 2.2b, 2.10)

#### **D. Theme IV Planning for Growth**

One of the themes that UWest identified for its accreditation review was Planning for Growth. The university has made preliminary plans for growth, as reflected in 2012 board-established priorities and in a summary strategic plan and three-year budget, and has

started a more inclusive, systematic strategic planning process that will lead to a full plan (Vision 2020). (CFRs 4.3, 4.6, 4.7)

### **Preliminary plans through 2018**

The Board of Trustees adopted four strategic priorities in 2012: Increasing enrollment, improving communication, growing academically, and growing financially. In its June 2014 Strategic and Pro Forma Budget Report, four new strategic objectives were stated, building on the board's four priorities:

(1) To reach the target number of students each year (increasing the total number of students by 50 each year) by recruiting more qualified and diverse students and improving retention rates. If met, this goal will bring enrollment to 550 headcount/418 FTE in 2017-18.

(2) To continuously improve quality of programs and produce better quality graduates.

(3) To continuously improve the university's reputation and recognition through a studied enhancement of all dimensions of its internal and external communications so as to better fulfill the university's mission.

(4) To continuously improve the university's financial strength, stability and sustainability.

The following is a summary of UWest's progress in each of these areas.

#### ***Increasing Enrollment***

UWest is already making considerable progress in meeting its key goal of increasing enrollment, which has grown from 162FTE/222 headcount in Fall 2010 to 330FTE/393 headcount in Fall 2014. (Its goal for Fall 2014 was 400 headcount.) Improvements in

marketing, financial aid, and admissions processes have contributed to the enrollment increase. A steady stream of prospective students from Taiwan and mainland China come to UWest to study, and a growing number of domestic students, mostly from the surrounding local community, are enrolling in UWest. Many of the younger students are coming from feeder high schools and colleges, and others are working adults returning to college to complete a degree or attend one of the graduate programs. The student body is about half international students and half domestic students. The graduate enrollment is larger than undergraduate. Baccalaureate students come either as first-time freshmen or as transfer students. There is housing on campus for 186 students.

As part of its strategic planning process described below, the newly appointed Dean of Enrollment and her task force (made up of admissions, financial aid and other key personnel) will prepare a detailed enrollment management plan that will include goals and targets by program and various categories of students, strategies and tactics, budgets, timelines, and metrics. This work will be guided by a report from a consulting firm, whose advice is largely being followed. The plan will target specific categories of students (e.g., domestic and international; freshmen, transfers, and graduate). The team took note that as it is presently constituted the enrollment management function is in its early stages, and the development of an enrollment management plan will not be complete until spring 2015. **The team recommends that the university continue to develop and implement its enrollment management plan as part of the strategic planning process.** (CFRs 3.1, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7)

The work on the values and vision of UWest, which has been done in Fall 2014 as the first phase of the strategic plan, should position UWest well to project to the public and prospective students a clear and understandable identity and mission. (CFRs 1.1, 3.5)

### *Improving Communication*

As noted by the fall 2012 WASC Special Visit team, communication has improved substantially both internally and externally. A Mission and Identity Committee, whose work is described in Theme I, was formed in 2011 and developed several approaches that are in various stages of implementation. Among the approaches were developing a vision (which was done as part of the strategic planning), communicating internally with students in various ways and with more frequency, involving faculty in outreach through professional conferences, and developing strategic partnerships and collaborations. A promotional video that can be used for several purposes was also developed. A newly hired Career Services Coordinator will connect the university to employers.

In discussing plans with the Strategic Planning Task Force and leaders, it was clear that connecting to the local community will be an important element of the new strategic plan as the university reaches out more systematically to prospective students in the community and seeks to create a role for itself as a resource to the community. Internal communication seems to be quite effective, especially in terms of the highly inclusive and collaborative way in which the strategic planning is being conducted with the active involvement of all constituents. (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)

### *Growing Academically*

UWest was granted interim approval by WASC to offer its new Doctor of Theology degree (ThD in Applied Buddhist Studies) and was awaiting the related Structural Change visit and approval at the time of this EER visit. This will be the only new program in recent years, as a decision was made not to develop new programs until existing ones were larger and stronger.

