REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To: Dominican University of California

Campus Visit
April 3rd – April 6th, 2018

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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 Reaccreditation Process

As noted in its succinct history of itself, Dominican University of California was founded in 1890, changing its ownership and operation from a Catholic college overseen by the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, to an independent university in 1969 with a majority lay Board of Trustees. Located in Marin County, it was originally established as a women’s college, becoming fully co-educational in 1971. Its current mission statement is cited early in the report and used throughout the report to show the linkage of mission to programs and initiatives. Dominican is led by a president who is in her seventh year at the university and is supported by a vice president for academic affairs, in her fourth year in this role, and an associate vice president for academic planning, in her sixth year. As of fall 2017, all senior leadership positions (advancement, finance and administration, enrollment management) are filled.

In 2017, Dominican revised its four-school structure to three schools: Liberal Arts and Education, Barowsky School of Business, and Health and Natural Sciences, to “conserve resources and to strengthen leadership and cross-disciplinary relationships” (p. 2). In 2015-16, the university conferred 316 bachelor degrees (BA: 131, BS: 177, BFA: 8), 164 master’s degrees (MA: 7, MS: 98, MBA: 59), and 47 MSED with Teacher Preparations.

Comprehensive student, faculty and staff composition were described clearly, with approximately 110 full-time faculty and 375 adjunct faculty members serving 1,812 students. Of particular note is Dominican’s student ethnicity profile as of fall, 2016, which is 39.9% White, 20.8% Asian American, 17.5% Hispanic, 4.4% African American, 1.4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 6.1 % two or more races, 1.5% international, and 7.8% unknown. The report also cites the university’s commitment and efforts to enhance diversity, noting both the
establishment of a Diversity Action Group and an annual series of professional development sessions. Dominican currently offers a small student-to-faculty ratio with an average class size of 14. It provides a unique academic model, the Dominican Experience, described in subsequent sections of this report, and it offers students an interesting array of global study opportunities.

Its introductory context statement also cites several points of distinction (ranking in *WSJ/Times Higher Education, U.S. News and World Report* ranking) and its success, as judged by *The Equality of Opportunity Project Study*, in helping transform lower-income students into higher-income wage earners. Dominican’s curriculum and specific programs that help prepare students as ethical leaders and socially responsible global citizens who incorporate service into their lives has been recognized by a number of awards (2015 Civic Engagement Award from the Washington Center and the NY Life Foundation) as well as the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. These points of distinction demonstrate some of Dominican’s contributions to the public good.

**Accreditation History.** Dominican has been accredited by WSCUC since 1949. Its most recent reaccreditation review was conducted in spring, 2010, with two interim reports in spring 2013 and fall 2014 respectively. Findings of the Commission were responded to in the institutional self-study and are discussed in Component 1 of this report. The institution has completed two substantive change reviews, in spring 2011 and in fall 2016. Its current reaccreditation process commenced with a self-study submission in September 2017, continuing with an Offsite Review in November 2017, and the reaccreditation site visit occurred in April 2018. This report is the team’s summary of the site visit findings.
Off-campus Locations and Distance Education.

On the WSCUC institutional website, Dominican lists five locations beyond the main campus: BioMarin Program (Novato), Buck Institute (Novato), LINES (San Francisco), Marin Ballet (San Rafael), and Ukiah campus. After conferring with the institution and with the WSCUC representative, it was determined that two members of the WSCUC reaccreditation visit team who reside locally in the Bay area would visit Dominican’s LINES program in San Francisco. Their report can be found in one of the appendices.

The only distance education program listed by Dominican is its Low-residency MFA program in Creative Writing. Two members of the visiting team reviewed this program and interviewed the faculty and dean. Their report is also found appended to this report.

B. Description of Team’s Review Process:

Dominican University of California submitted their self-study on September 19, 2017. WSCUC’s appointed reaccreditation team reviewed thoroughly the materials uploaded by Dominican, including the institutional report, all supporting documents for the self-study, and the Dominican website as preparation for the Offsite Review (OSR). The team members were assigned various areas of responsibilities as both primary and secondary readers, which were confirmed by all during the team’s initial conference call on October 31st, 2017. Team members prepared worksheets reviewing each of the components, standards, federal required policies, the Inventory of Institutional Effectiveness Indicators, and any special materials related to distance education, which they discussed as the foundation for the OSR visit, November 28th-29th, 2017.
At the OSR, the team developed Lines of Inquiry that identified key issues for further exploration and helped to develop questions to be asked during the accreditation interviews. In preparation for the accreditation visit, team members completed a second set of worksheets, reviewed institutional documentation again, reviewed additional documents submitted in response to the Offsite Review Lines of Inquiry, and conducted a second conference call on March 13th, 2018. The team clarified meetings with specific individuals and documents needed during the onsite visit.

During the accreditation visit from April 4th-6th, 2018, the team conducted interviews with the Board of Trustees, a broad array of administrators (president, vice president for academic affairs and ALO, vice presidents and deans, other administrative directors), the independent auditor, faculty members, students, and staff members. In addition to the previous document reviews, the visiting team reviewed materials offered onsite, and messages received through the confidential email account.

For the duration of the visit, the team collected information, examined the interview outcomes and refined these for questions in subsequent interviews. Throughout the process, the team encouraged open communication and rigorously reviewed the information provided by the interviews. As the visit drew to a close, the team members collectively constructed the final set of commendations and recommendations based upon careful and comprehensive analysis of the evidence gleaned from institutional materials and AV interviews.

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

Generally, Dominican’s institutional self-study and its accompanying appendices offered a candid, organized and comprehensive view of the university. The report provided a thorough self-study of the current state of the institution along with a history of its mission, vision, and
academic commitments. Each of the required components, standards, federal policies, and inventory were addressed with supporting evidence, although reflections required additional lines of inquiry probes and on-site review for clarification. The production of the self-study appeared to be a campus-wide initiative with a representative WSCUC Steering Committee.

By its conclusion, the Steering Committee had engaged with multiple groups and constituencies, including the Board of Trustees, the president and senior administrative leadership, faculty forum, numerous faculty committees, undergraduate and graduate administrators and faculty, numerous student affairs and support service groups, and students in preparing and reviewing various drafts of the final report.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions (CFR 1.1, 1.8):

As a result of the Educational Effectiveness Review of 2010, Dominican was asked to follow up on four areas: implementation of a strategic plan; increasing the number of tenure track faculty and support staff; improving financial management; and diversifying its revenue stream. It reported on its efforts to the Commission in 2015. In this reaffirmation report, Dominican has updated these four areas noting in a table (Table 1.1 on page 9) what it has accomplished beyond the scope of the 2011-15 strategic plan. It now has a new strategic plan, *Dominican at 130*, targeted to three areas: the *Dominican Experience*, curriculum alignment, and targeted enrollment management and program innovation.

Dominican has made adjustments to increase faculty and staff by emphasizing sustainable enrollment targets and planning to align the curriculum to goals that will increase the
student-faculty ratio (from 9 – 1 to 14 – 1), a ratio similar to other institutions in its Carnegie classification.

Financially, the university has reported consecutive annual operating surpluses FY 2011–15 but saw modest deficits in FY 2016 –2017 based largely on decreases in enrollment, particularly in the new entering student category. Its financial stability and sustainability are major goals in the new strategic plan, *Dominican at 130*, as well as the impetus for a potential new partnership with a technology firm that is at beginning stages of planning and decision-making. They also note in the introduction to the report that the Advancement Office has focused on planful fund-raising and building sustainable depth and quality. They note that since the last WSCUC visit the university has secured two of the largest donations in its history and conducted the first ever Day of Giving on campus.

