REPORT OF THE WASC VISITING TEAM

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW FOR REAFFIRMATION

To: San Francisco Conservatory of Music

September 17 – September 19, 2014

Team Roster

• Lorne Buchman, President Art Center College of Design (Team Chair)
• Aubyn Fulton, Professor of Psychology, Pacific Union College (Assistant Chair)
• David Mills Chase, Vice Dean Academic Affairs Conservatory, American Film Institute
• Linda L Hawk, Vice President for Finance, California State University, San Marcos
• Christopher Oberg, Vice President and WASC staff liaison

The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 WSCUC Senior College and University Commission Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission.

The formal action concerning the institution’s status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT
A. Description of the Institution and Visit 3
C. Response to Issues Raised in the Capacity and Preparatory Review 5

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS UNDER THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMPONENTS
Component 1: Response to the Commission’s letter after the CPR Visit 9
Component 2: Review under WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements 9
Component 3: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degree 10
Component 4: Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation 10
Component 5: Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation; and Improvements to Student Academic and Co-curricular Support 20
Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence 23
Component 7 & 8: Sustainability: Financial Viability; Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment 26
Component 9: Reflection and Plans for Improvement 33

SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 35

APPENDICES
A: Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements 39
B: Credit Hour Policy 40
C: Student Complaints Policy 42
D: Marketing and Recruitment Review 44
E: Transfer Credit Policy 45
SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Visit

The San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) began as a small piano school founded in 1917 by Ada Clement and Lillian Hodghead on Sacramento Street with 40 students. They incorporated as the SFCM in 1923 with 300 students, and began to attract internationally known musicians, developing an emphasis in chamber music. In 1956 SFCM moved to a new location at 1201 Ortega Street, in the Sunset District, and achieved both professional and regional accreditation by 1960. After several decades of growth of its reputation and fundraising base, SFCM moved in August of 2006 to its current location at 50 Oak Street, near Davies Symphony Hall and the Opera House.

SFCM reports that they educate approximately 400 musicians each year (roughly 180 undergraduates, 200 masters students and 20 postgraduates). In 2010-11 they had 33 full-time and 79 part-time faculty (58 FTE), making a student faculty ratio of approximately 7:1. Twenty-six members of the permanent faculty are members of the San Francisco Symphony. SFCM does not have any off-campus sites or distance education programs.

SFCM first received accreditation from WASC in 1960 and has had its accreditation affirmed continually since then. The Commission has frequently expressed concern about SFCM’s general education program (see WASC letters from 1963, 1988, 1990, 1994, 2005 and 2012). In its most recent action letters the Commission has also expressed concern about the nascent state of systematic, formal Program Review. On March 6, 2012 the Commission received SFCM’s Capacity and Preparatory Review Report and continued its accreditation, scheduling an Educational Effectiveness Review for the fall of 2013, and an interim report on the development and implementation of Program Review by September
1, 2012. The Commission later rescheduled the review to the fall of 2014 due to changes in institutional leadership at SFCM (David Stull assumed the presidency on July 1, 2013, and Robert Fitzpatrick assumed the office of Provost and Dean in early 2014). During this interval the Commission adopted a new Accreditation Handbook. SFCM was given the choice to undergo its next visit under the old Handbook, or write to the new one; they opted for the latter. Thus while in some places the current visit might be referred to as an “EER” visit, the substance and the activity of the visit should be considered equivalent to the “Accreditation Visit (for reaffirmation)” as described in the new WASC Handbook.

During September 17 – 19, 2014, the administration, faculty, staff, students and trustees of SFCM hosted the current institutional visit team, including two members (the chair and vice-chair) who had been part of the CPR Visit in September of 2011, and two new team members. The Conservatory was exceptionally gracious and efficient in providing for the needs of the visit team, and responded quickly and effectively to the team’s requests for additional information, materials, and meetings made both prior to and during the visit.


SFCM’s Institutional Report (hereafter referred to as the Self Study, or “SS”) was well written and easy to follow. The team found that everything represented in the SS was consistent with objective evidence reviewed prior to the visit, with interviews given to the team and with the team’s own observations during the visit. However in some important respects the team found that the SS did not fully or adequately explain the extent of the institution’s progress on key accreditation issues (see for example the discussion of General Education and financial planning issues in the sections that follow). From its
interviews during the visit the team concluded this discrepancy was partly the result of the rapid pace of developments associated with the arrival of first a new president and then a new provost in the thirteen months prior to the completion of the SS.

The SS was written jointly by the Accreditation Liaison Officer and the Director of Institutional Research, who both reported to the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC), chaired by the Provost. The team met with the ASC during the visit, which included administrators, faculty, staff, students and a board member (chair of the Academic Affairs Committee). The team was impressed with the level of involvement in and knowledge of the SS by the ASC members. Faculty, administrators, staff and students not on ASC also provided input into the SS, however interviews during the visit suggested to the team that while most faculty and students were aware of the accreditation visit and its significance, many were not closely familiar with the specific elements in the SS.

While the SS was well written and organized, it continued to reflect the relative paucity of direct, systematic and objective evidence in many areas, especially relating to student learning, that characterized past institutional reports. As will be addressed later in this report, SFCM has hired a Director of Institutional Research, and has made impressive progress in putting in place both the infrastructure and processes to collect and use evidence; however they still have a way to go in collecting direct evidence that would allow for a rigorous evaluation of student learning.

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

On July 1, 2013 David Stull assumed the presidency of SFCM. President Stull was selected by the Board in part based on his specific vision for the modern 21st century conservatory, and he initiated a new round of strategic planning at the institution informed
substantially by this vision. During the visit the team learned that President Stull spent much of his first six months in office engaging the Conservatory community in conversation about his vision, and communicating its contours. He hired a new Provost in early 2014, and got the new strategic plan approved officially on March 3, 2014. The team found that the new leadership has infused the Conservatory with renewed enthusiasm and vigor, and significantly enhanced faculty morale. This also led to a certain complexity in evaluating the Conservatory’s response to Commission recommendations. On the one hand, many of these are of long-standing concern that have been in discussion for years and in some cases decades; on the other hand, the current institutional leadership, including the President, Provost and Director of Institutional Research, have all joined the Conservatory very recently. As a result, the state of progress in responding to some recommendations can be viewed either as surprisingly slow in light of how long ago they were first brought to SFCM’s attention by the Commission, or as relatively brisk in light of how recently top leadership assumed office. In general, the team was impressed with the vision and plans currently in place for General Education, student learning assessment and financial development, but notes that to a large extent these plans appear to still require a great deal of fleshing out with specific details, direct assessment, and actual implementation before they can be considered fully responsive to Commission recommendations.

