

Interim Report Form

Please respond to each question. Do not delete the questions. Insert additional pages as needed.

Name of Institution: California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI or CI)

Person Submitting the Report: Dr. Jennifer E. Perry, Interim Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Planning and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)

Report Submission Date: February 26, 2021

Statement on Report Preparation

Briefly describe in narrative form the process of report preparation, providing the names and titles of those involved. Because of the focused nature of an Interim Report, the widespread and comprehensive involvement of all institutional constituencies is not normally required. Faculty, administrative staff, and others should be involved as appropriate to the topics being addressed in the preparation of the report. Campus constituencies, such as faculty leadership and, where appropriate, the governing board, should review the report before it is submitted to WASCUC, and such reviews should be indicated in this statement.

Preparation of the Interim Report began in Fall 2019, led by Dr. Jennifer Perry, ALO and Interim Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Planning. AVP Perry convened a WASC Task Force to begin preparation of the Interim Report. The members of the WASC Task Force included¹:

- Dr. Elizabeth Say, Interim Provost (Fall 2019-Fall 2020)
- Dr. Jennifer E. Perry, ALO and Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and Planning
- Co-Chair (19-20), Dr. Cynthia Flores, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Co-Chair (20-21), Dr. Elizabeth Sowers, Associate Professor of Sociology
- Co-Chair (19-21), Dr. Susan A. Andrzejewski, Interim Dean, Martin V. Smith School of Business & Economics
- Dr. Marie Francois (Fall 2020), Director of University Experience Program, Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor of History
- Dr. Kristen Linton (19-21), Assistant Professor of Health Sciences and Academic Assessment Director
- Dr. Alona Kryshchenko (19-20), Assistant Professor of Mathematics
- Andrew Lorenzana (20-21), Special Projects and Communication Specialist, Office of the President
- Julia Levi (20-21), Donor Relations & Outreach Engagement Specialist, Division of University Advancement

Beginning in Fall 2020, drafts of the Interim Report were reviewed by President Erika Beck, The President's Cabinet, and Academic Deans, as well as Interim President Richard Yao and Provost Mitch Avila who started in their new positions in January 2021.

¹ We thank Dr. Kristin Jordan for her data contributions and verification efforts and Karen Gundelfinger for her logistical support.

List of Topics Addressed in this Report

Please list the topics identified in the action letter(s) and that are addressed in this report.

Following a brief discussion of institutional context, the report includes updates for the following areas as specifically required elements of the Interim Report:

- I. Strategic Planning: In the July 15, 2015 reaccreditation letter to CSUCI, WASC's Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities requested that the University provide "updates on implementation of the 2014-2019 strategic plan, the aligned academic plan, and divisional planning, including faculty hiring."
- II. Graduate Programs: development of a plan for growth in graduate programs aligned with the strategic objectives of the University. As directed by WASC, included in this discussion is a report on the discontinuation of the Collaborative Online Doctorate in Educational Leadership (CODEL) program.

The required elements are discussed in three report sections: Strategic Planning, Faculty Hiring, and Graduate Programs. Also included is one appendix focused on campus responses to COVID-19. All supporting documents are accessible via underlined hyperlinks.

Evident in these narratives is CSUCI's increased investment into developing and implementing strategic planning, data-driven decision-making, social justice, and the overall maturation of the University in the context of major challenges including rapid enrollment growth and crisis events.

