

*Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*

**An Interim Candidacy Comprehensive  
Evaluation Report**

**Capilano University  
North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada**

**November 3-5, 2010**

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*A Confidential Report Prepared by the Evaluation Committee for the Northwest  
Commission on Colleges and Universities*

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this visit was to review the progress of Capilano University towards accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The visit was the second interim candidacy review of the university. The first two visits and reports were based on the former NWCCU standards; this second interim candidacy evaluation was based on the standards adopted in 2010.

Capilano University, located in North Vancouver, is a publicly funded institution in British Columbia with a 40 year history as a community college with a primary focus on preparatory studies, vocational and career training, university-level courses, and degrees at the associate and bachelor levels. Selected programs are delivered at the Squamish and Sechelt (Sunshine Coast) campuses. The name of the institution was changed from Capilano College to Capilano University in 2008 under legislation approved by the Province of British Columbia. Capilano University is one of five institutions named as a Special Purpose Teaching University under this act, a recognition that maintained its current focus and expanded its mandate to include non-applied baccalaureate degrees and master's degree programs. Changes in governance structures were made to accommodate these changes. Dr. Kris Bulcroft was named as president of Capilano University in August 2010.

Capilano University is characterized by a deep commitment to students and their learning. This commitment is captured in statements like "we meet our students where they are" and in outreach initiatives, a focus on teaching, and a passion for student development. A result of the environment provided at Capilano University is the sense of community expressed by students, employees, alumni, and stakeholders alike.

Capilano University receives operating funds from two primary sources with approximately 59% of its funding in 2010-2011 coming from the provincial government, approximately 30% from tuition, and the balance from contracts, ancillary services, and investment income.

This report provides a summary of the second interim candidacy comprehensive visit completed November 3-5, 2010. In addition to the change of the mandate to Capilano University while seeking initial accreditation, Capilano University made the transition to the standards the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities approved in 2010. The primary purpose of the review was to determine if the university was making progress in meeting these five standards in preparation for accreditation with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

## **Report on Self Study**

The self study was prepared using the 2010 standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The self study addressed each standard and the individual components of the standards in some detail. The report and supplemental materials were provided to committee members well in advance of the visit. The majority of the supplemental materials were available on site, even though some were available online at the time of the visit. The evaluation committee found the report to be straightforward and easy to read. The

committee also noted that the report raised questions to be addressed during the visit to campus.

The committee indicated that the report was largely descriptive in its presentation. Limited assessment information and analysis and/or reporting of the results of the planning, implementation, and evaluation cycle increased the dependence of the committee on gathering information on site. The structure of the report made it difficult to review progress for some standards.

Appendices were provided to support some aspects of the report. Additional exhibits were provided in the evaluation committee workroom. Some exhibits cited in the report were not available in the workroom.

The labeling of some appendices and exhibits made it difficult to align the support materials with the standards and report. Some materials cited in the report were not available in the workroom. The evaluation committee felt it was important to have access to exhibits ahead of the onsite visit and that supporting documentation be readily available in the committee workroom.

The communication of university staff with team members prior to the visit assisted the team in using its time effectively during the visit to Capilano University. Throughout the visit, students, staff, faculty, and administrators were very helpful as they provided information to committee members throughout the visit.

### **Individuals and Groups Interviewed by the Evaluation Team**

- President
- Vice President, Education – Academic and Arts
- Executive committee (vice presidents and deans)
- Board of Governors
- Deans, chairs, and faculty of academic programs
- Student services directors and staff
- Faculty members at open forum
- Staff members at open forum
- Students at open forum
- Library staff, faculty, and vice president
- Faculty, staff, and students at Squamish campus

### **Eligibility Requirements**

The self study document provided committee members with information on the actions taken since the previous interim candidacy report and site visit. The Accreditation Handbook procedures include committee analysis of the extent to which the institution meets the Eligibility Requirements. The committee found that, through the responses to the elements of the five standards, the institution has met or has made substantive progress towards meeting the Eligibility Requirements.

## Response to Prior Recommendations

Four recommendations were made at the time of the first interim candidacy visit. The University responded to each of these recommendations in its Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report. The recommendations and the committee review of the responses are listed below:

1. *The Committee recommends that Capilano University prepare a progress report on the implementation status as a Special Purpose Teaching University under the terms of the University Act of the provincial legislature. This report should include a summary of the changes that have been fully implemented as required by that Act and a list of on-going implementation activities. (Standards 6.A, 6.B, 6.C, and 6.D)*

The progress report summarizing the implementation of the status of Special Purpose Teaching University was provided as Appendix 7 in the exhibits supporting the Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report.

2. *The Committee recommends that the University utilize a planning process to inform resource allocations and master planning for physical development consistent with its mission and long-range educational plans. The master plan should be updated periodically. (Standards 1.B.4 and 8.C.1)*

A master plan for physical development of the University was provided in the exhibits in the committee work room. The University does not have a comprehensive master plan for facilities at this time, an area discussed in more detail in the committee response to Standard 2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure.

3. *The committee recommends that the University develop and implement its process for assessing all educational programs on a regular basis. Educational assessment must be integrated into an enhanced and systematic planning process and the University must identify and publish expected learning outcomes for each of its academic programs. (Standards 1.B, 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and 2.B.3; Policy 2.2)*

The University has made progress on the assessment of programs. A new *Assessment Handbook* is available to support the development of assessment processes, and a Moodle site has been established to track department and program implementation. The university continues to develop and implement program assessment, although additional progress is needed to satisfy the standards. This is discussed in more detail in Standards Three and Four of the evaluation committee report.

4. *The Committee recommends that the institution integrate its evaluation and planning processes to identify institutional priorities for improvement and systematically reviews its institutional research efforts, its evaluation processes, and its planning activities to document their effectiveness. (Standards 1.B.5 and 1.B.8)*

The university adopted a new strategic plan in 2009 to guide its planning and assessment processes. The documentation of progress on the plan is incomplete at this time in relationship to core theme assessment and analysis and in capital planning. This is discussed in more detail in the committee response to Standards 2.G., 3.B, 4.A, and 4.B.

## **Standard One – Mission, Core Themes and Expectations**

### **1.A Mission**

The Capilano University Vision, Values, Mission, Goals, and Strategic Directions plan was approved by the Board of Governors October 26, 2009. The mission statement was revised to reflect a recent provincial designation as a Special Purpose Teaching University and to add clarity to the types of programs offered by the University. The mission statement reflects the developmental, technical, and college transfer and degree programs approved for Capilano students and is consistent with the purpose of the University. The mission is posted on the University "About Capilano University" web link and is included within the Vision, Values, Mission, Goals, and Strategic Directions plan on the same site.

The Capilano University community defined mission fulfillment through two goals: "Students are drawn to Capilano University" and "Students are successful". Objectives have been identified for each goal and indicators of achievement have been determined for several of the objectives. In the case of the first goal, reputation and enrollment provide the categories in which objectives and indicators of achievement are defined. These are consistent with the mission of the university and have been used to gather data to inform decisions about programs and services for students. Seven broad student learning outcomes have been identified. These student learning outcomes are described as the basis for measuring the success of university programs. Objectives and indicators of achievement have been identified for the two goals, including the core themes, and provide a structure for determining the mission fulfillment.

### **1.B Core Themes**

The mission includes a "wide range of programs and services" which is then defined through four core themes. The core themes are consistent with the university mission and represent the second goal of the strategic plan. The core themes describe the distinct program areas of the university, areas that have been offered for some time and that are specified under legislation: general arts and sciences, preparatory programs, specialized programs, and community engagement. Faculty, administrators, and students were conversant with the themes, and the core themes are consistent with mission and defined roles of the university.