In its Action Letter of March 6, 2012, the Commission listed five specific recommendations based on the 2011 CPR Report. What follows is a brief summary of those recommendations and the team’s findings regarding SFCM’s response:
1. Developing General Education

The Commission expressed the concern that GE at SFCM had not been adequately integrated throughout the curriculum, and particularly into the Upper Division. The letter noted that this concern had been repeatedly expressed in the past, going all the way back to the initial accreditation in 1960. The Commission directed SFCM to: “Systematically review, formally document, and where necessary revise and extend the ways in which GE principles are integrated into the curriculum [at LD and UD].” Further, the Commission stated that it expected that “a formal plan to integrate GE throughout the curriculum will be implemented by the next visit."

SFCM addressed GE in its SS under Component 3, and this will be discussed in detail in the team report below under that section. In general, the team found that SFCM has developed some very interesting and forward thinking plans for integrating GE into their curriculum and upper division, but has not as yet implemented this plan as the Commission had expected in its letter.

2. Conducting Program Review and Assessing Student Learning

The Commission expressed its expectation that an internal systematic program review process would be developed, and that findings from assessment and completed program review would be available at the next review. This is discussed in detail under Component 4; in general, the team found substantial progress in this area, with several program reviews completed and available for review, though progress is still required with respect to direct evidence of student learning.
3. Enhancing Institutional Research

The Commission urged the development of a more robust institutional research function, and the capacity for systematic and complete data collection and analysis, with critical data disseminated to relevant departments. The team found that since the 2011 CPR visit SFCM had hired a Director of Institutional Research (DIR), a full-time employee who was first assigned 50% to IR, and now is 75%. In interviews with the DIR and academic department chairs, the team learned that the DIR has begun to create systematic processes of institutional assessment, and coordinates Program Review, and consults with departments as they go through it. The DIR also completes external institutional reporting responsibilities. SFCM developed institutional learning outcomes in 2012, and the DIR initiated an indirect assessment of these using a survey administered to graduating seniors in spring of 2014 (see SS, p. 19). Direct assessment however continues to lag, and performance-based courses continue to lack syllabi or student learning outcomes.

4. Planning for Financial Sustainability

The Commission urged swift and evidence based strategic planning to ensure that SFCM would be able to operate with a balanced budget and had a sound financial future. This will be addressed in detail in the section below on Components 7 and 8. In general the team found some significant progress in both in planning and in securing additional financial support, with a continued need for more specific implementation and contingency planning.
5. Providing a Supportive Learning Environment

The Commission urged that SFCM complete the audit of its facilities that it had originally planned to be included in its CPR, and to develop plans to fulfill its objectives (including optimum enrollment, alumni database, adequate rehearsal space and long-term solution of housing challenges). The team found in the course of its on-site interviews that the need for the facilities audit had substantially been met by steps SFCM had taken to address its student housing problems (discussed in more detail below in the sections on components 7 & 8) and the rehearsal space challenges. The team learned that the latter problem was significantly reduced through the implementation of steps to more efficiently utilize existing space, by faculty making their studios available for student practice when not otherwise being used, and by allowing appropriate instruments to practice in open spaces in the building. Additionally, as a majority of students have now moved to living spaces closer to the new building in the Civic Center (as opposed to the former campus on Ortega), they are able to go back to their living space to practice before and after classes and lessons. During separate interviews with both faculty and students the team found that frustrations with limited rehearsal space were significantly reduced from what was reported during the CPR visit in the fall of 2011.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS ACCORDING TO THE COMPONENTS

Components 1 & 2: Context and Compliance

These Components are addressed in Section I (above) and the Appendices (below).
Component 3: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees

SFCM is the only regionally accredited freestanding post-secondary conservatory in the Western United States, and one of only seven such institutions in the nation (SS, p.6). In their strategic plan SFCM states that one of their goals is to “energize the artist, intellectual and professional within each student.” This mission is uniquely served by the location of the campus since 2006 in what the SS describes as “one of the greatest concentrations of arts institutions outside of Lincoln Center”, noting that within three blocks of their campus are the homes of the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Opera, the San Francisco Ballet, the San Francisco Jazz Center, City Arts and Lectures, the San Francisco Public Library, and Herbst Theater, home of San Francisco Performances. The SFCM curriculum exploits these resources in a variety of ways, including a series of Master Classes and performances by visiting artists.

Student Learning: The overriding purpose of all degree programs at the Conservatory is to prepare young musicians for a successful professional music career (SS, p. 6), so it is not surprising that SFCM sees the centerpiece of their degree programs as studio instruction, in private lessons, ensembles, and preparation for year-end juries and recitals. However SFCM also notes that they expect students to “contextualize their practice within a larger intellectual framework” (SS, p. 7), and this provides a sense of their distinctive approach to student learning.

However, in recent years SFCM has found that many undergraduate students, often singers, have entered with rudimentary musicianship skills and have been placed in a remedial course. On some occasions these students have even needed to repeat that course. This typically has resulted in a small group of students who are never able to catch up to
their cohort, and occasionally resulted in deferred graduation. After conversations within the Music Theory department and consultation with the Voice department chair, the Music Theory department developed a separate musicianship track for those students who need basic music literacy skills. The plan is to begin this two-track model in the fall of 2014; and to track student success with diagnostic exams.

SFCM has a long history of successful musical instruction that has relied on a model of “continuous and detailed assessment” (SS, p.6), based on a master-apprentice relationship in which students receive on-going and immediate feedback from instructors on their performance. SFCM describes quality control in this system as based on a "clear and focused set of benchmarks... in the form of required repertoire at each stage of the student’s career” (p. 13). However to date the assessment of component skills needed to perform these works effectively has not been tracked systematically and objectively. The team noted with interest the promising intention reported in the SS of the studio departments to map the year-to-year repertoire requirements to specific musical, technical, and presentational skills. This mapping process has not yet been implemented, but the plan is to incorporate it into the program review process beginning in the 2014-15 year. The team suggests that SFCM make the implementation of this mapping process a high priority as soon as possible, as it will provide an important component of the Conservatory’s quality control system. SFCM has a shorter history of providing systematic and objective forms of assessment based on formal learning outcomes as expected by WSCUC standards (CFRs 2.6, 2.3 & 2.4), though they have been moving in this direction, as described later in this report in the sections on Components 4, 5 and 6.
Graduate Program Issues: As expected by WSCUC standards (see CFR 2.2b) the graduate program is distinguished from the undergraduate in several ways. Masters level students have an academically advanced curriculum and are expected to acquire the tools of professional-level music research, and must take at least one graduate proseminar with an emphasis on research and writing methods (p. 12). The masters curriculum is not only more musically and academically advanced, but also more explicitly career-centered. More emphasis is placed on professional performance opportunities and career development that includes professional internships, grant writing, and business skills (see SS, p. 8).

General Education: The team was particularly interested in how SFCM understood, structured and assessed its General Education (GE) program in its undergraduate degree. The interest was based in the long standing concerns expressed by the Commission in this area, including its most recent specific expectations that the Conservatory “Systematically review, formally document, and where necessary revise and extend the ways in which GE principles are integrated into the curriculum [at LD and UD]” (2012 Action Letter, p. 2; CFRs 2.2a, 2.3, 2.4). The SS noted that the General Education department has begun the revision of its curriculum, starting with a series of departmental meetings during the spring of 2014. The intention expressed in the SS is to introduce a new GE curriculum in fall 2015, the centerpiece of which would be a new two-semester writing sequence for all incoming freshman (SS, p. 13).

