REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To the NewSchool of Architecture and Design

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). 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.
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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Accreditation History

The NewSchool of Architecture and Design (NewSchool) was founded in 1980 as a for-profit institution. Over the past 38 years, the institution has undergone multiple changes of ownership, including being acquired most recently by Laureate Education, Inc. in 2008. In fall 2018, NewSchool offered 11 degree programs that enrolled 537 students, approximately 75% of whom were undergraduates and 25% were graduate students. NewSchool’s programs included both professional and academic degrees: two professional graduate degrees in architecture (M.Arch I 4+2 and M.Arch I 4+3, each offering an Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure, or IPAL, option), two academic master’s degrees in architecture (Master of Architectural Studies and Master of Science in Architecture), a five-year Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch), a four-year pre-professional Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management, a fully-online Master of Construction Management (the institution’s sole degree in this modality, which is reviewed in the appended Distance Education Review), a Bachelor of Interior Architecture and Design, a Bachelor of Arts in Product Design, and a Bachelor of Science in Graphic Design and Interactive Media.

In fall 2017, architecture students represented 69% of the institution’s enrollment, with 80% of this group at the undergraduate level and 20% at the graduate level. Seventeen percent of NewSchool was pursuing a degree in construction management (56% undergraduate; 44% graduate), and 14% of the institution was studying in one of the undergraduate design areas (interior architecture and design, product design, and graphic design and interactive media). Over half of the incoming undergraduates in fall 2017 were transfer students (most frequently entering from the California Community Colleges);
NewSchool was 35% female and 65% male, and the institution reported the following representation of students among racial and ethnic categories: undergraduates – 7% Asian, 2% Black or African American, 30% Hispanic, 23% White, 2% two or more races, and 32% non-resident alien (3% unknown); graduate students – 7% Asian, 9% Black or African American, 20% Hispanic, 36% White, 5% two or more races, and 20% non-resident alien (3% unknown).

Programmatic accreditation was provided through the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) for the professional architecture programs (B.Arch, M.Arch I, and IPAL options). Located in the East Village district of downtown San Diego, NewSchool established a mission that embraced human-centered design, emphasizing that “for design to be successful it must focus on user needs, exemplifying a humanistic approach to design education.” NewSchool’s mission statement included the institution’s intention “To nurture and inspire design-minded learners to become citizen architects and designers.” It further emphasized “a firm foundation of critical thinking, ethical behavior, and a culture of professional practice on their way to becoming socially responsible leaders of change for our global society.”

Formerly accredited by the Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools, NewSchool was granted candidacy byWSCUC in June 2012 and received substantive change interim approval in 2013 for four bachelor’s degree programs, one of which – BA in Product Design – remained among the institution’s offerings. The Commission granted initial accreditation to NewSchool in February 2014. The institution received one additional substantive change interim approval for a bachelor’s degree that remains inactive (BA in Strategic Design and Management). A progress report submitted by NewSchool in May 2016 addressed retention/graduation, program review, and the composition of the board of directors. In September 2017, the institution submitted its mid-cycle review, and the institution was asked to include in its institutional report for reaffirmation the steps taken to improve graduation rates.
and to provide publication via web links of its graduate program graduation rates and evidence of student learning.

B. Description of Team’s Review Process

The team received NewSchool’s institutional report in January of 2018. Prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the team held a conference call in March 2018 to discuss the process ahead, to review the institutional report, and to identify additional evidence the team wished to receive in advance of the OSR. A preparatory worksheet was completed by all team members that collected the team’s perspective and analysis regarding areas of good practice, areas for improvement, and areas for further inquiry regarding each Component of the institutional report, the Inventory for Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI), the federal compliance forms, and the WSCUC Standards. NewSchool promptly provided the additional materials that the team requested following the conference call.

During the OSR in Alameda, California, which began May 2 and continued May 3, 2018, the team analyzed and discussed NewSchool’s compliance with the Standards and CFRs, reviewed the team worksheet, and produced the Lines of Inquiry document, which outlined key areas of investigation that the team would undertake during the Accreditation Visit (AV). At the end of the OSR, the team read its commendations and lines of inquiry to NewSchool during a teleconference with NewSchool’s representatives. The team included with its lines of inquiry requests for (1) documents and materials to be provided to the team prior to the AV, and (2) meetings to be scheduled during the AV for the team with individuals and groups at NewSchool. The team held a conference call in September 2018 to prepare for the AV, during which the team reviewed its collective response to a second analytical worksheet concentrating on the areas of the lines of inquiry, the institution’s response (the additional
materials NewSchool provided), and topics for further inquiry. The team also considered the proposed schedule of the AV, determined the necessary changes, and discussed strategies for the visit.

During the AV, the team interviewed the institution’s leadership, board, administration, staff, faculty, and students, held a conference call with an executive from Laureate Education, and checked a confidential email account, which was made available to the NewSchool community for communication with the team and which received no messages before or during the visit. In response to the team’s ad hoc inquiries for additional information or schedule changes, the director of institutional research and assessment provided reporting and statistics quickly and completely, and organized the necessary meetings. This responsiveness on behalf of the institution warrants commendation. The team found the individuals and groups with whom it met to be candid and forthcoming with their answers to the questions posed. During the visit, the team verified impressions it formulated during the OSR and its analysis of the institutional report. Executive sessions provided the team with an opportunity for reflection on evidence and for sharing its observations and insights gleaned from the scheduled meetings. At the exit meeting of the visit, the team read to the NewSchool community its commendations and recommendations, which served as the culmination of the team’s deliberations and analysis of evidence.

C. Institution’s Reaffirmation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The team found that NewSchool’s institutional report addressed the topics prompted by theWSCUC report template and was thorough, clear, and well organized. The team reflected on its experience during the visit and its analysis of the institutional report’s evidence, and found the report to be
accurate in how it portrayed NewSchool’s efforts to comply with WSCUC’s Standards. During an interview with NewSchool’s WSCUC steering committee, the team confirmed the account in the institutional report that senior administrators authored individual Component chapters of the report, and key faculty and staff participated in working groups that provided evidentiary support for the self-study. The steering committee, which included NewSchool’s leadership, reviewed the report before submission. As a foundation for the WSCUC self-review, an institution-wide SWOT analysis was cross-referenced to the WSCUC Standards and specific CFRs, with the results of this process incorporated into NewSchool’s Long Range Planning document in 2018.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

A. Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

Addressing Issues from Previous Commission Action

The team reviewed NewSchool’s institutional report, conducted interviews at the institution, and considered evidence documenting the extent to which the institution responded to the issues raised in previous Commission actions.

The Commission wrote:

- The Commission expects NSAD [NewSchool] to continue to gather, analyze, interpret and use data about student success, and to develop, as the team noted, “effective and efficient
communication methods by which to share student learning outcome results and student success data on a broad and regular basis.”

Upon reviewing the institution’s website presentation of statistical and assessment reports, the team found NewSchool to have fulfilled this expectation of the Commission. An appropriate quantity of granular data were analyzed and aggregated into the summary statistics that reported student success measures such as retention rates and graduation rates, which were calculated by entry type (freshman, transfer, and graduate student), by demographic group, and on a trend for each degree level at a 150% completion rate. These student success statistics are discussed at greater length in Component 5 of this team report. With three assessment reports made publicly available on the NewSchool website – on a web page featured prominently – the institution has provided a level of detail in reporting its assessment findings that surpasses that of many peer institutions within the region.

The Commission wrote:

- …[I]t will be important to have in place a sound retention strategy. Such a retention strategy should include analyses that focus on characteristics of entering students, including demographics such as family status, academic preparedness, and other variables.
- The Commission expects NSAD [NewSchool] to offer an appropriate set of student services, based on the needs of its students, to develop strategies to assess the effectiveness of those services, and to use the results for ongoing improvement.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) underwent restructuring after the new dean was appointed in 2016, and the staff in this area played a significant role in orchestrating NewSchool’s retention strategy. The institution focused on both academic issues and student personal issues in its approach to providing
services and interventions. The Center for Academic and Student Success (The Center) advanced the academic support offered at the NewSchool through a variety of programs and by embedding tutors in courses. To determine which courses would benefit from these embedded tutors, data were collected and analyzed to describe students’ academic preparation before entry, their success in the STEM courses required by NewSchool, and student retention/degree completion data. The team commends this effective use of data to design the intervention. The team found that the Veterans Resource Center, support for students with disabilities, and programs such as International Day – when the diverse international cultures of NewSchool students were celebrated – all contributed toward student success. At the time of this visit, initial assessments had been performed among the DSA offices. The team also heard about DSA’s effort to identify the best artifacts for assessing what students were learning from their encounters with DSA services. The team suggests that the assessment of DSA’s co-curricular services progress from this introductory stage with a concentration on those areas that have the closest relationship to enriching student persistence and learning.

To account for students’ personal challenges among retention factors, NewSchool participated in the Noel Levitz College Student Inventory assessment, which highlights the concerns and characteristics of incoming undergraduate students. In response to these data, DSA offered services and interventions to at-risk students whose scores on the instrument were associated with experiencing trouble at the institution. Collecting such information and putting it to immediate use established a foundation for the NewSchool Persistence Committee and the Consultation, Intervention and Retention Team (CIRT) to take action and to coordinate effort among offices in the newly restructured division. The team found the work within DSA to be dedicated and to contribute toward reaching the institution’s retention goals.

The Commission wrote:
• The Commission expects NSAD [NewSchool] to incorporate an external evaluation component into its future program reviews.