Objectives and indicators of achievement for this second goal (students are successful) are defined for the objectives of each core theme. Targets and benchmarks are established for many of the indicators; indicators do not include the target or benchmark information for some core theme objectives. One potential source of information, student performance on learning outcomes, is provided and published for some programs; the University has not developed a comprehensive approach to the assessment of student learning outcomes and performance at the program level to form a consistent basis for the evaluation of these objectives. Reports from the province are one of several formal and informal assessments. There is limited use of qualitative information in the assessment of student learning. Planning for core themes is incomplete at this time.

Concern: The absence of targets and benchmarks for some core theme indicators of achievement limits the evaluation of the achievement of objectives and the core themes.

## **Standard Two – Resources and Capacity**

### **2.A Governance**

Capilano University recently transitioned from a college to a university and was approved as a Special Purpose Teaching University. University governance is defined under the University Act, the legislation governing Special Purpose Teaching universities, and includes two bodies, the Senate and the Governing Board. The Senate has responsibility for academic matters, and the Governing board has responsibility for the management and administration of the University. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators are represented on both bodies.

The University responded to the new standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities as it prepared for the second interim candidacy visit, an indication of its continuing commitment to the accreditation process. Additionally, the University sought and was successful in its designation as a Special Purpose Teaching University. The self study, interviews, and exhibits support the commitment to compliance with Commission standards and with the expectations of the Ministry for this new university designation.

### **Governing Board**

The Board of Governors for Capilano University consists of fifteen members and includes community, faculty, staff, and student representatives. The majority of the members are appointed by the provincial government with elected representation from faculty, staff, and students. Two of the government-appointed members are chosen from persons nominated by the alumni association. The president of the University also serves on the Board. Two members of the Foundation board also serve on the Board of Governors Investment Committee but are not members of the Board of Governors. Board members reported that the Board reflected a mixture of talents and skills to address the vision of the University and to engage in University governance as needed.

The Board of Governors meets once a month. Board sub-committees meet as needed, often in conjunction with the monthly meeting of the Board. Business of the Board is conducted within the framework of the Board of Governors By-Laws. The primary focus of the Board is oversight of policies and provincial statutory requirements. Each January, the Board holds a retreat; one agenda item is a review of its performance, informed partially by data resulting from an annual survey of the Board.

The Board of Governors is responsible for selecting and evaluating the chief executive officer of the University, its president and vice chancellor. Board members described the recently completed selection process for the current president. The selection process included appointing a search committee consisting of faculty, staff, students, and Board members. The committee screened applicants and brought three candidates to campus for interviews. The search committee and Senate made recommendations to the Board, and the Board hired the president.

The President of Capilano University provides leadership and oversight for the University. With her administrative staff, the President administers University policy in the support of the mission and core themes of the University.

## **Leadership and Management**

The President and Vice Chancellor of Capilano University has a full-time position, supported by administrators with expertise in the primary functions of the university: five vice presidents, five deans, and director of development and alumni relations. This administrative team meets regularly to support and coordinate the initiatives essential to the mission and core themes of the University.

The Executive Committee observed that the strategic plan provides guidance for the University and that the two goals and associated objectives drive needs within the plan. Fiscal resources are allocated differentially based on University priorities with attention to the whole of the University.

The Executive Committee shared a sense of excitement about the dialogue that has occurred as a result of the transition from a college to a university. The dialogue and actions to implement the designation of a Special Purpose Teaching University have increased the attention to and understanding of the planning, assessment, and evaluation loop. Examples of Ministry-required data, anecdotal evidence, and employer assessments were provided by Executive Committee members as strategies that support the planning, assessment and evaluation cycle. These processes have not been consistently integrated into a systematic and routine cycle at this time.

## **Policies and Procedures**

As Capilano transitions from a college to a university, the Board of Governors and the Senate are engaged in systematic review of policies and procedures in areas included in Standard 2.A Governance.

## **Academics**

Policies governing academic matters are developed, reviewed, and approved by the Senate. Academic policies are provided in the *Academic Policies* document, available in print and electronically. Library policies guide the use of library resources for patrons and are published and available on the Library web site.

A comprehensive system exists for the evaluation and articulation of transfer credits in British Columbia. Once a course is articulated for transfer, it is entered into the British Columbia Council on Admissions and transfer database, accessible to students seeking information on transfer equivalents. The process is managed through the Registrar's Office and information on the process can be found in the *Calendar*.

## **Students**

Evidence of policies for students was provided in exhibits and through web-based resources. These policies include information on areas such as admission, placement, academic standing, and appeals. Information about programs is provided in the academic *Calendar*, program updates are posted throughout the academic year.

The Capilano Students' Union has a relationship with the University as described in Board Policy 18. The Board policy covers the relationships with the student newspaper (Capilano Courier) and the Student Union.

### ***Human Resources***

The Board of Governors enters into contractual agreements with the faculty and the staff. The agreements include terms of employment including processes for recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. An initial letter of appointment details the expectations of the employee; procedures for evaluation are outlined as well. Board of Governors' policies cover working conditions for administrators and staff excluded from the collective bargaining agreements. The terms for faculty and staff evaluation are described in the collective bargaining agreement for each group.

Employee records are held in a secure area with access provided only to individuals with a need to know. These individuals sign a confidentiality statement before accessing the records.

### ***Institutional Integrity***

University publications and releases provide consistent messages about the role and mission of the University and the scope of its programs and services through print and electronic media. Examples include the availability of the strategic plan; the posting of the Vision, Values, Mission, Goals and Strategic Directions plan on the About Capilano University web page; and program information on the homepage of the web. Public information is consistent in its message and provides essential information for the public the University serves.

Institutional integrity is reflected in the stated values of Capilano University. These include (among other statements) academic integrity, open engagement with ideas and respectful engagement with each other, personal accountability for the integrity and success of the university, and transparency and an ethic of fairness. Codes of conduct have been adopted for members of the Board of Governors, University employees, and students; these are available on the University intranet. Processes for resolution of conflict are stated in policy.

The University has established policies and guidelines to manage potential conflicts of interest. Policies and guidelines related to intellectual property, copyright, and ownership are included in the collective bargaining agreement and in the Board of Governor's policy.

Information about regional accreditation is posted on the About Capilano University web page. All institutional reports developed for the accreditation process are located on this site, and the University presents accurately its current candidacy status.

The British Columbia Government Procurement and Supply Services sets standards for contractual commitments. Additionally, Board of Governors and Senate policies and an internal routing process assure that contracts conform to University policy and provincial policy and guidelines.

### ***Academic Freedom***

Senate Policy 2003-01 covers academic freedom policies and guidelines. A review of policy combined with information from faculty representatives provides evidence that Capilano University provides an environment for the intellectual exchange and scholarly pursuits that

characterize a higher education environment. Policies and procedures are in place to support these pursuits and to address situations contradictory to the principles of academic freedom.

### ***Finance***

Policies adopted by the Board of Governors, Executive Policies, and the University Act provide the bases for the oversight and management of university resources. The University adheres to these policies and makes required reports to these bodies.

### **2.B Human Resources**

Capilano's policies and procedures are contained in four primary documents. The Faculty and Staff Handbooks are produced as a result of the respective agreements between Capilano and their Faculty Association and with the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union Local 378. The two agreements are negotiated on a regular basis and are in force for three and four years respectively. After the stated lengths of the agreements are reached, they stay in effect until either the unions or the University request a renegotiation. Handbooks are published to incorporate the agreement standards and remain in effect until the collective agreements are renewed or when there is a policy change that affects the agreements. The policies and procedures are applied equitably to faculty and staff.