On first glance the SS’s discussion of GE primarily in terms of the establishment of a new freshman writing sequence to begin a year in the future seems unresponsive to the Commission’s direction that SFCM have implemented a plan to integrate GE throughout the curriculum, particularly at the upper division, by the time of the current visit. As the team
found in the course of several interviews on site, key personnel at SFCM do acknowledge a current lack of consistency in core competency skill development in the upper division. Course offerings at this level are predominantly elective, and the lack of effective sequencing across the entire curriculum presents challenges for more structured skill development in the two upper division years. The team learned during these interviews that the writing sequence is part of a more thoughtful plan to integrate GE throughout the curriculum, and that there are programs currently in the planning stage that have the potential to radically re-­vision and emphasize GE objectives and values in the upper division. Still, these currently are currently in the form of plans and intentions, and have not yet been implemented.

SFCM’s reflection on the state of GE on its campus resulted in the conclusion that GE objectives and values were being limited by a lack of cohesive skill development in the lower division that would adequately support the demands of successful upper division work. The development of a new two­­semester writing course in the freshman year, and the relocation of the previously required Western Civilization sequence to the second year, are intended to develop basic writing and critical thinking skills in lower division students, making possible more ambitious and challenging liberal arts work in the upper division. This reformulation of the core GE courses in the lower division also allows more focused and effective instruction for ESL students, which the Conservatory has identified as a pressing need.

The team learned from interviews with President Stull, Provost Fitzpatrick, and faculty leaders in GE and academic areas that over the last six to nine months the Conservatory has been involved in discussion about what specific next steps in upper
division GE the planned changes in the lower division will allow. Among these is a restructuring of upper division GE courses in history and languages, and required core academic courses like music history and music theory that have obvious opportunity for addressing GE outcomes. In this restructuring, Music History courses would be designed to fit with GE courses in Art History, Literature and History to consider related themes at a high level of critical inquiry. While students would not be required to take all classes in a cluster, the more they took, the more they would benefit from the integration of common foci and goals. This would also feed into an exciting element of the new Strategic Plan, which is the development of a modular courses taught by scholars of international reputation on sabbatical from elite institutions that would consider in depth some area of science, history, literature or philosophy that relates in some way to music. These scholars would eventually be housed in the new residence hall, and funded by a Conservatory endowment.

The team did not find evidence that SFCM had met the Commission expectations for GE as expressed in the last Action Letter and tied to CFR 2.2a. However the team was encouraged by the real and creative energy demonstrated on campus around integrating GE more closely into the curriculum at SFCM, including at the upper division. This does appear to be a substantive and perhaps unparalleled advance in focus on GE in the history of the Conservatory. The new writing sequence to be introduced next year, and revisions to the western civilization sequences do appear likely to provide a stronger foundation for the realization of GE objectives in the upper division. Real campus discussions about how to parlay these opportunities into rich and integrated exploration of GE themes and development of more sophisticated GE skills and have been going on at SFCM in earnest
since the arrival of the new president and provost. These conversations do not appear to reach Commission expectations for implementation, and the SFCM community does not always seem to be as focused on intentionally and systematically labeling all of these potential developments as “general education”, and in developing rigorous and objective procedures for assessing progress in this area. Again, no doubt at least some of the reason for the failure to fully meet the Action Letter expectations is the degree of change on campus associated with transitions in high-level leadership over the last year or so. The team recommends that SFCM commit itself to a firm timetable for implementing an intentional second stage of GE development and assessment, building on the lower-division changes anticipated to be implemented next year, integrating several elements in the curriculum and taking advantage of the momentum and energy associated with the presidential investment in the modular visiting scholar program which is part of the strategic plan.

**Component 4: Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation**

The SS identifies performance, in the studio and ensemble, and academic coursework as the two broad components of the Conservatory’s curriculum. While academic coursework is usually more amenable to traditional assessment techniques, the report describes an undocumented instructional tradition that is characteristic of the master-apprentice pedagogical model prevalent in musical instruction. In this tradition, clearly defined statements describing expectations for student learning are “less likely to be fully codified into formal syllabi with explicit student learning outcomes” (SS, p. 24) in the performance components of the curriculum.
While the informal, master-apprentice tradition is undergirded by tradition and has long been common in music in higher education, it does lack the specificity and reference to clear expectations for student learning and standards for student performance that is expected by accreditation standards (CFR 2.6) and that supports systematic and intentional evaluation of educational and training success (CFRs 2.4 and 4.3). Most studio courses still do not have course level student learning outcomes, or even formal syllabi, a state of affairs related to the tradition in music instruction, but also the institutional fact that so many of the studio faculty are part-time teachers and full-time professional musicians, who often have neither the time nor the habitual inclinations to develop these aspects of formal pedagogy.

The team did find evidence that the Conservatory is making progress in this area. During the CPR visit in 2011 the team found resistance and in some places hostility to the entire project of formal assessment. The team found a profoundly different attitude among faculty and administrators during the current visit. As noted in the SS (p. 24) in the Fall of 2011, 43 of 44 academic courses had syllabi, but only 50% of these contained student learning outcomes. As noted in the SS, “an outcome-based understanding of instruction is taking hold among much of the classroom faculty and is approaching a critical mass” (p. 24). While the team was unable to find objective evidence of progress on including course level SLOs in the syllabi of academic courses, the Program Reviews inspected, and interviews with teachers of academic courses, did support the conclusion that the role and value of course level SLOs is increasingly appreciated by faculty and that these are steadily being adopted. Moreover, in interviews with senior faculty the team found a growing appreciation for the value of syllabi and SLOs even for studio courses, and received reports
that as departments prepared for their Program Review they created sample syllabi templates and began encouraging adjunct faculty to develop their own. The Conservatory intends to hold a workshop in the fall of 2014 to assist faculty with the development of course-level outcomes and curriculum mapping, with a focus on studio instruction.

The few academic departments that did not have department level SLOs at the time of the 2011 visit have been helped to develop them as they prepare for their Program Review, and all departments will have these in place once the full first round of Reviews has been completed.

The Conservatory has identified their juried performance examinations, long a core part of their program of musical instruction, as an opportunity to comprehensively assess performance outcomes and institutional learning outcomes in both the major and in core competencies (CFRs 2.2, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1).

Issues of educational quality for international students, an important constituency at the Conservatory, have also been addressed since the CPR visit. TOEFL scores required for admission have been raised from 61 to 71, and a summer orientation program consisting of ESL coursework was developed in 2012. Reflection on the effectiveness of this program has led to a proposal for a course focused on graduate studies on music and English language proficiency.