During the initial accreditation of NewSchool, the team examined the institution’s program review process at its beginning, with two pilot reviews having been completed. The Commission articulated its expectation that external reviewers be implemented, as they were not a part of the program review process at that time. The current team found that NewSchool incorporated external reviewers in two of the three program reviews completed since the last visit. Through recognizing the NAAB visiting team as the external reviewers of the architecture programs, the institution asserted its compliance with this expectation. External reviewers were incorporated into the construction management review also; however, no external reviewers participated in the Integrative Studies review. NewSchool introduced its new program review handbook and review template, which specified the use of external reviewers in program review, and the team considered this progress to demonstrate promise for a rigorous review process to develop.

Governing Board

The initial accreditation visiting team identified the composition of the board as being at variance from WSCUC’s governing board policy and expressed concern about board committee membership. The team observed that at the time of the current visit NewSchool’s board had a majority of members independent of Laureate Education, with one of the independent members serving as chair. The team reviewed the committee assignments of board members and determined that they followed the board’s bylaws.
Changes since the Last WSCUC Visit

In 2017, NewSchool terminated its School of Design’s name affiliation with the Domus Academy in Italy; however, it preserved the academic collaboration with that institution to enable the continuing exchange of both students and faculty.

In an August 2018 press release, Laureate Education announced plans to focus and to simplify its business model through divestiture of some of the institutions in its portfolio through sales or closures. It can be anticipated that NewSchool is part of this Laureate process of reconsidering its asset portfolio, and NewSchool concurred that it must maintain contact with WSCUC regarding any changes that take place as a result.

B. Component 2: Compliance: Review under WSCUC Standards and compliance with federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The team reviewed all materials presented by NewSchool as evidence of its performance regarding the Standards and the federal forms, and the team concluded that the institution is in compliance. Further, the team reviewed the institution’s Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators, and an analysis of that document is offered by the team below.

Standard One

Institutional Purposes (CFRs 1.1, 1.2)
NewSchool’s mission statement was published prominently on NewSchool’s website and in both its faculty handbook and student handbook (academic catalog). The team found NewSchool’s mission to articulate the institution’s purpose and to be appropriate in its scope. (CFR 1.1) The institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs) appeared in the catalog and aligned well with the institution’s mission while articulating clearly NewSchool’s expectations for student learning. The assessment of learning at NewSchool, with findings that describe student performance and the institution’s standards, were easily found on the institution’s website. Retention rates by entry type and graduation rates by both student level and demographic groups were presented on consumer information webpages as well as on a page dedicated to student success and achievement. (CFR 1.2) Additionally, NewSchool published term by term program outlines for each degree on its website, accompanied by the program learning outcomes and other program data that included California job placement rate (e.g., 91% for Bachelor of Architecture degree recipients). (CFRs 1.2, 1.6) Both the institution’s website and the student handbook described the grievance and complaint processes. Such policies and procedures were also published in the faculty handbook. (CFR 1.7) The team commends the degree of transparency these webpages represent, the ease of access to all this information, and the level of detail provided to the public.

Integrity and Transparency (CFRs 1.3-1.8)

Diversity was among the values stated in the NewSchool mission statement. NewSchool also articulated diversity as an institutional priority in the Diversity Statement in the academic catalog and student handbook. The individuals with whom the team met demonstrated their connection to this institutional value. During the team’s meeting with the board of directors, the chair described her pride at the diverse audience of student families and friends at graduation, and she equated the diversity of the
students completing degrees as a manifesting of the institution’s mission. The team found the support services for veterans to be an asset to the institution, which enrolled active duty military or veterans as more than 10% of its student population as of winter 2018. The Student Life area proactively championed diversity at the institution with the “We Are NewSchool” campaign in response to the discomfort experienced by some at the institution following the election of 2016. Participation in the campaign involved wearing a safety pin to signal one’s commitment to inclusivity and the diverse community. (CFR 1.4)

NewSchool’s faculty handbook provides a statement of academic freedom that includes all faculty members and students (CFR 1.3); however, the team suggests publishing the faculty handbook and the diversity statement from the academic catalog on the institution’s website. NewSchool’s website served as a vehicle to state the institution’s mission and position, to describe the institution’s learning, and to provide access to program information and student completion statistics. (CFR 1.6) The team notes the potential of the NewSchool website to be an effective vehicle for a broader communication of these additional materials (the diversity statement and the faculty handbook) to the campus community and the public.

The NewSchool Curricular and Academic Policy committee (NCAP) functioned as the faculty governance body at NewSchool. It was composed of full-time and part-time faculty members, chairs, and deans, and operated independently of Laureate Education, as did the institution’s administrative leadership. The institution’s board of directors was also independent of Laureate Education and had responsibility to approve the long range plans and the annual budget of the institution. The majority of the board was independent of Laureate, and the board chair was selected from among the independent members. (CFR 1.5)
NewSchool’s response to student complaints is described in the appendix in the Student Complaints Review. (CFR 1.7)

In terms of honest and open communication with WSCUC, NewSchool and Laureate have kept the agency informed of material matters affecting implementation of WSCUC policies and procedures. (CFR 1.8)

Conclusion

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that NewSchool has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard One. Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

**Standard Two**

Teaching and Learning  (CFRs 2.1-2.7)

NewSchool made significant strides in achieving its educational objectives through deep commitment to student learning and success, as well as thoughtful effort to improve teaching and learning. NewSchool offered six undergraduate programs and five graduate programs, with a majority of the student enrollment in the Bachelor of Architecture program. The content, standards, and rigor of these programs were clearly defined under the shared “human-centered design” framework that was central to the institution. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2) Information such as entry and graduation requirements were provided
through the student handbook, the institution’s website, and other appropriate venues. (CFRs 2.2, 2.12)

The meaningful redesign of the “General Education” program – called Integrative Studies at NewSchool – helped ensure the breadth of undergraduate education and instilled the values central to the institution. (CFR 2.2a) The use of the “human-centered design” principles in all of NewSchool’s programs strengthened the connection between general education and discipline-specific learning experiences. Faculty reported to the team that they have expended continuous effort to examine and adjust the curricular offerings to meet industry’s demand and to ensure that the student performance requirements were appropriate for the degree levels (e.g. the emphasis on research in the graduate thesis). (CFRs 2.2b, 2.4)

A solid foundation of student learning assessment was established at NewSchool. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) were not only introduced at the course, program, and institutional level but also well aligned across the levels. (CFR 2.3) The incorporation of learning outcomes on syllabi effectively communicated expectations of student learning. (CFR 2.4) The institution’s assessment effort emphasized WSCUC’s Core Competencies, with critical thinking, information literacy, and written communication assessment initiatives presented to the team. The institution, however, acknowledged that the quality of assessment was uneven across programs. In contrast to the widely disseminated learning outcomes, the assessment measures were less developed. (CFRs 2.3, 2.6) While the extensive use of rubrics in assessment was encouraging, the faculty recognized challenges with rubric development and implementation when they discussed this assessment approach with the team. Indirect assessment methods, such as students’ self-reported learning collected on surveys, were less frequently used at NewSchool, outside of course evaluations. With so many disciplines using qualitative assessment in the classrooms of NewSchool during critique, the team observed that an incorporation of what may be more familiar methods in the context of formal assessment may be valuable. As such, the
team recommends that NewSchool continue and expand its efforts to assess student learning in a sustainable way, by collecting and triangulating multiple measures (both direct and indirect) and forms of student learning assessment (both quantitative and qualitative). (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 2.11)

The broad engagement of faculty – both part-time and full-time – in implementing the SLOs and assessing student learning was impressive. (CFR 2.4) Similar engagement of staff also took place to develop co-curricular assessment efforts, which was excellent. During the visit, students expressed high levels of satisfaction with the academic experience, and in particular, praised the faculty and staff (e.g. the advising team) for their devotion to student success. The studio project experience was a particular highlight for the students, providing a stimulating amount of authentic learning and an appropriate level of challenge. (CFR 2.5) The knowledge and skills of NewSchool graduates were commended by the Advisory Board members, who recounted hiring NewSchool students regularly for their firms. They commented on the improvement of the graduates’ quality over the years to better meet the industry’s needs. The team notes that this progress, when accompanied by the increase in NewSchool’s graduation rates, speaks for both the quality and the quantity of the institution’s positive educational outcomes. (CFR 2.6)

In response to previous WSCUC Commission letters and visit reports, NewSchool introduced new program review processes. (CFR 2.7) The NAAB review of the architecture programs was particularly useful to the team in validating the strengths of these programs and in revealing areas of improvement. Beyond the NAAB reviews, and up until 2018, there were few examples of systematic program review undertaken at NewSchool, and the program reviews that had taken place varied greatly in terms of focus and process. For example, the construction management program review was the only program review that incorporated external reviewers in a program review process that was unique to NewSchool. The team considers the development of the Academic Program Review Handbook as a promising first
step, given how it clearly laid out the components and process of NewSchool’s program review. To build on this groundwork, the team strongly encourages NewSchool to follow the proposed seven-year program review schedule and to commit to a follow-up mechanism that documents progress on the action plan items that result from completed program reviews. (CFR 2.7)

Scholarship and Creative Activity (CFRs 2.8, 2.9)

NewSchool bridged the academic and professional domains by hiring quality faculty with real-world experience, but faculty staffing appeared to the team to be uneven across programs. Several programs, such as construction management, were understaffed in full-time faculty. (CFRs 2.2b, 3.1) The expectations for faculty performance were articulated in faculty contract language and in the faculty handbook, with a clear specification of “25% [workload] devoted to service to the school, scholarship, research, practice, and community service.” (word added) (CFR 2.8) The annual performance evaluation process (SHRPS) allowed for calibration of responsibilities and duties. While the process provided fluidity in accommodating faculty’s professional development goals, the team notes that NewSchool could benefit from a clearer definition of research, scholarship, and service, as well as the linkage between them. (CFR 2.9)

