



Report of the WASC Visiting Team

Educational Effectiveness Review Report

To Teachers College of San Joaquin

September 28-30, 2011

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Candidacy

Team Roster

Kay Llovio, Chair

Ron Germaine, Assistant Chair

Sharon Brown-Welty

Esteban Diaz

Ron Wormser

Barbara Gross Davis, WASC Liaison

The evaluation team in conducting its review was able to evaluate the institution under the WASC Commission Standards and Core Commitments and therefore submits this Report to the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for action and to the institution for consideration.

Table of Contents

Section I. Overview and Context 4

A. Description of Institution and Visit..... 4

Recent accreditation history..... 5

**B. The Institution’s Educational Effectiveness Review Report: Alignment with the
Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report 6**

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review..... 7

Response to CPR team recommendations 9

Section II: Evaluation of Educational Effectiveness Under the Standards 10

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives 10

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions..... 14

Retention, Graduation, and Student Success..... 17

**Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure
Sustainability..... 18**

Faculty and staff..... 18

Fiscal Resources..... 20

Financial Stability. 21

Financial Recession and Impact..... 22

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes. 22

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement 24

Strategic Thinking and Planning..... 24

Commitment to learning and improvement. 25

Systems for Enhancing Educational Effectiveness and Student Learning 26

Section III: Summary Findings and Recommendations 28

Commendations..... 28

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

Major Considerations and Recommendations 29

Appendix A: Compliance Audit 31

Appendix B: Credit Hour Policies and Procedures 35

Section I. Overview and Context

On September 28-30, 2011, a WASC evaluation team of five members visited Teachers College of San Joaquin (TCSJ) in Stockton, California, for the Educational Effectiveness Review (Candidacy) as scheduled with consideration of TCSJ for initial accreditation as stated in the Commission letter dated March 7, 2011. The team acknowledges the gracious hospitality, openness, and cooperation extended by the campus community. Preparation and accommodations for the site visit were most appropriate and served the team well. The team interviewed over 150 members of the TCSJ community during the visit, and met with additional constituents during a reception.

A. Description of Institution and Visit

Operating within the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE), Teachers College of San Joaquin (TCSJ) was founded in 2009 for the purpose of graduate education. It builds upon SJCOE's successful past programs, which include Project Impact, a district internship program, and numerous credentialing programs approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), with the earliest dating back to 1997. Thus, although TCSJ is new, it benefits from a strong infrastructure with experienced, qualified personnel and systems. Establishing appropriate autonomy within its larger context has provided unexpected challenges that the College has aggressively addressed, working with WASC staff to comply with the policy for "Institutions with Non-Educational Components," which states in part that "When it is supported by or affiliated with another organization or is part of a larger organization whose purpose is not primarily higher education, the accredited entity must have 'education as its primary purpose and operate as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.'" This process is discussed in greater detail in Standard Three.

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

TCSJ offers a single Masters of Education degree, with three concentrations, in order to fulfill its mission

to develop a workforce of teachers and school leaders who are comfortable with collaboration, understand the need to prepare students for both work and higher education, and have the skills to develop, implement and sustain innovative educational ideas, including Multiple Pathways programs.

The team saw increased enrollment in each concentration since the October 2010 Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) visit, with a 27% growth overall. In June 2011, 134 students were enrolled in the following areas of concentration within the Masters of Education degree: Educational Inquiry (76); Educational Leadership & School Development (47); Advanced Teaching Practice (11). Additionally, 47 students are pursuing credentials outside the Masters program or are in non-degree, professional development courses.

TCSJ graduated its first class in Spring 2011, awarding degrees to 38 students in three concentrations: Educational Inquiry (27); Educational Leadership and School Development (9); and Advanced Teaching Practice (2).

Recent accreditation history

TCSJ applied for WASC Eligibility in March 2009, and in April 2009 was granted Eligibility status for a period of four years through March 1, 2013. The Eligibility Panel found that all criteria were met, and expressed no concerns about the College moving to the next stage. TCSJ quickly followed with a Letter of Intent to pursue candidacy in October 2009. WASC's letter of November 30, 2009, summarized the progress of TCSJ to date; identified several areas requiring attention including governance, educational objectives, financial accountability, and institutional planning; and outlined the next steps.

In October 2010, a team visited TCSJ for the CPR. In February 2011, the WASC Commission received the CPR report, and recommended TCSJ proceed to the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER), after which the Commission would consider TCSJ for initial

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

accreditation or candidacy, as appropriate. The Commission noted in their action letter that board governance, strategic planning, financial management and oversight, and educational effectiveness at TCSJ required further development. TCSJ's responses to issues raised in the CPR are addressed in section C below.

B. The Institution's Educational Effectiveness Review Report: Alignment with the Proposal and Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

The Educational Effectiveness Review Report prepared by TCSJ is thorough and consistent with the model required to provide evidence of preparedness for Initial Accreditation or Candidacy. Within the narrative response for each Standard of Accreditation, TCSJ framed research questions and sub-questions that parallel the WASC Criteria for Review (CFR); pertinent CFRs were included in the margin of each paragraph and a matrix was provided to direct team members to each CFR reference within the report. The data and documentation to support the report were hyperlinked within the report, again at the end of each standard, and available to the team on a USB flash drive; additional information requested by the team was provided in a timely manner. The team found the report to be a factual and accurate representation of the institution.

The TCSJ Leadership Team -- comprised of the Dean, three department chairs, Office of Institutional Research (OIR) Director, and Registrar -- led the EER process, engaging faculty, administration, staff and students in self-review. As an organization committed to learning and continuous improvement, TCSJ regarded the review as an opportunity to "formalize and strengthen this commitment" (TCSJ EER Report, p. 2). The team commends TCSJ for its commitment to institutional excellence and demonstrated progress in educational effectiveness in the eleven months since the CPR visit. The team also commends SJCOE and TCSJ for their commitment to continue to make progress on governance issues as discussed during the team's

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

visit. Through the experience, TCSJ learned much about its strengths (purpose, program review, and retention) and areas where further progress would be important (governance, strategic planning, and faculty collaboration). In order to develop “a culture of continuous improvement informed by data” (TCSJ EER Report, p. 45), TCSJ identified the following goals for ongoing improvement: greater emphasis on research/publications for faculty, increased enrollment, expanded use of innovative technology, and strengthened ties to business and industry. The team encourages TCSJ to incorporate each improvement goal into its strategic plan.