The team was very impressed with the plans for the Conservatory's digital portfolio, as detailed in the SS. Conversations and demonstrations during the visit provided further clarification about the implementation of the project, which involves partnering across the entire institution. SFCM intends that all student performances will be audio and video recorded for potential inclusion in portfolios. Student reflection and self-assessment will be
significant features of the portfolios, and faculty will have the ability to assess learning comprehensively at the program and institutional levels in a manner consistent with the Conservatory tradition. The institution will also have a powerful tool for understanding learning and educational effectiveness over time (CFRs 2.5, 2.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). In interviews it appeared SFCM initially is focused on the digital portfolio as a professional development tool, providing students with the tools with which they will be able to communicate their skills and accomplishments to potential employers. However, the team found that key personnel at SFCM were also beginning to appreciate the powerful and exciting potential applications of the portfolio for assessment of student learning, though for this to be fully realized the Conservatory will need to make more progress on ensuring the existence of student learning outcomes for all courses and departments, and developing and using appropriate rubrics.

The SS (p. 30) notes that the final recitals required of senior undergraduates and masters students are capstone experiences that are extremely well suited to the assessment of course, department and institutional competences at the end of a student’s tenure at the Conservatory. The opportunities for assessment are extended beyond performance, as recitals provide the opportunity for students to write extensive program notes on the pieces being performed, and to give an oral presentation to the audience. However, as the SS also notes, realizing the assessment potential of the senior recital awaits the development of appropriate rubrics and their use by panels of appropriate faculty to score and evaluate performance. The SS promises that “enhancing the recitals in this way will be discussed in the 2014-15 academic year” (p. 31), though this is the kind of
development that might have been expected to have been worked on after the CPR visit of 2011 and prior to the current institutional visit.

Success with emerging forms of assessment has been facilitated by the development of a formal institutional research function in response to a recommendation in the last Commission Action letter, which has consolidated data collection and analysis and the management of program review under the leadership of the Director of Institutional Research. This structural change will significantly benefit Conservatory quality assurance and improvement processes in the coming years. Discussions with the DIR and the ALO during the team visit provided insight into some of the challenges facing quality assurance efforts. Among these are the lack of easy access to long range data about student performance. The Conservatory now has the beginning of the infrastructure and expertise to address this problem. The proposed Committee on Student Learning and Assessment (SS, p. 16) provide further promise for advance in the collection and use of direct evidence of student learning.

Overall, the team recognized that significant progress has been made at SFCM with respect to the assessment of student learning since the 2011 visit. Over the last three years it appears that a real and profound change in the institutional culture toward formal assessment has begun to take shape. The hostile resistance to systematic assessment appears for the most part to have melted away. The hiring of a Director of Institutional Research, and the increasing integration of her function in the coordination and preparation of departments for Program Review (discussed in more detail below) appears to be both a sign and a cause of this cultural change. Significantly more faculty have developed course level SLOs and syllabi, and are signaling their willingness to integrate
their more traditional, subjective, informal and immediate modes of assessment with more formal, systematic and objectives modes of assessment. Significant work in this area remains to be done to come closer to fulfilling WASC standards (CFR’s 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 4.3), including: the development of syllabi and course-level learning outcomes for all courses that reflect the intent and standards of the Conservatory’s curriculum; ensuring that outcomes are aligned at the course, program, and institutional level; making use of the recital process to assess learning close to graduation and implementing the exciting digital portfolio proposal. In one sense it is disappointing that more has not been done in this area in the last three years in response to the Commission’s recommendations, in another the apparent change in culture, and the delays associated with the multiple leadership transitions during the period, make the current state of progress more understandable.

Component 5: Student Success

SFCM added a DIR after the 2012 Action Letter, but that person is still not 100%. Thus the Conservatory systems for reviewing student learning and success are still being established and developed (SS, p. 31). They are now regularly disaggregating student success data, when they can, according to the following subgroups: gender, national origin, race/ethnicity, scholarship status, and curriculum, using 5 year averages as benchmarks. SFCM has also identified six peer institutions against which to compare themselves: Boston Conservatory, Cleveland Institute of Music, Curtis Institute of Music, Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music, and New England Conservatory of Music. Like SFCM, these are all freestanding musical training institutions that are regionally accredited but historically emphasize the traditional master/apprentice model of training. Over last 18 months with their new IR Director in place, SFCM has improved the quality and scope of their student
success data; they currently are tracking retention and graduation rates using information from their student information database, PowerCampus, and standard analysis tools like Microsoft Excel and Access. Complete and accurate retention data only goes back to the fall of 2006, when they started using PowerCampus. They do have IPEDS data for undergraduates going back to 2003 cohorts for retention data and 1994 cohorts for graduation rates, though this only disaggregates graduation rate data by gender and ethnicity.

**Retention Rates:** The most recent available five-year average retention rate is 81% for freshmen (population of 207 students), 83% for undergraduate transfers (population of 118 students), and 91% for master's (population of 413 students). The retention rate appears to be improving, as the RR for the 2008 cohort was 76%, while it was 86% for 2012. This data is reported and discussed in a straightforward manner in the SS (see pp. 34 – 37). They note that their RR has been lower than the average of their peer schools for the last six years that comparison data was available (by 7 to 11 percentage points over the last three years). It is unclear from the SS, and team interviews during the visit, exactly at what levels and how extensively the institution has reflected on this data, but the SS does list three proposed actions to raise RR in the future:

1. Improve the orientation program for a smoother transition into college life
2. Enhance and better coordinate tutoring services across all departments
3. Add new residential building to make living close to campus easier and more affordable. (SS, p. 34).

The SS also notes that the 5-year RR for Minority students (defined as those who self-identify as Hispanic, African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) is 73%, 8% lower than the 81% overall undergraduate
rate. This is not discussed in the SS. Other disaggregations are discussed in terms of RR patterns by scholarship status and musical discipline.

**Graduation Rates:** SFMC has complete six-year graduation rate data for only two undergraduate cohorts (2006 and 2007), which together contain ninety-seven students, with a 68% graduation rate. Using the more limited IPEDS data set, they have analyzed data going back five cohorts, with a similar overall graduation rate of 67% (see SS pp. 38-42 for full report and analysis of graduation rates).

The SS does report a significantly lower GR for Minority students (48%) than for Caucasian students (63%), (Asian American students have a graduation rate of 81%). Their peer schools also have a discrepancy for GR of Minority students, though the gap for SFMC appears to be about 25% worse than the average for the six peer schools (see Exhibit H to the SS; eliminating the worst year for each group to avoid exaggeration from outlier values, the GR for Caucasian students at SFMC was 5.75% below that for peer schools, while the GR for Minority students was 7.5% below that for peer schools). The SS notes that the low GR for Minority students is a nationwide problem in classical music education programs, tied to the poor state of arts education at the primary and secondary level. SFMC does have programs in place to begin to redress deficiencies in these areas in San Francisco (“Music to Go” and “Conservatory in the Schools”), but they recognize that these small programs alone will not be enough to make the difference. In the SS, SFMC states that “This issue is particularly concerning to us, and we intend to make this a subject for our Enrollment Management Committee” (p. 40), but the team was unable to obtain any specific plans in place to address this.