Employees are made aware of the terms of their employment. They are recruited through a competitive process with details of the qualifications required along with their duties and responsibilities outlined. Faculty members are evaluated every five years at a minimum and in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner in accordance with the collective agreement and *Faculty Handbook*. Administrators and exempt staff are evaluated in accordance with established policies and timelines unique to each. Performance evaluations are recorded in each individual's confidential personnel files. The files are properly secured and only personnel with a need-to-know are able to view them after they have signed a statement of confidentiality. No evidence could be found of union staff employees being evaluated on a regular basis after the required six month probationary period evaluation.

Class size is normally limited to thirty-five students each, and the faculty has a specified, limited number of class hours to teach. When registration for a class warrants consideration for an additional section, the University may employ, budget permitting, an additional instructor for the added class. Staff is hired as needed, either to fill temporary vacancies created due to leaves of absence, personnel departing established positions, or new positions. Human Resources maintains a pool of qualified, approved personnel who are available for temporary assignment when the need arises for up to three months (e.g., to assist with book sales at the beginning of an academic term).

Professional development is a priority for all employees. Faculty submit annual professional development plans, are granted the time each year to pursue the plans, and subsequent reports of their activities are filed. Staff members are also encouraged to pursue professional development; time is granted away from the workplace to pursue their plans, and funding is normally provided.

Concern: Classified staff members are evaluated at six months of employment; there is no evidence of ongoing evaluation of union staff members after the six month probationary period.

## **2.C Education Resources**

Capilano University programs are developed in accordance with guidelines established in Senate Policy 2009-03, Requirements for Credentials, and Board Policy 101. Senate policy sets a minimum number of credits for each level of credential, as well as appropriate levels of breadth and depth, and minimum grade point average for graduation.

General education and related instruction requirements are specified in Senate policy. Board Policy 101 identifies seven institutional-level student learning outcomes (including the general education and related instructional outcomes of communication, computation, and human relations). These institution-level outcomes were introduced in the fall of 2009, and program areas are in the process of integrating them into their program outcomes and assessment plans.

All programs are expected to identify student learning outcomes in the context of the program. As of 2010, most Capilano University programs have either developed or are developing student learning outcomes. Program learning outcomes are required to be included on any new program proposals or program revisions prior to approval by the Senate Curriculum Committee. Course learning outcomes are identified on course outlines, which are provided to students and are considered a contract between the instructor and the student. However, the University needs to publish its expected course, program and degree learning outcomes in a venue that is readily accessible to all of its constituencies (2.C.2).

Capilano University has a strong history of providing credit programs, diplomas and degrees in response to community and market needs, and it is complimented for the rich breadth of courses and programs offered and the talented faculty it has recruited. The spirit of collegiality, cooperation, innovation and dedication to student success among faculty and staff are noteworthy.

Degree programs at Capilano must conform to Senate policy and must also be approved by the provincial Degree Quality Assessment Board. Both institutional and provincial processes address breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are established in institutional policy and posted on the University's website.

Under the British Columbia University Act, the Capilano Senate is charged with the authority to set curriculum content and criteria for awarding credentials. Faculty members are directly involved in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of curriculum through their academic program structure and the Senate Curriculum Committee (SCC). Although the current chair of the SCC is not a faculty member, faculty members play a major role in the curriculum approval process. These roles are outlined in Senate policy 2009-05, Program Approval Process. Further, classroom faculty assume responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement.

Each program area within the University has a liaison librarian who regularly communicates with faculty members, promotes faculty awareness of resources and services, and provides instruction in the use of library and information resources. Further, access to discipline-specific information resources is regularly considered in the course development process. A university librarian is a standing member of the Senate Curriculum Committee, with an opportunity to provide feedback on the adequacy of existing information sources to support new programs, diplomas and degrees.

All faculty members are invited to request University librarians to provide subject-specific library research classes. Library instruction is provided for all English 100 and Psychology 100 courses. As a result, a majority of Capilano's students receive information literacy training while at the University. Additionally, information literacy competencies are embedded in numerous classes in which library and information resources are integrated into the learning process.

Prior Learning Assessment enables students to receive college credits for learning acquired in external environments, which benefits students who have work and life experiences that equate to courses offered at the University. The process for assessing prior learning at Capilano is delineated in Senate policy EC2002-03. Awarding of credit is dependent upon the student's ability to demonstrate the equivalent knowledge and skills of the course for which they are requesting credit. Evidence may include documentation, an interview, oral presentation, or portfolio and must meet the additional criteria of validity, sufficiency, authenticity, currency and reliability. Faculty members in the program area in which the student is seeking credit are responsible for assessing the student's demonstration of the learning outcomes.

Capilano's policies and procedures governing transfer credits are delineated on the Registrar's web-page. An articulation agreement exists amongst all British Columbia post secondary public institutions to accept each other's credit upon transfer if the given course is applicable to a course at the receiving institution and there is equivalency of credits between universities. Virtually all of the lower-level arts and science courses and many other lower-level program courses are articulated through the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer. This articulation process is supported by annual discipline-specific meetings attended by faculty representatives from all of the public post-secondary institutions in the province. There is also a pan-Canadian protocol encouraging colleges and universities to honor one another's first and second year courses.

Students must make a written request for transfer of credit, which is then reviewed by the appropriate faculty program coordinator who makes the decision to either accept, or not, the credit. Requests for transfer credit for non-articulated courses are evaluated by faculty members in the appropriate areas. All approved transfer credit is noted on the permanent student record. While the credit awarded does not affect the grade point average, the credit will be included in the total number of credits completed and may be used to complete certificate or diploma requirements if applicable. In addition to credits earned at other institutions, the University policy addresses Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Course credits along with transfer credit limits.

While the University has made important progress identifying assessable learning outcomes for the General Education components of its degree programs, as well as learning outcomes for those programs, this work needs to continue. It is now a requirement that any new degree proposal that is submitted to the Senate Curriculum Committee must include identifiable and assessable General Education outcomes.

University transfer degrees include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge of the humanities and fine arts, natural sciences and social sciences. Additionally, each University program of 30 credits or more is required to include a core of general education or related instruction at the breadth and depth appropriate for the level of the credential (Senate policy 2009-03, Requirements for Credentials). All programs are to include English and/or Communications, quantitative/analytical or related instruction, and opportunities for students to increase their competency in working with others and to increase

their understanding of the variety of influences on interpersonal interaction. Specific credit requirements are delineated for each credential: citation, certificate, advanced certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, post-baccalaureate diploma, graduate certificate and graduate diploma.

Any programs that do not include specific courses related to computation and human relations have documented the embedded instruction in these areas. Programs that have embedded related instruction have identified the content and its assessment on course outlines and the *General Education Components of Certificate and Diploma Programs* form.

Commitment to community is a core value at Capilano University, which is articulated in the University's strategic plan, and evidenced in the legacy of trust and respect that "Cap" has garnered in the community. The Continuing Education (CE) program is a prominent manifestation of this value and a key component of the institution's Community Engagement core theme. CE awards neither credit nor CEUs. Continuing Education provides credit-free learning opportunities to the diverse communities the University services. CE courses and programs are guided by generally accepted norms, based on institutional mission and policy and subject to the same review process as credit programs, with review by the Senate Curriculum Committee and final approval by Senate. CE maintains records and produces institutional data that document the number of classes and nature of learning provided through these classes.