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

In its letter of March 7, 2011, the Commission endorsed the recommendations of the CPR team and identified four critical areas for TCSJ to attend to before the EER visit. The team found substantial progress to have occurred in the eleven months since its previous visit. The Commission’s areas of emphasis are listed first in the section below, followed by the CPR recommendations; areas of overlap are noted.

Response to WASC Commission letter

Board governance. The Commission asked TCSJ to create a governing board independent of the Superintendent so that the College is in compliance with WASC’s Institutions with Non-Educational Components Policy and CFR 3.9. SJCOE proposed that the Superintendent “tender” authority to the San Joaquin County Board of Education, which would bear full legal and fiduciary responsibility for the College including the authority to hire and fire the TCSJ CEO. Legal counsel for TCSJ prepared a “Resolution of the San Joaquin County Board of Education Assuming the Role of Governing Board Over the Teachers College of San Joaquin” that was reviewed and endorsed by both WASC legal counsel and WASC staff.

During the team’s visit the Superintendent and SJCBOE Board Chair stated that changes to what had been previously proposed would be made in order to more accurately and clearly

define the intended responsibilities and authorities of the SJCOE Superintendent and the SJCBE. The team recommends that such changes and related documentation for their implementation be developed in concert with WASC staff in time for the Commission's February 2012 meeting so that both WASC and TCSJ leadership are in agreement that the new TCSJ governance is in accord with WASC policy.

Strategic planning. The Commission requested that TCSJ show significant progress on strategic planning, at minimum creating a draft linking strategic planning to academic, financial, information resources, and other planning. TCSJ has developed an initial Strategic Plan and Strategic Fiscal Plan (see Standard 3) in a process that included the advisory board and other key stakeholders. The team recommends further development that shows links to data, and to then prioritize academic, operational and financial goals (CFRs 1.6, 3.5, 3.9, 4.1-4.3).

Financial management and oversight. The Commission requested that TCSJ clearly and separately identify TCSJ financial accounts to assure both accountability and sufficient support for the College's own priorities. The team found that TCSJ financial accounts are not yet separate within the SJCOE accounting system; however, a conversion to allow audited TCSJ financial statements is planned for 2012. During 2011, the TCSJ transactions are identified and reported separately within the SJCOE budget.

The team also found that TCSJ's financial statements are not yet subject to independent audit, and that the auditors of SJCOE's financial statements have been unable to complete their recent audits owing to certain limitations in SJCOE's accounting protocols. Additional details are reported below in the Standard 3 section (CFRs 3.5, 4.2).

Assessment, program review, and student achievement. The Commission requested that TCSJ provide evidence of significant progress in the area of assessment and program review at the time of the EER visit. The team found that expectations for student learning are explicit in

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

all programs and widely known and embraced by faculty, staff, and students. Assessment plans are in place, and review of institution wide learning outcomes occurs in a well planned cycle. Two of four cycles of program review have been completed, utilizing both direct and indirect methods of assessment. Additional details are reported below in the sections addressing Standards 2 and 4 (CFRs 2.2-2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.4-4.7).

Response to CPR team recommendations

1. At the time of the CPR report, TCSJ had identified nine “needs” which the CPR team endorsed and recommended they continue to make progress, with particular attention to a faculty diversity plan (CFR 1.5) and expansion of library and information resources (CFR 3.6). On its return visit, the team found considerable progress in most areas:
 - TCSJ has established an Office of Institutional Research, conducted a systematic review of syllabi, and developed a protocol for faculty peer review processes (TCSJ “needs” 1-3).
 - A revised faculty manual has been published (TCSJ needs, 4).
 - Less progress has been made in expanding and strengthening ties with local industry (TCSJ needs, 5).
 - Goals and benchmarks for faculty diversity have been incorporated into the strategic plan (TCSJ needs, 6).
 - Additional scholarly resources have been added to library electronic resources collection (TCSJ needs, 7).
 - TCSJ has begun development of a Strategic Plan and Strategic Fiscal Plan (TCSJ needs, 8) that needs further refinement.
 - TCSJ offers a flexible tuition payment schedule and plans to move forward with Title IV funding when WASC accreditation is attained (TCSJ needs, 9).

2. The CPR team recommended TCSJ develop a teach-out plan in accordance with the WASC *Teach Out Plans and Agreements Policy* to protect students in the event of an unforeseen termination of its program. The plan is completed.
3. The CPR team recommended TCSJ develop and implement a systematic and macro-level program review plan to evaluate its academic programs, including student learning (CFR 2.7). As noted above, a four-cycle program review plan to review all core learning outcomes has been developed. Two cycles of program review are complete, and the third began in July 2011 (CFRs 2.7, 4.2). See Standard 2 for further discussion.
4. The CPR team recommended TCSJ develop a comprehensive strategic program and financial plan, including the full and effective use of existing and future resources, with representation from all constituents, including faculty and staff (CFRs 3.5, 4.1, 4.3). The plan was expected to include specific priorities, targets and milestones, a timeline, a consideration of resources needed to support implementation, and lines of responsibility. As noted above, a plan has been developed and will need further refinement to become fully operational. Additional details are reported below in the sections addressing Standards 3 and 4.
5. The CPR team recommended TCSJ prepare the missing Compliance Audit documents for review during the EER visit. The Compliance Audit is substantially complete (see Appendix A); all documents related to the governance structure and audited financial statements should be added when complete.