Student Learning and Success (CFRs 2.10 – 2.14)

The commitment to student success across all stakeholders at NewSchool was evident to the team. During the visit, multiple groups (e.g. faculty, staff, administration, board) commented on the collaborative effort across divisions/departments to enhance student success. Student success indicators such as retention rates and graduation rates were regularly monitored, disaggregated, and
examined at NewSchool (CFR 2.10), and the broad awareness of the 81% overall retention rate was impressive. NewSchool offered a robust array of co-curricular programs, for which all constituency groups were encouraged to participate (e.g. the NewSchool Lecturer Series). (CFR 2.11) The student services programs extended support to student populations including veterans, ESL learners, and students with disabilities. (CFR 2.13) The institution aligned its co-curricular learning outcomes with the institution’s academic mission and goals. Plans for assessing these outcomes were geared to ensure program effectiveness. (CFR 2.11)

Given the small size of the institution, faculty and staff expressed their preference for using a “human-centered” or individual-based approach to advise and support students. Students were able to receive prompt information, guidance, and support from various teams including admissions, enrollment, advising, career services, and the Center for Academic and Student Success. (CFR 2.12) The impact of this level of care was reflected in the increased retention rates, but much work remained to increase students’ timely progress to graduation. With the institution’s desire to increase enrollment, the team advises NewSchool to examine the sustainability of the current model of student support, and to explore additional ways to use disaggregated data to understand opportunities and barriers to graduation for different student groups. (CFR 2.10)

Transfer students represented over half of the incoming student population at NewSchool. The team observed that the same human-centered approach was provided to transfer students to ensure their success. The need to further develop a smooth transfer pathway from community colleges to NewSchool was identified by the institution, and corresponding outreach efforts were planned. The team encourages NewSchool to consider developing formal articulation agreements with local community colleges to minimize loss of credits through the transfer process. (CFR 2.14)
Conclusion

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that NewSchool has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with Standard Two. Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

Standard Three

Faculty and Staff (CFRs 3.1-3.3)

To appraise NewSchool’s policies, practices, and planning pertaining to faculty and staff, the team reviewed documents including the faculty handbook, the institution’s organizational chart, and a list of intellectual contributions of faculty since 2013. The team also discussed a range of issues related to Standard Three in meetings with administrators, faculty, and staff.

At the time of the visit, NewSchool employed 18 full-time faculty and 41 staff and administrators. This was two fewer full-time faculty members than at the start of 2018. Five of the full-time faculty had administrative duties and therefore carried reduced teaching loads. Part-time instructors constituted an important component of the faculty. With an overall student/faculty ratio of 12:1, the institution believed one of its strengths was small class sizes. The SWOT analysis conducted in June 2017 noted weaknesses that included the lack of full-time faculty in the School of Design and Construction Management. The institution’s report noted a concern over the lack of faculty diversity, particularly regarding low percentages of women and minorities. (CFRs 3.1, 1.4)
NewSchool defined a full-time teaching load as 36 credits per calendar year. This constituted 75% of overall faculty workload with the remaining 25% allocated to service, scholarship/research, practice, and community service. Standing faculty committees responsible for curriculum and academic policy, admissions, and assessment were fully staffed and active. Course releases were available to support faculty preparing new courses and with administrative duties with the approval of the program chair, program dean, president/CAO, and finance director. A report provided to the team showed that 26 faculty, since 2013, produced 78 publications, presentations, and other types of academic and professional contributions. Because the number of full-time faculty was small, each full-time faculty member had heavy committee and other service responsibilities. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3) Full-time and part-time faculty and their immediate family members could apply for a tuition reduction benefit to pursue a degree at Walden University, a Laureate affiliate. Full-time faculty, with a minimum level of service, could request reimbursement of up to $2,500 for a job-related course.

NewSchool’s affiliation with Laureate greatly contributed toward the level and quality of academic and student services. This relationship allowed the institution to function with lower staff levels than would be needed were NewSchool operating independently. Staffing was frequently described to the team by administrators and staff as “lean but sufficient.” The institution’s approach to ensuring services were available under these circumstances included cross training and the use of student assistants. During the visit, staff consistently conveyed the “lean but sufficient” staffing levels in a positive light, noting that cross training created an understanding of the contributions made by others, allowed for their professional growth, and helped build a sense of community across campus units. Notably, staff turnover was low. This feedback reflected an improvement in climate since the time of the SWOT analysis. Short training modules were available to staff through a Laureate portal. At the time of the
visit, the team observed that campus operations were functioning well. Students expressed that staff were consistently available and helpful; however, the team notes that over time, staff burnout was possible, which could impact morale and lead to greater staff turnover, both of which could impair operations. (CFR 3.1)

Faculty and staff policies were well documented. The 2017 Faculty Handbook covered, among other areas, the hiring, orientation of new faculty, responsibilities, work schedules, conducting scholarship, governance, academic freedom, professional conduct, ethical conduct, outside involvement and conflicts of interest, and grievance procedures. Faculty hiring procedures were routinized and involved an evaluation of candidates’ academic and professional credentials. One notable addition to the faculty handbook was the process for moving up in faculty rank. Faculty orientation covers basic instructional, operational, and compliance topics. (CFR 3.2)

Full-time faculty were evaluated annually using an evidence-based process that included a self-assessment of teaching, professional development, and service, student evaluations, and a review meeting with the program chair or dean. The institutional report noted that while efforts have been made to clarity policies on research and professional growth by adding language to the faculty handbook, the institution was still working on defining and communicating expectations to faculty. The team heard full-time faculty convey the perspective that the annual review process was clearly understood and that their conversation with their program head was productive and a positive experience. (CFRs 3.2, 3.3)

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)
Fiscal stability and enrollment management are addressed in detail in the team’s response to Component 7. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5)

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes (CFRs 3.6-3.10)

NewSchool’s organizational chart showed clear lines of responsibilities and reporting. The board of directors approved the long-range plans and annual budget, and also approved the appointment of the president and other key personnel. Based on the team’s discussion with board members and a review of board minutes for 2017 and 2018, the board was informed and was engaged in strategic and operational decision making. It reviewed the performance of the president using a written policy. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10)

Responsibilities and reporting lines of administrators were outlined in the faculty handbook. As the chief executive officer, the president was responsible for all day-to-day activities and for all operational decisions. The institution had a full-time CEO and a full-time director of finance and administration. Currently, and pending additional resources, the president also serves as the chief academic officer (CAO) and manages the academic division of the school in consultation with the deans and program chairs. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.10)

Faculty exercised effective academic leadership in multiple ways, including developing and administering degree programs, curriculum, admission standards, and assessment of student learning. Full-time and part-time faculty participated in shared governance through service on NewSchool’s Curriculum and Academic Policy Council (NCAP), its subcommittees, other standing committees, faculty meetings, and interactions with the board of directors’ academic affairs committee. Full-time faculty
attended bi-weekly meetings and a mandatory annual retreat that part-time faculty were encouraged to attend. (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.10)

Conclusion

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that NewSchool has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard Three. Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

Standard Four

Quality Assurance Processes (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

At the time of the visit, the team considered NewSchool to be building a solid foundation to support quality assurance processes in both academic and co-curricular areas. Based on a review of the evidence, the team found that NSAD is making substantial progress in developing and fully integrating a culture of evidence and continuous improvement. The commitment to a regularized assessment of curricular, co-curricular, and student support services was a consistent area of focus across meetings with faculty and staff accompanied by multiple examples of how data were being used to inform curricular revision and development of student support services. Advisory boards comprising local employers provided guidance on programmatic curriculum and direction. (CFRs 4.1, 4.3-4.5)

The team found that NewSchool provided a number of thoughtful documents outlining process flow and guidelines related to new program review that reflect sensitivity to student, industry, and global needs.
(CFR 4.7). This evidence will be explored further in the team’s response to Component 6. Actual proposals for either new programs or program discontinuation that included stakeholder feedback were not submitted for review. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2) The rigor of this process would be important not only for quality assurance but also for sustainability and planning. The team found that decision making about course delivery modality at NewSchool could also benefit from data evaluated against internal and external metrics. The team encourages the institution to develop a formal protocol and process for proposing and approving new programs. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

The director of institutional research and assessment was a key driver for the adoption of consistent and sustained quality assurance practices across programs and departments. This position sustained the necessary level of institutional research and assessment, with capacity in the IR department aided through the engagement of the student services team, the work of NewSchool’s committees, and an annual summit structure. (CFRs 4.2, 4.6)

Institutional Learning and Improvement (CFRs 4.3-4.7)

The summit and committee structures reviewed and reflected upon achievements related to student outcomes and improvement, and engaged faculty and staff stakeholders in evaluation, assessment, and data informed decision-making. The institution is small, which has allowed it to be nimble and responsive in reacting to data by making curricular revisions and implementing student support. A great deal of communication and consensus was observed across constituencies related to the mission, values, educational niche, and future growth strategy. (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)
The team found assessment and program review to be areas of opportunity, especially as they relate to sustained and systematic assessment. The NewSchool leadership acknowledged a gap in their assessment cycle and efforts, caused in part by interruption in the leadership of institutional research and assessment. NSAD engaged a number of activities over the last two years to demonstrate the institution’s capacity, and additional time will be required to assess the sustainability of those efforts. (CFR 4.2)

Conclusion

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that NewSchool has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard Four. Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

Federal Requirements

From reviewing the documents presented by NewSchool, the team determined that the institution met the federal requirements for credit hour policy and program length, marketing and recruitment, student complaints, and transfer policy.

Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The team reviewed NewSchool’s Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) to examine the assessment process in place and how assessment results were utilized to inform program improvement. The IEEI indicated that learning outcomes at the institutional level, at the program level (including the
Integrative Studies program) were established and disseminated through multiple venues. (CFR 2.3) These outcomes set a solid foundation for moving assessment forward at the institution. Embedded assessment using signature assignments, final projects, and capstones were reported across the programs, which were an excellent strategy to collect direct evidence of learning. The use of a sampling strategy by programs such as the Bachelor of Interior Architecture and Design, BS in Media Design and BA in Product Design maximized efficiency in data collection, particularly for programs with limited faculty and resources.

Due to the date when NewSchool completed the IEEI, it indicated that few programs had completed a program review as of summer 2017, and there was no indication in the institutional report of a process that governed the schedule or expectations for program review. Following the Lines of Inquiry, the team received additional materials including the Academic Program Review Handbook and a schedule that includes all programs. The newly developed handbook clearly described the components and process of program review. The team recommends that NewSchool complete a full cycle of this new review process for every program. (CFR 2.7)

After studying the IEEI, the team concluded that the use of indirect assessment was lacking at NewSchool. Such measures appeared to be used only by the BS in Construction Management program, and should be expanded to other programs. The responses on the IEEI to the questions “who interprets the evidence? What is the process” and “how are the findings used” seemed generic and vague, and raised questions regarding whether all programs indeed follow the same process in reviewing and utilizing assessment results. The team sought more specific and concrete steps that each program has taken to “close the loop.” During the visit, faculty reported additional details on curricular or pedagogical changes that resulted from assessment. The team advises NewSchool to document these
changes more closely in the annual WSCUC reporting and in the next submission of the IEEI. (CFRs 2.4, 4.3, 4.4)

C. Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees

During the visit, the team confirmed on numerous occasions the institutional report’s narrative regarding what it means for a graduate to hold a degree from NewSchool. The consistent emphasis on preparation for practice, a defining feature of the academic programs at NewSchool, surfaced in meetings with the industry advisory board members, students, alumni, and faculty. Representatives from the local architecture and building communities articulated a value for the institution’s practice orientation, and they also voiced appreciation for NewSchool’s willingness to offer space for local professional group meetings, which create contact between the students and industry. The team found this connection between the institution and San Diego’s architecture, design, and construction professionals to be an educational asset for the students and a signature characteristic of the programs offered at NewSchool. With two of the four “academic pillars” of NewSchool focusing on “professional practice” and “community and industry engagement,” the curriculum remained current and relevant by valuing what needed to be taught to create practicing architects, designers, and builders. (CFR 2.2) NewSchool’s institutional and program learning outcomes emphasized applied problem solving, critical thinking, communication, and leadership, highlighting the priority that NewSchool’s students be prepared to begin their careers upon graduation. (CFR 1.2)

To ensure the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree, NewSchool provided opportunities to incorporate the perspectives of practitioners. A considerable portion of the faculty were actively engaged as professionals in their fields. When teaching at NewSchool, these professionals assessed
student attainment of course learning outcomes that focused on the skills necessary for students’ eventual professional success. An active group of advisory boards provided guidance to the major programs. The team observed that the recurring refrain in the team’s meeting with advisory board members was how enthusiastic these individuals were to hire graduates from NewSchool – to fill internships as well as permanent positions – in light of the quality and integrity of the students’ preparation for joining the workforce. Through evaluating student work as invited members of juries, local designers and architects provided their knowledge and experience to students directly. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6) NewSchool’s students cited their perspectives as important contributions to their professional education. Furthermore, the institution’s curriculum development and review processes focused on additional avenues for integrating professional standards and practices into the major programs:

- the program review process now requires the input of external reviewers; (CFR 2.7)
- design programs set professional practice as a standard through relationships with design firms and the local practitioners teaching in these programs;
- assessing student capstone projects provided a successful avenue for professionals to serve as jury members and to collect data to inform curricular change; (CFR 4.3)
- the BS in Construction Management curriculum was developed using guidelines from the American Council for Construction Education; and
- the first-professional degree programs in Architecture were accredited by NAAB. (CFR 2.4)

NewSchool was one of 14 early-adopting architecture programs in the United States that responded to the Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure (IPAL) initiative by providing an option in the accredited Master of Architecture programs that “incorporates experience and examination with education to aid in reversing a nationwide trend of long timeframes between graduation and licensure.” The team
commends NewSchool for how professional standards are consistently incorporated into its degree programs, with industry experience reviewing and reflecting upon the education offered. The consistency with which NewSchool sought a connection to professional touchstones spoke to the standards set at the institution for its curriculum and validates the relevance of what was taught. (CFR 2.4)

Other dimensions of NewSchool’s educational programs provide meaning and quality to the institution’s degree. General education at NewSchool, called Integrative Studies, considered the integration of “realms of inquiry” (such as “design inquiry” and “scientific inquiry”) and “lenses of understanding” (such as “landscape and environment” and “building and environment”). Integrative Studies offered courses with content relevant to the major programs at NewSchool while emphasizing learning outcomes that embodied the WSCUC Core Competencies. In the major programs, NewSchool’s project-based approach to education prompted its students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in authentic scenarios. The common foundation year for the design majors, for example, enabled an interdisciplinary approach to student projects in those disciplines. The opportunity for internships and the participation of construction management students in regional student competitions developed students’ teamwork skills in practical collaborations, an integral dimension of the degree at NewSchool. The alumni advisory board communicated to the team how the visibility of NewSchool students in the workplace and in competition had foregrounded the institution’s quality. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4)
D. Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

NewSchool has demonstrated significant commitment and laid a solid foundation for an institution-wide assessment system. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 4.3) The development of learning outcomes at the course, program, and institution level for NewSchool was a critical step toward a meaningful infrastructure of assessment. The alignment of outcomes across levels, as well as with the WSCUC Core Competencies, offered consistency to the student learning experience that was framed by the “human-centered design” principle. Several commendable practices were implemented at NewSchool to collect evidence of student learning. For example, the focused use of signature assignments and capstone projects to collect data, the effort to adapt and calibrate rubrics in scoring student work, and the widespread use of curriculum maps to ensure curricular coherence. The annual assessment summit served as the culminating event to highlight and share assessment results, and cultivate assessment culture. The Assessment Summit on critical thinking presented a good example of how the institution came together to examine student learning. The effort engaged faculty and student affairs professionals across the institution and demonstrated collective commitment to student success. (CFRs 2.4, 4.4) The project revealed shortcomings in students’ critical thinking skills, which led to further faculty professional development and reflections on their own teaching. The library information literacy assessment project provided another example of NewSchool’s effort to “close the loop” – the unsatisfactory student performance in the evaluation and use of information sources led the institution to offer several sources of support, such as in-class instruction on information literacy and American Psychological Association (APA) citation workshops. (CFR 4.3) The three-year ILO assessment plan indicated a continuing effort to examine the other core competencies. The team suggests that NewSchool track changes in student performance on the same core competencies over time, in addition to evaluating particular student
cohorts. For example, the team asks: how do the findings on quantitative literacy through the ILO5 assessment in 2020-2021 compare with those through the ILO1 and ILO2 assessment in 2018-2019?

The team observed that a meaningful and comprehensive assessment system was emerging at NewSchool, and the acceptance of assessment was widespread; however, the quality of assessment seemed uneven among programs. The construction management program, for instance, utilized direct and indirect measures in collecting student learning data. Its inclusion of employer and alumni data, as well as the use of qualitative data (e.g. focus groups), provided an array of useful information for curriculum adjustment to better support students’ quantitative reasoning skills development. The team suggests that an effort to triangulate multiple sources of data be expanded to other programs as well. The co-curricular assessment was at its beginning stage at the time of the visit, with learning outcomes developed and mapped to the ILOs. The team encourages this effort to foster student success by expanding to all student affairs departments and integrating the results with the academic programs’ assessment findings. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.11)

The investment in the Campus Labs Outcomes tool signaled the institution’s commitment to assessment, and it had helped NewSchool align PLOs to ILOs and the WSCUC Core Competencies. The example assessment data collected through Outcomes thus far suggested that the quality of assessment varied. For example, the rubric for the STUDIO AR 402 and STUDIO AR 502 CLO assessment attempted to cover multiple outcomes at once (e.g. oral communication, design, culture, etc.), and the performance levels were not fully developed to warrant robust assessment findings. The implementation of Baseline as a survey tool can promote the incorporation of indirect assessment. The construction management program’s effort to engage employers in its PLO development through surveys was a strong example of the tool being used well.
The small student cohort size of a program (e.g. the design programs) should not have been an obstacle for assessment activities to take place. During the visit, the faculty indicated to the team that initial work had begun for these programs; however, the lack of full-time faculty prompted the team’s concern over whether the comprehensive assessment plan would be sustainable over time. (CFR 2.2b) For example, if data were collected at every level on the curriculum map (introductory, developing, and mastery), who will be responsible for the longitudinal tracking or “value-added” analysis that might ensure that the collected data are fully utilized? The small student cohort size, however, allowed NewSchool to take an individualized approach to identify obstacles to student success. As such, while disaggregated data were generated for retention and graduation rates, the discussion of achievement gaps (e.g. by underrepresented status or by Pell status) did not seem central to the student success effort at NewSchool. Given the desired enrollment increase that occurred at NewSchool, the team suggests the institution strengthen and expand the use of disaggregated data – moving beyond retention/graduation rates to include SLO results – in order to identify opportunities and challenges of student success for various student groups. (CFR 2.10)

**E. Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation**

In the institutional report, NewSchool provided information on critical student success indicators such as several retention rates (for new students by entry type, graduate students, continuing students, and all populations together), graduation rates, and job placement rates. (CFR 1.2) The impact of the strategies to improve the retention rates were evident, and the strong job placement rate in relevant fields was also commendable. The six-year graduation rate for first-time freshmen, on the other hand, could be further increased from its average of 42%; however, the WSCUC Graduation Rate Dashboard
indicated that on average only 10% of incoming students were assigned to the institution’s IPEDS cohort (an eight-year average of 15 students per year). A discussion of the institution’s performance on the GRD appears below and offers greater perspective on NewSchool’s graduation statistics. By creating graduation rates that include all entering undergraduate students, combining both freshmen and transfers, NewSchool calculated the 150% completion rates of students by race/ethnicity and gender, and the institution posted these statistics on their website’s student success and achievement page and its consumer information page. The overall graduation rate trends from the fall 2009 entering cohort through the fall 2012 for 150% time to completion showed an improvement from 43% to 65%, with women outperforming men in the fall 2012 cohort (83% vs. 56%; 15 out of 18 women completing and 22 out of 39 men completing). The race/ethnicity trends reported the outcomes for such small groups of students that they required caution when interpreting. The team notes the small groups of students were a consequence of new federal race/ethnicity categories being introduced during the time range reported. This caused an unusually large “unknown” category to drop in size alongside the reassignment of students to other small groups.