While visiting Dominican, the team also learned of a partnership with the City of Novato called “re-imaging citizenship” which will allow the university to provide further service options and continue to support the public good. The plan is to recruit a cohort of new students from Novato, have them participate in a summer internship with the city before the fall semester begins. They will continue these internships in subsequent summers.

The university provides an overview of capacity and infrastructure, which indicates significant renovations to student learning spaces and other capital improvements that support and enhance educational programs. It received the largest gift in its history in 2012, which enabled the renovation of Meadowlands Hall and the establishment of a health sciences building. The report discusses the need to improve the Student Information System in the future and the more recent move to an up-to-date learning management system. The team also received a recently completed and comprehensive study by an architectural firm of space and facilities at
the university. The administration plans to use this study as a guideline for space planning and potential fund-raising.

**Preparation for this Review.** This accreditation review was overseen by the university’s vice president for academic affairs and ALO, and the effort commenced in the spring of 2016. The vice president for academic affairs established a Steering Committee comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators from across the campus. This group met regularly, forming Working Groups that focused on five core areas. These Working Groups articulated key lines of inquiry, worked on narratives and shared their work on a Google site, which was open to the campus community in the fall of 2016. A synthesized draft, written by lead faculty, was available for review in spring 2017. Feedback from this review was incorporated into the self-study and a final version was presented to the president in May of 2017.

**Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and federal requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators**

The WSCUC standards, federal requirements, and the inventory of educational effectiveness indicators provide common ground across institutions ensure that “quality, integrity, accountability, and transparency” will be represented throughout a student-centered focus on learning (*2013 WSCUC Handbook of Accreditation*, p. 10).

**Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives.**

The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 1.

**Institutional Purposes.** The WSCUC accreditation visit team found that Dominican places student learning and success at the center of its work, and that its mission and values are widely recognized at the institution. The team noted that even though there have been significant
strategic and organizational change in recent years, faculty, staff and students returned again and again to a sense of identity and purpose grounded in its values. Dominican has recently approved institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), which nicely align with the Dominican mission and identity. Dominican recognizes that the ILOs are not fully implemented across the undergraduate or graduate degree levels and across the co-curriculum (CFRs 1.1, 1.2).

**Integrity and Transparency.** Dominican provided all materials demonstrating key policies on its web site and in other locations, including its Diversity Declaration (CFR 1.4), policy on academic freedom (CFR 1.3), communication with WSCUC (CFR 1.8), the role of its governing board (CFR 1.5), and clear policies regarding student grievances and complaints (CFR 1.6). The team noted that there is no common graduate student handbook, and that policies are decentralized for that population. Dominican clearly demonstrated open and honest communication with WSCUC, but acknowledges that with many changes taking place, there is a need for continued transparency and improved communication (CFR 1.8).

Dominican demonstrated a commitment to diversity through expanded data collection, but acknowledged in its self-study that there is “room to grow” in this area, and that updating the current Diversity Declaration remains a goal. The team recommends further resources and authority be dedicated to efforts including a strategy and assessment plan for diversity and equity aligned with the Dominican Experience and university mission, and the consideration of focused initiatives, such as faculty hiring toolkits, focused training for search committees, diversity training and/or certification for faculty and staff to become diversity champions, and a focus on diversity and equity in faculty governance.
Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions. The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 2.

Teaching and Learning. Dominican has developed a comprehensive set of assessment and program review practices that are at the beginning stages of implementation. Although annual assessments for programs have been collected and analyzed for some time, academic programs are in the first cycle of program review and newly revised assessment processes are in place for undergraduate and graduate programs (CFRs 2.1-2.7). Through its thorough curriculum alignment review and revision processes for all academic programs, academic programs of every level (undergraduate and graduate) have clearly stated learning outcomes that are fully aligned with its institutional learning outcomes (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6). Using AACU’s Essential Learning Outcomes, the Degree Qualifications Profile, and other guides, outcomes and curriculum were revised to clearly establish and differentiate the meaning, quality and integrity of the degree for undergraduate and graduate levels of learning (CFR 2.2a-b). The alignment initiative will be reinforced through the Dominican Experience, particularly the components of digital portfolios and signature work, which will facilitate capturing student work at culminating levels (see further discussion in Components 3 and 4).

The general education program had been collecting and reviewing assessment data based on student requirements since 2010. Assessments for general education work, including the five core competencies, have been collected and analyzed at several curricular levels. In fall 2017, the faculty completed a thorough revision of the general education process that better aligned the university’s institutional level outcomes with general education learning outcomes and curriculum (CFR 2.2a). Assessment plans are in place, which include using developmental
rubrics fully aligned with the general education outcomes. This set of revisions should provide more effective tracking of student progress from entry levels through graduation (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.6).

**Scholarship and Creativity.** At Dominican, faculty members are generally expected to engage in scholarship activities. Faculty members attend conferences in their disciplines and work on research projects, primarily during the summer, when workloads are lighter (CFR 2.8). Increasing the sufficiency of faculty and staff should help to alleviate this workload problem; additionally, the administrative leadership identified targeting increases in faculty salaries as a priority over the next several years (CFR 2.1). It was proposed in the institutional self-study that moving to a four-unit-based curriculum will afford faculty greater efficiency (fewer preparations), which should help to facilitate ongoing scholarship and creativity (CFR 2.9).

**Student Learning and Success.** Generally, the office of institutional research provides analyses of retention and graduation appropriately disaggregated by various student cohorts for their progress in remaining at the institution and graduating in a timely manner (CFR 2.10). As noted in Component 5, tracking student success through retention and graduation rates would be better facilitated by improving on the data enterprise system currently in place. The team generally noted that retention and graduation rates were fully in line with institutional expectations although further analysis of an anomaly was encouraged (see Component 5).

At Dominican, students are assigned an integrative coach, whose role is intended to complement the existing advising structure, and whose purpose is to serve students in acting as a resource and guide throughout the students’ academic plan. Though the role is in its initial stages of development, initial results are promising in helping students to track progress toward their degrees (CFRs 2.11, 2.12). There are clear processes in place for students who wish to register
complaints and disputes (CFR 2.12). A comprehensive approach to mentoring (peer, academic and professional) helps to ensure just-in-time assistance is provided to all students effectively connecting them to all available campus resources (CFR 2.13).

Transfer student information, admissions requirements, articulation agreements, and transfer policy are clearly posted on Dominican’s website. Administrative staff and faculty who work with transfer students also provide advising on an individual basis so that students will know the courses that will articulate to the university and those that will not (CFR 2.14).

**Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability.** The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 3.

**Faculty and Staff:** The institutional report and its supporting exhibits indicate an engaged, dedicated, and qualified faculty and staff with a new collective bargaining agreement for part-time faculty and a curricular redesign initiative being implemented that is striving to achieve more manageable faculty workloads and to stabilize the number of tenure-track faculty lines in light of a 23% decline in overall student headcount enrollment (2,278 in fall 2011 to 1,750 in fall 2017). These same sources of evidence, as well as on-campus interviews, indicate that budget pressures related to declining enrollment and the realignment of resources to implement the three initiatives in the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan have created stress on staffing levels, staff development resources, and compensation levels for faculty and staff (CFR 3.1).

Although a commitment to diversity is embedded in the university’s mission, institutional reports indicate that the diversity of faculty and staff is far less than that of the student body (example: full-time faculty 73.6% Caucasian and student body 33.9% Caucasian). Interviews with the university’s Office of Diversity and Equity and Diversity Action Group indicate that
there is no current diversity action plan and that there are limited resources and authority to develop and implement strategies to enhance campus awareness and to advance faculty and staff diversity through hiring practices (CFR 3.1).