Section II: Evaluation of Educational Effectiveness Under the Standards

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

TCSJ has purposefully defined the mission, vision, and values that set the College apart from more traditional Colleges of Education. The development of mission, vision, and values included input from various constituencies (TCSJ EER Report, p. 44). Through interviews with

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

various constituencies, the team found a strong understanding of the unique mission, values, and culture of the College as well as support for the programs offered through TCSJ (CFR 1.1).

In addition to embedding the vision, mission, and values of TCSJ into programs, program leaders have carefully designed learning outcomes that are visible in various documents throughout the College (CFR 1.2). For example, the Core Learning Outcomes (CLO) are included in all syllabi, in scoring rubrics for assessing syllabi, in the program review process, in the rubrics for assessing portfolios, in designing fieldwork experiences, and in the program review cycle. At the course level, student learning outcomes are evident in most syllabi, and further, learning outcomes are often carefully aligned with course assignments and assessments. The team suggests that syllabi be reviewed to ensure student learning outcomes are stated in terms of actions using, for example, Bloom's Taxonomy.

Faculty were clearly able to articulate their understanding of CLOs, and beliefs that CLOs are important to student success in completing courses and programs as well as being important tools to connect courses throughout the program. Current students and graduates remarked it was evident that courses are built upon one another, and they saw alignment of the subject matter taught within the program (CFR 1.2).

The Dean of the College meets frequently with faculty, community leaders, and Advisory Board members to disseminate information about the program, to encourage collaborative course designs and to solicit recommendations about other program components. In interactions with the Dean, it was evident she shoulders the responsibility for all aspects of TCSJ programs (CFR 1.3).

Academic freedom for faculty and students was evident in the number of collaborative meetings held to discuss curriculum, fieldwork experiences, course content, course alignment, and student work (CFR 1.4). Students were encouraged to pursue research projects that aligned

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

with their work and interests. A statement of Academic Freedom is included in the Faculty Handbook, indicating that “TCSJ follows the AAUP principles for Academic Freedom.” In addition, there is an appeal process should faculty feel their academic freedom has been violated (CFR 1.4).

The TCSJ strategic plan includes goals and benchmarks for hiring diverse faculty to more closely reflect the ethnicity of TCSJ students (CFR 1.5). The goal is to have 50% of faculty and staff mirror under-represented minority populations. The strategic plan was developed through a collaborative process that included the Advisory Board and other constituencies. The team suggests that TCSJ review the WASC Policy Statement on Diversity and suggests the strategic plan include separate diversity goals for faculty and separate diversity goals for staff (CFR 1.5).

Ample evidence was provided from a variety of sources to indicate the educational program was designed to meet the specific needs of the Stockton community, and that the program was designed with input from the community, the school districts served by the county office, and TCSJ students and faculty (CFR 1.6). The integrity of the program was communicated in part through interviews with faculty in which they talked about the course-change process. Faculty reported they had opportunity to reflect on courses and needed change, and then to collaborate with other faculty and leadership to implement change and continuous improvement. The process for implementing such changes provided evidence that continuous improvement is a hallmark of the program (CFRs 1.6, 4.6, 4.8).

Marketing and other information disseminated about programs offered by TCSJ are in line with the actual courses and degrees offered. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) is in place to review research protocols to ensure the protection of individuals participating in research studies conducted as part of a TCSJ program. Students are required to complete the National

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

Institute of Health (NIH) certificate online tutorial to demonstrate understanding of issues related to the protection of human subjects (CFR 1.7).

Policies and procedures for addressing complaints have been developed and are accessible to faculty and students (CFR 1.8). Separate complaint procedures have been designed according to appropriate government codes as follows: Complaints Concerning Personnel or Programs, Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials, Uniform Complaint Procedures, Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures, and Claims and Actions against the County Office of Education. The team suggests TCSJ establish regular intervals for review of the application and effectiveness of these policies.

Throughout the eligibility and candidacy stages, TCSJ has maintained an honest and open communication with the Commission, establishing frequent lines of communication regarding policy implementation (CFR 1.9). The team commends TSCJ on its commitment to the WASC process. For example, the aforementioned resolution regarding board governance was drafted in consultation with TCSJ and WASC legal counsels. The quantity and quality of the materials in the evidence room reflect great effort and passionate commitment to ensuring the educational effectiveness of the College.

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

Teaching and Learning.

TCSJ offers a single Masters of Education degree with three concentrations: Educational Inquiry, Advanced Teaching Practice, and Educational Leadership and School Development. Multiple sources inform students about program requirements, including the TCSJ catalog, website, and a Handbook for completing program and degree requirements (CFRs 2.2, 2.12). The degree program's five core learning outcomes are prominently posted within the College facilities, aligned within course syllabi, and regularly assessed within the program review cycle (CFR 2.3).

A key element of TCSJ's focus on student learning is the hiring of qualified faculty members who reflect its mission and core values in their teaching. In particular, their practice of hiring "expert practitioners" contributes to excellence in teaching (CFRs 2.1, 2.8). TCSJ has 19 faculty who teach the M.Ed. core and elective courses, serve as program advisors and fieldwork supervisors, and oversee the curriculum and assessment of the five core learning outcomes for the degree program (CFRs 2.2b, 2.4). Ten are full-time instructors and nine are part-time. Of these, seven have a doctorate and three are in the process of obtaining a doctorate. These faculty qualifications are comparable to another local college that also provides a masters degree in education (CFRs 2.1, 3.1, 3.2).

In keeping with their focus on student learning M.Ed. faculty meet regularly to ensure consistency across courses and to make modifications to course content as necessary (CFR 2.4). As a result of these meetings, faculty developed a Masters Project Evaluation Process and a Masters Project Rubric for evaluating capstone projects and portfolios (CFR 2.3).