The team suggests that NewSchool pursue analyses of graduation that identify factors associated with student success and with students not completing their degree. When NewSchool identified which courses should receive embedded tutors, course performance data and records of courses completed elsewhere were used effectively in the analysis. Similar information along with data describing student experiences and characteristics could be associated with degree outcomes and hold the potential of informing interventions or improvements. The team advises the institution to determine what data points to collect or examine to better understand opportunities and barriers for students’ timely graduation. (CFR 2.10)
The team commends the efforts among student affairs functions to retain students, which are discussed elsewhere in this report. As mentioned in the team’s description of NewSchool’s response to the Commission’s last action, the DSA assessment plans represented an excellent first step for co-curricular assessment, which can lead to continuous improvement in this area. Each DSA department developed PLOs, which were aligned with the ILOs, and each department intended to use both direct and indirect measures to ensure departmental effectiveness. (CFR 2.11) The team observed that as the institution concentrated on which factors were associated with student completion, these DSA departments were positioned to take the action needed to bolster student success.

WSCUC Graduation Rate Dashboard

At the time of the visit, the team observed that NewSchool was in an initial stage of using WSCUC’s Graduation Rate Dashboard (GRD) to better understand its students’ success. The team examined NewSchool’s performance on the dashboard, focusing on the Unit Redemption Rate (URR), the Absolute Graduation Rate (AGR), and non-continuing student statistics (headcount and non-completing units). Rates on the GRD exhibited the impact of the recent decline in enrollment, with the URR, for example, exceeding 100% in the most recent year reported. Generally positive trends were indicated on the GRD, including the downward trend in non-continuing students and the decline in this group’s average institutional units. These measures demonstrated that students who were non-continuing were departing earlier in their studies, without accumulating the greater expense of additional years of study without degrees being produced. Longer trends in the URR indicated how an increasing amount of undergraduate instruction at NewSchool was associated with student completion.
Selecting comparison institutions for an analysis of NewSchool’s performance poses challenges; however, the team was able to use the WSCUC GRD web tool to select similarly sized (101-500 students) for-profit institutions for an analysis of NewSchool and its peers. Considering NewSchool in comparison to for-profits of similar size (and excluding the 2017 rates that exceed 100%), the team notes that NewSchool over-performed these peers on the URR for the last five years and consistently posted a higher AGR performance than this group until 2016. NewSchool’s for-profit peer group grew from two to six institutions between 2014 and 2016, which suggests that as the comparison group grows, NewSchool’s performance and that of its peers may need to be contextualized by a separate examination of the enrollment trend fluctuations that influence URR and AGR. Among the challenges of engaging in a peer comparison for this institution, the team found it difficult to identify institutions of a similar size to NewSchool in the WSCUC region that instructed as many architecture undergraduates. Broadening the analysis to non-profit institutions in the 101-500 enrollment range, the team found NewSchool’s performance on the AGR to be toward the middle of these institutions ranked from low to high, at 46% (range: 18% to 82%, excluding one outlier institution); however, only a single institution in this comparison group offered architecture degrees.

The IPEDS six-year graduation rate proved to be a measure of limited value when analyzing student degree completion success at NewSchool, given how low a percentage of NewSchool’s undergraduate students were represented among the IPEDS cohorts for first-time first-year fall entrants. The GRD showed potential value to NewSchool as a tool for characterizing institutional performance. The team learned from the director of institutional research and assessment that NewSchool was planning to report four-year and five-year undergraduate programs on separate versions of the dashboard, as well as create a version of the dashboard that defines graduation as including students who have completed their courses and requirements but have not yet been administratively cleared for graduation. The
team commends NewSchool for its flexibility and persistence in adapting its use of this tool toward meaningful applications of its statistics, and concurs with NewSchool’s approach for exploring how to benefit from the measures offered by the GRD.

F. Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

The development of the comprehensive 2018-2019 program review handbook and template established strong guidelines and lay the groundwork for ensuring a systematic approach to data collection, analysis, and interpretation across programs. (CFR 2.7) Program reviews at NewSchool were commencing a seven-year cycle of review. The three-year assessment plans, recently developed for each of the degree programs, provided clear timelines for activities and input. Each plan effectively aligned institutional, program, and course learning outcomes, and identified sources for direct assessment and setting metrics for benchmarking. (CFRs 2.4, 4.1, 4.3) The current program assessments available for review preceded the introduction of these guidelines; however, the available reviews were inconsistent in approach and in terms of the quality of data and analysis. Several longtime programs at NewSchool had multi-year assessments that allowed comparison and a general determination of initiative effectiveness over time, which at times included comparisons with external benchmarking, such as exam and licensure passing rates across other institutions. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.1) The newly published program review handbook and review template, however, were intended to create consistency in depth, breadth, and focus – in program review as well as assessment – and result in systematic evidence collection at the program level to allow for data-informed change. (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 4.3, 4.5) Hopeful that NewSchool will continue its recent advances in program review expectations, the team recommends
that NewSchool engage in the regular update and development of its program review guidelines. (CFR 2.7)

NewSchool has incorporated advisory committee feedback and juror input into assessment, which involved additional stakeholders, such as alumni and employers (CFRs 4.5, 4.6). Though alumni and employer focus groups occur, the institution could benefit from more systematic and consistent surveying and data collection. Additionally, indirect student assessment data regarding student perception of preparedness, attainment of competencies, and the value of curricular and co-curricular activities may provide valuable data. (CFR 4.5) As mentioned earlier, consistent use of external reviewers would strengthen the program review process.

Retention and graduation rates were apparent to the team as having focused assessment and data driven decision-making regarding initiatives and resource allocation. NewSchool prepares its own annual institutional report, which provides both annual and multi-year trend data related to these major areas, disaggregation of the graduation rates by demographic, and job placement and exam pass rates. Data for retention and graduation rates showed recent improvement, though graduation rates for undergraduate degrees continued to be an area of opportunity. The institutional effort to address student attrition and the disaggregation of data to inform initiatives could be similarly expanded into the realm of student learning and competencies. The team suggests that it would be informative for NewSchool’s IR area to disaggregate data for all areas of review, including exam pass rates, job placement, and SLOs (CFRs 2.6, 2.7, 2.10).

Several solid assessment case examples were provided to demonstrate how NewSchool evaluates writing, library information literacy, and critical thinking. The case studies embodied beginning efforts
to “close the loop.” For example, the writing initiative assessment compared 2016 versus 2018 results, and the construction management assessment of the signature writing assignment led to a better developed assignment with clearer instructions and the use of Grammarly and Turnitin. The graduate architecture review followed up on each of the areas examined during the prior review of 2013, which supported a continuity helpful in assessing programmatic progress and follow-through. (CFR 4.3)

The team found evidence of both internal dissemination of data through summits (e.g. retention summit, assessment summit), quarterly meetings, and the annual institutional report and the incorporation of data into decision making and the institutional review and planning process (CFRs 4.2; 4.3, 4.6). Data were compiled for external specialty and regional accreditation. The trainings, summits, and formal meetings appeared to have engaged a collective process that shared the responsibility for assessment across the campus stakeholders including faculty, staff, and administration (CFRs 4.2, 4.3, 4.5). NewSchool’s Curriculum and Academic Policy Council (NCAP) was charged with the review of curriculum, student learning outcome assessment, evaluating standards of performance and making recommendations to the Provost for curricular and policy changes (CFR 2.4). Advancing its focus to higher levels of NewSchool’s organization, the team noted that the institution’s strategic planning processes, including the development of the Long Range Plan (LRP) document, occurred at the level of the board of directors and administration, and the team determined that they considered data as part of the processes of evaluation and decision making. (CFR 4.7)

The overview document titled "Building a Culture of Assessment" provided a strong framework for continuous improvement. The development of assessment “champions” set forth a strategy to institutionalize assessment. The team heard about many efforts to train, educate, and inspire a culture of evidence, an understanding of assessment, and an orientation toward data driven decision making.
Assessment led to recommended initiatives and later reassessment gauged improvement. (CFRs 2.6, 4.2, 4.6) By embedding quality assurance processes in curricular and co-curricular areas (CFR 4.1), the broad institutional engagement in assessment was clear to the team through NewSchool’s establishment of learning outcomes across levels, its commitment to increase faculty assessment expertise, and the campus-wide events such as the Assessment Summit and the Retention Summit. (CFR 4.3) While the team found the quality of assessment inconsistent across disciplines, good efforts existed to “close the loop” with assessment results, such as the reviews of Construction Management and Integrative Studies program. Targeted efforts to disseminate data through quarterly and annual reports further promoted data-informed decision-making (CFR 4.2).

G. Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

Financial position

Along with a narrative describing NewSchool’s financial situation in the institutional report, the team reviewed (1) audited financial reports for fiscal years 2014 through 2017 (CFR 1.7), (2) key financial performance metrics for January-September 2018, (3) a detailed board-approved budget for FY 2018, and (4) several reports on progress toward achieving financial sustainability.

While NewSchool took steps to align expenses to revenues, the institution continued to operate with an annual budget deficit. Operating deficits as well as capital investments are funded by NewSchool’s parent company, Laureate Education. Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) improved between 2015 and 2017. Based on the 2018 budget, EBITDA was expected to be
negative, but improved over 2017; however, at the time of the site visit, EBITDA for NewSchool was forecasted to fall short of budget. (CFR 3.4)

Laureate Education Online (LDE Online), a profitable provider of non-degree courses to international students, will be transferred from Laureate to NewSchool in the fourth quarter of 2018. This action should improve NewSchool’s financial position. NewSchool has been providing back-office support for this entity since 2014 and will become responsible for curriculum and faculty hiring. At the time of the visit, LDE Online was dependent on two international clients so while LDE Online may improve NewSchool’s financial performance, it comes with some risk. Revenues and expenses associated with LDE Online courses have been included in the audited financial reports for NewSchool since 2014. Combining LDE Online’s and NewSchool’s results yielded a slight negative for 2017. EBITDA was forecasted to reach breakeven for the combined entity in FY 2018. (CFR 3.4)

Revenue was stable in 2016, increased by 5.9% in 2017, and was forecasted to grow 4.0% in 2018. To offset the impact of sluggish revenue growth, the institution had worked to manage expenses in several functional areas. Operating expenses, net of depreciation, decreased by 5.0% in 2016 and decreased by 1.50% in 2017. Operating expenses were forecasted to increase 4.58% in 2018, in part due to a $0.5 million increase in rent for the space in San Diego that the institution leased for the campus. Merit and needs-based scholarships/discounts were offered by NewSchool to its students but were managed to approximately 13% of revenue. (CFR 3.4)

While the FY 2019 budget was still under development, the institution’s preliminary EBITDA projection for NewSchool, inclusive of LDE Online, was slightly positive. Excluding LDE Online’s revenues and costs, however, EBITDA for NewSchool as a standalone unit was projected to be negative. (CFRs 1.7, 3.4)
The team observed that NewSchool remained highly dependent on tuition and other student fees to drive revenue. The institution had already trimmed expenses so any substantial improvement in its financial position rested with enrollment growth. Table 7.2 shows the pattern of fall semester enrollment (headcount) since 2009. (CFR 3.4)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Total Enrollment</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>537</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Enrollment</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>193</td>
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Institutional Report, p 61, 64; 2018 Financial Performance Update, October 24, 2018

In response to declines in enrollment in architecture programs after 2010, new programs in construction management and design were introduced. (CFRs 1.1, 3.1, 4.6, 4.7) NewSchool’s 2018 Enrollment and Marketing Plan specified new enrollment targets by program and defined a broad range of tactics at the program level to boost leads, applications, and yields. During the visit, numerous administrators and staff expressed confidence that the conversion in 2018 to a new CRM system, Salesforce, would have a significant impact on the institution’s effectiveness in recruiting new students. A new enrollment director was hired to manage recruiting, and two existing positions were restructured to expand the number of full-time recruiters. Partnerships were formed with area high schools, particularly those designating a specialty in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM), and ten community colleges in California to promote their undergraduate programs. The relationships with the community colleges were especially important since most undergraduates entered as transfer students. Digital marketing campaigns were developed to recruit domestic and international students in the
“core” market of the Middle East and “expansion markets” of Brazil, Panama, and Peru. During the visit, the institution’s updated website went live (NewSchool 2018 Enrollment and Marketing Planv2). (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 4.6)

The team found that NewSchool’s financial sustainability plan was based on tenets that support enrollment growth. These include an emphasis on the importance of student success, industry recognition of program quality, programmatic accreditation, and effective branding. Recruiting efforts included academic employees collaborating with marketing staff to attract and communicate with prospective new students. (CFRs 3.4, 4.6)

Recruitment led to a modest expansion in enrollments through 2017, but the upward trajectory stalled in 2018. The 2018 budget was based on new and total enrollments of 280 students and 614 students, respectively. These targets were missed because of declines in new enrollment of both domestic and international students. Helped by rising retention rates, new enrollment was forecasted to be 193 for 2018 while total enrollment is forecasted to be 537. The president and director of finance and administration estimated that the breakeven enrollment level is 575 – 600 students. (CFR 3.4)

The institution benefited greatly from economies of scale in infrastructure afforded by its affiliation with Laureate. The budget reporting, human resources, information technology, legal, and regulatory compliance infrastructure provided by Laureate far exceeded what NewSchool could achieve on its own. The expenses of the various systems centralized by Laureate were allocated across the affiliated institutions using an “at cost” method. The affiliation with Laureate also enabled capital investments to be made, $2.3 million from 2013 to 2017. The expenditures covered facilities upgrades, 3D printers, an improved student portal, implementation of a learning management system, technology upgrades, and the revamped website. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.7)
Another looming issue for NewSchool was that the lease on the buildings that house the campus in San Diego will expire in December 2020. This lease will need to be renegotiated at acceptable terms if the institution is to remain at the current location. If the institution is successful in growing enrollments, physical space at the current location could become a binding constraint. Leadership estimated that the campus could accommodate a student body of approximately 610-620 using current instructional methods. Shifting some instruction to a hybrid modality would increase the capacity of the current facilities and was being discussed. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5, 3.7)

In summary, the institution was implementing a thoughtful plan to recruit and retain students and to grow enrollments. Numerous units on campus were participating in the efforts to grow enrollments. Expenses were being prudently managed; however, until operating surpluses materialize, financial sustainability will remain a serious concern for NewSchool. In the short term, it will be important to achieve revenue targets to – at a minimum – cover operating expenses, but financial sustainability will require more than reaching breakeven. Revenues must reach levels sufficient to support capital investment in instructional materials, facilities, and technology. Higher revenues will also be needed to enable expanding faculty and staff resources. The team recommends that NewSchool continue to thoughtfully manage expenses to achieve alignment with anticipated revenues. (CFR 3.4)

Allocating Resources in Alignment with Institutional Priorities

Resource allocation was guided by NewSchool’s Long-Range (Strategic) Plan and Long-Term Financial Sustainability Plan. These plans linked academic excellence, student success, and community engagement through “eight tenets” to financial sustainability. The budgeting process, led by the
president, followed an annual timeline and was developed with input from program chairs/deans and other campus leaders. It was reviewed and approved by the board in December. Department heads had the autonomy to use their allocation of funds to support department priorities. Administrators and faculty conveyed that the budgeting process was consultative and included channels through which funding requests from unit leaders could be made. (CFRs 3.3, 3.4, 4.3) The team recommends that NewSchool pursue the multiple tactics articulated in its Eight Tenants of Financial Sustainability to grow new enrollments while maintaining improved retention rates of continuing students. (CFR 3.4)

Examples of institutional priorities guiding resource allocation included (1) efforts to boost retention, including the formation of the Center for Academic and Student Success and an embedded tutoring program, (2) efforts to improve recruiting, including the conversation to a new CRM system (Salesforce), a new website, weekly meetings of the president with financial, academic, enrollment and marketing, and student services managers to improve communication and quickly resolve recruiting obstacles, outreach to community colleges, outreach to STEAM high schools, outreach to international prospective students, and expanding course offerings in winter and summer terms, and (3) capital investments. (CFRs 3.4, 3.5) The team recommends that NewSchool carefully examine the impact of new marketing initiatives on application volume, including: the new CRM system, improved relationships with community colleges and high schools, use of digital lead channels, strengthened international recruiting, and the institution’s new website. (CFR 3.4)

Evolving Higher Education Landscape

NewSchool has a clear mission that was supported throughout the university community and provided a vision for its place in higher education. Strategic planning was being guided by this mission. As a
provider of practice-based degree programs, NewSchool has developed strong connections with the professional architecture, construction management, and design communities. Insights were provided by the board of directors, members of advisory boards, instructors who were also practitioners, and community-based projects. Examples of actions taken in response to the changing environment included (1) the creation of programs in construction management and design and (2) the possible development of online/hybrid instructional modalities in areas beyond construction management. (CFR 3.4) The team recommends that NewSchool explore the market for new degree offerings and curricula that take advantage of NewSchool’s areas of expertise. (CFR 3.4)

H. Component 8: Optional essay on institutional specific themes

The institution chose not to pursue the optional essay.
I. Component 9: Reflection and plans for improvement

Throughout this report, the team has cited how NewSchool approached this review in the spirit of improvement. As a consequence, the team identifies several areas to note here:

- NewSchool introduced a new program review handbook to guide departments in their self-studies toward a comprehensive template. The institution’s previous experience with program review – with a relatively brief period of time elapsing between reviews – proved impractical. By consulting with other institutions and determining what information and materials would best serve program review at NewSchool, the institution was committing to a seven-year cycle, a recently established schedule of when each department would be up for review, and a new process that was clearly articulated in the handbook.

- Recent developments in assessment involved the faculty more extensively with authoring and applying rubrics to evaluate student learning at the course level through the institutional level. In the Institution Report, NewSchool described how over the last two years, the local culture of assessment evolved, and the institution returned its attention to the measurement of learning and the use of such data in improving the educational program.