The Conservatory has established three specific goals regarding their GR:
1. Improve graduation rates among minority students to 70% over the next ten years.

2. Bring our overall graduation rate up to the level of peer schools. Aiming for an overall graduation rate 3% higher than the average of peers within the next fifteen years.

3. Minimize the spread of graduation rates among departments by collecting further data and instituting programs that specifically support Brass, Woodwinds, and Percussion.

SFCM has demonstrated impressive progress in their systematic collection and careful analysis of student success data since the CPR visit in 2011. Much of this appears to be due to the creation of the Director of Institutional Research position. They are beginning to support institutional analysis of student success data and reflection on steps that might be taken to improve outcomes. The team was particularly impressed that questions for Program Review were being informed by reflection on retention and graduation rate data disaggregated by musical discipline (CFRs 4.1, 4.2 & 2.7).

**Component 6: Quality Assurance and Program Review**

Chief among the concerns about quality assurance identified in the 2012 Commission Action Letter was SFCM’s lack of progress in implementation of program review. The team was impressed with the significant progress that SFCM has made in this area, with the implementation of a formalized cycle of review. Seven departmental reviews had been completed by the team’s visit, and three more were scheduled to be completed during the third year of the five-year cycle starting in September 2014. The program review charter and guidebook are improving with experience gained from each review.
A centralized institutional research function, led by a Director of Institutional Research appointed since the last visit, has allowed for program review to develop and for systematic, deep and comprehensive reflection on curricular and student learning issues to take place (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.2).

The Conservatory’s self-study details each element of the program review process, including mission and departmental learning outcomes, student learning, student success, faculty effectiveness, curricular improvements, and action items and follow up. Beginning in 2014, program review has also incorporated external review in site visits to make observations and recommendations. In interviews with faculty during the site visit, it became clear to the team that program review has become an important part of the Conservatory’s institutional culture and is laying the groundwork for the development of a culture of evidence from which decision-making and sound academic planning can take place. During one meeting the team heard several long-time Conservatory faculty give glowing and passionate testimony to the value they had found from participating in the program review process – a process many of them had been decidedly skeptical of only three years earlier. Completed Program reviews are presented to the academic affairs committee for review and comment (CFRs 2.2, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6).

The team learned during its interviews on this subject that there is still a need for a data set to adequately inform the program review process. Departments are now provided with a template for writing the review, a schedule of activities, enrollment, retention, and graduation data, relevant WSCUC and NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) standards, departmental learning objectives, and a list of student and alumni accomplishments. The program reviews examined by the team did not include very much
formal, systematic data related to the direct assessment of student learning, mostly because this kind of evidence is for the most part still not being collected at SFCM, and many courses (mostly studio) still do not have course level student learning outcomes or syllabi. Program reviews at SFCM also currently appear to lack a formal mechanism to create actions plans to align review outcomes with budget allocation, and also lack any formal process for following up with departments on progress and needs related to recommendations that emerged from program review (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). Another area for continued improvement is the inclusion of co-curricular departments into the program review cycle, which would encourage even more systematic assessment in this area and allow for deep and rich understanding of the entire student experience in the Conservatory (CFRs 4.2 - 4.7).

It appeared to the team that program review did have the effect of stimulating the development of both department and course level student learning outcomes, and of creating more of an expectation that all courses must have syllabi. The program review process itself will be formally examined as part of the regular cycle, which calls for a review to take place in 2016-2017.

Important curricular changes, new initiatives, and improvements to educational quality have resulted from program review. The team learned that during one recent review, examination of departmental curricula led the faculty to reflect on the need for greater distinction between undergraduate and graduate courses, and to grant more autonomy to department chairs in creating their own budgets as the needs for resources are identified in review reports. These include the change in the TOEFL score required for admission, the summer ESL intensive, and the first-year writing initiative. Several
departments identified the need to attract high quality students, which has provided sustained impetus to institutional planning surrounding scholarships, student housing, and facility improvements.

The development and actual implementation of program review at SFCM is commendable, and the next phase of quality assurance for the Conservatory will need to involve gathering and analyzing direct and indirect evidence of student learning. These processes are still in developmental stages. The Conservatory has increased its capacity to collect indirect evidence of student learning, including exit interviews with all graduating students in 2014. A questionnaire is also administered to all graduating students to gauge their own assessment of their performance in certain aspects of the Conservatory curriculum. Collection of direct evidence of student learning should be improved and accelerated by the implementation of the digital portfolio system currently under development. This tool will allow the Conservatory to gather, analyze, and understand evidence of educational quality in a comprehensive way and provide the opportunity to triangulate with direct evidence from juried performance examinations (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.4).

Components 7 & 8: Sustainability and Planning for The Changing Higher Education environment

The Long Range Financial Plan (CFRs 3.4 and 4.7): As noted in the institutional report, SFCM’s move to 50 Oak Street in 2006 created opportunities for expansion and community partnerships with its strategic location in the Civic Center and proximity to Silicon Valley. The relocation also brought challenges that included requiring the Conservatory to increase its enrollment by 25% from FY 2006 to FY 2014, raise
endowment draws to 6.5%, and provide limited general salary increases for faculty and staff during the last four years. In response to these circumstances, President Stull introduced a bold, strategic vision that was subsequently supported by the Board of Trustees in March 2014 (CFRs 3.6, 3.9). While the vision is comprehensive with nine goals and action oriented objectives, the team recommends taking it to the next step in the implementation strategy through the development of key performance and success indicators (CFR 3.7) to measure achievement of the goals and objectives with a timeline. A clearly articulated operational plan will give the Conservatory a road map for establishing roles, responsibilities, and expectations while creating opportunities to engage the campus community in the process (CFR 4.6). The introduction of a new undergraduate degree program in Technology and Applied Composition (referred to as the Applied Music Composition for Media program in the institutional report), which is now accepting applications for fall semester 2015, and the construction of Conservatory owned student housing with an occupancy target of fall 2019, are high priorities of the strategic vision that are well underway. A high priority has also been placed on the recruitment and retention of exceptional faculty and students.