Institutional Context

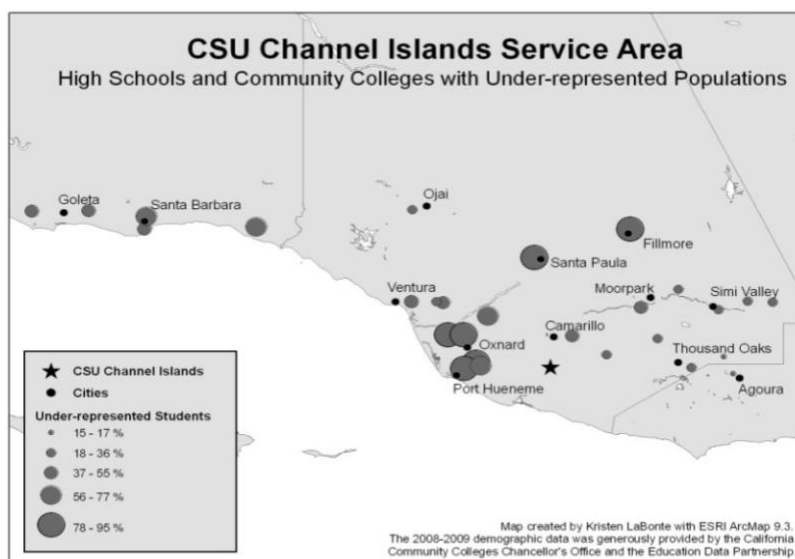
Very briefly describe the institution's background; mission; history, including the founding date and year first accredited; geographic locations; and other pertinent information so that the Interim Report Committee panel has the context to understand the issues discussed in the report.

In 2002, California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) became the 23rd and newest campus of the California State University (CSU) system. CSUCI is the only four-year regional comprehensive public institution in Ventura County, filling a critical need for accessible higher education in the region. The University's mission places students at the center of the educational experience, emphasizing learning within and across disciplines through multicultural and international perspectives, integrative approaches, and community engagement, as represented by the four Mission-Based Centers. CSUCI offers a range of educational programs, including 26 bachelor's degrees, six master's degrees, seven teaching/administrative credentials, and eight certificates in specialized areas of study. CSUCI received initial accreditation from WASC in 2007, for the maximum allowance of seven years, and the University received re-accreditation in 2015 for nine years.

CSUCI is located in Camarillo, California midway between Santa Barbara and Los Angeles. The University serves a diverse, regional population of undergraduate and graduate students in the following service areas: Ventura, Northern Los Angeles, and Southern Santa Barbara counties. The main campus lies on traditional Chumash lands that were subsequently ranched and then housed the *Camarillo State Hospital* from 1936 to 1997. In addition to the main campus in Camarillo, the University has a satellite campus in Goleta (near Santa Barbara), the Channel Islands Boating Center in Channel Islands Harbor (in Oxnard), and a research station on Santa Rosa Island (the Santa Rosa Island Research Station; SRIRS) through an agreement with Channel Islands National Park.

As one of the fastest-growing institutions in the country, with the number of students doubling in a decade, CSUCI served 7,093 students (the full-time equivalent of 6,405.9 students) in Fall 2019 while maintaining a student to faculty ratio of 19 to 1. Nearly 60% of CSUCI

students are the first in their families to attend college, and more than 80% receive financial aid. In 2009, CSUCI received designation by the US Department of Education as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Since receiving the HSI designation, the Hispanic/Latinx student population has grown by 255% from Fall 2009 (pre-HSI status) to comprising 53.1% of the total student population in Fall 2019. In Fall 2019, CSUCI was one of only nine institutions in the nation that received the inaugural Seal of Excelencia from the Washington, DC-based *Excelencia in Education* for the University's commitment to, and success in serving, a majority Hispanic/Latinx student population. Since receiving reaccreditation in 2015, CSUCI has grown and evolved in many ways, while remaining steadfastly committed to access, inclusivity, and academic excellence.



Since the July 15, 2015 reaccreditation letter, there have been several changes in senior administration. On March 9, 2016, the CSU Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Dr. Erika D. Beck as President of CSUCI effective August 2016. She succeeded Dr. Richard R. Rush, who served as the University's Founding President from 2001 through 2016. On October 29, 2020 the CSU Board of Trustees appointed CSUCI President Erika D. Beck as the next President of California State University, Northridge starting January 2021. As a result, Dr. Richard Yao was designated as CSUCI's Interim President effective January 9, 2021, after having served at the Vice President of Student Affairs since 2018.