## **2.D Student Support Services**

Capilano provides a myriad of student support services to enhance student success. Some of the services are intended for all the students (e.g., financial aid, academic advising, counseling, book store) while others are for specific student populations (e.g., disability services, international students, First Nation students).

The University has aggressively pursued safety and security issues. A threat assessment has been conducted, responses coordinated with area law enforcement agencies, emergency preparedness plans developed, and crisis response training provided for employees and students. The University addresses via policy, and in practice, the handling of dangerous and disruptive students.

The Admissions and Academic Advising Departments were recently consolidated with the personnel alternating their time between the two functions. The University admits each candidate who qualifies for admission without any cap on total enrollment; some academic programs do have caps. Rather than the Academic Advisors attempting to be thoroughly versed in every program's requirements, they are grouped in pods of programs and are able to be more knowledgeable, or specialized, in their respective areas. They are in daily contact with faculty members regarding students and program requirements. Advisors make regular visits with the students at their two regional campuses.

The University publishes all the information that meets the standard of a catalog's contents online. This catalog is available to any prospective or current student, employee, or the general public. The *View Book* provides an excellent overview of program offerings and requirements. The University website covers the administrative details of getting admitted to the University, learning and living as a student, and being successful academically and personally in order to complete one's educational goals. For certificates and diplomas leading to positions for

licensure or entry to a particular occupation or profession, the educational requirements are published on the website along with prospective employment and development opportunities in the given field. The University website could be revised for easier navigation and for readily locating information.

Academic records are maintained by the Registrar. All records are electronically stored and securely protected. Once paper files are electronically scanned, they are transferred to an off-site secure storage facility managed by a security contractor. Until the files are taken to the off-campus repository they are secured in the Registrar's Office. Only personnel with a need-to-know are granted access to student files and are required to sign a statement of confidentiality.

Financial Aid has a variety of awards, or grants, for students based on need or merit. Loans are also arranged and payments tracked. Students receiving aid have required entrance and exit interviews. Financial Aid information is available on-line, and a printed comprehensive guide for students is published annually.

Students are responsible for clubs and most other co-curricular activities as the Student Union is a member of the Canadian Federation of Students - Local 5, a non-profit organization. The Student Union has autonomy, and is organized and run solely by students. The Athletics and Recreation Department provides an intramural program.

There are several auxiliary services provided by the University which include, but are not limited to, the Book Store, the Children's Centre, and the Performing Arts Theatre. Food services are provided on campus by an independent contractor. The services support the University's mission, and enhance the learning and living environment. Students, faculty, and staff have formal means, i.e., committees, to provide input regarding the services.

The Athletics and Recreation Department supports several intercollegiate sports as well as an intramural program. There are limited scholarships available for student-athletes, and the operating budget equally supports women's and men's sports. The operating budget is supplemented by ticket sales. The University is a member of the Canadian Colleges Athletic Association with the Athletic and Recreation Department adhering to its standards. The eligibility status for each student-athlete is reviewed weekly by the Registrar and Athletic Department, and student-athletes are held to the same standards as all other students. The Athletic Director's emphasis is on learning, and the strong academic standings of the student-athletes reflect this.

The University has a verification process, which is publicized, involving positive identity at the time of matriculation, registration, and throughout their career as a Capilano student. Verification is required for participation in on-line courses; however, no evidence could be found of a published verification policy easily accessible to students.

Assessment exists in the sense of determining if services provided by Human Resources and Student Support Services are adequate in that student and employee needs are met. Internal surveys are conducted in some areas, and the University has recently started to administer the National Survey of Student Engagement. However, little evidence could be identified that assesses if services are contributing directly to the core themes.

## 2.E Library and Information Resources

The library's mission aligns with that of the institution and highlights its support of student success. To meet the needs of the students, staff, and faculty members, the Capilano University Library provides both a traditional library with a physical presence on campus and also virtual access to a range of library and information resources. The library space is central and prominent, underscoring its importance to the campus community. The library also has a small facility on the Sunshine Coast Campus. The library's virtual presence is visible as a prominent link on the University's web site. The library has a substantial collection of print and audiovisual materials to support the curriculum. It has made an important decision to grow an online collection of books and journals; this not only expands the collection, it improves access by making information available 24/7 and extends access to resources to students at the regional campuses. Librarians have further expanded access to information by evaluating open-access internet sources and linking those appropriate in online subject guides and resource pages.

The library provides a variety of services including reference, circulation, interlibrary loan, and audio-visual. Also housed in the library is a Computer Learning Centre. Reference and research assistance is available in person at the reference desk and by phone and email. Chat reference assistance is available through the province-wide AskAway program. Librarians have created online research guides for a variety of subjects. The library provides a variety of learning spaces: individual, group, quiet, and those with access to technology. The regional campuses also receive services. The Sunshine Coast Campus has a small library space and collection. Students at both Sunshine Coast and the Squamish Campus have benefited from the expanded access to online library and information resources. Twice a week courier service provides those distant students with access materials they need from the main campus's physical collection. Librarians visit the regional campuses several times a semester to provide information literacy instruction.

One challenge the library has been facing for a number of years is a relatively flat allocated budget, and this has not changed with the move from college to university status and the addition of new programs. Improvements to the collection have resulted from one-time monies received for new programs and reallocation of resources such as cutting print subscriptions duplicated in online databases. The library has a seat on the Senate curriculum committee but there is no guarantee that a new course or new program will include monies for library support. Collection decisions are the responsibility of a collection development librarian who works closely with other librarians who are liaisons to departments on campus. These librarians consult with their departments to get input about collections.

Another challenge is space. This is true on the North Vancouver facility where students reported that at times the library is so crowded that students sit on the floor. The Squamish campus has no dedicated library space.

Students interviewed during the site visit were unanimous in their high praise of library services and the library staff and faculty who implement them. Faculty members were also supportive and complimented interlibrary loan services and the process in place to request library materials for the collection.

The evaluation committee found little evidence that planning for library and information sources is guided by feedback from affected users. The last formal student survey was completed in 2006 and has not been repeated. The only faculty survey mentioned was one currently

underway to determine how faculty members are using videos and DVDs in their classrooms. Librarians reported using individual, informal feedback to inform changes in the library. In their liaison roles, librarians also confer with departmental faculty about information needs. The library currently lacks a chief librarian whose administrative responsibilities would include leading comprehensive assessment efforts. Instead, a library coordinator is elected from the library faculty every two years; however, this person also retains many of his/her librarian duties so lacks time to administrate large projects. The lack of a Chief Librarian is of concern because of this position's role in implementing planning and assessment initiatives.

Librarians at Capilano are teaching-focused, offering a comprehensive information literacy program with options ranging from classes and one-on-one consultations to email and phone reference. Library subject guides have been created and made available online to help students. Because library instruction is embedded in English and Psychology 100 courses, a majority of Capilano students are offered at least one information literacy class during their time on campus. Instruction sessions targeted to specific subjects are also taught. The class schedule is made public and drop-ins are encouraged to attend those scheduled classes. Students interviewed reported these classes to be very helpful and felt they contributed to their success. For students who do not participate in a library instruction session or who would like a refresher, an online Information Skills Tutor tutorial is available. Librarians are also providing workshops as part of a series of student success workshops sponsored by Counseling and Learning Support. A new marketing initiative resulted in materials advertising library and librarian services for students. This dedication to the teaching role among the library faculty is impressive and serves Capilano University students well.

