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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

This report of the special accreditation visit to the San Jose State University (SJSU) is a follow up to the re-accreditation review conducted in 2015. In that review, the evaluation team raised a number of concerns about leadership, organizational climate, shared governance and diversity. In acting on the team's report, the accrediting commission granted SJSU reaccreditation for seven years, and called for a special visit to take place in the spring of 2017, focused on the issues of leadership, organizational climate, shared governance, and diversity. The special visit timetable was moved at the request of the university to the fall of 2017 subsequent to the appointment of a new president in 2016. This report of the special visit focuses only on the major issues raised in the prior review; it is not a comprehensive visit of all aspects of the institution. The evaluation team is substantially the same as the 2015 team.

A. Description of Institution

San Jose State University (SJSU), situated on 154 acres in downtown San Jose, in the heart of Silicon Valley, is the oldest in the 23-campus California State University (CSU) system —it was founded in 1857 and became the first institution of public higher education in California (CSU website). SJSU is an institution with a long tradition and an important role within the CSU and in California. Its mission is "to enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship." Its proximity to Silicon Valley provides it with a great opportunity to not only educate the future citizens of California and of the world but also create a workforce that can be competitive and informed in all professions recognized today and those to be developed in the future.

are design studies, psychology, kinesiology, biological sciences, and business). The top five most popular graduate programs are software engineering, electrical engineering, computer engineering, library & information science, and industrial engineering (SJSU Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Analytics).

The hospitality extended to the evaluation team by SJSU was most gracious and appreciated. The team appreciated the candor, as well as the open and forthright manner in which comments were made in all of its interactions. The institution provided convenient and comfortable meeting rooms, as well as technical support to assist with the team's technology needs. The team's requests for additional information during the visit were met with a high degree of responsiveness.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The evaluation team met with SJSU administrators, including leadership teams concerned with student affairs, as well as academic affairs. Meetings held with other key groups included the African American/Black Student Success Center, the Chicanx/Latinx Student Success Center, the UndocuSpartan Program, Student Resource Centers, the "4 Pillars Team," and faculty representatives from the Senate Executive Committee and the Accreditation Review Committee. Open forums were also held with students, faculty, and staff.

C. Institution's Special Report: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The university prepared the special report addressing the focused issues of leadership, organizational climate, shared governance, campus climate, and diversity. The report contained appropriate documentation supporting its narrative.

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SECTION II – EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. Issue: Leadership, Organizational Climate, and Shared Governance

Leadership and Organizational Climate

transitions will likely continue, and there appear to be many transitions at the dean's level as well. This level of senior leadership turnover, while not unusual in higher education, could be a continuing source of tension as reorganizations and changes in plans often accompany personnel changes. Overall, the optimism the team heard about the future was tempered by a sense of fatigue from staff over the numerous transitions, especially middle managers, and a resolute sense of commitment from faculty (CFRs 3.6, 3.7).

Shared Governance

In a document shared with the evaluation team entitled, "The State of Shared Governance at San Jose State University," the SJSU Academic Senate Chair described dramatic improvements in shared governance that have taken place in the last two years. In particular, the document credited both the interim president and current president with fully engaging the senate leadership in discussion and open dialogue, as well as the sharing of information and ideas. The senate has also seen stability in leadership which has reinforced the development of stability of shared governance. In a meeting with the evaluation team, the president described the

the Special Visit, members of the President's Cabinet stressed the importance of having common goals and more transparency to facilitate shared governance.

The Special Visit Report cited several new initiatives that improve shared governance at the university. These include establishing a permanent Accreditation Review Committee (ARC), comprised of key members of the senior administration, with representation from faculty and student leaders, and the president's decision to have each cabinet level search be chaired by a faculty member. These new initiatives are an attempt to bridge any distance or concerns about faculty involvement in shared governance. These changes will create more consistent oversight, transparency and leadership on issues important for the university's growth and forward movement (CFRs 3.6, 3.7).

Another positive sign of shared governance was led by the interim president in 2015. The faculty senate passed a resolution in 2015 that affirmed four guiding principles of SJSU shared governance related to collegiality, engagement of appropriate stakeholders, wide consultation on the part of all campus governing bodies, and regular and transparent communication with community stakeholders.

The Special Visit Report also noted that the president holds regular meetings with the chair of the academic senate and other faculty-led groups, and engages in "listening tours" with the colleges. However, faculty noted that the president and chief of staff are less engaged with the senate than the most recent interim president. While faculty praised the president for careful, thoughtful and transparent decision-making and willingness to engage in open discussions, it expressed a desire to have more engagement with the Senate Executive Committee and a need for the goodwill of the president and Senate Executive Committee to "trickle down" to the colleges and departments where some elements of strife and the effects of leadership turnover continue.

In a reorganization of student academic services, the Division of Academic Affairs has formed an Office of Student and Faculty Success which now includes not only traditional student success services such as advising, peer connections, and TRIO programs, but also faculty development and community leadership. At the same time, a new Associate Vice President of Transition and Retention Services position was created and filled in the Division of Student Affairs with responsibilities for oversight of EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) and student success task forces.