A new Integrated Education Taskforce is now working on developing interdisciplinary learning and perspectives, embedding service learning more deeply across the programs, and expanding internships and study abroad. The team met with this task force and found that groundwork had been laid for a deeper conversation about each of the areas the group is studying. The team suggests that next steps might include more clearly defining “interdisciplinary” and the ways in which this concept might best fit within the “whole person” model of education at UWest; and differentiating this from the other practices that have fallen within the scope of this task force, which seem to be mostly high-impact experiential modes of learning (such as service learning, internships and study abroad). (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.10, 4.4)

In other parts of the UWest self-study, the team found evidence of growth and improvement of the academic enterprise. For example, in the last two to three years, as a result of various assessment and review initiatives, UWest has eliminated the overlap of undergraduate and graduate courses; increased the number of full-time faculty for General Education, English, Psychology, Religious Studies, Buddhist Chaplaincy; made several positive curricular changes to programs at all levels and in all departments; and added more administrative support for the academic departments. (CFRs 2.3, 2.5, 2.7, 4.1, 4.4)

The June 2014 preliminary plan and budget shows that there will be enrollment in new programs in 2017. No specific programs have been identified yet, but may arise from the strategic planning process.

Improvements to support academic quality and effectiveness are addressed in the section immediately below.

### *Growing Financially*

As noted by the Fall 2012 Special Visit team, UWest has addressed its earlier financial challenges well and has realized surpluses in recent years. Its surplus for FY 2014 is expected to be more than one million dollars. This improvement is a direct result of generous support from the Order, increased enrollment revenue, and careful monitoring of expenditures. (CFR 3.4)

At the request of the Commission, UWest developed a pro forma financial plan that matches newly forecast institutional revenues with the institutional expenses required to support anticipated growth. The Commission indicated that, “A strategic financial planning and budgeting process needs to be developed, and implemented before the institutional review.” (CFR 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)

The team reviewed UWest’s “5-Year Strategic and Pro-Forma Budget Report” (dated June 2014 and covering the years 2013-18), which anticipates and supports the strategic plan that is in development. This plan clearly lays out the university’s goals and the budgets needed to support them. A timeline provided demonstrates an 18-month participatory process in plan development, beginning with the Executive Team, which calls for wide consultation in the institution, approval by the Board of Trustees, and



revision/implementation by the Executive Team. (CFR 4.6, 4.7)

Major goals in the plan include increases in enrollment to support the budget and improvements in institutional expenditures to support the increased numbers of students. The major changes in the plan on the revenue side are a doubling of tuition revenue from increased enrollment and increases in tuition rates (about 5% per year) and a 25% decrease in donations from the Board of Trustees. The tuition dependency is expected to increase from 50% to 70% during the plan period. On the expenditure side, there are modest increases in the instructional budget and larger increases in institutional support (e.g., institutionally funded financial aid and physical plant) as UWest catches up with its infrastructure needs to support larger enrollments and positions itself for further increases beyond the plan period. (CFR 3.4, 4.6)

The university is in an enviable position financially, in that it has generous external support from the Fo Guang Shan order, and usually ends the fiscal year with a substantial surplus. Indeed, the team noted several key indicators of the financial strength of the institution: UWest has nearly three million dollars in cash, has total assets of 30 million dollars, and earned nearly a million dollars in investment income in 2013. However, the proportion of its revenue devoted to instructional expenses has not grown over the last five years, and in some areas appears to be declining. While the team applauds the careful financial controls and appreciates the desire to have substantial reserves, it concluded that UWest should be re-investing more of the margin to support the quality and planned growth of the academic programs.

**The team recommends that, for the next five years, the university budget less**

conservatively and invest in the academic infrastructure that will serve the planned enrollment growth and promote educational effectiveness. For example, the need for additional full-time faculty members was acknowledged in several places through the institutional report. (CFR 2.1, 3.1) The university leadership at all levels understands this, and team was informed that a faculty-staffing plan with criteria for triggering hires would be part of the final strategic plan.

Additional support to promote student success, to provide opportunities for service learning, and to enhance support for scholarship were also part of the emerging plan; the team supports the funding of these key academic activities. (CFRs 2.1, 2.8, 2.10, 2.13, 3.1-3.3, 4.6, 4.7) The board and administration may wish to consider adopting guidelines on the proportion of revenue that is devoted to instructional expenses.