No evidence was found of regular and systematic evaluation of the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services. The library does gather statistical data on a number of factors such as personnel, collection numbers, reference transactions, and so on. The data is gathered for the Council of Post-Secondary Library Directors of British Columbia which aggregates the data and compares it with similar data from other institutions. However, the University does not have an assessment plan in place for the library nor are users regularly and formally solicited for input. Some collection analysis has been done in the area of journal subscriptions and e-book purchases; however this was necessitated by the decision to move to electronic sources and not as part of a larger, more systematic evaluation plan. The library is not included in the institution's assessment plan. The lack of a Chief Librarian, who would be responsible for planning and assessment initiatives, is again noted.

Concern: There was no evidence of a systematic and comprehensive assessment plan and process for the evaluation of library services.

## **2.F Financial Resources**

Capilano University (CU) is governed by a 15 member Board of Governors.

The budget process is initiated by the development of a base budget. The base budget consists of the previous year's budget adjusted for employee position additions and deletions, projected salary increases, and elimination of one-time budget adjustments. Departments have the opportunity through their vice-president or dean to request one-time or permanent budget adjustments. The Executive Committee does an initial prioritization of these new requests based on their connection to the strategic plan. These requests are submitted to the Senate Budget Committee. The Budget Committee may then recommend additional adjustments or a change

in priority based on need and strategic value. At the same time revenue projections are prepared and eventually compared to expenses for review. A balanced budget is required. Once balanced and finalized, the budget is submitted to the Board of Governors for approval.

Funding is largely dependent on the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD) with 59% of the 2009-10 general fund operating budget revenue coming from government appropriations. The institution has built and maintains fund balances and reserves adequate to provide for enrollment fluctuations, minor calamities, and other contingencies.

The President and Vice President for Finance and Administration regularly report on the financial performance of the University to the Board of Governors (Board).

Budget, planning, and business functions are centralized and under the authority of the Vice President for Finance and Administration who reports directly to the President. All of these areas are adequately staffed by professional, experienced, and knowledgeable staff.

The institution complies with all aspects of financial management, reporting and audit requirements as evidenced by audited financial statements and independent auditor's report. The Board maintains an Audit and Finance Committee. The committee reviews audit recommendations made by the external independent auditors and from internal control reviews. Action plans are presented to the Committee and progress monitored.

The CU Foundation is managed by the University's Development Office. Its sole purpose is to raise funds for the university in the areas of scholarships, faculty development, and capital projects. The relationship between the university and the foundation is defined in an agreement signed by both parties. It should be noted that the relationship between CU and the Foundation is unusual. Several years ago CU hired an external law firm to craft a change to the reporting relationship of the Foundation, moving it from an independent fundraising organization to one directly managed by the University. It appears that this restructuring, possibly unique in Canada, complies with all applicable Canadian laws and regulations. All investment activities are governed by policy with oversight provided by the Board of Governors Investment Committee. Two Foundation Board members are members of the Investment Committee, but are not members of the Board. The University, the Board, and the Foundation Board should be vigilant to assure no conflicts of interest, even unintended, ever present themselves.

All fund raising activities are governed by policy, comply with government requirements, and are conducted in a professional and ethical manner as evidenced by audited financial statements and independent auditor's report.

## **2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure**

Capilano University (CU) is situated on 40 forested and very attractive acres in North Vancouver with a total of 535,703 square feet of usable space. CU maintains two regional campuses, one in Sechelt and one in Squamish. The three campuses support 17 buildings (15 in North Vancouver and 1 on each of the regional campuses). The facilities are sufficient to support the mission and goals of the university. The Facilities Management Department has been able to maintain the buildings, grounds, and support infrastructure in a manner more than adequate to meet the needs of the institution.

The institution is currently building the new Bosa Centre for Film and Animation which will be a 65,000 square foot, one-of-a-kind, and state of the art facility affording students the tools they need to create excellence in their productions, both live-action and animated. Some of these tools include: 3-D filmmaking equipment, a 200-seat High Definition/3D theatre, industry-standard sound mixing and recording studios, an 8,000 square foot sound stage, picture editing labs, sound editing labs, digital and commercial animation labs, a teaching studio for cinematography, costuming studios, and state-of-the-art cameras and recording equipment.

A space utilization study was conducted in July, 2010; the study reveals that CU has surplus capacity in its pool of general classrooms and specialized teaching labs and studio room types. The study indicates that there is a shortfall in overall office and meeting room space.

Equipment for instructional programs appears to be adequate and is inventoried, controlled, and maintained.

CU does not have a current master plan. They have, however, prepared and submitted a five-year capital plan to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD). The goal of the plan is to request funding from the ALMD to expand and improve existing facilities. The plan was prepared without the benefit of a recent campus master planning process that could have included input such as campus engagement, enrollment forecasting, future program development, and community relations.

The majority of evidence suggests that the deferred maintenance of facilities is not a serious concern. Deferred maintenance funding is provided annually through the ALMD. Even though this funding was reduced this past year, the campus appears to be managing deferred maintenance well. However, a formal long-range deferred maintenance plan with an accounting for backlog does not exist and is currently being developed. Until this plan is fully fleshed out CU will not know its actual deferred maintenance backlog.

The University has taken the opportunity presented by the recent retirement of the IT Director to hire a consultant to assess the IT organization. The purpose for this assessment is to improve the delivering of IT services by analyzing current practices and comparing them to established industry best practices. The assessment finds that "The IT Services department is functional and has demonstrated the ability to meet the basic needs of Capilano University users ... This said; the department is not up to the effectiveness and efficiency level it has the potential of being." Recommendations include reorganizing the management structure and hiring a Chief Information Officer. CU is moving forward on these and other recommendations offered in the assessment.

IT infrastructure and strategic planning is supported by the Information Technology Technical and Operational Committee (ITTO), the lab support staff, and the Closest to the Action Group (CTAG).

The IT Department uses a systems lifecycle management program to ensure equipment and software is kept current and meets the needs of the University. IT equipment appears to be adequate and is inventoried, controlled, and maintained.

Compliment: The University is complimented for creatively structuring and acquiring the financing necessary to fund the development, design, and construction of the Bosa Centre for Film and Animation.

Concern: The Institution's deferred maintenance backlog is not adequately documented. The campus should continue to proactively work to develop a schedule of future deferred maintenance needs and identify the associated backlog. Standard 2.G.1

## **Standard Three – Planning and Implementation**

### **3.A Institutional Planning**

Capilano University adopted its current Vision, Values, Mission, and Strategic Directions plan in October 2009. The plan is the result of a participatory and inclusive process of development, input, review and refinement, and approvals. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders participated in World Cafes; participant input was captured and included in the process. University administrators worked to include both the content and the spirit of the discussions in the language of the plan. Several examples of the level of attention to detail paid to the development of the plan were provided. The Board of Governors was involved in the development of the plan and was the approving body. The plan is prominent and accessible on the University web.

One result of the planning process was the articulation of seven strategic directions for achieving the two goals of the University. Objectives, indicators of achievement, and performance targets and benchmarks framed data collection and reporting on each goal and contributed to determining mission fulfillment. Resource allocations have been aligned with the strategic directions and to support achievement of the goals of the University.

Performance measures are identified for each of the objectives linked with Goal One. Examples of measures included in the plan are Ministry required information, survey information, and student head count and FTE information; targets have been developed for each performance measure and a summary of the results is provided. These data are gathered and reported in the Institutional Accountability Plan and Report (IAPR).

Data gathered for Goal One are summarized in the IAPR and in the institutional Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report. Core theme objectives are included in the report. While data were reported for some Indicators of Achievement, data were not available for every indicator. The IAPR data are available to evaluate the fulfillment of the mission of the University.