Response to Issues Identified by the Commission

This main section of the report should address the issues identified by the Commission in its action letter(s) as topics for the Interim Report. Each topic identified in the Commission's action letter should be addressed. The team report (on which the action letter is based) may provide additional context and background for the institution's understanding of issues.

Provide a full description of each issue, the actions taken by the institution that address this issue, and an analysis of the effectiveness of these actions to date. Have the actions taken been successful in resolving the problem? What is the evidence supporting progress? What further problems or issues remain? How will these concerns be addressed, by whom, and under what timetable? How will the institution know when the issue has been fully addressed? Please include a timeline that outlines planned additional steps with milestones and expected outcomes. Responses should be no longer than five pages per issue.

I. Strategic Planning

Since reaccreditation in 2015, CSUCI has made significant progress in implementing University-wide strategic planning in the context of significant change and maturation. Since CSUCI's last accreditation review, executive-level leadership transitions have affected the context within which the University made progress in the area of Strategic Planning. This section is organized historically and by the four major areas of focus within the University's current Strategic Initiatives.

Strategic Plan for 2015 - 2020

In 2013, President Emeritus Rush asked the Provost to convene a University Strategic Planning Committee to revisit the University's initial Strategic Plan and make recommendations to prepare the University and its graduates for the issues, demands, and opportunities of the 21st century. The outcome of this process reaffirmed the University's Mission Statement, refined the University's vision, and outlined three broad Strategic Priorities for the University to address from 2015 through 2020: (1) Facilitate Student Success, (2) Provide High-Quality Education, and (3) Realize Our Future. Shortly after finalizing the University's Strategic Plan, each Division began developing its own Divisional Strategic Plan, in alignment with the 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan. When President Beck arrived on campus in 2016, some Divisions had finalized their plans (e.g., the former Division of Information Technology, Division of Student Affairs), while other Divisions, including Academic Affairs, paused finalizing Division Plans as the University prepared to welcome a new President, along with a new Provost.

Strategic Initiatives 2018 - 2023

Building on the University's Strategic Priorities for 2015 – 2020, President Beck launched a Strategic Initiatives (SI) planning process to guide how the University would move towards achieving its vision for the future. A Steering Committee comprised of stakeholders was convened and began to determine the process and priorities for the campus to achieve the goals outlined in the 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan. In Fall 2017, the planning process proceeded by appointing four subcommittees charged with leading campus-wide discussions to help identify and define strategic initiatives for recommendation to the President: (1) Academic Placement and Support, (2) Capacity and Sustainability, (3) Communicating Clear Curricular Pathways, and (4) Integrative Excellence. President Beck also developed the President's Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence to further CSUCI's commitment to equity and inclusion. In Spring 2018, a draft of the SI plan was distributed to the campus community, which included

recommendations from the SI Steering Committee and Subcommittees, open forums, World Cafés, and feedback from the President’s Listening Tour and White Paper. The finalized version was shared in May 2018, the process leading to a refined campus vision: “CSUCI aspires to be nationally recognized as a leader in providing equitable, affordable, and transformative education that enables social and economic mobility for its diverse student population.”

The Strategic Initiatives for 2018 – 2023, grounded in the 2015-2020 Strategic Priorities, are categorized into four goals to guide how the University’s vision is translated into practice:

1. *Educational Excellence* – Ensuring students graduate with the high-level knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for engaged citizenship and career success.
2. *Student Success* – Ensuring all students progress to degree completion in a timely manner regardless of their background.
3. *Inclusive Excellence* – Fostering a campus culture that advances inclusive excellence.
4. *Capacity & Sustainability* – Taking action to sustain and advance a robust University in an era of declining state support.

In Fall 2018, the Strategic Initiatives Implementation Team (SIIT) was charged with overseeing cross-campus implementation, helping to develop the infrastructure needed to capture and publicly disseminate the University’s SI progress. The SIIT also assisted with the initial review and refinement of the implementation process, while the Strategic Resource and Planning Committee (SRPC) provided the final evaluation and resource allocation for all Strategic Initiative funding requests. In Fall 2019, the monitoring and oversight of SI process was decentralized across Divisions, with the Provost or Vice President overseeing each Division being responsible for managing SI identification, review, and implementation. The SRPC continues to provide final evaluation and resource allocation for all SI proposals.