Using the Strategic Vision and Plan as a framework, an eight-year financial model has been developed utilizing long range key financial and managerial assumptions. SFCM augmented this model with a six-year financial pro-forma for the student housing project and a seven-year revenue and expenditure plan for the Technology and Applied Composition program. The models were reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees’ Finance Committee on May 1, 2014; Executive Committee on May 7, 2014; and the SFCM Board of Trustees on June 4, 2014 (CFR 3.9).
For determining revenues in the long range financial model, projected enrollment in SFCM’s current collegiate programs for fiscal year 2014 was 388 FTE students and is expected to remain steady through FY 2018, decreasing to 385 FTE students in 2019, and stabilizing at 380 FTE students through FY 2022. The growth in enrollment is expected to be in the new [TAC] program, scheduled to accept its first class with 10 FTE students, and increasing school wide enrollment at a rate of 2.5% to 3% per year. Since much of SFCM’s financial stability is linked to the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students, understanding the enrollment funnel by program for the last five years could yield useful data to inform marketing and recruitment strategies. Also noteworthy is the Conservatory’s belief, as confirmed by the team in interviews with faculty leadership and student support services staff, that balancing enrollment in its current programs is vital to ensuring instructional quality and integrity (CFR 2.1). With the residence hall project occupancy date scheduled for fall 2019 with 337 beds and enrollment projected to be 430 FTE students, this equates to approximately 78% of the student population living in Conservatory owned student housing. SFCM policies governing living in student housing will be important since net revenues from housing is a source of funds in the Conservatory’s long range plan to meet operational needs. Also, the estimate of $70 million used to develop the pro-forma will need to be re-examined due to the recent decision involving the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired to not be a partner in the commercial property at 214 Van Ness, which will now be 100% owned by the Conservatory. Due to these circumstances, the team recommends SFCM revisit its assumptions about the number of beds, practice rooms, suites for visiting faculty, and retail
space as it is directly tied to the planning objectives of recruiting and retaining exceptional students and faculty within a fiscally prudent operational budget.

Two components of SFCM’s long range financial plan that would benefit from being closely monitored are the growth rate of the pre-collegiate and adult extension programs and the leveraging of tuition discounting for the current and future technology programs. This is noteworthy given that the projected revenue from pre-collegiate and adult extension programs was below projections for FY 2014 and expected to increase by close to 7% for FY 2015. SFCM should be intentional in its marketing strategies for these programs to maintain a 3% growth rate and a substantially lower discount rate of 5.90% as compared to the collegiate and technology programs. SFCM’s tuition discounting practices could be vulnerable when looking at FY 2014 with 35.7% coming from redistributed tuition revenues and the balance from endowment sources and annual fund contributions for a combined discount rate of 47.6%. In interviews with the President and Chief Financial Officer, SFCM’s discount rate is in line with peer institutions based upon available information.

In addition to tuition revenues, the long range financial plan calls for an increase in the annual endowment draw to 7% for fiscal years 2015 through 2017 and gradually decreasing to 4.50% by 2021. As noted in the CPR Team report in 2011, this practice exceeds the SFCM Board of Trustees’ policy of 4% to 4.5%. While the assumption of a higher than average drawdown rate is essential for enhancing revenues to cover operating expenses, it restricts SFCM’s ability to grow the endowment corpus to create capacity for increased funding for faculty salaries, scholarships, professional development (CFR 3.3), and support for the implementation of the new Technology and Composition program.
On the expenditure side, SFCM’s financial plan includes funding for new faculty and staff positions and market adjustments starting in FY 2015 and across the board salary increases of 2% per year, effective FY 2016. While the institutional report states additional staff positions will be added to support advancement and communications, it is unclear if there are plans to add staff in other areas, such as student and institutional support services, notably in the library, technology, institutional research, tutoring, career, counseling and mental health services (CFR 3.1). After years of salary stagnation, with faculty raises that do not appear to have fully kept up with inflation during much of the last decade, it is not clear to the team from either the SS or team interviews if the proposed faculty salary increases are competitive enough to retain and attract the high caliber faculty necessary to ensure the integrity of the academic mission and the master/apprentice pedagogical structure. Moreover, the team heard concern from some during the visit about the Conservatory’s practice of relying on serial one-year contracts for new full time salaried faculty. SFCM does not have a tenure structure, but increased use of multi-year contracts might enhance both the ability to retain and attract quality faculty and empower existing faculty to participate more fully and vigorously in faculty governance.

Although the strategic vision and plan articulates curricular changes such as the Visiting Artists/Scholars, introduction of a module/semester-based calendar and Winter Term (CFR 4.3), the faculty costs will be covered within the range of the current faculty salary projections. The Jazz, Improvisation and Roots Music program will be implemented only if the Conservatory secures additional funding.

As noted above, SFCM has incurred increased costs associated with the maintenance and operation of facilities. For fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the increases are attributed to
start-up capital costs for the Technology and Composition program and the establishment of a prudent contingency fund. Based upon SFCM’s audited financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, the Conservatory experienced an operating deficit. Due to the $1M matching gift secured by President Stull, the Conservatory’s unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 indicate a positive balance from operations, excluding depreciation (CFR 3.4). It is also anticipated that the Conservatory will end the 2015 fiscal year with an operating surplus based upon the revenue and expenditure assumptions in its long-range financial plan.

Given that much of SFCM’s operating budget and overall financial health is contingent on securing philanthropic dollars, the Conservatory recognized the need to take its advancement and development functions to the next level. In interviews with the newly appointed Vice President for Advancement and Director of Development, the enthusiasm and excitement for a $125M capital campaign, coupled with presidential leadership, has garnered the support of the Board of Trustees. The infusion of additional resources into SFCM’s communication and fundraising efforts are expected to increase annual giving by 5% per year in primarily unrestricted gifts and increases in trustee giving to the annual fund as it leads up to SFCM’s centennial anniversary in 2017. In FY 2014, annual giving was $4,211,000 and the goal for FY 2015 is $4,899,150. In order to meet this goal, SFCM plans to build a broader constituency of donors aligned to the mission, maximize ways to enhance the Conservatory’s profile in the community to access new prospects, and take proactive steps to encourage planned giving. Of the $125M that is expected to be raised as a result of the capital campaign efforts, SFCM plans to secure $75M in pledges for its future student residence hall to be located on the Van Ness parcel. As of the date of the
institutional report and the team visit, SFCM has raised $17M in pledges in support of this goal. The entire project will be funded by contributions with a construction start date in FY 2017 and move in scheduled for the 2019 fall semester. In a cash flow analysis prepared by an outside consultant, the project will provide 337 beds during the regular academic year and 170 beds in support of summer rentals. Based upon the consultant’s assumptions, SFCM will be able to meet debt service requirements and realize surplus cash to fund other operational needs such as scholarships and professional development (CFRs 3.4, 3.5). In fall 2013, 128 students lived in a facility (Golden Gate Hall) leased by SFCM so the additional 209 beds will significantly improve the Conservatory’s ability to recruit and retain out of region and international students. However, the current student residential facilities are short term leases and it is unclear if the Conservatory has a Plan B if the capital campaign is unsuccessful in securing the funds needed to finance working drawings, design, construction, equipment, and furnishings. Another important assumption in the residence hall cash flow projections is the occupancy of beds during the summer months, which will require a marketing and outreach plan to attract this business to the Conservatory. SFCM may want to consider other deal structures such as partnerships with private developers if fundraising efforts fall short or more time is needed to secure the necessary cash and pledges. Such partnerships, if successful, can free up funding for other priorities and opportunities that advance the academic mission of the institution. The balance of $50M from the $125M capital campaign will be used to support scholarships, professorships and programs.