The seven strategic directions of the University identified in the Vision, Values, Mission, and Strategic Directions document are described in the Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report and in discussion with Executive Committee members as providing direction for the alignment of the institutional mission and direction and resource allocations.

Capilano University has executed planning for emergencies and operations recovery.

### **Core Theme: General Arts and Sciences**

Among the four core themes, General Arts and Sciences (GA&S) goes back to the original goal for establishing the Capilano College: to allow local students to start a liberal arts education in a welcoming and supportive environment, in preparation for transferring these core general education credits from Capilano to other British Columbia universities. A number of Associate of Arts programs are available within the core theme, but most students transfer without completing a credential. More recently, another goal within the core theme has been to allow students to complete a four year liberal arts degree within the same friendly environment.

These two goals within the core theme are loosely divided among three objectives:

- Students successfully complete their courses
- Students successfully complete their programs
- Students are prepared for further study.

The first and third objectives address the first goal, while the second objective addresses the second goal. There are a total of five indicators of achievement under the core theme objectives.

Data collection and analysis is a recent effort, which could end up being systematic in nature in the long run. The chosen indicators provide data that are assessable and verifiable, but not clearly meaningful. Student achievement at a course level is assessed based on course grades. This leaves room for potential conflicts of interest for the course instructor and potential grade inflation. Grades also lump together multiple learning outcomes along with other, non-instructional outcomes (e.g., class attendance), which further impacts the ability to assess the student learning outcomes. The level of student preparation is a worthwhile outcome, but it is measured via an indirect measure, a survey of student perceptions. Longer term, Capilano plans to use actual performance data, following students' transfer to another institution.

### ***3.B Core Theme Planning***

Consistent with the other core themes at Capilano, planning for the General Arts and Sciences core theme is a dynamic, mainly ad-hoc, living process that has not been captured into a written document.

Resource allocation decisions have had to do mainly with the number of sections offered, and these decisions are informed by current student demand more than any other data. During the years 2004-2008, the number of sections in Arts and Sciences was reduced in response to a decrease in student demand, while more recently the number of sections has been steadily increasing due to increased demand. Waitlists for fall 2010 were unusually large, but the impact on students has been limited so far as students have alternative options when most desirable sections are unavailable.

Part of the planning within this core theme has been in reserving seats in Arts and Sciences classes for students enrolled in Capilano University programs that require these classes. For example, the new Bachelor of Motion Picture Arts degree requires English 100. The program approval process for this new degree secured funding for a sufficient number of extra seats in English 100 for the incoming film students. When demand exceeds the capacity allocated through such planning, English 100 sections have been added to meet whatever level of demand there was. Even where there was a constant and recurring need for adding sections in past semesters, the base number of sections offered has not always increased to reflect past needs. While adding sections at the last minute does accommodate student needs, it puts pressure on faculty resources that must adapt to workload adjustments. This is one of several examples of an area that would benefit from systematic planning within the core themes.

According to student testimonies, the core theme is well supported by the Writing Centre and Math Centre. Students also confirmed the role of the excellent quality of student support at Capilano in the Arts and Sciences core theme. Provincial articulation agreements facilitate students' transfer to and from other institutions in British Columbia.

Planning in support of new programs has been longer term, but still not committed to paper. A Bachelor of Arts in General Studies is expected to meet the needs of those students who want

to complete a liberal arts four year degree at Capilano. The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis was another way to respond to student and community demand, one of the few specialized programs within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

General Arts and Sciences planning is aligned with institutional planning, and supports the objectives of the core theme. As the objectives and indicators of achievement mature to include more accurate assessment of learning outcomes, the planning process could become more formalized, systematic, and better informed by the data.

Concern: There is inconsistent evidence that program development occurs as a result of *ongoing, systematic* planning within the General Arts and Sciences core theme. Planning needs to guide the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme's objectives (3.B.1).

#### **4.A Assessment**

The three objectives and five indicators of achievement for the General Arts and Sciences core theme were assessed in the self-review report. As mentioned in the section about Standard 1, one of the indicators still needs to be defined. This missing indicator (program learning outcomes) is a key component of the requirements for Standard 4.A.3. Three of the remaining indicators are assessable and verifiable, but not clearly meaningful, as they attempt to assess learning outcomes via course grades.

For students enrolled in General Arts and Sciences programs, assessment of program level outcomes is still under development. In the most recent compilation of assessment results (available at <http://moodle.capilanou.ca/mod/resource/view.php?id=136880>) five out of fifteen programs within General Arts and Sciences submitted assessment plans. None of the programs within the core theme submitted assessment reports. Among the reasons cited for this lack of reporting are complexities in defining acceptable outcomes, low number of students enrolled in the programs (as most students transfer out) and a high level of flexibility in the course requirements for completing the program.

Given this lack of data from the assessment of program outcomes, the institution did not assess the indicator of achievement based on the associated data. Aside from this, the other indicators of achievement have reported values that exceed their respective targets. While this might appear to indicate substantial achievement of the core theme objectives, this conclusion is not supported by data.

Discussions with all key groups at Capilano brought up abundant anecdotal evidence about the level of achievement of the objectives of this core theme. However, limited evidence of direct measure of student learning was available to the evaluation committee.

Concern: No evidence was provided that the assessment of core theme indicators of achievement is ongoing and systematic (4.A.1).

Concern: The evaluation of student achievement needs to become a regular and comprehensive process. In particular, evaluation of program and degree learning outcomes must be included in assessment plans (4.A.3).

Concern: Program planning requires consistency within an explicit framework of assessment, action and improvement. The General Arts and Sciences core theme must be evaluated

holistically through the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives, and to document the resulting outcomes (4.A.4).

#### **4.B Improvement**

Given the early stage of the assessment process, much if not most of the improvement phase is still in the future. Some resource allocation decisions in General Arts and Sciences were described earlier in this report, but those were not based on program assessment data. Decisions based on student learning outcomes can be expected to occur only after the program level assessment includes meaningful measures of these outcomes.

Concern: Assessment of the General Arts and Sciences core theme is not yet an area of consistent practice. Using the results of assessment to systematically inform program review and planning is an undertaking that requires further attention and focus. Further, these results will need to be made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner (4.B.1 and 4.B.2).

### **Core Theme: Specialized Programs**

Comprising one of Capilano University's core themes, *Specialized Programs* includes a wide range of certificate, diploma, and degree programs that are designed to address community needs. Approximately 55% of the University's 7335 students enrolled in credit-bearing programs are enrolled in one of these specialized certificate, diploma or degree programs. The purpose of this core theme is to work with the community and regional industries to develop and deliver programs that prepare graduates with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to make economic and cultural contributions to their communities and beyond.

Housed in the Faculties of Health and Education, Fine and Applied Arts, Business, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation, and Arts and Sciences, many of these programs include practicum courses, public performances, public exhibits or other venues for applied learning. Credentials approved to be offered within the Specialized Programs include:

- Citations
- Certificates
- Diplomas
- Baccalaureate Degrees
- Post-Baccalaureate Credentials

Baccalaureate degrees include the:

- Bachelor of Motion Picture Arts
- Bachelor of Applied Behaviour Analysis – Autism
- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Care and Education
- Bachelor of Legal Studies (Paralegal)
- Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies
- Bachelor of Music Therapy
- Bachelor of Tourism Management

Additional baccalaureate degrees have been proposed for Communication Studies, which builds on the existing diploma in communication studies, and Performing Arts as well as a diploma in visual effects, to complement the motion picture and animation programs, and a degree expanding the advanced diploma in Illustration/Design: Elements and Applications (IDEA).