In interviews with fieldwork supervisors of administrative credential candidates in the Educational Leadership and School Development concentration, supervisors described the rubric

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

they use to evaluate portfolios for M.Ed. candidates. The Rubric is shared with students as they work to complete their degree so that expectations are clear (CFRs 2.4, 2.6). Students also use the rubric independently to evaluate their own projects (CFR 2.4). At regularly scheduled meetings and retreats, faculty work to align coursework in the M.Ed. program, and adjust course content to ensure that it meets core learning outcomes (CFRs 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4). Student surveys and interviews attest to students' strong belief that courses have instilled in them the TCSJ core learning outcomes and that they are able to apply the learning in their classrooms. As one student commented, "Everything I learn in my classroom [at TCSJ] I apply in my classroom the next day."

The Masters of Education (M.Ed.) program at TCSJ extended the work of a successful CTC accredited credential program, Project Impact, based in SJCOE (CFR 2.2b). Given this experience, TCSJ has a solid track record of collecting evidence to meet specific standards required by CTC and other agencies. This strong model for measuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning continues in the M.Ed. program and is further developed in the establishment of an Office of Institutional Research (OIR) whose purpose is to collect data and assist with analysis to improve the educational effectiveness of the institution (CFRs 2.3, 2.7). TCSJ's mission, core learning outcomes, and expectations for student attainment provide the framework for Program Review (CFRs 2.4, 2.5, 2.7). Review of student work provided strong evidence that TCSJ has infused its mission and Core Learning Outcomes in the M.Ed. program.

More importantly, the College works to assure that its graduates reflect in their own classroom practices TCSJ's mission and expertise in each of the CLOs. Implementation of the Program Review cycle has provided a useful framework for the systematic measurement of learning outcomes and evidence of resulting data-informed action or planning (CFR 2.7; see discussion of Program Review in Standard 4). Courses also reinforced the TCSJ mission "to

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

develop a workforce of teachers and school leaders that...understand the need to prepare students for both work and higher education..." (CFR 2.2b). Additionally, TCSJ has increased opportunities for all M.Ed. faculty to collaborate. This particular change followed directly from a faculty survey showed that found over 50% of respondents had little time to collaborate. The collaborative meetings have been fruitful, leading to specific changes within the M.Ed. program (CFR 2.2b).

Findings from student surveys confirm that M.Ed. graduates believe they meet TCSJ Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs). One student stated that he decided to apply for the Masters program after reading TCSJ mission statement on their website. He commented that he had already dropped out of two other Masters programs after determining they were "just more of the same." He continued, "When I go away from my classes [at TCSJ] I am walking away with something useful." Evidence from Employer surveys also shows school-site administrators believe TCSJ graduates have mastered CLOs. Course syllabi include the TCSJ mission and the CLOs with the concomitant Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the course (CFR 2.7).

A survey of participants in the *Showcase of Excellence* (TCSJ EER report, p. 24) indicated that students applied what they learned in the M.Ed. core courses. A survey of M.Ed. candidates found a high percentage of graduates who felt that completion of the Masters project was valuable for developing personal scholarship; it affected their classroom practices; and it contributed to the body of knowledge about teaching and learning (CFRs 2.5, 2.6). As a direct assessment of what students have learned, analysis of the M.Ed. projects and capstone portfolios that are required as part of the M.Ed. plus Administrative credential revealed high levels of performance by program graduates (CFR 2.7). The team heard confirmation of the theme that students felt "I am now able to apply my learning to teach students more effectively and to influence colleagues" (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5).

TCSJ's efforts thus far reflect a strong commitment to developing a culture of evidence to assess educational effectiveness in the Masters program. Collaboration amongst faculty has been strongly reinforced by the program review cycle and has served as a powerful catalyst for the systematic assessment of program outcomes and the use of the results to develop action plans.

Scholarship and Creative Activity

As part of their professional development, faculty are encouraged to “disseminate their work through publications and presentations at local, state, and national events” and TCSJ provides travel support for those making presentations (CFR 2.8; Faculty Manual, p. 17). TCSJ also supports faculty attendance at conferences and workshops when they are related to their teaching and non-teaching responsibilities (CFRs 2.8, 2.9). TCSJ noted that faculty attended 64 conferences and workshops, with 13 presentations, although it is unclear if these were based on faculty research. Given the strong emphasis that TCSJ places on the power of research and, in light of the core learning outcome that “graduates develop and implement research to contribute to the wider body of knowledge as well as to reflect on and inform personal practice,” faculty presentation and publication of research would be a powerful model for students to follow (CFRs 2.8, 2.9).

Retention, Graduation, and Student Success

TCSJ has developed the *Articulation of M.Ed. Coursework* document which provides an overview of the program and course offerings for all three concentrations in the degree. The document is used to inform prospective students and to advise current students of the requirements for the different concentrations within the M.Ed. program (CFR 2.12).

Individual assistance is available to students who are struggling in a particular area; an entire course on graduate writing was developed and added to the sequence of courses when it became apparent through program review that writing was a shared area of need for a number of

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

students. Program faculty attend to the needs of their students, and “meet them where they enter” as pointed out by one of the student interviewees. Attention to students’ needs has contributed to an overall retention rate of 86% for all concentrations and credentials (TCSJ EER Report, Table 3.2b). Based on exit surveys, the College reports that no students who exited the program expressed dissatisfaction with TCSJ. TCSJ surveyed students who dropped out, and 14 of the 15 did so for personal or job-related reasons.

Retention and graduation rates are made public and were available for the team. To date, one cohort has proceeded through to graduation (CFR 1.2), and the graduation rate for this first cohort was 93%. Currently, TCSJ does not have benchmark data to put this percentage in context. In the next phase of the assessment cycle, TCSJ will review the retention reports generated during the program.

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

Faculty and staff.

TCSJ has devoted considerable energy to creating a higher education component to its academic community, while remaining under the employment regulations of the SJCOE. A strong core of full-time faculty and staff serve as the Leadership Team of the College and operate as a committee-of-the-whole (CFRs 3.1, 3.2). They have completed a revision of the Faculty Manual, incorporating polices as suggested in the team’s CPR report and in compliance with WASC guidelines. A review of the Faculty Manual shows that it provides faculty with information needed to be successful within the TCSJ culture (CFR 3.3).