As highlighted by specific examples below, CSUCI has made significant progress towards the four SI goals. For a full list of project summaries that include their relationships to specific SIs, see the Current Strategic Initiatives Work webpage.

Educational Excellence

In support of educational excellence, CSUCI has utilized HSI grant and Strategic Initiatives funding to support high-impact practices including peer mentorship, learning communities, undergraduate research and service learning, including Student Research, the Santa Rosa Island Research Station, and the CSUCI STEM Program coordinated by the Center for Community Engagement. Strategic investments have also been made into faculty hiring and co-curricular support services discussed elsewhere in this report.

Since 2015, CSUCI has leveraged nearly \$10 million in competitive HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution) grant funding to support the design and implementation of student success and educational excellence initiatives, with grant funding from Project ALAS, Adelante, OLAS, Promesas, and more. These initiatives provide academic support and other key elements of success in navigating the pathways to and beyond the four-year educational system. Included in this work has been an emphasis on peer mentorship, with many Peer Education & Equity Programs (PEEPs) funded through these grants, including STEM tutors through Promesas and both Outreach and In-reach mentors through OLAS. PEEPs help students successfully navigate their college transition, foster a sense of belonging, and promote engagement in campus culture.

PEEP Embedded Peer Mentors (EPMs) are one of the high-impact practices woven together within the First-Year Communities Program – Learning Communities (LCs) and Living-Learning Communities (LLCs). The University supports LLCs focused on HUGS students, specifically from our Latinx and African-American populations. A 2019 study using institutional data from 2011 to 2018 attests to the efficacy of learning communities in supporting academic success. Student participation in a LC/LLC is significantly associated with a higher GPA, fewer DWFIs, more units attempted in the first year, and a higher probability of student retention.

Student Success

Central to CSUCI's student success efforts is a focus on improving retention and graduation rates for all students and reducing inequities in the pathway to degree attainment, particularly for historically underserved, low-income, and first-generation students. Student success at CSUCI is addressed in the University's Strategic Initiatives, along with the California State University (CSU) Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025) objectives: Academic Preparation, Enrollment Management, Financial Support, Student Engagement & Well-Being, Data-Informed Decision Making, and Elimination of Administrative Barriers. CSUCI has made numerous strides in each of these areas since our last WASC accreditation report in 2015. Examples here relate specifically to SI funding and the reallocation of existing funds.

As this relates to WASC accreditation, all academic programs now provide both 2-Year and 4-Year course roadmaps for incoming students, and students have access to an online, interactive degree planner tool. In Fall 2019, the University began to use block scheduling of incoming first-year students and began to implement mandatory academic advising for all incoming first-year students and students involved with TRiO Student Support Services, the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), and Promoting Achievement Through Hope (PATH) cohorts. PEEPs partnered with EOP and TRiO to pilot CSUCI's Peer Mentor Ambassador Program, which gives peer mentors the opportunity to earn a \$3,500 stipend per semester in return for their advising and mentoring fellow students.

Through the development of the Student Success & Equity Gap Data Analytics Tool and the Division of Student Affairs Data Dashboard, the University has expanded our capacity to make data-informed decisions related to how the University improves student success outcomes (e.g., GPA, retention rates, graduation rates, DWF rates) and eliminate equity gaps (e.g., race/ethnicity, Pell-eligible status, first-generation, college readiness). The data from these dashboards have informed more targeted outreach and interventions and guided campus resource prioritization and allocation. In addition, they allow programs to examine cross-utilization of student support services in relation to student success.

In Fall 2019, CSUCI launched Ekhobot, an artificial intelligence chatbot, used to engage and encourage students via text messaging throughout the semester and during challenging times (e.g., current pandemic). The University has also continued to expand its Basic Needs Program, which provides support to students experiencing basic-needs insecurities by addressing food (Dolphin Pantry), housing, and transportation security, along with providing financial assistance in times of dire need².