The report also notes that there has been a very significant increase in faculty hiring in the last two years, with over one hundred new hires in that period, and with another sixty +/- planned recruitments in the next year. The result of this will be that in the next five to ten years nearly a third of the faculty will have been hired. As is standard as part of this process, new faculty are given reduced teaching loads in order to support their scholarly development. The faculty hiring process has been decentralized at the institution, so responsibility for faculty recruitments lies with the deans and department chairs. While this decentralization of faculty recruitment seems to be working well at the institution, it may inadvertently be a missed opportunity to create the types of cross disciplinary and applied curricula needed to keep San Jose State University at the cutting edge of academic reform. As the strategic plan is further developed, it will be important for the campus to connect that back to faculty recruitment and development (CFRs 3.1, 3.3, and 4.7).

The integration of student success efforts with faculty success is an unusual and potentially promising arrangement; the team was told it was motivated by the premise that student success also requires faculty success. For this to succeed, it will be important for those functions to be supported by an academic vision that seamlessly connects faculty development with curriculum and course planning, faculty recruitment and turnover planning, academic advising, and student support

services. The data needed to better understand the relationship between student success and faculty will also need to be developed, something that the team notes

community seemed pleased with the openness of the campus conversations about strategic planning and with the president's plan to take the time needed to ensure that the process is transparent and inclusive and encourages 'aspirational thinking.'

In addition to a policy regarding strategic planning, under the interim president a

and administrators in Academic Affairs seemed pleased with this organizational change.

Commendations:

SJSU administration is to be commended for its positive momentum in regards to shared governance, as it has demonstrated strong engagement and widespread consultation with faculty in decision-making.

SJSU is to be commended for its efforts towards promoting inclusiveness in its strategic planning efforts.

B. Issue: Campus Climate and Diversity

Campus Climate and Diversity

In spring 2015, all members of the campus community, both employees and students, were invited to participate in a campus climate survey that was designed by the campus. Nearly 7,000 responses were gathered, which indicated issues revolving around safety, communication, and sense of community, as well as dissatisfaction with campus leadership. The campus is planning to administer another campus climate survey in spring 2018, although the survey will likely be different in terms of methodology and scope. The campus is commended for embarking on another campus climate survey and is encouraged to consider adopting a survey instrument that will enable benchmarking with other institutions.

In each of the meetings that the evaluation team conducted with various groups, there appeared to be much optimism as to the apparent consultative nature of the current administration, as well as an overall sense that the campus climate had significantly improved. A notable exception to this were the comments from staff. There was a tone of cautious optimism, however, given the continuous turnover in university leadership over the years, staff expressed frustration and fatigue over changes in upper level and cabinet positions, as well as in organization. The term, "second class" citizens was used by some to describe how they are perceived at the university. It was mentioned by one group that direct communications with the Provost was prohibited at one point, which was a departure from past practice. It is clear that SJSU must pay closer attention to staff concerns, and take steps to address these issues (CFRs 3.2, 3.3).

In addition, in spring 2017, the campus administered the *NSSE* (*National Survey of Student Engagement*) to freshman and senior students. With a response rate of over 40% (more than 4,000 responses), the campus has the data to enable an in-depth analysis of student engagement and to compare those responses to the last administration of the *NSSE* in 2014. Preliminary analyses were shared with the evaluation team, which indicated few improvements in student responses, particularly among seniors, since 2014. The campus is encouraged to analyze and

disseminate these findings soon to facilitate efforts to improve student satisfaction and performance (CFR 2.10).

An area of particular concern that was voiced by a variety of people concerned advising services for students. While efforts have been made to improve academic advising through the formation of Student Success Centers in the colleges and by hiring more advisors, individuals expressed dissatisfaction with advising as students reported rude and culturally insensitive behaviors of advisors as well as an inability to see advisors in a timely manner. The team also learned in meetings with various groups (staff, students) that some advisors were providing inconsistent/inaccurate advising information, and were perhaps not sufficiently attuned to the needs of students with disabilities, first generation college students, and/or veterans. Complaints concerning advising from the aforementioned groups resonated from two reports, "Assessing Overall Climate for Military Veterans at SJSU (Klaw, RSCA Report 2017)," and "Why Do Students Leave? A Study of Student Departure from SJSU." Thus, SJSU is encouraged to continue efforts to further improve advising services (CFRs 2.12, 2.13).

A more positive development is the formation of the "4 Pillars" team comprised of and co-led by Academic Affairs and Student Affairs managers. This group is

focused on addressing obvious, operational issues that impede student success, such as bottleneck courses, and on providing more co-curricular and curricular activities to improve student engagement, to name a few. They are examining metrics of success and setting targets for the colleges to measure effectiveness. The 4 Pillars

team visit is that both the African American and the Chicanx/Latinx Student Success Task Forces have transitioned to baseline funding in Student Affairs. The administration is to be commended for its demonstrated commitment to diversity issues at SJSU (CFR 1.4).

Suggestions:

SJSU consider the development of an overall plan to coordinate the alignment, measurement, and assessment of all co-curricular and diversity training initiatives as they impact student success.

SJSU should align the 4 Pillars activities with other efforts related to student engagement in Student Affairs, the African American/Black and Chicanx/Latinx Student Success Centers, the UndocuSpartan Program, and Student Resource Centers.

SECTION III - FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

Commendations