Instruction and student support remain the strongest focus of faculty and staff, and the team was impressed with the use of student course evaluations and the concomitant reflection of

faculty to strengthen teaching. For example, 94 per cent of surveyed faculty reported they made instructional change based on end-of-course evaluations (TCSJ EER, p. 26). TCSJ may be able to further enhance instructional feedback to faculty by incorporating in the Faculty Manual a peer review process similar to what is used in other higher education institutions as a way to provide formal feedback from fellow instructors (CFRs 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3).

The Faculty Manual includes the professional development policy (p. 17; CFR 3.4). All faculty members are encouraged to disseminate their work through publications and presentations. Travel support is provided to conferences when presentation proposals have been accepted. Full-time and part-time faculty are supported for travel to conferences and training when the event is directly related to their work responsibilities.

Information resources.

An interesting example of faculty and student development is the college-wide implementation of the use of iPads as a tool for instruction. During interviews with the team, faculty and students described how iPad use helped to individualize teaching and learning. TCSJ leadership is encouraged to develop an assessment plan to evaluate the educational effectiveness of the use of iPads (CFR 3.3).

The team noted that TCSJ has subscribed to SAGE (an online source for accessing research literature), and projects the hiring of a research librarian for the year 2013 (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.6). The subscription to SAGE is a good beginning, and future plans to expand these resources will enhance access to information resources for TCSJ graduate students (CFR 2.13.). An example of TCSJ's commitment to providing resources for students came during interviews with students. A student who recently accessed SAGE in order to review literature for a class assignment discovered she did not have access to the journals she needed. Within one hour of emailing her instructor to express her concern, she received a response from the Dean saying that

she would look into the problem. Later the same day, the student logged on to SAGE and found that the journals had been added to TCSJ's subscription. The student stated that the speed of the Dean's response and the quick addition of resources were indicative of TCSJ's commitment to students (CFRs 2.13, 3.6).

Fiscal Resources.

As an operating unit within the SJCOE, the financial accounts of TCSJ have not been maintained separately (CFR 3.5). Since the CPR visit a year ago, TCSJ has worked to comply with a new Commission policy, *Institutions with Non-Educational Components* (ratified November 5, 2010), which states that

“The accredited entity must present financial information in a manner that allows the Commission and peer reviewers to evaluate the financial viability and management of the accredited entity . . . Generally, institutions are also expected to have audits prepared in such a way that the educational and non-educational aspects of the entity are separated.”

Completed audits of SJCOE financial statements, of which TCSJ's financial transactions are a part, have not been possible for reasons which the SJCOE CFO believes to be in the best interests of the schools and students which SJCOE serves.. Nonetheless, the team recommends that SJCOE and TCSJ complete the transition for separate financial accounts within the SJCOE accounting structure, and arrange for annual independent audits of TCSJ accounts (CFR 3.5), providing an update on the transition at the February 2012 Commission meeting.

The format, timing, and content of existing financial reports correctly follow the applicable accounting protocols and State requirements, but because TCSJ accounts are not separate from SCJOE accounts, the team finds financial reports to be of limited informational value for on-going governance and management of TCSJ (CFRs 1.8, 3.5, 4.2). The team suggests that current financial reports be supplemented by others which report at least quarterly

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

and which include year-to-date revenues and expenses for current year operations only, projected or expected year-to-date performance based on the annual budget, any resulting variances between the two and the projected year-end amount.

Financial Stability.

Although it is premature to assess the financial stability of TCSJ (CFR 3.5) due to its short time span of operation, TCSJ has reported an operating gain of \$953,000, or 17% in FY2009 and an operating gain of \$171,000, or 3% in FY2010, and an estimated operating loss of \$122,000 in FY 2011. The net gains, added to the initial funds transferred in 2009, puts the unrestricted fund balance at approximately \$2.7 million. However, during the visit, the team learned that accounting protocols for entities such as SJCOE made it difficult to assess TCSJ's ability to budget and track its annual financial performance. For example, the requirement that certain funds owed to the organization for prior years' activities, such as tuition payments, be recorded as current year income in the year in which payments are received prohibited an assessment of each year's actual operating income, expenses and resulting gain or loss. Actual year-end financial performance in all three years varied significantly from original budgets. Explanations of such variations could contribute to informed planning, budgeting, and on-going management.

Since meaningful financial data to inform governance and management is different from information required for accounting purposes, and for reporting needs applicable to county offices of education rather than to institutions of higher education, the team suggests that required financial reports for TCSJ be supplemented by quarterly reports, which include year-to-date revenues and expenses for current year operations, projected or expected year-to-date performance based on the annual budget, any resulting variances between the two, and projected year-end amounts. Such information will better position TCSJ leadership (governance and

management) to fulfill oversight and management responsibilities, make possible meaningful year-to-year comparisons, and provide a more solid set of data to inform both strategic and tactical program and financial planning (CFRs 3.5, 3.8, 4.2, 4.3).

The unrestricted funds (accumulations of prior year gains) credited by SJCOE to TCSJ accounts in 2009, and subsequent additions, appear to have been temporarily assigned to TCSJ for accounting purposes, without evidence of a permanent and irrevocable transfer. Thus the availability of those funds to meet future TCSJ needs cannot be assumed since SJCOE could, at any time, redirect the accounting treatment of some or all of those funds to other SJCOE accounts.

Financial Recession and Impact

The Dean and CFO reported that despite the adverse impacts of State funding on County schools, TCSJ enrollment has not declined nor has TCSJ experienced other negative consequences of the recession. Leadership at TCSJ believes that enrollment will increase from teachers seeking to enhance their prospects for future employability, citing a large pool of teachers within the county who completed their credential through Project Impact and have yet to complete a Masters in Education degree.

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes.