A review of faculty and staff handbooks and interviews with faculty and staff indicate that policies, practices, and evaluation systems appear to be in place; but that staff evaluation systems should be implemented more uniformly and should include expanded inputs such as those provided by a 360-degree review system (CFR 3.2). There also appears to be professional development opportunities available for faculty, including funding and sabbaticals. Funding for staff development, however, appears to have diminished through budget reduction efforts (CFR 3.3).

**Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources:** Although the university experienced five years of unrestricted operating budget surpluses through FY 2014-2015, a review of audited financial statements reveal that unrestricted operating budget losses have occurred in FY 2015-2016 ($1.9 million) and FY 2016-2017 ($0.9 million). Also, reports and interviews indicate that the FY 2017-2018 operating budget is currently projected to have an unrestricted operating budget loss of up to $1.7 million with net tuition and fee revenues of $41.5 million (75% of total revenues), total operating revenues of $55.6 million, and operating expenses of $57.3 million. Three-year operating budget projections through FY 2020-2021 indicate that unrestricted operating losses are likely to continue through FY 2018-2019 (CFR 3.4).

Interviews with senior administrators and members of the Board of Trustees indicate that the university is pursuing multiple strategies to balance its unrestricted operating budget. These strategies include implementing a modified zero-based operating budget for major cost centers, further aligning the budget with the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan, hosting a focused summer
finance summit for the university community, reorganizing institutional research resources to improve predictive modeling, hiring an executive director of financial aid to develop and implement improved financial aid leveraging strategies, marketing enhancements, new program development including external partnerships and non-credit bearing offerings, and efforts to increase the university’s national and local visibility and credibility. Short-term, and likely unsustainable, strategies being used to reduce the projected loss ($3.1 million initial loss down to current projected loss of $1.7 million) in the FY 2017-2018 unrestricted operating budget include increasing the endowment spending rate from 5.5% to 7.0%, deferring the implementation of salary increases, eliminating the relatively modest $0.4 million contingency reserve, and deferring the implementation of aspects of the strategic plan.

The team does note that the university has had clean external audits, relatively sophisticated and evolving budgeting and budget modeling systems, and increasing revenue diversity, primarily from expanded non-credit bearing educational programs, external partnerships, and enhanced fundraising efforts. The team also notes that Dominican recently refinanced $28.3 million of long-term debt and achieved more favorable terms and net present value savings of $4.6 million (CFR3.4).

The property and facilities on the Dominican campus appear to be generally adequate for the institution’s current operational needs and reflect recent strategic improvements to facilities. The team notes that the completion of the Allen Athletic Complex in 2016 marked the completion of the university’s previous campus master plan. The team also notes that a physical planning campus task force has been convened to align space planning with strategic planning and that several renovation and student housing projects are completed and planned that focus on facilitating the implementation of the Dominican Experience. Finally, the team notes that a space
needs study was recently completed by outside architects to further inform future facility improvements.

Interviews with faculty, staff, and students indicated the need for continued improvement and/or expansion of select campus facilities that will better support implementation of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan; especially the provision of adequate space for new program initiatives. Interviews also indicated the general adequacy of technology resources, but with some technology support, modernization, and reliability issues. Finally, interviews indicated the need to continue to coordinate, improve, and leverage technology resources to facilitate the implementation of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan (CFR 3.5).

**Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes:** Although three members of the senior administration (vice presidents for advancement, finance and administration, and enrollment management) have been hired since 2014, all members of the senior administration appear to be qualified, engaged, and have the confidence of the Board of Trustees (CFR 3.6 and 3.8). It also appears that the senior administration has been using data and shared governance structures to inform the development and implementation of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan, although they are still in the process of fully integrating the plan with budgeting processes as evidenced by interviews with senior administrators, faculty, and staff (CFR 3.7).

Agendas and minutes from the board of trustee’s retreats and meetings, as well as interviews with members of the board, indicate an independent, engaged, supportive, and committed group of trustees. Evidence of presidential evaluation by the board was also provided via interviews with the board and the president (CFR 3.9). Finally, the board has been focused on using best practices including board self-evaluation, establishment of term limits, and the adoption of updated bylaws.
Interviews with faculty, along with a review of the faculty handbook and minutes from faculty forums, provided evidence of academic leadership by the faculty. These interviews also expressed a desire for increased consultation and communication with faculty by the senior administration (CFR 3.10).

**Standard 4: Quality Assurance Processes.** The team’s finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with Standard 4.

The Institutional Research Office tracks graduation and retention rates and compares them to peer, competitor, and aspirational institutions on a routine basis. In addition to being regularly shared with the university leadership and Board of Trustees, these data are available on the institutional research website (CFR 1.2, 4.2, 4.6). The Institutional Research Office also supports the data and information needs of the academic and co-curricular areas (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.5). The team noted the office is staffed with 1.75 FTE employees; the heavy workload and outdated data systems prevent the office from providing additional value-added consulting and analysis. The team recommends the university further support institutional research’s ability to provide high quality data and analysis for program review, assessment, and institutional effectiveness (CFR 4.2).

**Institutional Learning and Improvement.** The university has demonstrated evidence of organizational structures and processes that support a framework for systematic, ongoing, review and assessment of student learning. The faculty, academic assessment committee, and director of assessment work together to ensure that academic assessment and program review continue on a regular schedule (CFR 4.3, 4.4, 4.5). Student learning and student success are assessed through the annual assessment process and program review, which then result in changes and
improvements (CFR 4.3, 4.4). For example, during the program review process, Communication and Media Studies (CMS) faculty members discovered student learning could be improved through intentional course scaffolding. As a result, the CMS faculty members are in the process of curriculum review and revision.

The university continues to address ongoing changes within the higher education landscape through programs such as the *Dominican Experience* (CFR 4.7). The *Dominican Experience* is integral to the quality, integrity, and distinctiveness of the Dominican degree. Through interviews with various campus group, the team noted faculty and staff members’ engagement in the development of the Dominican experience and the ILOs (CFR 4.6).

Final determination of compliance with the Standards rests with the Commission.

**Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees (CFRs 1.2, 2.2-4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3):** Dominican has spent the last two years in a concerted effort to review, reflect on, and revise its overall learning outcomes, modeling them after the AACU’s *Essential Learning Outcomes* as well as including WSCUC’s five core competencies in their articulation. The university has also used the *Degree Qualifications Profile* to guide the alignment of these outcomes across degree levels, particularly baccalaureate to master’s levels. Dominican used multiple stakeholder groups throughout this process, seeking feedback from across the campus. This process led to agreement on four major learning outcomes (ILOs):

- Exploration and Acquisition of Knowledge
- Practice of Civic Engagement
- Development of Intellectual, Professional, and Artistic Skills
- Cultivation of Well-Being
Each of these major outcomes was broken open into more specific learning outcomes. For instance, the Development of Intellectual, Professional, and Artistic ILO is comprised of critical thinking and creative expression, qualitative and quantitative reasoning, effective communication, and information literacy. The four ILO’s are made visible on the university’s website and each syllabus is required to indicate which ILO(s) is/are relevant to the course.

The general education program was redesigned to incorporate the new learning outcomes and presented to the Faculty Forum in the fall of 2017. Faculty voted 82 to 15 to approve the revisions. The next step is for each of the majors and minors to redesign their courses to incorporate the ILOs and to realign their curricula from 3-unit to 4-unit courses. This process was begun in the spring semester of 2017-18 and will continue until all departments have submitted their courses and programs for review and approval. The goal is to institute the revised general education, majors and minors in the fall of 2019.