It is evident that SFCM has taken bold steps in establishing long term, flexible financial planning processes (CFR 3.4) that are aligned with the Conservatory’s Strategic
Vision and Plan (CFR 4.6). The team encourages SFCM to make commitment to faculty, both in the terms of increased salary and more longer-term contracts, a priority in financial planning, in order to safeguard and enhance the faculty assets so crucial to their mission.

Preparing for the Changing Environment of Music: Applied Music Composition for Media (CRFs 4.3 and 4.7): In fall 2015, SFCM will launch a Technology and Applied Composition (TAC) program that capitalizes on their regional location and the strengths of the Conservatory model. The introduction of the TAC program will establish a new standard for media oriented composition and support the Conservatory’s strategic plan and high priority goal for enhancing technology (CFR 4.7). In interviews with staff, the team learned that SFCM had not conducted a formal market analysis or demand study of the TAC program. The team believes the Conservatory would have benefited from such a study and the opportunity to incorporate its findings and recommendations in the implementation plan (CFR 4.3). During the visit, the team toured the recently renovated spaces that will accommodate this new program. Since the TAC program is in high demand based upon anecdotal information, SFCM anticipates it will have a lower discount rate than the other performance areas, generating higher revenues and redirecting financial aid resources toward recruitment of students and faculty and to augment funding for institutional operations.

From a global perspective, a concern of the visiting team is the declining audiences and demand for Western European Art Music, which poses a serious threat to the traditional programs of the SFCM. While this is addressed with the TAC program, there was no mention of this with the other programs offered by the Conservatory in the institutional report. Another area of exploration as SFCM undertakes the journey of
operationalizing its vision is to address the changing higher education environment (CFR 4.7) in conjunction with the evolving environment of interest in high culture.

**Component 9: Reflections and Plans for Improvement**

SFCM does appear to have made good use of the current institutional review, and has certainly demonstrated substantial improvement and momentum towards reaching and internalizing WSCUC standards over their status at the 2011 CPR visit. Much of this seems to reflect the increased energy, focus and vision of new institutional leadership. SFCM appears confident that they will be able to open a new residence hall in the fall of 2019, which if realized will address several interlocking problems identified during the 2011 CPR process. They have hired a Director of Institutional Research, and are already taking advantage of the early fruits of this function. Perhaps most importantly from the point of view of WSCUC standards, SFCM has put in place a process for formal Program Review, and had completed seven departmental reviews prior to the team visit. They have also made encouraging first steps in finally thinking carefully and systematically about GE throughout the curriculum. While balancing the operational budget is still something of a challenge, the new leadership has reinvigorated fund raising, and has reported impressive early successes that promise a path toward a much more stable financial future. The team heard even more during the visit than is contained in the SS about some very exciting and ambitious plans for the future to make SFCM one of the real leaders of worldwide Conservatory education.

While the Conservatory has progressed significantly in building tools and processes for assessment, the team notes that the institution has yet to manifest assessment as a value that permeates the culture as a whole. For example, the core values
of the Conservatory articulated in the Strategic Plan make no mention of assessment or the need to build a community that values self-reflection and the growth that can come from it. Similarly, the team was struck by the fact that the Board of Trustees has no formal evaluation process in place for the President. Given that a culture of assessment needs to touch all parts of the institution to be most effective, the team suggests that the Board might set a regular and formal evaluation process for the President. This would not only allow them to measure the success of leadership but also model for the entire community that assessment is a value throughout the institution and not simply for academic programs, faculty and students.

SECTION III – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

1. The team recognizes that SFCM is an institution at an exciting juncture with dynamic new leadership, a bold vision for the future, and an energized community (Board of Trustees, faculty and staff) that is prepared to take on that future.

2. The team commends SFCM for its proposed multipurpose residential facility and for its plans to locate that facility in a location that is ideal for its students and part of the vibrant music community of San Francisco. We recognize as well how the Conservatory’s residential plan satisfies a very specific need for students even as it addresses the larger long-term issues of resource generation, student quality, recruitment, and retention.

3. The general education program has finally turned a corner, and the team commends the work done to date. The plans for a first-year writing sequence as a foundational part of the curriculum as well as the placement of the Western Civilization program
in the second year both represent solid efforts in the improvement of this program. Further opportunities that will come from a new modular class structure, a dynamic visiting scholar program, and a curriculum focused on fundamental business/professional career skills, all bode well for a full and lively general education program in the future.

4. The Conservatory has traveled an impressive distance in its approach to program review (seven completed reviews in three years) and in building a coherent set of assessment tools. SFCM should be commended for the significant progress made in this area previously filled with conflict and community ambivalence. In addition, the establishment of an IR function provides the opportunity to use data for decision-making and for focusing on fundamental issues of student success. The team is also struck by the potential of the proposed digital portfolio initiative and encourages its development with much enthusiasm.

5. The team commends the Conservatory for its improved focus on the student experience with respect to its attention to health and wellness, tutoring support, and its current and future housing solutions. The team is pleased that SFCM has addressed the practice room challenges of the past and recognizes marked improvement in that area.

Recommendations

1. The team recognizes an opportunity to develop a framework for the strategic plan that will further support its realization and community buy-in. In particular, the team suggests developing a structure of clearly articulated tactics, timelines, milestones, and performance indicators. Such a structure will add greater definition
to the implementation process and provide the opportunity for increased engagement of the community at this transformational moment (CFR 4.6)

2. The team recommends that the various initiatives proposed for General Education should be shaped into a more coherent and comprehensive offering. Whereas the proposed writing requirement is important (and is emphasized in the self-study), equally significant is the integration of a modular class system, the visiting scholar seminars, the proposed business education, and the intellectual opportunities involved in a broader and more nuanced capstone experience. The Conservatory ought to "connect the dots" for the whole program and communicate the value of the proposed solution clearly to the student body (CFRs 2.2a; 2.3)

3. While the team was impressed with the progress of program review and assessment of student learning, we recommend further development and integration of course, program, and institutional outcomes in the major and in general education. The team also recommends further development of methods for direct assessment of student learning (CFRs 2.7, 4.4; CFRs 2.3, 2.4)

4. The team encourages the Conservatory to pay careful attention to strengthening the operating budget in the next few years. We recommend that SFCM focus on their previously stated priorities of competitive faculty and staff salaries, student scholarships, faculty development, and balanced budgets -- all of which are pressing concerns of the here and now. The longer-term resource solution of the residential project on Van Ness will help address these needs in time but will require several years for full realization (CFRs 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)
5. While commending the Conservatory’s decrease of the annual endowment draw to a more reasonable 5% in recent years, the team suggests that the institution reconsider its plan to obtain working capital through increasing the draw again in the near future (as high as 7%) as proposed in the financial plan. With all the confidence in fund raising communicated to the team during the visit, and with gifts to underwrite the strategic plan and the technology program “all but signed,” we believe it would be prudent to find working capital through these philanthropic sources – if at all possible -- instead of reducing precious endowment dollars any further (CFR 3.4).