The Commission action letter called for TCSJ leadership to create a governing board that operates independently from the Superintendent and bears full legal and fiduciary responsibility for the College. The letter stated that the WASC Commission expects to see significant progress in the area of governance by the time of the EER (CFRs 1.3, 1.6, 3.8, 3.9).

In June SJCOE counsel proposed a plan to WASC staff for governance of TCSJ to be turned over to the SJCOE Board of Education. In the plan the SJCOE Superintendent, who is the current governing authority for TCSJ, would “tender” authority for TCSJ to the SJCOE

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

governing board. The governing board of the San Joaquin County Board of Education is comprised of five members who are elected to positions on the County Board of Education, separate and independent from the election of the Superintendent. It has been proposed that these board members will comprise the TCSJ Governing Board and meet in separate session to discuss College matters.

The plan was reviewed by WASC counsel and WASC staff, and TCSJ leadership was encouraged to develop specific operating procedures for the SJCOE Board and to clarify the relationship between SJCOE and TCSJ leadership and how they would handle personnel actions. The EER team was charged with providing findings and recommendations about the proposed change.

After document review and interviews with the County Superintendent of Schools, the SJCOE board chair, the CEO, and Dean of the College, the team found that SJCOE proposes to modify the June proposals (as reflected in the draft Resolution to be adopted by the SJCOE and related implementation documentation, e.g. job descriptions) to more accurately reflect the planned realignment of responsibilities and authorities for personnel, financial and related matters. With regard to the Board's responsibilities for TCSJ personnel, it has been stated that, while the Superintendent will retain authority to hire and fire the CEO and other staff of TCSJ, the Board will participate in the evaluation of the head of the College and will delegate power and authority to that position to effectively lead the College. TCSJ personnel will need to officially remain SJCOE employees to ensure their pension benefits under California law.

The team recommends that the Superintendent transfer appropriate responsibility and authority for governing TCSJ to a board that bears full legal and fiduciary responsibility for the College. The team further recommends that materials necessary to implement and exercise transferred authority (e.g. by-laws, policies, and revised job descriptions) be developed in

consultation with WASC staff before the February 2012 Commission meeting (CFRs 3.8, 3.9, 3.10).

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

Strategic Thinking and Planning.

A recommendation from the CPR report was that TCSJ develop a comprehensive strategic program and financial plan, including the full and effective use of existing and future resources, with representation from all constituents, including faculty and staff (CFR 3.5, 4.1, 4.3). A planning process began in the spring of 2011, and a strategic plan developed for fiscal years 2011-2016. The strategic planning committee was chaired by a member of the TCSJ Advisory Board and, was broadly constituted with representatives from faculty, College and SJCOE staff, others from the Advisory Board and members of the community (CFR 4.1). The Strategic Plan consists of two sections: Academic and Operational goals; and a Fiscal Plan, which are addressed separately.

The team commends the planning committee for stating clearly that planning was guided by TCSJ's mission and core learning outcomes, and some goals reflected guidance from a newly created vision statements. While the team found the academic and operational goals to reflect intuition and visioning, evidence of goals being informed by information resources and data analysis was missing.

The team suggests TCSJ continue to develop and refine its strategic planning so that academic, operational, and fiscal goals are more clearly informed by findings from data analysis (CFRs 4.2, 4.3). TCSJ might also consider separating its Academic and Operational goals into at least two priority levels: goals essential for Mission fulfillment and fundable from a more conservatively estimated revenue base; and desirable goals, which could be implemented if and when higher revenues are realized (CFR 4.1).

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

The Fiscal Plan addresses only current and projected revenues for TCSJ; no expense data, current or projected, are included. Budgeted, rather than actual, revenues for the last fiscal year, FY2011, are used for the base year and “target” amounts for the final year of the five-year Plan, FY 2016, are listed for each major category of TCSJ revenues: Tuition and Fees, California Block Grants, Auxiliary Enterprises, and Foundation and Grant Support. “Reserves” are shown as a current year revenue source rather than recorded as “Transfers from Reserves,” unlike conventional non-governmental nonprofit accounting. Annual revenue goals were not included.

The Fiscal Plan indicates a decrease in income received from California block grants, replaced by tuition and new revenue from Foundation & Grant Support. In order to achieve the new targets, the compound annual growth rates were calculated for tuition (33%), auxiliary enterprises (12%), and foundation/grant support (85%). No expense data for each of the planned changes were included with the fiscal strategic plan.

The team finds revenue increases to be ambitious and perhaps unrealistic. While establishing ambitious revenue goals, or “targets,” is an important and valuable management tool, the team suggests that TCSJ consider also developing another, more conservative set of revenue projections as a basis for institutional planning (CFRs 4.1, 4.3). In sum, the team recommends TCSJ use findings from data analysis to inform and prioritize each academic and operational goal and accompanying fiscal estimates in the strategic plan (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

Commitment to learning and improvement.

TCSJ’s efforts thus far reflect a strong commitment to developing a culture of evidence to assess educational effectiveness in the Masters program. Collaboration amongst faculty has been strongly reinforced by the program review cycle and has served as a powerful catalyst for the systematic assessment of program outcomes and the use of the results to develop action plans. TCSJ has put in place a program review cycle that evaluates evidence of student mastery of the

five Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Core Values (TCSJ Program Review Timeline). The cycle is designed to repeat over a four-year period during which data for multiple measures of all Core Learning Outcomes are reviewed. Implementation of the Program Review Cycle has provided a useful framework for the systematic measurement of learning outcomes and evidence of resulting data-informed action or planning, as shown in the document, *Summary of Data-Informed Action or Planning*.

Systems for Enhancing Educational Effectiveness and Student Learning

The primary system for enhancing educational effectiveness at TCSJ is the program review cycle (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7, 4.6, 4.7). Evidence from numerous course documents shows TCSJ has instituted the use of rubrics for most assignments and calibrates instructors for grading (CFRs 4.4, 4.7). As a check for educational effectiveness, an external reviewer will be brought in in year four of the program review cycle to review data, analysis and findings for all four cycles. Finally, TCSJ takes advantage of the proximity of sites in which graduates and teacher candidates work to follow both groups and survey administrators about the quality of graduates' work. Evidence shows that specific changes to courses and programs emanated from findings from surveys of employers (CFRs 4.4, 4.8). TCSJ is to be commended for the progress they have made in instituting and carrying out thorough and purposeful program review and documenting resulting change.

