

California State University Maritime Academy

Progress Report

Submitted to WSCUC Commission

March 1, 2021

- Section 1: Introduction**
- Section 2: A Campus Culture of Trust**
- Section 3: Principles of Leadership**
- Section 4: Assessment and Program Review: Deliberate Planning of Assessment Methods**
- Section 5: Current Status of Unity and Diversity on Campus**
- Section 6: Conclusion**
- Section 7: Appendices**
- A. Commission Letter of July 2019
 - B. Communication Task Force Presentation to Campus Leadership Council
 - C. COVID Campus Process Map
 - D. Shared Governance Presentation to Campus Leadership Council
 - E. New Decision-Making Protocol
 - F. Leadership Indicator Results for ELDP
 - G. ABET Re-accreditation Mechanical Engineering
 - H. ABET Re-accreditation Engineering Technology
 - I. IACBE Re-Accreditation Business Administration
 - J. IWAC Executive Summary
 - K. HERI Faculty Survey Summary
 - L. HERI Staff Campus Climate Survey
 - M. Unity Council Presentation to Campus Leadership Council
 - N. Gender Equity

What could have been one of the darkest chapters of Cal Maritime's 90-year history was transformed into one of its greatest triumphs: in the midst of a global pandemic, with generalized heightened fears and anxiety, we were able to graduate our seniors and get them into the workforce and advance our underclassmen and keep them on track -- and all with just a very small handful of cases, none of which to date has led to a major campus outbreak.

To work in the environment of the pandemic has been a struggle, and many of the strategic goals and objectives of the institution were postponed or stalled as human and financial resources were diverted into emergency processes necessary to keep students, faculty and staff safe and healthy. Cal Maritime was successful, but perhaps at the expense of advancing other initiatives that lost priority.

However – and crucially – in other ways, the pandemic has brought out the best in Cal Maritime, and (especially as should be seen in the section below), actually enabled the campus to improve certain processes which will be carried forward in the post-pandemic environment.

II. A Culture of Trust

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Certainly these objectives were born out of a recognized need for better communication practices at Cal Maritime. At the conclusion of the retreat, it was recognized that the issue included both a technological dimension (how to best disseminate information) and an interpersonal/organizational one (how to effectively communicate with colleagues and teams). Regarding the former, a Communication Task Force was put together which looked at how email practices have devolved over time (See Appendix B). The overuse of the “All Faculty,” “All Staff,” and/or “All Student” lists led to “email fatigue” and, ironically, more messaging from more individuals and groups led to a decreased understanding of campus operations. Actions taken and actions proposed from the task force include:

- Create Auto-provisioned granular distribution lists for School of Engineering (For School, Department, and Program) interfaced with PeopleSoft.
- Created an archive account to preserve messages sent to the campus-wide lists.
- Transition to using department-named email addresses as opposed to individually named addresses for specific information.
- Work to identify the on-campus population to target on-campus messages
- Explore use of Portal / Intranet and Digital Displays for announcements on- and off-campus.
- Test use of Microsoft Teams for affinity group collaboration.
- Email Etiquette and Protocol Manual for Campus to eliminate unnecessary CCs and “Reply All” functions.

Regarding the interpersonal dimension of communication, it was recognized that changes were necessary to help leadership recognize *why* trust may have eroded in some relationships and how campus administration and faculty could combat this perception. This recognition immediately led to many of the action-oriented objectives articulated below.

ii. Strengthen Shared Governance

In the months just prior to the WASC visit but after the campus WASC report had been written, perceptions of shared governance were at a low point. Ra WAf sxheri9ep3(na)4(nc)-6(e)4(w)2(e) wl,,St2niz2-

- There are new modes of presentation *and* dissemination of information from various governing bodies including the update and revision of public-facing Senate webpages.
- The entire Senate Executive Committee has been invited to all subsequent Campus Leadership retreats (See Appendix D).