As part of its on-going, and continuous improvement approach, all departments submit an assessment report each year and undergo a program review which includes external reviewers every 6 years. Following the program review the department submits a MOU that serves as its focus for assessment in the next years. Since the university is in the midst of incorporating the new ILOs and what is described below as the Dominican Experience, most departments have not recently undergone a program review process but a schedule for these reviews is provided. To ensure the integrity and quality of the degree, the university has also instituted what it calls the Dominican Experience, which is comprised of four core elements: integrative coaching, a digital portfolio for each student, integration of community engagement into the curriculum and co-curriculum, and signature work. How each of these core areas will be implemented is determined by existing shared governance processes and procedures.
Since the identification of the *Dominican Experience*, each of the core elements has, to varying degrees, been initiated and in some cases fully implemented. *Integrative Coaching*, which complements the existing advising system, is undergoing a pilot this academic year, 2017-18. It is envisioned that the coaching model will, after review and formal approval of the faculty, be instituted campus-wide next year. The *Digital Portfolio* was introduced to all incoming first-year students in the fall of 2016. Currently, academic departments and programs have been invited to pilot digital portfolios this year. *Community Engagement* is being supported by the development of the Center for University Partnership and Community Engagement as well as by an advisory council, begun in 2016, comprised of faculty from all three schools. Their work is largely at the planning stage. On the other hand, *Service Learning and Global Learning* have been distinctive programs at Dominican for many years and the university has a well-documented record of assessment and program review for each. Finally, *Signature Work* which is defined as a work of significance that necessitates the integration of multiple learning skills and is driven by a student’s own inquiry, has been a part of many academic programs. A survey of department chairs showed that over 90% of programs currently require students to complete a signature work product before graduation.

The university recognizes that a major area of development as it goes forward, is connecting the *Dominican Experience* with Graduate Programs. Work on this effort has been scheduled to begin this academic year (2017-18). As indicated above, Dominican is also aware that it needs to fully implement the plans it has been making to establish the Dominican Experience across all undergraduate programs.

**Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)**
In March 2016, Dominican completed its development of institutional learning outcomes (ILOs). Because of its comprehensive curricular revision and newly approved process, the university is now well-poised to construct a clear picture of student learning from the time of entry through graduation (CFR 2.2). Described in more detail elsewhere in this report, the *Dominican Experience* will provide clear evidence of student learning assessments through the critical processes of signature work, digital portfolios, integrative coaching and community engagement once it is fully in place.

There has been widespread involvement of faculty, staff, and students in the development of the ILOs (e.g., on site interviews, faculty and staff workshops, student focus groups). Broken down into four broad goals, the ILOs cover: exploration and acquisition of knowledge, practice of civic skills and social responsibility, development of intellectual, professional, and artistic skills, and cultivation of well-being. The goals clearly provide the framework of twelve intended learning outcomes for all students that are well-aligned with the mission of the university (CFR 1.2). Additionally, the specific learning outcomes include the five core competencies and many of the other recommended areas within the standard; the curricular alignment process just recently completed and the revised program review process will ensure that learning is achieved at the appropriate performance levels throughout the institution. The revisions will help to ensure critical consistencies and integration to render this level of analysis possible (CFRs 2.2.a, 2.2.b, 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3).

Dominican has recently approved (fall 2017) a new general education core curriculum that is broadly aligned with the new ILOs and is expected to be fully implemented by fall 2019. As evident in the self-study and onsite documentation, this curricular revision represented a critical shift from course-requirement completion to outcomes-based general education program.
Prior to the revision, Dominican identified areas of knowledge, intellectual skills, Catholic heritage foundations, and an emphasis on citizenship and sustainability. A curricular map of the general education program showed clear alignment between the general education areas and the WSCUC core competencies (self-study, p. 28). Students completed a series of courses at lower division and upper division levels that were intended to prepare them generally for citizenship and for specialized work in their majors (e.g., writing, information literacy, and quantitative reasoning at lower and upper division levels). Assessment plans and results of assessing student learning outcomes for the existing general education requirements are provided. However, as we have indicated, the general education program has largely collected assessments based on course requirements instead of an integrated curriculum fully aligned with the ILOs. Thus, there are accounts of students’ achievement levels in specific courses; outcomes in general education courses span several competencies (e.g. critical thinking, writing, etc.) but consistency in assessment and reporting of results is unclear (e.g., consistency across assignments, rubrics and other measures, results reporting). Additionally, the technology infrastructure poses significant challenges in summarizing assessment results and closing the loop across the curriculum.

Dominican has undertaken a thorough review of its general education program that accompanied the comprehensive curriculum revision. As part of the review, the institution is revisiting the alignment of outcomes, assignments, and measures and developing new tools where needed. Moreover, they understand that it is critical to systematically involve and report out to the faculty analyses and results in ways that demonstrate that the alignment task was a success within the general education program. Certainly, significant faculty development and celebrations, such as the Assessstival, will provide an improved understanding of where students
stand when they graduate and how the Dominican Experience has helped them achieve their ILOs in the general education program as well as their majors.

Dominican’s graduate programs have also completed curricular alignment with the ILOs. Within each graduate program, there is clear evidence of learning outcomes articulated at the graduate level (CFR 2.2.b). Onsite examination and self-study documentation demonstrated that student learning assessments are collected and analyzed at key formative and summative levels; there are student support mechanisms in place to ensure student progress (CFR 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7).

**Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention, and graduation (CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 2.13):**

In 2014, Dominican created the Institutional Research Office. Two highly skilled members (equaling 1.75 FTE) staff the office. Through interviews with various groups on campus, the team noted an aging data enterprise system and heavy workload hinders the office from providing additional value-added consulting services and analyses to faculty, staff, and administrators.

The Institutional Research Office regularly tracks and shares graduation and retention data (CFR 1.2). The data are compared to peer, competitor, and aspirational institutions (CFR 4.1). The data are also appropriately disaggregated; however, in some cases small data sets make meaningful analyses difficult (CFR 2.10). Reports are publicly available on the university’s website (CFR 4.2). The Institutional Report reported on the Graduation Rate Dashboard (GRD) and noted the dissimilar IPEDS and GRD rates (6-year graduation rate of 72% and absolute graduation rate of 57%). The team and the Institutional Research Office discussed the rates as well as the usefulness of the GRD given IPEDS data represents 75% of the students and agreed with the Institutional Research Office’s conclusion that given the current mix of first-time
freshmen and transfer students, the IPEDS graduation and retention data are appropriate student success metrics for the institution.

The Institutional Report noted improvements in graduation rates, beginning with the fall 2008 cohort. The report and interviews with campus groups corroborated the actions taken to improve the graduation rates. The team felt that in addition to monitoring the GRD, as it is charged to do, the Graduation and Retention group should take a deeper examination of the dip in 6-year graduation rate for the fall 2007 cohort (49%) and the subsequent improvement beginning with the fall 2008 cohort (56%) to better understand the dramatic turn and the implications.

At Dominican, student success is shaped through the both the academic curriculum and co-curricular programming. To meet the changing higher education environment and to create a distinctive degree, Dominican developed the *Dominican Experience*, which incorporate ILOs that clearly reflect the institution’s values (CFR 1.2). All academic and co-curricular program outcomes are mapped to the ILOs (CFR 2.3).

The team reviewed the Division of Student Life’s assessment reports and plans. Although there is a comprehensive set of assessment practices in place, the division is in the beginning stages of implementation. This is in large part due to changes in student life personnel. It was clear to the team that with the stabilization of leadership, intentional efforts are being made to develop assessment capacity and create a culture of evidence in the Division of Student Life (CFR 4.5, 4.6). For example, in additional to full-day assessment workshops led by the dean and associate dean of student life, assessment has been incorporated into the agenda of the student life staff meetings. The team expects student life to continue building capacity in the areas of assessment and program review.
Although assessment and program review are nascent, student life utilizes data to support decision making (CFR 4.3). For example, in fall 2017 Dominican created the CARE Team, a cross-functional team designed to support students. To understand better the meaning of “student support,” the Student Satisfaction Inventory survey results were supplemented with supplemental student focus groups.

**Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1-4.7):**

Dominican University has demonstrated quality assurance and improvement in multiple ways, including program review, assessment of learning, and the use of data and evidence.

In 2014, Dominican created an Office of Assessment and hired a full time director of assessment. In addition, Dominican has built institutional capacity in the areas of program review and annual assessment reporting and made progress in building a faculty culture of evidence and inquiry. Dominican appropriately cites examples, such as an annual *Assesstival* and a periodic assessment newsletter, to demonstrate that there is support for quality assurance and a meaningful effort to build assessment into the culture. In the words of the Institutional Report, “assessment has become…a set of nuanced and targeted interventions designed to move each program out of its silo to higher, common ground” (p. 52). The team observed this to be the case, as faculty and program directors indicated a clear connection between program review and larger institutional strategic initiatives (CFRs 4.1, 4.3).

Between 2014 and 2017, Dominican revised its program review process and guidelines. The revised program review manual emphasizes progressive change, the inquiry-based model, a focus on degrees rather than departments, collaborative work by the faculty. The institution mapped all degree programs and developed a series of faculty development workshops as well as
a resource-rich assessment web site. Thus far, eight programs have either completed the program review cycle or have submitted a self-study under the revised guidelines. During the Accreditation Visit, faculty and program directors cited significant examples of the program review process leading to significant curricular or pedagogy change, such as the sequencing of scaffolding of courses, focused pedagogy across different sections of the same required course, and the use of evidence to develop a proposal for a new minor (CFR 2.7).

Beginning in 2014-15, Dominican significantly revised the approach to assessment of student learning. Dominican has formed an Academic Assessment Committee that includes representative faculty from each school and representatives from the Library and the Office of Diversity and Equity. Committee members were charged with policy, connecting with schools and departments, and general review of assessment plans and their connection to program review. Programs were encouraged to use an “inquiry model” for designing and implementing assessment plans. The new approach is now in its third year of implementation. In addition, programs have made a shift toward assessment projects based on individual assignments to ones focusing on a culminating signature work that provides evidence of several key outcomes (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 4.4).

There has been significant progress in recent years around the integration of the Institutional Research Office, the Office of Assessment, and faculty work involving quality assurance, especially using program review as the nexus of data on student learning, student success, and the student experience. Dominican’s Institutional Report is transparent that the institution is still developing connections between program review and strategic planning, and the institution is struggling to connect Institutional Research data with program review (CFRs
4.5, 4.6) and strategic planning. There is currently no standard university-wide platform collecting evidence of student learning tracking the use of results (CFRs 2.7, 4.4).

Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment (CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3-4.7)

Financial Sustainability: As detailed in an earlier section (Component 2) of this report, Dominican has experienced enrollment-related unrestricted operating budget deficits in FY 2015-2016 and FY 2016-2017 with deficits projected for FY 2017-2018 and FY 2018-2019. Actions planned and undertaken in response to these deficits have included the continued refinement of data-informed budget modeling, refinanced long-term debt, a focus on enrollment stability rather than growth, and the development and implementation of the Dominican at 130 strategic plan. The strategic plan includes a focus on student retention and success, new program development, curricular renewal, improved financial aid leveraging, and the pursuit of revenue diversification through the expansion of other revenue sources including the development of non-credit bearing programs, external partnerships, enhanced fundraising, and focused marketing efforts.

The team is concerned that the continuation of unrestricted operating budget deficits may prevent the university from effectively pursuing its mission and fully implementing its strategic plan. This, in turn, will hamper Dominican’s ability to respond to the changing nature of the higher education environment and to remain financially viable (CFRs 3.4, 4.7).

Alignment with Institutional Priorities: Dominican is a mission-driven institution and appears to be very clear about its mission and values (CFR 1.1). This clarity is evidenced by the Dominican at 130 Strategic Plan that is helping Dominican align its mission and commitments with its resources. For example, the team found evidence that the implementation of the
strategic plan is being used by Dominican to prioritize its limited financial and physical resources and to develop new programmatic and revenue sources.

Dominican also has a very clear commitment to its students that is focused on providing a distinctive educational experience with an emphasis on student retention and success. This commitment is evidenced through the ongoing implementation of the *Dominican Experience*, curriculum alignment, and academic program innovation.

The clarity of purpose and commitment, as well as the implementation of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan noted above, should help assure that Dominican continues to align its resources with its institutional priorities so that educational effectiveness and institutional capacity are advanced (CFR 3.7).

Interviews with various members of the campus community and a review of efforts underway to implement the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan and to balance the unrestricted operating budget indicate increasing alignment with the stated mission and values of the institution. It is therefore expected that the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan will continue to act as a framework for the university as it further implements the strategic plan within the bounds of its human, financial, and physical resource limitations (CFRs 3.4, 3.7).

**Higher Education Environment and Institutional Response:** Building on the successes and lessons learned from its 2011-2015 strategic plan, as well as an assessment of the challenges facing higher education nationally and in the San Francisco Bay Area, Dominican utilized a comprehensive, data informed, and inclusive process to develop the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan. The *Dominican at 130* strategic plan (the university will celebrate its 130th anniversary in 2020-2021) is very focused and has three major components. The first component is a distinctive educational experience, known as the *Dominican Experience*, that is focused on
student success, the achievement of four institutional learning outcomes, and the incorporation of four values from the university’s mission statement. The second component is curriculum alignment that will sustainably implement and support the *Dominican Experience* in the curriculum and co-curriculum. The third component is a focus on enrollment management and program innovation.

Interviews with members of the Board of Trustees, members of the senior administration, faculty, staff, and students indicate that the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan has been somewhat effective but has yet to be fully implemented and integrated with all aspects of budgetary and campus space planning. Also, the effectiveness of the plan has yet to be fully assessed (CFR 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, and 4.7). The team does note that ongoing and developing efforts underway to balance and accurately project the unrestricted operating budget provide opportunities for the university to advance the implementation of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan and to further integrate it into the planning processes so that the institution can continue to fulfill its mission within a changing higher education environment (CFR 4.7).

**Component 9: Reflection and plans for improvement**

Because of reflections on its mission and operations guided by the reaccreditation framework, the university identified three major areas of improvement: data management for better planning, alumni giving, and admissions/enrollment and marketing. The report clearly specifies the concerns in each area and notes changes the university intends to make or has recently made that may lead to improvements.

The administration further clarified each of these areas during the visit and updated the actions it is taking to change, shore up, or re-structure each area. For instance, the president and vice president for academic affairs explained that the IR function will move from Public Affairs
to Academic Affairs and report to the academic vice president. Since the academic side of the college is the major “consumer” of developed and analyzed by the information provided by the IR Department, the shift in reporting should result in better direction of the department’s work.

The team also learned of staffing changes in admissions and enrollment management that have already resulted in changes that the senior leadership believe will result in better recruitment and higher enrollments.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

The team would like to commend Dominican University of California for the following:

1. A focused strategic plan, *Dominican at 130*, that positions Dominican to continue its mission in a challenging and changing higher education environment (CFR 4.7).
2. A distinctive model, *The Dominican Experience*, with four strategies that provide undergraduate students with curricular and co-curricular integration based on high impact practices (CFRs 2.1, 2.3, 2.5).
3. A comprehensive set of assessment and program review practices that are at the beginning stages of implementation (CFRs 2.7, 4.1, 4.3).
4. The refinancing of long-term debt with cost savings and more favorable terms (CFR 3.4).
5. An independent, engaged, supportive, and committed Board of Trustees that is focused on best practices including revised bylaws, term limits, and self-evaluation (CFR 3.9).
6. A collaborative, dedicated, and qualified faculty and staff (CFR 3.1), who have supported the university as it has experienced financial stresses and have energetically engaged in
the strategic planning process to advance the mission, vision, and values of the university (CFR 3.1).