In its short lifetime, TCSJ has been intentional in the conceptual and practical implementation of its program review process, which the team found to be a highly developed system in most areas. The review follows a four-year cycle with evidence for two CLOs being reviewed each year. Faculty are required to evaluate the program's student learning outcomes, annual assessment findings, bench-marking results, subsequent changes, and evidence concerning the impact of these changes. They present a plan for the next cycle of assessment

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

studies. At the time of this writing, cycle A has been completed, cycle B is in progress, and initial planning has begun to identify evidence required for cycle C. Progress through the program review cycle matches dates in the planning document.

The Leadership Team conducts an annual retreat, providing feedback on the quality of outcomes, assessment plans, assessment studies, benchmarking results, and assessment impact. TCSJ effectively uses the feedback to improve student learning. Internal reviewers examine samples of student work such as sample papers, portfolios and capstone projects. Students are invited to discuss what they learned and how they learned it. The campus systematically integrates program reviews into planning processes by negotiating formal action plans. Although follow-up activities enjoy institutional support, budgeting does not appear to be integrated into program review.

Internal and [planned] external reviewers analyze direct and indirect evidence of student learning in the program and offer evaluative feedback and suggestions for improvement. They have sufficient expertise to evaluate program efforts; departments use the feedback to improve their work. The team notes that part D of the cycle includes plans for an external reviewer to conduct a review of their program. The team encourages TCSJ to secure the services of an external reviewer with knowledge of and experience in program review in an institution of higher education.

Section III: Summary Findings and Recommendations

The team appreciates the professional manner in which TCSJ provided assistance and cooperation during the Capacity and Preparatory Review and the Educational Effectiveness visits.

Commendations

The team commends Teachers College San Joaquin for:

- Achieving a successful launch of Teachers College with all the attendant challenges and complexity such an undertaking requires. Such an achievement is noteworthy under optimum conditions. To do so with such success in an environment in which many organizations and many individuals are struggling is remarkable.
- Putting together a well-conceived proposal for addressing the issues arising from the unique challenges regarding governance of a higher education institution as part of a County Office of Education.
- Responding directly and constructively to the recommendations in the CPR report and to the subsequent issues raised by WASC.
- Demonstrating a genuine commitment to the WASC process. The quantity and quality of the materials in the evidence room reflect great effort and passionate commitment to ensuring the educational effectiveness of the College. This commitment was particularly evident in the openness with which TCSJ leaders, faculty, staff and students responded to the many queries and requests from the team with great courtesy and warmth.

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

- Developing an outstanding program review process and assessment design, notably the portfolio review and calibration of capstone projects. TCSJ has embraced a system of continuous improvement.

Finally, the team commends TCSJ for the quality of its students. The first graduates are strongly committed to educational reform and passionate about bringing it to all classrooms in San Joaquin County. They have set a high standard for future graduates to follow. But, judging from interviews with current students, they are ready and eager to take up the banner with the same passion.

Major Considerations and Recommendations

As Teachers College of San Joaquin matures as an institution of higher education, the team makes the following recommendations:

1. Continue efforts to achieve greater faculty diversity so that representation more closely resembles the population served (CFRs 1.5, 2.1, 2.10, 3.2).
2. Complete the transition for separate financial accounts within the SJCOE accounting structure, and arrange for annual independent audits of TCSJ accounts (CFR 3.5), providing an update on the transition at the February 2012 Commission meeting.
3. Use findings from data analysis to inform and prioritize each academic and operational goal and accompanying fiscal estimates in the strategic plan (CFRs 4.2, 4.3). The plan should include specific priorities, targets and milestones, a timeline, a consideration of resources needed to support implementation, and lines of responsibility.
4. Transfer appropriate responsibility and authority for governing TCSJ to an independent board that bears full legal and fiduciary responsibility for the College. The team further recommends that materials necessary to implement and exercise transferred authority

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

(e.g. by-laws, policies, and revised job descriptions) be developed in consultation with WASC staff before the February 2012 Commission meeting (CFRs 3.8, 3.9, 3.10).

Appendix A: Compliance AuditName of Institution: **Teachers' College of San Joaquin****Dates of Visits:** Initial Accreditation, CPR: **October 20-22, 2010**Initial Accreditation, EER: **September 28-30, 2011**

CFR	Documents Required	Candidacy		Initial Accreditation	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
Standard 1					
1.1	Mission statement	✓	✓		
1.2	Educational objectives at the institutional and program levels	✓	✓		
1.2.1	Public statement on student achievement (retention, graduation, student learning	Not M.Ed.	✓		
1.3	Organization chart (X 3.8, 3.9, 3.10)	✓	✓		
1.4	Academic freedom policy	✓	✓		
1.5	Diversity policies and procedures; Procedures for Special Accommodations	✓	✓		
1.6		-	-	-	
1.7	Catalog (online ____, hard copy ____) with complete program descriptions, graduation requirements, grading policies (X 2.10.1)	✓	✓		
1.7.2	Student complaint and grievance policies	✓	✓		
1.7.2.1	Policy for grade appeals	✓	✓		
1.7.2.2	Records of student complaints	✓	✓		
1.7.3	Faculty grievance policies	✓	✓		
1.7.3.1	Record of faculty grievances	✓	✓		
1.7.4	Staff grievance policies	✓	✓		
1.7.4.1	Record of staff grievances and complaints	✓	✓		
1.7.5	Employee handbook	✓	✓		
1.7.6.1	Up-to-date student transcripts with key that explains credit hours, grades, levels, etc.	✓	✓		
1.7.6.2	Admissions records that match stated requirements; complete files	✓	✓		
1.7.6.3	Policies and procedures to protect the integrity of grades	✓	✓		
1.7.6.4	Tuition and fee schedule	✓	✓		
1.7.6.5	Policies on tuition refunds	✓	✓		
1.8	Regular independent audits of finances (X 3.5)				
1.9	WASC-related policies to ensure sub change policies	Not available	✓		
1.7-1.9	Documents relating to investigations of the institution by any governmental entity and an update on the status of such investigation	n/a	✓		