### **3.B Core Theme Planning**

Program development is based on student interest, industry/community need, and employment opportunities. Accordingly, programs within this core theme are revised or expanded to reflect industry standards. However, there is inconsistent evidence that program development occurs as a result of ongoing, systematic planning. Planning for each core theme needs to guide the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme's objectives (3.B.1).

Concern: There is inconsistent evidence that program development occurs as a result of ongoing, systematic planning within this core them. Planning needs to guide the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme's objectives (3.B.1).

### **4.A Assessment**

Student success is the primary criterion for measuring program effectiveness. Within the thematic area of *Specialized Programs*, student success encompasses three objectives:

1. Students successfully complete their programs.
2. The learning outcomes of career and employment-related programs are well aligned with the needs of the relevant industries;
3. The learning outcomes of programs related to aesthetic engagement enable students to make cultural contributions; and

There are six indicators of student success:

1. Program completion
2. Attainment of program Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)
3. Employed in training-related job
4. Education useful in performance of job
5. Graduates achieve licensure or certification where applicable
6. Documentation of the visible presence of graduates in the cultural community

Achievement targets have been set for two of these six indicators: program completion (80%) and employment in a training-related job (65%). The University's *Comprehensive Self-Evaluation* reports that 82% of students in the final year of a specialized program completed their programs in 2009-2010. Of the students responding to the Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) survey, 70% reported working in a training-related job.

However, achievement targets for the remaining four indicators have not been established. In particular, the target for attainment of program-level student learning outcomes within this core theme has not been determined. A comprehensive assessment plan for *Specialized Programs* has not been fully implemented (3.B).

Faculty members have played a primary role in the evaluation of specialized programs. A number of academic units within *Specialized Programs* have completed their assessment plans,

and some have filed assessment reports. Academic unit assessments include a variety of methodologies, including external advisory boards and certifications as well as capstone projects.

While faculty members within *Specialized Programs* have begun the process of articulating student learning outcomes (SLO) and identifying methods for assessing SLO, not all programs have developed an assessment plan and reported the results of their assessment. Program faculty members are responsible for establishing clearly identified learning outcomes and for evaluating student achievement (4.A.3). It is essential that *Specialized Programs* engage in the ongoing, systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data—quantitative and/or qualitative—as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives (4.A.1). Further, it is essential that the University document—through an effective, regular and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement—that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. The documentation of student achievement should be inclusive, accessible and transparent.

Concern: Performance targets for the attainment of program-level student learning outcomes within this core theme have not been determined. A comprehensive assessment plan for *Specialized Programs* has not been fully implemented (3.B).

#### **4.B Improvement**

Assessment of student success has led to improvement within some program areas at Capilano University, but this is not yet an area of consistent practice. The purpose and value of institutional assessment occurs when the results of core theme assessments are used to produce institutional improvement by informing planning, decision making, and the allocation of resources and capacity. There is limited evidence of the use of the results of assessment to systematically inform program review and planning (4.B.1). Further, there is limited evidence that these results are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner (4.B.2).

In sum, faculty members and leaders within *Specialized Programs* are complimented for the progress they have made to-date articulating student learning outcomes, identifying appropriate assessment measures and critically reviewing the efficacy of those measures. There is evidence of a solid foundation for core theme planning and improvement. However, program planning requires consistency within an explicit framework of assessment, action and improvement. There is limited evidence that the institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives, and to document the resulting outcomes (4.A.4).

Concern: Program planning requires consistency within an explicit framework of assessment, action and improvement. *Specialized Programs* need to evaluate holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives, and to document the resulting outcomes (4.A.4).

Concern: Assessment of student success is not yet an area of consistent practice. Using the results of assessment to systematically inform program review and planning is an undertaking that requires further attention and focus (4.B.1). Further, these results are to be made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner (4.B.2).

## **Core Theme: Preparatory Studies**

About 10% of Capilano's student population qualifies for preparatory programming to meet entry requirements for college-level courses, prerequisites for university transfer and career/vocational programs or upgrade their academic or basic literacy skills. Courses are offered through a number of departments at Squamish, the Sunshine Coast as well as the North Vancouver campus.

Preparatory Programs has been a prominent feature of the institution since its beginning. Demographics in its service area verify the programming needs and robust enrollment in the programming further corroborate this student and community-centered theme. It is an essential element of the mission of the institution.

Like its student population, programs within Preparatory Studies are diverse. Some programs, like Adult Basic Education (ABE) are tuition free, others are tuition bearing programs, and some are funded in cooperation with outside agencies and require special admission processes and reporting requirements. None offer degrees; however, some offer opportunities for students to earn certificates or citations. These are available in College and University Preparation, Community Capacity Building, English as a Second Language (ESL), Gateways, Vision, Access to Work, Discover Employability, Academic English Preparation, and English Language Foundations.

The focus of this core theme is to provide access to and opportunities for specialized programming for adult learners from diverse backgrounds to gain skills, knowledge, strategies, and confidence to be successful in the next level of studies or to satisfy personal or career goals. It mixes academic programs like Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and College and University Preparation with a focused group of student service programs like First Nations Transition and Community Development and Outreach. Preparatory Programs report to the Vice President of Student and Institutional Support. This administrator is new to the university and has brought change and a new direction of cross departmental conversation and collaboration to the unit that is appreciated by faculty and has led to sharing of resources to better serve students.

### ***3.B Core Theme Planning***

Preparatory Studies identifies three objectives under the University's "Students are Successful" goal:

- Students successfully complete their courses
- Students are prepared for further studies
- Students acquire an increased confidence.

Measures and targets have been set based on course completion, attainment of Student Learning Outcomes as measured by students earning a grade in the course, extent prepared for further study, and self efficacy as measured by responses to the Developmental Student Outcomes (DEVSO Survey). Measures such as course completion and receiving a grade are limited measures of student success and ones that are easily manipulated.

#### **4.A Assessment**

Measuring core theme outcomes is still a work in progress. Most students who take courses in this area do not earn a credential. The data collected for the indicators of achievement are not collected for every program in the unit and may only represent ABE and ESL. Two Indicators of Achievement are focused on course level outcomes rather than program outcomes and measured by student completion of a course and attainment of course learning outcomes as measured by course grade. The third is a student self-identified measure. Programs are looking at including actual performance data following student progress and this should be encouraged.

Program level outcomes assessment is still under development. Only a few programs submitted assessment reports in this core theme. One noteworthy Continuous Assessment Plan is from the College and University Preparation program. It identifies program outcomes based on the student goal (successfully pursue further studies in college) and multiple measures used to quantify results. The plan also includes student performance measures in appropriate areas that require a more qualitative approach. This plan could serve as a model for other units in this core theme that have yet to develop an assessment plan. All departments should complete plans and identify program outcomes.

Concern: A comprehensive system to gather performance information on all Preparatory programs has not been developed.

#### **4.B Improvement**

While it is still early in development of assessment processes, there is the beginning of indication that changes in programming in some areas may be associated with assessment. This may be simply the result of looking at completion data in programs and determining that moving from self-paced classes to mixed mode or lecture-based, paced courses would benefit student success. Efforts such as these, while laudable, need to be more directly associated and documented in program assessment plans.

Changes such as a securing a new position in ABE of a Student Success Coordinator (to explore measuring and reporting student success, researching effective strategies, and identifying tools for tracking student progress) and creating an ABE Learning Centre should be the result of the program assessment process. There is no clear indication that these program changes in personnel resources and space resources were the result of core theme planning.

Concern: There is limited evidence of the use of core theme assessment results in the planning and allocation of programs, effort, and resources for this core theme.