7. A stable, qualified academic and administrative leadership team that clearly supports and effectively directs the new strategic directions (CFRs 3.6, 3.7).

**Recommendations**

The team would like to recommend the following:

1. To assure the university’s long term financial viability, Dominican should strive to advance the timelines to balance its unrestricted operating budget, implement its strategic plan, and address deficiencies in facilities and technology infrastructure (CFRs 3.4, 3.5).

2. The university should continue to enhance its continuous planning efforts including formalizing processes and timelines for the assessment of the *Dominican at 130* strategic plan (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

3. To acknowledge and retain its valued faculty and staff resources, Dominican should advance efforts to achieve desired staffing levels, to meet compensation targets for faculty and staff, and to provide appropriate levels of faculty and staff development (CFRs 3.1, 3.3).

4. The university should provide increased level of authority and support to the Office of Diversity and Equity and the Diversity Action Group and advance the development, implementation, and assessment of a diversity plan (CFR 3.1).

5. Dominican should continue to build and maintain a robust system for tracking progress for the institutional learning outcomes in curricular programs from general education through the majors and in co-curricular programs (CFRs 2.2a, 2.11).
6. The university should further support institutional research and technology to provide high quality data and analysis for program review, assessment, and institutional effectiveness (CFRs 4.2).

7. Dominican should closely monitor the impact of the transition from a three-unit to four-unit curriculum through quality assurance and fiscal budget processes (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 4.1)
APPENDICES
The report includes the following appendices: attach checklists for each of the area
A. Federal Compliance Forms
   1. Credit Hour Review
   2. Marketing and Recruitment Review
   3. Student Complaint Review
   4. Transfer Policy Review
B. Distance Education Report
C. Off-site Review Report
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy on credit hour</td>
<td>Is this policy easily accessible? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, where is the policy located?</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/registrar/academic-information/credit-hour-policy">http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/registrar/academic-information/credit-hour-policy</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour</td>
<td>Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet</td>
<td>Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments: Term schedules attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses</td>
<td>How many syllabi were reviewed? 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</td>
<td>What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? ☑ AA/AS ☑ BA/BS ☑ MA ☐ Doctoran</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)? Creative Writing, Education, English, Religion, and Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated)</td>
<td>How many syllabi were reviewed? 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</td>
<td>What kinds of courses? Clinical, Independent Student, and Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>What degree level(s)? ☑ AA/AS ☑ BA/BS ☑ MA ☐ Doctoran</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)? Nursing, Environmental Ethics, and Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)</td>
<td>How many programs were reviewed?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What kinds of programs were reviewed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What degree level(s)? ☑ AA/AS ☑ BA/BS ☑ MA ☐ Doctoran</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What discipline(s)?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? ☑ YES ☐ NO</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/catalog">http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/catalog</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.dominican.edu/academics/majorsprograms">http://www.dominican.edu/academics/majorsprograms</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review Completed By: Carole L. Huston
Date: April 5, 2018
## Marketing and Recruitment Review Form

Under federal regulation*, 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: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Federal regulations** | Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?  
☑ YES ☐ NO  
Comments:  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions/global-education/internationalstudents |
| **Degree completion and cost** | Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree?  
☑ YES ☐ NO  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions/graduate/programs  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions/adult-degree-completion  
http://www.dominican.edu/academics/majorsprograms |
| | Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree?  
☑ YES ☐ NO  
Comments:  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions/aid/costs2 |
| **Careers and employment** | Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable?  
☑ YES ☐ NO  
http://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/current/studentlife/careerservices |
| | Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable?  
☑ YES ☐ NO  
Comments:  
Dominican University of California is required to provide information on placement of and types of employment obtained by its graduates. This information can be obtained by Career Services, located on the 3rd floor of the Dominican Heritage and Alumni House.  
A site team member reviewed the employment data maintained in Career Services and found it to be very detailed and helpful. |

*§602.16(a)(vii)*

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

Review Completed By: Peter A. Michell  
Date: April 6, 2018
3 - STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy on student complaints | Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints?  
☑ YES □ NO  
If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Is so, where?  
http://www.dominican.edu/admissions/aid/consumerinformation  
http://www.dominican.edu/about/employment/policies  
Comments: |
| Process(es)/ procedure | Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints?  
☑ YES □ NO  
If so, please describe briefly: Described in links below.  
If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure?  
☑ YES □ NO  
Comments:  
http://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/current/studentlife/student-rights-responsibilities |
| Records | Does the institution maintain records of student complaints?  
☑ YES □ NO  
If so, where? Office of Dean of Students ; Office of Human Resources  
Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time?  
☑ YES □ NO  
If so, please describe briefly: See comments below.  
Comments:  
As of Fall 2017, Dominican is using Maxient software to manage and track student complaints. Prior to this year, complaints were maintained and tracked by appropriate offices as follows:  
   o Complaints about a student = Office of Dean of Students  
   o Complaints about faculty, staff, third party (business relationship with the University) = Director of Human Resources  
The individual with primary oversight of these offices monitors complaints to identify any trends of concern in the nature of complaints received. |

*§602-16(1)(ix)  
See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Marlene Lowe  
Date: April 5, 2018
**4 – TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM**

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Reviewed</th>
<th>Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Transfer Credit Policy(s) | Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit?  
☑ YES ☐ NO |
| | If so, is the policy publically available? ☑ YES ☐ NO  
If so, where?  
http://www.dominican.edu/academics/resources/registrar/academic-information/transferpolicies |
| | 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?  
☑ YES ☐ NO |
| | Comments:  
Dominican will grant transfer credit only for college level courses completed at a degree-granting, regionally accredited, post-secondary two-year and four-year college or university and from post-secondary institutions which are candidates for accreditation (as defined in the Handbook of Accreditation, WASC Senior College and University Commission Credit will also be accepted for courses taken at accredited institutions by the Ministry of Education in the home country. Courses from non-accredited institutions are not transferable to Dominican. The University accepts units from other institutions under the guidelines outlined by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) and the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Generally, Dominican accepts courses that are transferable to the CSU or UC systems. |

*§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 WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Carole L. Huston  
Date: April 5, 2018
Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: Dominican University of California
Type of Visit: Accreditation Visit
Name of reviewer/s: Marlene Lowe and Carole Huston
Date/s of review: April 3-6, 2018

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: Low-residency Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (low-residency MFA)
   Course: Mentorship 1: Creative Non-fiction, Narrative Medicine Syllabus
   Course: Residency 1: Creative Non-fiction, Narrative Medicine Syllabus

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)
   The Low-residency MFA was approved by WSCUC through a substantive change application in August 2016. The first cohort of five entered in June 2017. The program is delivered through distance education in fall and spring terms and residencies in summer and winter sessions. The program is delivered through the university’s learning platform Moodle. Supplemental platforms include Skype for workshops and Google docs for 1:1 writing support. It should be noted that the June 2017 cohort was from the local area, and requested the workshops be conducted in person rather than via Skype, to which the program obliged. The university is aware that as the program grows to include students from outside the area, it will need to utilize online platform for workshops.
   The program is highly individualized and includes an intense mentoring component. Currently the student faculty ratio of 5:1. The program director’s vision is to grow future cohorts to 15 students while maintaining the 5:1 student faculty ratio. There appeared to be some discrepancy between the administration and program administrators regarding enrollment targets for the Low-Residency MFA program in Creative Writing.