Additionally as noted in the introduction, while the COVID pandemic was extremely disruptive, much was learned from the crisis. Communication protocol and shared governance practices became much stronger: COVID necessitated a great many committees constituted with all the relevant campus stakeholders, all of which were dependent on each other in order to make quick and serious decisions in a very fluid and dynamic environment. Out of this exigency Cal Maritime adopted several new governance schemes (Appendix C). The campus success with handling the crisis was in no small part to our ability to communicate effectively and push recommendations through appropriate channels. It is our hope and desire that such practices will remain after the crisis has passed.

iii. Ensure faculty and student inclusion in decision making

As part of the refinement of the role and function of the Campus Leadership Council, a certain number of objectives were clarified. In a series titled “Decision Making and Shared Governance, (See Appendix E) the Campus Leadership Council will serve as the primary integrated planning body at Cal Maritime. The CLC is responsible for the effective coordination and communication of campus-

- The Senate has implemented a new Administrative Review Policy, and the second cycle of evaluations was completed in January of 2021.
- Faculty membership has been increased on the Budget Advisory Committee (from two at-large members to three faculty members; one representative from each school).

III. Leadership Principles

The second Action requested in the progress report was to “Work to identify principles of leadership that are instantiated in curricular and co-curricular offerings aligned with the institution’s mission and culture.”

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- The program in International Business and Logistics (IBL) is developing an alternative to Watchstanding (which is a current requirement of all cadets but is only mandated by the Coast Guard for our licensed students). This would provide more meaningful programmatic opportunities to enhance those students' leadership skills.
- As noted in the "Communication" section above, student groups are now much more assimilated in strategic decision-making processes: as part of their involvement, endorsement letters are required to be issued from these groups, and this can be tied to leadership development enhancements. The opportunity for our cadets to participate in shared governance – but with the added responsibility of *accountability for that participation* – contributes to the overall emphasis on student stewardship of campus operations.

IV. Assessment and Program Review

The next Action requested in the progress report was to "Continue to build on the progress that has been made in assessment and program review by focusing on faculty development and deliberate planning of assessment methods."

Cal Maritime takes pride in the continued development and refinement of its assessment practices. This is demonstrated, in part, in successes in the reaffirmation of accreditation of individual programs that occurred since the WASC visit. In 2019-20, the Department of Engineering Technology and the Department of Mechanical Engineering were successfully reaccredited by their respective ABET Commissions. (Appendices G and H). Last July, our Business Administration program was reaccredited by IACBE with no notes, and no observations (Appendix I).

Additionally, our Institution

- Faculty Workshops in Assessing Institution Learning Outcomes this year in Information Fluency and Ethical Reasoning.

V. Current Status of Unity and Diversity

The final action requested in the progress report was to “Assess the current status of unity and diversity on campus using an objective method, for example, a confidential campus climate survey, as the basis for creating a clear set of goals and measures of achievement for the programs and services provided.”

Campus Climate Surveys

Cal Maritime administered a number of surveys in the 2019-2020 academic year and the decision to participate in these programs preceded the WASC visit. Cal Maritime administered the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#); the [Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement](#); the [Higher Education Research Institution Faculty Survey](#); and the [Higher Education Research Institution Staff Climate Survey](#). Summaries of the latter two are contained in Appendices K and L).

Figure 1: Comparison Group on Question of Campus Diversity

Figure 2.

These surveys give Cal Maritime valuable information in order to address its challenges. While the administration of these instruments demonstrate a commitment to assessment, a plan has yet to be adopted which would serve to improve campus climate based on these initial responses. Furthermore, additional campus climate surveys – specifically devoted to issues of diversity – will be implemented in the future. Due to concerns over survey fatigue, it was felt that a pause between surveys was in order. Compounding the issue was, again, the COVID pandemic: it was felt that administering a “campus climate” survey in a period when fewer faculty, staff, and students are on campus calls into question the very validity of what information we could gather from such an unusual and unprecedented “climate.” Concerns over the distortion of COVID on any data-gathering activity in 2020-2021 has postponed additional surveys to a post-pandemic environment.

Unity Council and Gender Equity Group

The Unity Council is the university’s primary body for diversity issues. This council includes the campus Title IV Coordinator, the Chief Diversity Officer and the HCM Manager, and has three distinct focus areas: education, integration and advocacy, and culture. The charter is currently being reassessed with the council to play a larger role in campus climate. [redacted] (b) (5) - DPP

VII. Appendices

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