### **Strategic Plan: Vision 2020**

When President Stephen Morgan joined UWest in June 2013, he immediately took steps to start a strategic planning process that would address growth in detail. The process has involved collaboration among all constituents and will result in a five-year strategic plan and detailed departmental plans (to be completed by June 2015).

The first step of this process has been completed with the examination and reaffirmation of the mission; restatement of the vision; and clarification of values. The Strategic Planning Task Force spoke enthusiastically about the importance of this first phase of the planning process. They found that deep discussions about the meaning of their shared values had a salutary effect on both achieving consensus on values and building a stronger sense of unity in an already close community. (CFRs 1.1, 4.6)

Part of phase 1 of the planning process involved conducting an analysis of internal and external factors, including the changes taking place in economic, social, technological, and education domains, and considering how these would affect UWest. A summary of the external factors cited two or three important changes in each of these areas and the Strategic Planning Task Force was conversant with this document and could address what they perceived to be the most important external trends. For example, the summary noted areas for employment growth, the intellectual skills that employers seek, the possible impact of the Dream Act, changing demographics, and the growth of online education. Without having a completed strategic plan at the time of the visit, the team was unable to assess how effectively the plan anticipates and addresses the rapidly changing environment for higher education and how it will affect UWest; however, the team is confident that these factors are being carefully considered in the planning process. (CFRs 4.6-4.7)

The next phase of the planning process will be for the Strategic Planning Task Force to develop overarching institutional goals, especially for enrollment. That process will be completed by about year-end 2014 and will be followed by the development of departmental plans. These plans will be reconciled and integrated into a final university-wide strategic plan in spring 2015 and presented to the Board of Trustees for approval. The final plan will have the objectives, targets, timelines, and metrics that characterize sound and useful planning. The team was impressed with the systematic and thoughtful approach to the planning and is confident that the final plan will be evidence-based and collaboratively developed blueprint for UWest's next five years. Given its importance to overall institutional direction, **the team recommends that UWest continue its work on**

**the strategic plan, and develop measurable goals, initiatives, indicators of success, and budgetary implications as planned. (CFRs 4.5-4.7)**

In summary, UWest has made considerable progress in planning for growth, and will complete its full five-year strategic plan in spring 2015. At this point, planning for growth is lagging behind the growth itself. The team congratulates UWest for the steady incremental pace of growth, both in both enrollment and finances, over the past four years, while at the same time having some concerns about the impact of that growth on the institution and its capacity to educate the larger numbers of students in the excellent manner that it values and aspires to. For example, faculty-staffing plans would serve UWest well by anticipating the needs for core and/or full-time faculty and being able to search for and fund these positions in a timely way. Specific and targeted enrollment management might result in meeting goals by attracting the right kind of students for the specific programs that most need an enrollment boost. Comprehensive orientation and support plans, especially for freshmen, should improve retention, continuing enrollment and completion, which will also contribute to the good reputation of UWest. The team supports UWest in the development of these plans and encourages timely completion and implementation.

(CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 2.10, 2.13, 4.1-4.3, 4.5-4.7)

#### **E. Other Matters Raised on the Visit**

##### **Standard 1**

Team members noted that results from the spring 2014 Student Satisfaction Survey reflect a decline over the past four years in staff and faculty ratings on two important items: “Leadership at UWest is qualified to provide for efficient operations,” and “Leadership at

UWest is sufficient in numbers to provide efficient operations.” Both these results point to a need for leadership renewal as has already begun at the institution. While the numerous recent leadership changes at UWest have brought additional strength to institutional leadership and ability to focus on mission accomplishment, the team was eager to see further progress both on the hiring of a new Chief Academic Officer and on fuller utilization of academic and fiscal resources to accomplish the institutional mission. (CFR 3.6, 3.7)

### **Standard 2**

On the Schedule of Classes, the team found that almost all courses for undergraduates meet only once per week, typically for three hours, with almost no classes held on Fridays. Team members noted several problems with this scheduling approach. First and foremost, it can affect student learning. A robust finding in the educational research literature indicates that lower-division students learn, understand and retain more if there are several class meetings of 1-1.5 hours each. Second, having several class meetings per week would result in faculty being on campus more days per week, being available for student interaction and advising. Third, while there may be adequate classroom space for the university to teach its curriculum now, as the university grows and adds more courses, this may not be so. **The team recommends that the university adopt evidence-based practices for class scheduling that promote student learning and success, and invest in the academic infrastructure that will serve the planned enrollment growth and promote educational effectiveness.** (CFRs 2.4, 2.5)