6. The team recognizes that the Conservatory believes it has great potential for a successful fundraising campaign. The recent significant gift to acquire the Van Ness property augurs well in this regard. Still, given that the Conservatory’s future plans rely so heavily on philanthropy, the institution might consider alternative financing strategies for housing if fundraising plans fall short or take more time than anticipated. In a similar vein, the team suggests that the Board set clear policies regarding the amount of cash and pledges necessary to have in-hand before groundbreaking on the new facility begins (CFRs 3.4, 4.6, 4.7)
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements

SFCM did complete the Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Compliance (see SS, pp. 5-6 and Exhibit C). This was completed first by the ALO and the Director of Institutional Research (DIR), then in a second round of review in a meeting with the DIR, ALO, Provost, Associate Dean for Student Life and Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. They provided all required evidence in this review, and provided summaries indicating thoughtful reflection on the process.
APPENDIX B: CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW

Institution: San Francisco Conservatory of Music  
Date: September 17-19, 2014

Overview:  
Under federal regulations, WASC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

Credit hour is defined by the Department of Education as follows:

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Program length may be seen as one of several measures of quality and as a proxy measure for scope of the objectives of degrees or credentials offered. Traditionally offered degree programs are generally approximately 120 semester credit hours for a bachelor’s degree, and 30 semester credit hours for a master's degree; there is greater variation at the doctoral level depending on the type of program. For programs offered in non-traditional formats, for which program length is not a relevant and/or reliable quality measure, reviewers should ensure that available information clearly defines desired program outcomes and graduation requirements, that institutions are ensuring that program outcomes are achieved, and that there is a reasonable correlation between the scope of these outcomes and requirements and those typically found in traditionally offered degrees or programs tied to program length.

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy on credit hour                           | Is this policy easily accessible? × YES □ NO  
Where is the policy located? Collegiate Catalog  
Comments:                                                                                           |
| Process(es)/periodic review of credit hour       | Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? × YES □ NO  
Does the institution adhere to this procedure? × YES □ NO  
Comments: Review of credit hour assignments are done through program reviews and new course approval process. |
| Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet | Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? × YES □ NO  
Comments: Fall 2014 course schedule states credit hours and meeting times by course. Course syllabi reviewed indicated meeting times. |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses  
*Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.* | How many syllabi were reviewed? N/A  
What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)?  
What degree level(s)?  
What discipline(s)?  
Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? □ YES □ NO  
Comments:                                                                                           |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)  
*Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.* | How many syllabi were reviewed? N/A  
What kinds of courses?  
What degree level(s)?  
What discipline(s)?  
Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? □ YES □ NO  
Comments:                                                                                           |
| Sample program information  
(catalog, website, or other program materials) | How many programs were reviewed? Four  
What kinds of programs were reviewed? Music  
What degree level(s)? Bachelor and Master degree levels.  
What discipline(s)? Composition, guitar, voice and orchestral instruments.  
Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? × YES □ NO  
Comments: All bachelor’s degree programs require more than 120 semester hours and between 46-55 semester hours for master’s degree programs. |
### APPENDIX C: STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW

**Institution:**  San Francisco Conservatory of Music  
**Date:**  September 19, 2014

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Policy on student complaints** | Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?  
Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where?  
Comments:  
The SFCM Student Grievance Policy is located in the Code of Conduct section of the Student Handbook, available online: [https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2CZjLtglPeLdnVOQVJ1ODVxUms/edit](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2CZjLtglPeLdnVOQVJ1ODVxUms/edit)  
| YES |
| **Processes/procedure** | Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? Please describe briefly:  
1. A Student Grievance Form is submitted to the Office of Student Life. It should contain the date and time of the alleged conflict or action, the reason(s) for the complaint, a summary of the complaint, a list of other persons who may provide information, and any appropriate documentation. The student must also include the resolution or outcome he or she is seeking. The complaint must be submitted within ten (10) business days of the alleged conflict or action.  
2. Upon receipt of a completed form, a meeting will take place with the student and the Associate Dean for Student Life or designee from the Office of Student Life.  
3. The Associate Dean for Student Life or designee will notify appropriate persons and request any information or documentation needed to resolve the complaint.  
4. The Associate Dean for Student Life or designee may attempt to resolve the complaint by encouraging discussion between the student(s) and the faculty member/administrator or by taking the appropriate action to resolve complaint.  
5. A review of the complaint with the Human Resources Manager and supervisor(s) may be used when deemed appropriate and beneficial to the process.  
6. When possible, the final resolution or a finding of “unresolved” will be filed in the Office of Student Life within fifteen (15) business days of the date the complaint is filed. If there are circumstances requiring an extension of this deadline, the Associate Dean for Student Life or designee will notify the parties involved.  
7. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, a committee will be appointed to review the information and render a final decision. The committee will consist of a total of five (5) members. Three (3) of the members will be from the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and two (2) of the members will be staff members from the Enrollment Management Committee (EMC). When the FEC and/or the EMC are not in session or at the discretion of the Dean, the Dean’s Office may appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of no less than three (3) faculty members and (2) staff members. The decision of the committee will be final.  
Does the institution adhere to this procedure? | YES |
| Comments: |  |
| Records | Does the institution maintain records of student complaints?  
Where?  
Records are maintained in the office of the Associate Dean, Student Affairs. | YES |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? Please describe briefly:  
Student complaints are aggregated and investigated annually and compared to prior years for analysis of issues brought forward and trends in complaint data. | YES |
| Comments: |  |  |
APPENDIX D: MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW

Institution: San Francisco Conservatory of Music  
Date: September 17-19, 2014

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Federal regulations</td>
<td>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | Comments:  
SFCM complies with section 487 (a) (20) of the Higher Education Act regarding compensation for securing student enrollments. | |
| Degree completion and cost | Does the institution provide accurate information about the typical length of time to degree? | Yes |
| | Does the institution provide accurate information about the overall cost of the degree? | Yes |
| | Comments:  
SFCM's Collegiate Catalog lists tuition, mandatory fees and deposits by academic year and semester cost of attendance figures including living expenses, is also available to assist students in calculating a budget for a 9 month academic year. | |
| Careers and employment | Does the institution provide accurate information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? | Yes |
| | Does the institution provide accurate information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? | Yes |
| | Comments:  
SFCM provides career resources and employment opportunities through the Professional Development and Engagement Center. | |

*Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.
APPENDIX E: TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW CHECKLIST

Institution: San Francisco Conservatory of Music
Date: September 17-19, 2014

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.</th>
<th>Verified Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Credit Policy (s)</td>
<td>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for reviewing and receiving transfer credit?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the policy publicly available?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, where? The policy is in the Collegiate Catalog and on the SFCM website under Academic Support and Services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments: SFCM allows a maximum of 36 non-music credits for the transfer consideration. All exceptions to the policy are approved by the Academic Affairs Committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

1. Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
2. Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WSCUC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.