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

CFR	Documents Required	Candidacy		Initial Accreditation	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
	A list of pending legal actions by or against the institution, including a full explanation of the nature of the actions, parties involved, and status of the litigation				
Standard 2					
2.1	List of degree programs, showing curriculum and units for each (X 1.7)	✓	✓		
2.2	Complete set of course syllabi for all courses offered	✓	✓		
2.2.1	(For associate and bachelor's degrees) statement of general education requirements (X 1.7)	n/a			
2.3	SLOs for every program	✓	✓		
2.4		-			
2.5		-			
2.6		-			
2.7	Program review process with clear criteria, which include assessment of program retention/graduation and achievement of learning outcomes	In Initial Stage	✓		
2.7.1	Regular schedule of program review (including for non-academic units)	Not available	✓		
2.8	Policies re faculty scholarship and creative activity	Not available	✓		
2.9		-			
2.10	Data on student demographics	✓	✓		
2.10.1	Data on retention and graduation, disaggregated by demographic categories and programs	Not available	✓		
2.10.2	Collection and analysis of grades at the course or program level, as appropriate	✓	✓		
2.10.3	Policies on student evaluation of faculty	✓	✓		
2.10.4	Forms for evaluation of faculty by students	✓	✓		
2.11	List of student services and co-curricular activities	n/a	✓		
2.11.1	Policies on financial aid	✓	✓		
2.12	Academic calendar (X 1.7 catalog)	✓	✓		
2.13	Recruitment and advertising material for the last year	✓	✓		
2.13.1	Registration procedures	✓	✓		

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

CFR	Documents Required	Candidacy		Initial Accreditation	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
2.14	Registration forms	✓	✓		
Standard 3					
3.1	Policies on staff development	Not available	✓		
3.2	List of faculty with classifications, e.g., core, full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenure track, by program	Incomplete	✓		
3.3	Faculty hiring policies	✓	✓		
3.3.1	Faculty evaluation policies and procedures (X 2.10)	Not available	✓		
3.3.2	Faculty Handbook if available	Not available	✓		
3.4	Faculty development policies	Not available	✓		
3.4.1	Faculty orientation policies and procedures	Not available	✓		
3.4.2	Policies on rights and responsibilities of non-full-time faculty	Not available*	✓		
3.4.3	Statements concerning faculty role in assessment of student learning	Not available	✓		
3.5	Audited financial statements (X 1.8)	Not available*	*See Standard 3		
3.5.1	Appropriate financial records	✓			
3.5.2	Appropriate policies and procedures for handling of financial aid (X 2.11)	n/a			
3.5.3	Campus maps	✓	✓		
3.6	Inventory of technology resources for students and faculty	✓	✓		
3.6.1	If online or hybrid, information on delivery method	n/a	✓		
3.6.2	Library data/holdings, size	Not available	✓		
3.7	Inventory of technology resources and services for staff	✓	✓		
3.8	Organization chart (X 1.3 and 3.1)	✓	✓		
3.9	Board list	✓	**		
3.9.1	Board member bios	✓	**		
3.9.2	List of Board committees	n/a	**		
3.9.2.1	Minutes of Board meetings for last two years	✓	**		
3.9.2.2	Governing board bylaws and operations manual	Not Available*	**		
3.10	CEO bio	✓	✓		

TCSJ WASC Team EER Report

CFR	Documents Required	Candidacy		Initial Accreditation	
		CPR	EER	CPR	EER
3.10.1	CFO bio	✓			
3.10.2	Other top administrators' bios (e.g., cabinet, VPs, Provost)	✓			
3.10.3	Policy and procedure for the evaluation of president/CEO	✓	**		
3.11	Faculty governing body charges, bylaws and authority	Not available	✓		
3.11.1	Faculty organization chart (if applicable)	Not available	✓		
3.11.2	Minutes of last year's faculty meetings	Some Available	✓		
Standard 4					
4.1	Strategic plan	Not Available	✓		
4.1.1	Operations plan	Not Available	✓		
4.1.2	Academic plan	In Initial Stage	✓		
4.2	Description of planning process	✓	✓		
4.2.1	Process for review of implementation of strategic plan	Not available	*See Standard 3		
4.3		-	-		
4.4	New program approval process	Not available	✓		
4.4.1	Program review process (X 2.7)	In Initial Stage	✓		
4.5	Description of IR function and staffing	✓	✓		
4.6	Process for review and analysis of key data, such as retention, graduation (X1.2)	In Initial Stage	✓		
4.7		-		-	
4.8		-		-	

*See report narrative page 10

**To be completed when new Board is convened

Appendix B: Credit Hour Policies and Procedures

Institution: **Teachers College of San Joaquin**
 Kind of Visit: **Educational Effectiveness Visit**
 Date: **September 28-30, 2011**

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all CPR, EER and Initial Accreditation Visits. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)	Verified Yes/No
Policy on credit hour	Does this policy adhere to WASC policy and federal regulations?	Yes
	Comments: Policy will be included in Faculty Manual	
Process(es)/ periodic review	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)?	Yes
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure?	Yes
	Comments: Included in program review process	
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?	Yes
	Comments:	
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? How many syllabi were reviewed? What degree level(s)? What discipline(s)?	n/a
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	
	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)	What kinds of courses? Student Teaching, Fieldwork How many syllabi were reviewed? 3 What degree level(s)? graduate What discipline(s)? education	Yes
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded?	Yes
	Comments:	