### **Standard 3**

As noted above, University of the West has 17 full-time and about 40 adjunct faculty members. Several of the full-time faculty members serve as department chairs or assistant chairs. Full-time faculty members teach six courses a year or have a reduced load for administrative and other kinds of projects, e.g., four if they are chairs or five if they serve as assistant chair. The faculty is represented on university-wide committees, including Strategic Planning, Academic Policy and Curriculum Committee (APCC), Mission and Identity Committee, and University-Wide Assessment Council. (CFRs 3.1-3.3)

University of the West also has a Faculty Senate, which is composed of faculty members, three of whom serve as officers and others who are elected as representatives of their departments. The level of activity of the Senate has been uneven over the years, and it has inherited a cumbersome set of organizing documents that the faculty leaders find are not necessary or workable for a small institution. Related is the lack of a formal written approval process for approving new programs; the university does follow a practice that involves presenting the proposal to the APCC and other entities.

The Senate is attempting to establish a clear and appropriate place for itself in the university governance structure with a well-understood scope of authority and role in academic decision-making. The team encourages the university to support this effort to clarify decision-making processes and ensure a robust role for faculty in academic oversight. (CFRs 3.7, 3.10)

## SECTION III

### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CAPACITY AND PREPARATORY REVIEW AND THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

#### Commendations

1. The team commends UWest for the strong, engaged implementation of assessment in the last two years, and continuous improvements in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. A culture of assessment is apparent, and faculty are on board. It was evident to the team that the institution is doing assessment for improvement of student learning. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 4.3, 4.4)
2. The team commends UWest for its expansion of the Board to include committed and knowledgeable independent members, all of whom share the values of the institution. The independence accorded to the Board by the Order and the fact that the Board has brought in a senior leader with deep experience in American higher education is commendable. The Board displayed high engagement with the institution, understanding the Board's own need for further expansion, greater gender and ethnic diversity, and more local representation from the community. (CFR 1.5)
3. The team commends UWest on the development and implementation of a thorough, in-depth presidential evaluation process. (CFRs 3.1, 3.7-3.9; Policy on Independent Boards)
4. The team found Theme I of the EER report, on Mission and Multiculturalism, to be highly appropriate, even critical at this time, to the UWest mission. Team members agreed that the essay represents a timely, appropriate, and honest attempt

to understand vital issues confronting the institution, to analyze those issues rationally and in an inclusive manner, and to begin to address the findings. The team commends UWest for its engagement in Theme I. As UWest expands its enrollment and the diversity in its student body, this theme provides a critical, data-informed perspective on further actions needed to support the success of its students. (CFRs 1.1, 1.4, 2.10)

### **Recommendations**

1. The team recommends that the university examine and streamline all processes involving program review, external review, and assessment, and look for crosswalks between ongoing assessment, program review, and annual reporting. The team also suggests that the university consider a staggered system of in-depth program reviews on a recurring cycle. (CFRs 2.7, 2.10, 4.1, 4.4)
2. The team recommends that the university accelerate its analysis and usage of student success data. The team found that UWest is in the early stages of understanding retention, persistence and completion patterns of its students, and of disaggregating information so the university can improve student completion and success at the undergraduate level. The team recommends that UWest develop goals and targets by looking at other institutions, and by looking at good practices from among other institutions. (CFR 1.2, 2.10)
3. The team noted that UWest has begun a broad-based and highly inclusive strategic planning process. However, the strategic plan was not complete at the time of the visit. The team recommends that UWest continue its work on the strategic plan,



and develop measurable goals, initiatives, indicators of success, and budgetary implications as planned. (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)