- The enrollment management issues discussed elsewhere in the team’s report were being addressed at the time of the visit through changes intended to stem the decline of incoming students in fall 2018. The team heard about how the new CRM system showed promise for attracting new students and how the implementation of this system followed an analysis of the old system’s shortcomings. The Division of Student Affairs pursued interventions when students were identified by the Noel-Levitz instrument as being at risk upon matriculation.
The effort invested in maintaining NewSchool’s continuing student population paid off, with improvement in retention over the last five years. The faculty and staff of NewSchool described this success with pride.

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS (such as Substantive Change)

The team has no additional topics to report.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NewSchool provided the team with the evidence necessary for a comprehensive review to occur, and the institution’s process of investigating its performance in compliance with the Standards, its dedication to the Core Commitments, and its adherence with the federal requirements led to responsive action designed to improve the quality of the education offered. The team offers the following commendations and recommendations to NewSchool.

Commendations

NewSchool is to be commended for:

1. The extensive involvement of the institution’s constituents in the preparation of the institutional report. The depth and breadth of this participation is evident in the details presented and the insights offered.
2. NewSchool’s goal to focus on “Human-Centered” design. The School’s forward-thinking reflection of contemporary practice offers clarity and priority to its educational mission.

3. The successful NAAB review in 2016, which indicates the high academic quality of the institution’s architecture offerings.

4. The successful effort to restructure the Division of Student Affairs with its focus on addressing the essential needs of students to support their success.

5. The assessment foundation NewSchool has established with a strong alignment of the learning outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels. The development of a culture of assessment has been fueled by the engagement of faculty and staff in the evaluation of both curricular and co-curricular outcomes.

6. NewSchool’s improvement in its retention of students over the last five years, which embodies the student-centric culture that is broadly shared by the faculty, staff, and administration.

7. The enthusiasm and commitment across all stakeholders – the faculty, staff, students, alumni, advisory committees, and board – to NewSchool. The synergies among them have led to the continuous improvement of academic programs and to a strong relationship between the institution and San Diego’s community of architects and builders.

8. The practice at NewSchool that has become increasingly evidence driven, with the greater availability and intentional use of data commonly embedded in decision-making processes.
Recommendations

The team recommends that NewSchool:

1. Improve its financial sustainability by: (CFR 3.4)
   a. continuing to pursue the multiple tactics articulated in NewSchool’s Eight Tenants of Financial Sustainability to grow new enrollments while maintaining improved retention rates of continuing students.
   b. carefully examining the impact of new marketing initiatives on application volume, including: the new CRM system, improved relationships with community colleges and high schools, use of digital lead channels, strengthened international recruiting, and the new website.
   c. continuing to thoughtfully manage expenses to achieve alignment with anticipated revenues.
   d. exploring the market for new degree offerings and curricula that take advantage of NewSchool’s areas of expertise.

2. Continue and expand its efforts to assess student learning – both curricular and co-curricular – in a sustainable way, by collecting and triangulating multiple measures (both direct and indirect) and forms of student learning assessment (both quantitative and qualitative). (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.10, 2.11)

3. Engage in the regular update and development of its program review guidelines, and complete a full cycle of this new review process for every program. (CFR 2.7)
APPENDICES

A. FEDERAL COMPLIANCE FORMS

OVERVIEW
There are four forms that WSCUC uses to address institutional compliance with some of the federal requirements affecting institutions and accrediting agencies:

1 – Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form
2 – Marketing and Recruitment Review Form
3 – Student Complaints Review Form
4 – Transfer Credit Policy Review Form

Teams complete these four forms and add them as appendices to the team report. They are included here in order for the institution to provide the necessary information for the team. Teams are not required to include a narrative about any of these matters in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations section of the team report.

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM
Under the federal requirements referenced below, WSCUC 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 - §602.24(f)
The accrediting agency, as part of its review of an institution for renewal of accreditation, must conduct an effective review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

(1) The accrediting agency meets this requirement if-
   (i) It reviews the institution's-
       (A) Policies and procedures for determining the credit hours, as defined in 34 CFR 600.2, that the institution awards for courses and programs; and
       (B) The application of the institution's policies and procedures to its programs and coursework;
       and
       (ii) Makes a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education.

(2) In reviewing and evaluating an institution's policies and procedures for determining credit hour assignments, an accrediting agency may use sampling or other methods in the evaluation.

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.

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

Program Length - §602.16(a)(1)(viii)
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.

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM –
Under the federal requirements referenced below, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s credit hour policy and processes as well as the lengths of its programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy on credit hour | Is this policy easily accessible? X YES ☐ NO  
If so, where is the policy located? NewSchool Academic Catalog and Handbook on page 111  
Comments: This policy is reviewed by the Catalog Committee, NCAP, and approved by the president. |
| 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)? X YES ☐ NO  
If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: All new courses are approved by NCAP and the President. Any adjustment to course credit hours/amount are approved by the Dean or Chair of the Program, reviewed by NCAP, and approved by the President. |
| Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet | Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: Schedule time are broken down into Lecture Lab Components. The schedule can be found here: [https://wascsenior.box.com/s/k9mz1af12cm8sil01u4gbwy0zle35mee](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/k9mz1af12cm8sil01u4gbwy0zle35mee) |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses | How many syllabi were reviewed? 5  
Type of courses reviewed: X online ☐ hybrid  
What degree level(s)? ☐ AA/AS ☐ BA/BS ☐ MS ☐ Doctoral  
What discipline(s)? Construction Management  
Are students doing the amount of work per the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: A folder containing the 5 reviewed syllabi can be found here: [https://wascsenior.box.com/s/mtrmm08mtxiegbdttptyxg72onxzecn](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/mtrmm08mtxiegbdttptyxg72onxzecn) |
| Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent) | How many syllabi were reviewed? 1 syllabus used for five offerings of an internship course  
What kinds of courses? Directed Independent Studies  
What degree level(s)? ☐ AA/AS ☐ BA/BS ☐ MA ☐ Doctoral  
What discipline(s)? Architecture  
Are students doing the amount of work per the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: A folder containing the syllabi can be found here: [https://wascsenior.box.com/s/mtrmm08mtxiegbdttptyxg72onxzecn](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/mtrmm08mtxiegbdttptyxg72onxzecn) |
Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study, accelerated</th>
<th>awarded?</th>
<th>X YES</th>
<th>☐ NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments: The Dean and Chairs review these records to ensure CLOs are being meet and credits are correct. The sample syllabi can be found here: <a href="https://wasc-senior.box.com/s/snpjsgsdizpnu6k8wwu7ymi2h4r3pdja">https://wasc-senior.box.com/s/snpjsgsdizpnu6k8wwu7ymi2h4r3pdja</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many programs were reviewed?</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of programs were reviewed?</td>
<td>UG Architecture, Construction Management, and Product Design. Graduate Architecture and Construction Management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What degree level(s)?</td>
<td>☑ AA/AS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What discipline(s)?</td>
<td>Architecture, Construction Management and Product Design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of an acceptable length?</td>
<td>X YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments: Information on specific programs can be found here: <a href="https://www.nyu.edu/">NewSchool Academic Catalog and Handbook</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM –
Under federal regulation §602.16(a)(1)(vii), WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions and Comments: (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections of this table as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Federal Requirements** | Does the institution follow federal requirements on recruiting students?  
X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: NewSchool follows Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and does NOT provide incentive compensation to employees for enrolling students. |
| Degree completion and cost | Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree?  
X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: Consumer Information: [https://newschoolarch.edu/legal-info/consumer-information/](https://newschoolarch.edu/legal-info/consumer-information/)  
Sample Gainful Employment Program Data Page: [http://programdata.newschoolarch.edu/Bachelor_of_Architecture/04.0201-Gedt.html](http://programdata.newschoolarch.edu/Bachelor_of_Architecture/04.0201-Gedt.html)  
| Careers and employment | Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?  
X YES ☐ NO  
Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?  
X YES ☐ NO  
Comments: Consumer Information: [https://newschoolarch.edu/legal-info/consumer-information/](https://newschoolarch.edu/legal-info/consumer-information/)  
Sample Gainful Employment Program Data Page: [http://programdata.newschoolarch.edu/Bachelor_of_Architecture/04.0201-Gedt.html](http://programdata.newschoolarch.edu/Bachelor_of_Architecture/04.0201-Gedt.html)  

**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 requirements do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.**
3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM —

Under federal regulation*§602-16(1)(1)(ix) WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s student complaints policies, procedures, and records.
(See also WSCUC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections of this table as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy on student complaints | Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 Is the policy or procedure easily accessible?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 If so, where?  
 NewSchool Academic Catalog and Handbook on Page 160; section titled “Student Appeals and Grievance Policy.”  
 Comments: |
| Process(es)/procedure | Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 If so, please describe briefly: Resolution is sought with the party with whom the grievance lies, then it escalates first to the program chair and then to the Dean of Student Affairs as a completed confidential Student Grievance form. It will be reviewed within 30 days of submission, and a resolution and/or recommendation will be provided to the student within 45 days of submission. Title IX complaints are handled by the Title IX Coordinator via a separate process described in the Academic Catalog.  
 If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 Comments:  
 NewSchool Academic Catalog and Handbook on Page 160 |
| Records | Does the institution maintain records of student complaints?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 If so, where? If student complaints are submitted then they are housed/stored in the office of the Dean, Division of Student Affairs. Title IX cases are housed in the Title IX coordinator’s office as well as in the Dean’s office  
 Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time?  
 X YES ☐ NO  
 If so, please describe briefly: If a student complaint is submitted, it will be stored in the Dean of Student Affairs office. In an effort to digitally manage, more widely advertise, and better professionalize the management of student concerns, the WeCare database is being created for use by the Division of Student Affairs. More importantly, this system will be used to secure safe storage for highly sensitive student complaints and concerns  
 Comments: |
4 – TRANSFER CREDIT REVIEW FORM –
Under federal requirements*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting, transfer, and admissions practices accordingly.