3. Nature of the review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)
   The team reviewed the following materials:
   • Syllabi: Mentorship 1: Creative Non-fiction, Narrative Medicine and Residency 1: Creative Non-fiction, Narrative Medicine
   • Program assessment plan
   • Student and program learning outcomes rubrics
   • Program website

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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.
- Moodle, the learning management system

**Persons interviewed:**
- Joan Baranow, Program Director
- Laura Stivers, Dean of School of Liberal Arts and Education

## 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 program is aligned with the university’s values of study, reflection, and community. During the interview conducted with the dean of the division and the program faculty director, both expressed concern over their belief that the vision for the program was to grow enrollment to 40-50 students per cohort. As a response to this report, the administration clearly indicated, &quot;There is no desire or projection on the part of the administration to have more than 15 students per cohort in the MFA program. This number is understood to be the program’s goal and is incorporated into all planning documents. It is not clear where this misunderstanding originated but it will be addressed&quot; (quote from corrections-of-error response).</td>
<td>The program and the administration will work to reconcile any perceived differences regarding the projected enrollment.</td>
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<td><strong>Connection to the Institution.</strong> How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?</td>
<td>Students do not appear to be actively socialized into the university in part because of its low residency requirement and because of the newness of the program.</td>
<td>The program administrators and faculty should engage with higher level administration to ensure that students in this program are fully integrated.</td>
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<td><strong>Quality of the DE Infrastructure.</strong> 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?</td>
<td>The program utilizes Moodle, the learning platform. Currently, students email work to faculty mentors. The program intends to move away from this to having all students utilize Turnitin. Currently, instead of using Skype for distance workshop, workshops are face-to-face (at students’ request) and follow up consultations and advising occurs through Skype.</td>
<td>Thus far, the program has made existing technological systems and support work. However, as the program grows, faculty will need to engage more at a distance through Moodle and other technologies (current students are relatively local). They will also have to consider how to provide students with additional training and support.</td>
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<td><strong>Student Support Services:</strong> 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?</td>
<td>The program is designed to be high-touch with the faculty mentor as primary institution point of contact for support services. Currently, faculty mentors are able to provide student support services or direct students to the appropriate service as needed.</td>
<td>As the program grows outside of the region, faculty advisors and administrators should closely monitor how support services are addressing needs of students at a distance.</td>
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<td><strong>Faculty.</strong> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the 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?</td>
<td>Three full-time faculty members serve as faculty mentors. The faculty members actively participate in assessment. They have created rubrics and in the summer intend to norm and apply the rubrics to the first cohort’s work to check for alignment and consistency.</td>
<td>The faculty’s assessment of the program’s curriculum should assist in identifying any issues that have arisen in regard to faculty development needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum and Delivery.</strong> 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? (Submit credit hour report.)</td>
<td>The faculty members created the program, from learning outcomes and syllabi review to assessment plans. They consulted with program administrators from other universities to determine an appropriate program curriculum and delivery for a distance program.</td>
<td>Follow through with academic program review should help to determine the program’s strengths and challenges.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Retention and Graduation.</strong> 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 other institutions’ online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?</td>
<td>The first cohort entered June 2017 so no year-to-year retention or graduation data are available.</td>
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<td><strong>Student Learning.</strong> 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>An assessment plan has been developed. Faculty mentors will score artifacts using rubrics. The first round of assessment will take place summer 2018.</td>
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<td><strong>Contracts with Vendors.</strong> 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>Moodle, the learning management system, is supported by the university.</td>
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<td>Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution’s quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?</td>
<td>The program has an assessment process/plan in place. It will be implemented in summer 2018.</td>
<td>The team expects assessment reports will be made available.</td>
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</table>
Institution: Dominican University of California
Type of Visit: Accreditation Visit (AV)
Name of reviewer/s: Christopher Sindt and Peter Michell
Date/s of review: April 3, 2018

A completed copy of this form should be appended to the team report for all visits in which off-campus sites were reviewed1. One form should be used for each site visited. Teams are not required to include a narrative about this matter in the team report but may include recommendations, as appropriate, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the team report.

1. Site Name and Address
   
   LINES Dance Center
   26 Seventh Street
   San Francisco, CA 94103

2. Background Information (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a branch campus standalone location, or satellite location byWSCUC)

The Alonzo King LINES Ballet BFA at Dominican was conceived in 2005 and enrolled its first cohort in fall 2006. The partnership was initiated by Dominican to increase the diversity among degree majors. Students participating in stand-alone programs at LINES Ballet Center also expressed desire for expanded educational opportunities under the LINES umbrella, the opportunity to earn a college degree in dance. A partnership with Dominican offered LINES a clean slate to build a program and curriculum based on its values and philosophies.

The program launched with 11 students, a class which eventually grew to 14. Enrollment has fluctuated slightly over the years, but has generally averaged 10-12 per cohort, with the smallest being 8 and the largest being 16. There are currently 44 dance majors in four cohorts. To date, the program has graduated 85 dance major students.

The foundation of the dance curriculum is classical ballet, with a progressive viewpoint rooted in the philosophy of Alonzo King. Creative investigation is emphasized throughout the 4 years, and individual artistry nurtured. The dance curriculum combined with the comprehensive liberal arts education and social values of the Dominican tradition is designed to generate thoughtful, self-aware and generous artists.

Alonzo King LINES Ballet and the LINES Dance Center have been housed in the Odd Fellows building in San Francisco since 2001. Founded in 2006, the LINES Ballet BFA at Dominican offers the majority of its studio courses at the LINES Dance Center. It is the only program connected with Dominican at this site. There are currently 44 students enrolled in the BFA program, 1 full-time faculty member, 1 program director, and a pool of 40 adjunct faculty members.

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

1 See Protocol for Review of Off-Campus Sites to determine whether and how many sites will be visited.

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<tr>
<th>Lines of Inquiry</th>
<th>Observations and Findings</th>
<th>Follow-up Required (identify the issues)</th>
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<tr>
<td>For a recently approved site. Has the institution followed up on the recommendations from the substantive change committee that approved this new site?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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| Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFRs 1.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1) | The BFA in Dance program is housed in the Dominican’s School of Liberal Arts and Education and the division of Music, Dance and the Performing Arts.  
The program provides an integrated student experience of off-campus dance education and on campus coursework leading to BFA degree, consistent with Dominican’s commitments to the arts.  
The dance curriculum combined with a comprehensive liberal arts education and social values of the Dominican tradition result in thoughtful, self-aware and generous artists.  
The site is managed in a joint agreement between Dominican and the LINES Dance Company in San Francisco. A Dominican administrator routinely serves on LINES Board-current incumbent is AVPAA and Dean of the Dominican Experience. |                                          |
| Connection to the Institution. How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFRs 1.2, 2.10) | Senior projects and other performances occur on campus in a regular schedule. The program presents between 8 and 12 performances on campus each year, with additional performances in various venues in San Francisco. Angelico Concert Hall is the sole venue for performance on the Dominican campus.  
All students participate in GE and elective courses on campus and participate in clubs and other co- and extra-curricular activities.  
As a supplement to onsite advising and a component of the “Dominican Experience,” Dance students have a dedicated “integrative coach” who guides their experiences and connects them with campus resources and communities.  
Dominican provides twice per day bus service between its campus in San Rafael and LINES Dance Center in San Francisco. |                                          |
| Quality of the Learning Site. How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFRs 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 3.5) | While Dominican had a dance program before the LINES agreement, there were no dance facilities on campus in 2005, when preliminary plans were underway for the partnership. As part of the agreement, it was understood that the studio dance courses for the BFA in Dance would take place at the LINES Dance Center in San Francisco. To supplement those facilities, a partnership was formed with Marin Ballet, a private children’s ballet school located just a few blocks from the Dominican campus.  
The BFA in Dance has rental agreements with the LINES Dance Center for approximately 42 studio hours per week, and with Marin Ballet for 26 studio hours per week. All studios in both locations have sprung floors with Marley (a specialized dance surface), mirrors, barres, pianos and sound systems. At both facilities the BFA use extends beyond just the studios themselves to include locker rooms and meeting rooms. In addition, the Program Director and Program Assistant have office space at the LINES Dance Center and they maintain the programs extensive costume collection there. |                                          |
In 2011, the dance program was granted the former Pennafort Chapel space (at Dominican) to convert to a small practice studio. A sprung floor and Marley were installed, however there are no barres or mirrors or sound system. This space has proven to be an invaluable resource for student research and creative exploration.