### **Core Theme: Community Engagement**

The core theme of community engagement aligns with the University's mission of offering a wide range of programs that enable students to pursue lifelong learning. The University's commitment to its community is evidenced in its far-reaching continuing education program and its well-used Capilano Performing Arts Theatre (CPAT). Community engagement has recently been identified as a core theme; however, Capilano has a record of community activities going back many years with such established continuing education programs as the Community Music program and Eldercollege. CPAT also runs a very ambitious program. In the past year, CPAT hosted sixty shows and rented its space to forty-five community groups in addition to a regular

church group that uses the theatre every Sunday. Community members interviewed spoke highly of the institution as well as its continuing education initiatives and the Performing Arts Centre; some of these members had ties to Capilano going back many years.

### ***3.B Core Theme Planning***

Planning for the community engagement core theme is limited by the lack of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data with which to guide the selection of programs and services.

### ***4.A Assessment***

While the institution has established an objective for the community engagement theme, the committee found no evidence that meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement have been completed. The continuing education program collects feedback from participants and maintains records of enrollment and completion but these data are not aggregated for program improvement use nor is it tied to core theme targets. Continuing Education has just begun a two-year process to review its mission and strategic direction. CPAT collects quite a bit of data, including attendance numbers, numbers of new participants, and postal code information. Until recently, assessment of the Performing Arts Theatre relied on these statistics and informal evaluation methods such as the director's input and the occasional interviewing of participants. This fall it began using patron feedback forms and has developed a five-year assessment plan which ties to the institution's strategic plan. This plan does not, however, include indicators of achievement, but instead references goal markers of "Good." CPAT, like Continuing Education, has started a review of its strategic plan which has not been reviewed in some time. Neither program is included in the institution's assessment plan.

### ***4.B Improvement***

Indicators of achievement have yet to be developed for the community engagement core theme. As a result, there is no systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data on which to base the assessment of this core theme or to inform the planning of program improvements.

Concern: The Community Engagement core theme lacks targets for the indicators of achievement. Because of this, there is no systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data on which to base the assessment of this core theme or to inform the planning of program improvements.

## **Standard Five – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability**

### **5.A Mission Fulfillment**

Capilano University has identified strategic directions, goals, and core themes. Seven strategic directions are identified in the plan. Performance indicators are identified for each of the seven objectives, and data are reported in the Institutional Accountability Plan and Report (IAPR). The IAPR is posted on the University and Government of British Columbia web sites. Four core themes have been identified and linked with Goal Two of the plan. Objectives have been stated for the core themes; performance indicators have been identified for some but not all of the objectives.

The University reviews and uses data prepared for the IAPR as it engages in discussion about progress towards meeting Goal One of the Vision, Values, Mission, and Strategic Directions plan. The Board of Governors and the Executive Committee shared examples of the use of these data in recommendations and decision points such as deciding how to allocate and re-allocate funds to programs and align resources with strategic directions. Based on the data provided in the report, the majority of the objectives for Goal One are at the target established, supporting the level of quality and effectiveness expected to fulfill the overall mission of the University.

The planning, assessment, and evaluation of core themes is uneven. Objectives are stated for each of the four core themes; while performance indicators are provided for some core theme objectives, they are not available for all, including assessment of student learning outcomes, at this time. Anecdotal information about evidence of student learning was discussed by members of the Executive Committee; the information is not consistently available for review in a format that can be used to assess performance for all core theme objectives and evaluate the effectiveness of programs in meeting the second goal of the strategic plan. The limited data available for the core themes limits comprehensive review and decision making relative to core themes and overall mission fulfillment.

### **5.B Adaptation and Sustainability**

The University engages in regular evaluation of its resources, capacity, and operations using information gathered for the IAPR and for internal analysis. Decisions are discussed in the context of the mission of the University and its three campus locations. Results of data provided in the IAPR reporting process are included in these discussions and help inform decisions at the University level, especially supporting discussion of Goal One of the plan. Documentation of the effectiveness of the core themes in meeting the mission of the University is less consistently developed and available. This impacts the opportunities for regular evaluation of resources and capacity relative to Goal Two on the current strategic plan.

The University adopted the Vision, Values, Mission and Strategic Directions document in October 2009. Since that adoption of the plan, the cycle of planning has been based on the mission and core themes. The cycle has been documented and implemented more systematically for Goal One of the plan, in part through the IAPR reporting and the planning occurring at the institution level. Core theme objectives have been identified, and progress has been made on performance indicators for many of the objectives. As a result, the planning, assessment, and improvement cycle is incomplete for the four core themes. There is some

evidence that anecdotal information is used in discussions about student learning outcomes, but there is limited formalized reporting and systematic use of evidence in the planning cycle at this time.

Using its mission as a lens for review, the University monitors its environments to identify the coherence of its planning and directions with the patterns and trends that exist in its market area. This information is provided internally through the Senate and to the Board of Governors. A recent example of a strategic change is seeking assignment as a Special Purpose Teaching University and the transition from a college to a university. Faculty and administrators express their intent to continue to focus on the teaching mission of the University, filling a unique niche in higher education in its service area. The successful application for this designation results from the continuous review of the University in its current context and for the future.

Concern: The planning, assessment, and evaluation cycle is not fully developed to address each goal and core theme included in the Vision, Values, Mission, and Strategic Direction document.

## General Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

1. The evaluation committee commends the University faculty, staff, and leadership for their spirit of collegiality, cooperation, innovation, participation, willingness to serve, and dedication to student success as exhibited by their passion for Capilano University.
2. The evaluation committee commends the University for fostering a culture of inclusion and pluralism through its outreach to and support of students with diverse learning needs.
3. The evaluation committee commends the University for fostering community partnerships and a legacy of trust and respect in the community.

### Recommendations

1. While noting that faculty and administrators receive regular and periodic evaluations, the evaluation committee did not find evidence that all categories of staff are formally evaluated beyond the six month probationary period. The committee recommends that the University engage in an ongoing, consistent process of regular employee evaluation with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities. **(Standard 2.B.2)**
2. While the University has developed an institution-wide comprehensive plan, the evaluators found little evidence of formal planning at the core theme level. The committee recommends the University engage in regular, systematic, and integrated planning for core themes to guide the selection of programs and services and the allocation of resources to achieve the objectives of the core themes. **(Standard 3 B.1, 3.B.2)**
3. While the University has identified objectives for its core themes, not all objectives had associated targets with their indicators of achievement. The evaluation committee recommends that the University take immediate action to complete the identification of the targets for the indicators of achievement of core theme objectives. **(Standard 3.B.3)** Further, the committee recommends that, with respect to those indicators, the University engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data as the basis for evaluating the accomplishments of its core theme objectives. **(Standard 4.A.1)**
4. While the University has made important progress towards identifying student learning outcomes and methods of assessment, the committee found the assessment of student learning is inconsistent and incomplete. The committee recommends that the University complete the process of identifying indicators of student learning and collect and analyze meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data to document that students who complete courses, programs, and degrees achieve identified learning outcomes. **(Standard 4.A.3)**

5. The committee found few examples of the use of assessment results to inform academic planning and decision making leading to improvement. The committee recommends that the University complete its assessment efforts and use the results for improvement of accomplishment of core theme objectives and student learning achievement. (**Standard 4.B.2**)
  
6. Evidence could not be found that the University is engaged in an ongoing structured planning process to document development of its physical plant. The evaluation committee recommends that the University complete a comprehensive planning process to develop a campus master plan incorporating all university locations. (**Standard 2.G.3**)