*§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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections of this table as appropriate.)</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? X YES □ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, is the policy publicly available? X YES □ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, where? Included in the <a href="https://newschoolarch.edu/admissions/admissions-process/transfer-student-admissions/">NewSchool Academic Catalog and Handbook</a> on pages 39-42 (undergraduate) and page 43 (graduate).</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? X YES □ NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Sample Transfer Guides were reviewed by the team.
B. Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: NewSchool of Architecture & Design
Type of Visit: Reaffirmation
Name of reviewer/s: Su Swarat
Date/s of review: 8/29/18 – 9/21/18

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all comprehensive visits to institutions that offer distance education programs and for other visits as applicable. Teams can use the institutional report to begin their investigation, then, use the visit to confirm claims and further surface possible concerns. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report. (If the institution offers only online courses, the team may use this form for reference but need not submit it as the team report is expected to cover distance education in depth in the body of the report.)

1. Programs and courses reviewed (please list)

   Program:
   Master of Construction Management

   Summer 2018 courses:
   • CM-601, Current Practice in Construction Management
   • CM-602, Implementing Building Information Modeling
   • CM-603, Emerging Trends in Project Management
   • CM-604, Project Feasibility and Cost Controls
   • CM-651, Commercial Design and Construction Methods
   • CM-652, Advanced Project Delivery Systems
   • CM-653, Leadership Challenges in Construction Management
   • CM-654, Capstone: Project Integration

   Fall 2018 courses:
   SRO-1000, Student Readiness Orientation

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

   NewSchool offers one distance education program: Master of Construction Management (MCM). It was initially offered in the fall quarter of 2011, and was designed for asynchronous delivery. The courses are delivered through Blackboard 9.1. Each course is designed for ten weeks, and most contain discussion posts/responses, and individual or group projects. The program has eight courses, and is designed such that if students take two courses per quarter, they can finish the program in one year - see below for course details and curriculum sequencing.

   Quarter 1 (Planning)
   • CM 601 Current Practices in Construction Management
   • CM 652 Advanced Project Delivery Systems

   Quarter 2 (Integration)

---

1 See Distance Education Review Guide to determine whether programs are subject to this process. In general only programs that are more than 50% online require review and reporting.
CM 602 Implementing Building Information Modeling
CM 651 Commercial Design & Construction Methods

Quarter 3 (Organization)
CM 603 Emerging Trends in Project Management
CM 653 Leadership Challenges in Construction Management

Quarter 4 (Effective Execution)
CM 604 Project Feasibility and Cost Controls
CM 654 Capstone: Project Integration

Based on the information provided by NewSchool, the enrollment of the MCM program fluctuated between 16 and 26 (headcount) and 13 to 18 (FTES) from 2013 to 2016, with a significant increase in Fall 2017 to 41 (headcount) and 30 (FTES). The size of entering cohort between the same time period is 6 to 9, with a much larger incoming class in Fall 2017 of 18 students. Between 52% and 61% of the students are full-time.

3. Nature of the review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

All relevant sections in NewSchool’s reaffirmation report and additional materials, including the NewSchool website, were reviewed. Actual Blackboard course sites for the aforementioned MCM courses were examined. A phone conversation took place with the George Welch, faculty and chair of the Construction Management program at the time of the review.

Observations and Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFRs to assure comprehensive consideration)</th>
<th>Observations and Findings</th>
<th>Follow-up Required (identify the issues)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fit with Mission.</strong> How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?</td>
<td>The MCM program is aligned with NewSchool’s mission. The online program format supports NewSchool’s aim to offer a “global classroom environment”. The program is design-minded and focuses on problem solving and design thinking, both of which are at the core of NewSchool’s curricular orientation. Both the faculty and curriculum design facilitate students’ preparation for career or industry, again aligned with NewSchool’s mission. The MCM program is the only distance education program offered by NewSchool. It was conceived in 2010, proposed to and approved by the Board of Directors, built through a series of summits working with subject matter experts, distance education writing experts, and operational personnel. The student learning outcomes for each course are mapped to the program learning outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes.</td>
<td>More information on the long-term plan of the online program offerings, and how this plan supports NewSchool’s vision for growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection to the Institution.</strong> How are distance education students</td>
<td>Students in the online MCM program receive the same information and support as their face-to-face counterparts. All MCM students work with the same team of Enrollment Advisors throughout the application processes. Once admitted, they receive all the same</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrated into the life and culture of the institution?</strong></td>
<td>General communication as face-to-face students, including the monthly NewSchool Newsletter. Additionally, all MCM students have access to NewSchool advisors who are available to help guide them through registration and ensure completion of degree. MCM students have access to online consultations with NewSchool’s career services department, which helps students get placed in jobs upon graduation. They also receive the same “student readiness orientation” to help integrate them into the life and culture of NewSchool.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?</strong></td>
<td>The MCM program uses the Blackboard 9.1 platform. The platform seems to provide adequate infrastructure for the courses reviewed, offering components that address important curricular elements (e.g. syllabus, announcement, assignments, grades) and allowing faculty-student or student-student interactions (e.g. discussion boards). According to NewSchool, all servers are co-located in Baltimore with several other Laureate institutional backbones. There is 24/7/365 IT support, and technology is updated and maintained in a very structured manner. All courses are maintained on the backbone servers, and archive copies of courses are downloaded and backed up on the NewSchool servers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Support Services: What is the institution’s capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?</strong></td>
<td>A separate “Student Services” tab is available through the Blackboard platform. The tab provides links to a variety of student services including registration, tuition and fees, and student records. As mentioned earlier, MCM students have the same access to student services as face-to-face students, from access to enrollment advisors during the application process, access to advisors and the registrar once matriculated, access to the career services department for help with job placement, and access to all digital resources offered through the Richard P. Welsh Library. The library maintains subscriptions to academic databases offering peer reviewed research publications via EBSCO and JSTOR, eBooks through the online public access catalog, and access to digital periodicals via the Zinio platform, as well as specific construction tools, which include RSMeans Online and the Design Cost Data Conceptual Estimator. The library also maintains a research guide to provide an organized collection of resources related to construction management. More data on the effectiveness of these services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the All of the principal faculty for the online MCM program are part-time, adjunct, and located off-site. The faculty credentials are available at <a href="https://newschoolarch.edu/academics/school-of-architecture/cm-faculty/">https://newschoolarch.edu/academics/school-of-architecture/cm-faculty/</a>. The faculty has remained stable since the start of the program. The faculty were chosen so that their expertise and experiences best match the courses they teach. Each year the MCM faculty are invited to attend THE annual faculty Plan to hire full-time faculty?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?

retreat, which occurs in the end of September. The retreat offers opportunities for faculty to meet with leadership and advisory boards, and to discuss any issues regarding the programs.

Construction Management appears to lead the assessment and quality assurance process at NewSchool, with a program review completed in 2018. The MCM program specifically has an aligned system of CLOs and PLOs, both are aligned with the ILOs and WSCUC core competencies.

Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings?

The MCM program was designed by a task force consisting of Dr. Linda Thomas Mobley, the original chair of CM Programs at NewSchool, George Welch, faculty chair of the CM programs through 2018, and an invited group of subject matter experts and advisory board members. The outline of the program was proposed to the board of directors and approved for offering.

The MCM program was designed specifically as a distance education offering, with the goal of being able to graduate in 12 months. There is no comparable on-ground program.

Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to

MCM retention and graduation rate fluctuated greatly over the years, largely due to its small cohort size. According to George Welch, in the early years the program struggled to offer all courses in all quarters for this reason. The retention and graduation rates were also affected by the fact that the majority of MCM students are working professionals who intentionally step out of school for a period of time to focus on their professional work. The intended one-year nature of the MCM program also makes the traditional year-to-year retention rate calculation less meaningful. For example, MCM’s fall 2012 entering cohort 150% graduation rate (meaning students had 1.5 years to complete the 1-year MCM program) was 27% (3/11). However, that same cohort’s graduation rate increases to 82% (9/11) when time to graduation is extended beyond 150%.

Determine a different success measure for retention and graduation rate that is more suitable for the MCM program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>other institutions’ online offerings?</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning.</strong>&lt;br&gt;How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?</td>
<td>As mentioned above, MCM has established CLOs, which are mapped with PLOs and subsequently ILOs through curriculum mapping. MCM is actively engaged in the assessment of student learning through direct (e.g. assignment with rubrics for written/oral communication) and indirect measures (e.g. student course evaluations). The newly implemented Campus Labs system facilitates further use of rubrics in assessing student learning. George Welch indicated that more results will be available on written communication this fall.</td>
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<td><strong>Contracts with Vendors.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on Contracts with Unaccredited Organizations?</td>
<td>NewSchool does not have separate contracts with vendors for infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses.</td>
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<td><strong>Quality Assurance Processes:</strong>&lt;br&gt;How are the institution’s quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance</td>
<td>As mentioned above, MCM seems to be the leader in NewSchool in assessment and quality assurance. The program review process examined a variety of data, and the assessment effort appears to be thorough and sustainable. The program has disseminated the assessment results among faculty for discussion and program improvement, with an example of the 2016-17 student course evaluation results reviewed at the MCM faculty retreat in Atlanta, Georgia.</td>
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<td>education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?</td>
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