While Pennafort is too small at 28' X 40' to accommodate regular BFA dance curriculum classes (per NASD guidelines), it facilitates Senior Project and Senior Solo rehearsals, which were formerly conducted at extra expense at Marin Ballet. Pennafort also provides practice space for faculty, understood to be a necessity in the discipline.

The LINES Dance Center includes ample space for learning and opportunity for frequent direct contact between faculty and students in private and public spaces.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Student Support Services.</strong> What is the site’s capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFRs 2.11-2.13, 3.6, 3.7)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Support Services are provided on the Dominican campus. Students are not at the Dance Center every day of the week and can therefore access services on campus as needed. Dance students have a dedicated integrative coach, a dedicated advisor, and specialized library support. Dance students report high levels of satisfaction with these services in surveys.</td>
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<th><strong>Faculty.</strong> Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty is involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFRs 2.4, 3.1-3.4, 4.6)</th>
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<td>Teaching is delivered by the Artistic Advisor to the BFA Dance Program and by adjunct instructors. The Artistic Advisor is the sole full-time faculty. His position is unique and covered under an MOU between LINES Dance Company and Dominican. All other dance faculty are adjunct. The Program Director is categorized as full-time Dominican staff member, although she teaches and supervises rehearsals in addition to administering all operational aspects of the program. Currently there is a pool of 40 adjunct dance faculty who are assigned classes according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The approach to selecting adjunct faculty for the BFA in Dance Program has consistently been based on professional standards and therefore most of the instructors are specialists, experts, and very active professionally who also receive points as a “professor of practice” under the seniority tier and step structure of the CBA. Adjunct faculty are evaluated under the articles of the CBA. Full-time faculty are evaluated under the terms of the Faculty Handbook and Term Faculty Policy; staff program directors are evaluated under the Employee Handbook. Adjuncts participate in curriculum development in onsite meetings and conduct program-level assessment with the program director.) All faculty complete written evaluation forms for each student each semester. BFA Dance Program course content is collaboratively determined between faculty and program director.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Curriculum and Delivery.</strong> Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on</th>
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<td>New, and changes to, courses are submitted through the approved Curriculum, Education, and Policy Committee (CEPC) template and follow the CEPC guidelines. Studio dance courses are, by nature, different than lecture courses. Curriculum design and course content is largely determined through collaboration with faculty and the program director as the agreement</td>
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between Alonzo King LINES Ballet and Dominican indicates that LINES Ballet designs the dance curriculum and selects the dance faculty.

Adjunct faculty teaching theory courses are equally active as scholars, researchers and authors. The connection to the current professional dance community through faculty is very important to the dynamism and relevance of the curriculum, as well as to the professional networking opportunities available to students and alumni.

This unique, accredited four-year degree program combines a rigorous academic and artistic education. The foundation of the dance curriculum is classical ballet, with a progressive viewpoint rooted in the philosophy of Alonzo King. Creative investigation is emphasized throughout the 4 years, and individual artistry nurtured.

**The Conservatory Model**
The applied dance curriculum for the BFA in Dance major uses the conservatory model of training. Students move through the curriculum as a cohort, e.g., freshman ballet, sophomore ballet. This structure remains the same throughout the four years of the program with faculty adapting course content to the increasing skill level, and particular needs of each cohort.

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<tr>
<th>Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFRs 2.6, 2.10)</th>
<th>Dance students graduate at rates comparable to Dominica as a whole (57.1% 4-year graduation rate in 2016 to 58%). Retention rates over the last five years have ranged from 100% to 91% -- higher the university average (83%). Diversity issues center on under-representation of male students. Program Review Diversity section</th>
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<tr>
<td>**Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus? (CFRs 2.6, 4.6, 4.7)</td>
<td>The program initiated a formal cycle of assessment and reporting based on program outcomes in AY 16-17. Goals of next cycle include: attention to norming, more explicit rubrics, and aggregate data for a program-level portrait of achievement. The program is currently undergoing its self-study report phase as part of the university’s program review cycle. Assessment is embedded at the instructor/student level by developing several evaluation forms that serve as an artifact and documentation of the assessing done over the course of the semester. Each evaluation form is tailored to the course/discipline and includes a rubric of technical, artistic and learning skills categories with numerical values for “Excellent” to “No Progress.” There is an area for comments where more nuanced and personal information can be given. Evaluations are given for all dance courses at the end of each semester. <strong>Senior Project Process</strong> Each senior dance major is responsible for fully producing a choreographic work. During the first weeks of the fall semester they audition dancers in the program and follow-up by conducting a creative process for a finished work performed in February. They are responsible for the direction, scheduling, artistic concept, choreographic material, music choice, costuming, lighting design, participation in peer feedback groups, and technical assistance backstage. Following each performance is a question and answer session during which the senior class shares their points of departure, their</td>
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challenges and surprises during their creative processes, and how they have grown because of the experience. The mentor serves as moderator for the discussion and facilitates audience questions and responses.

Student Learning – Survey Data
About 90% of students report that they are advancing in their achievement of the stated learning outcomes of the program. The responses reflect where students are in the program’s sequence: 3 of the respondents who indicated a lack of confidence in launching their careers were freshmen (n=7), only 1 of the 9 responding seniors felt this was the case.

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<th>Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution’s quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFRs 4.4-4.8)</th>
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<tr>
<td>All Dominican University policies and processes apply to the program. The program is currently undergoing its first self-study begun in late 2016 based on DUC Program Review Manual and findings for educational effectiveness in is progress.</td>
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<td>Annual reporting based on direct assessment of learning will more systematically address the effectiveness issue in coming iterations.</td>
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<td>The December 2017 survey was completed by 28 students from all cohorts (a 61% response rate and a valid snapshot of general student sentiment in the program). The February 2018 focus group was attended by 15 or 30% of current enrolled students (no seniors were present).</td>
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Highlights included:
- the connection of a degree program with a professional dance company;
- the very high quality of instruction and personal mentoring;
- the possibilities for creating a career as a dance professional;
- the opportunity to participate in a genuine learning community where support is freely offered by peers and others; and
- to make meaningful connections between academic study and development of technical skills.

Opportunities included:
- raising visibility of the program at DUC (e.g., marketing and networking for better attendance at LINES events);
- more focused core curriculum;
- more flexibility in ability to engage professional guest teachers; and
- improved facilities on campus for performance.

Interviews by team members of two cohorts of BFA Dance Program students indicated:
- Some dissatisfaction with on-campus courses as they tend to be offered in the evening and are primarily attended by adult students. Most students in the BFA Dance Program are of traditional college student age.
- The bus service between the LINES Dance Center and the Dominican campus is not always reliable.
- Students awarded work study assignments as part of their financial aid package are not on campus enough to accept the work study assignment.
- Dissatisfaction that other Dominican students do not attend the performances offered by BFA Dance Program students on campus.
- Cafeteria services and lunch-time activities are not available at the LINES Dance Center.

Findings from team interviews with BFA Dance Program students have been shared with appropriate administrators at Dominican.