4. On the Schedule of Classes, the team found that almost all courses for undergraduates meet only once per week, typically for three hours, with almost none on Fridays. Team members noted several problems with this scheduling approach. First and foremost, it can affect student learning. A robust finding in the educational research literature indicates that lower division students learn, understand, and retain more if there are several class meetings of 1-1.5 hours each. Second, having several class meetings per week would result in faculty being on campus more days per week, being available for student interaction and advising. Third, while there may be adequate classroom space for the university to teach its curriculum now, as the university grows and adds more courses, this may not be so. The team recommends that the university adopt evidence-based practices for class scheduling that promote student learning and success, and invest in the academic infrastructure that will serve the planned enrollment growth and promote educational effectiveness. (CFRs 2.4, 2.5)
5. The team took note of the recent hiring of a new Dean of Enrollment Management. As it is presently constituted the enrollment management function is in its early stages, and the development of an enrollment management plan will not be complete until spring 2015. The team recommends that the university continue to develop and implement its enrollment management plan as part of the strategic planning process. (CFRs 3.1, 3.7, 4.6, 4.7)

6. The team found a need for continued enhancements to the graduate programs and professional preparation of the graduate students, including enhanced resources for research and increased numbers of full-time graduate faculty. As enrollments continue to climb, the team recommends that the university consider providing additional opportunities, such as student teaching for the doctoral students, developing plans for an outpatient clinic that would utilize psychology students, and experiential learning for the business students. (CFRs 2.2b, 2.10)

## APPENDICES

- A. Credit Hour Review Checklist
- B. Transfer Credit Review Checklist
- C. Marketing and Recruitment Checklist
- D. Student Complaints Review Checklist

**1. CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW CHECKLIST: University of the West**

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Where is the policy located? Website and will be in next catalog
	Comments: Should be more easily searchable on website.
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)? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
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? NOT APPLICABLE AS UWEST DOES NOT OFFER ANY ONLINE DEGREE PROGRA,S
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?
	What degree level(s)?
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
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? 3
	What kinds of courses? Clinical/intern and independent study
	What degree level(s)? undergraduate and master's
	What discipline(s)? Business, Psychology
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? All
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? All degree programs
	What degree level(s)? Bachelors (120 semester units), Master's (33-72 s.u.), Doctorate (63 s.u.)
	What discipline(s)? Religious Studies/Divinity, Business, Psychology, English, General Studies
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

Review Completed By: Teri Cannon for Team  
Date: October 28, 2014

**4 – TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW CHECKLIST**

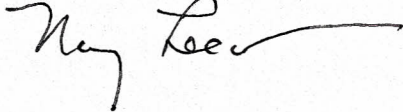
Under federal regulations\*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit?	yes
	Is the policy publically available? If so, where?	yes - Academic Catalogue
	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?	yes
	Comments:	

\*§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:   
 Date: 10/28/14

## 2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

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.	Verified Yes/No
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?	Yes
	Comments: <i>Reviewed admissions procedures and interviewed staff.</i>	
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree?	Yes
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree?	Yes
	Comments: <i>Reviewed data and catalog.</i>	
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?	Yes
	Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?	Yes
	Comments: <i>Reviewed programs and interviewed faculty and students</i>	

\*§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: *David Sadava*  
Date: *October 28, 2014*

### 3. STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW CHECKLIST

Under federal regulation\*, WASC 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.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?	Yes
	Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where?	Yes, in the Catalog
	Comments: Policy is updated periodically. Grade grievance policy is published on page 80 of 2014-2015 Catalog. Student grievance policy is published on pages 89-90 of 2014-2015 Catalog.	
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly: A grievable action is defined as one that is unauthorized or unjustified and adversely affects the status, rights, or privileges of the student, including actions based on race, color, nationality, religion, gender, gender expression or gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age or disability.  The policy has an informal Step 1 followed if/as necessary by a formal action Step 2. Formal complaints must be written and submitted on the Student Grievance Form. Stages include preliminary investigation, formal hearing, and appeals process.	Yes.
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes.
	Comments: Few complaints have been received at UWest. Reviewers examined one extensive case of alleged retaliation, harassment, insult and discrimination and noted that the Institution had followed its procedures exhaustively in coming to resolution.	
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? Where? Records are maintained by the Dean of Student Affairs.	Yes.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly: The Dean of Student Affairs tracks and monitors student complaints over time.	
	Comments: Records are kept in a secure file by the Dean of Student Affairs, who tracks the progress of individual complaints as well as monitoring the occurrence of complaints over time.	

\*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

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

Review Completed By: J. Joseph Hoey, Ed.D., Team Chair

Date: 10/28/2014