Inclusive Excellence

CSUCI embraces diversity, equity, and inclusivity as essential to ensuring the success of the University. As discussed earlier, President Beck created the President's Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence to provide a permanent space for dialogue with and guidance for the President on matters of equity, justice, and inclusivity. The Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence helps shape institutional strategy,

² The food pantry served 694 unique students in Fall 2019, and 645 students in spring 2020, 10% of the total student body. In Fall 2019, 91% of students who utilized emergency services persisted to spring 2020 or graduated in Fall 2019.

including the recommendation of equity-based initiatives, policies, and procedures with specific foci on fostering inclusivity, advancing a collegial campus environment, and eliminating equity gaps across campus. In Fall 2018, the University launched a formal Campus Climate Survey as a mechanism to collect and discuss campus feedback on diversity, inclusion, and related campus climate issues to inform the development of a plan to continuously assess campus learning and working environments in order to make ongoing, data-informed improvements as needed. As mentioned in the previous section, CSUCI has created several data-dashboards to ensure that campus stakeholders have timely access to disaggregated data to inform equity-minded decision-making. Funded initiatives to promote inclusivity and diversity across campus include the [Students of Color Mentoring Program](#) and [the Summer SURFer \(Student Undergraduate Research Fellow\) Research Opportunity Program](#). The campus is currently in the process of designing and preparing to execute an Inclusive Excellence Action Plan which synthesizes and focuses a number of efforts to promote racial and social justice at CI (i.e., the President's Commitment to Advancing Racial Justice, Summer 2020; 7-Point Framework, Fall 2020; recommendations for advancing racial and social justice from the President's Advisory Council for Inclusive Excellence, Fall 2020; and other campus initiatives).

Capacity & Sustainability

Given continued reductions in state support to the CSU system, CSUCI has proactively taken measures to ensure these cuts will not hinder the academic quality of our educational programs. We have leveraged technology and auxiliary service areas to support fiscal prudence, as well as reviewed administrative processes and resource allocations to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency. In 2017, the campus hired an [Organizational Effectiveness Specialist](#) to assist in recommending operational improvements to facilitate administrative and student services that are cost-effective, efficient, and strategically position the University for the future. Since then, Organizational Effectiveness programming has freed up approximately \$2 million in resources for reallocation³.

CSUCI has since expanded the role of the [Shared Services Solution Center \(SSSC\)](#) on campus to provide a one-stop-shop and first layer of support services to students, faculty, staff, and community partners. In addition, the DAA [Academic Planning and Budgeting Department](#) has developed the [Academic Affairs Fact Book](#) and Financial Dashboard, which are designed to provide access to data regarding the DAA budget, enrollment, and faculty. They also established procedures to formalize the approval and allocation of faculty reassigned time.

The University has also undertaken several initiatives to enhance philanthropic support and strengthen relationships with alumni. A campaign to increase the University's visibility throughout the region has resulted in increased philanthropic gifts from Santa Barbara by 400% from FY 2017-2018 to FY 2019-2020. Investments have also been made in the creation of philanthropic social media channels, the Culture of Philanthropy Committee, the Class Gift campaign, Adopt-a-Grad Initiative, and the [Dolphin Connect Program](#).

Additionally, the University has undertaken a number of capital projects that will greatly enhance academic and student support space, as well as provide long-term savings and revenue streams⁴. A

³ For example, in collaboration with Extended University, the campus streamlined the faculty and Academic Program Director payroll process. The former payroll process typically took 97 steps and required five different forms, whereas the new process requires 37 steps and two forms, saving the University an estimated 49 labor hours and \$17,000 annually. Within Conference & Events, the University was able to increase outside events by 131% between 2016 and 2019, providing nearly \$1 million in additional revenue.

⁴ After the tragedies our campus experienced in Fall 2018, including the mass shooting at Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks and campus evacuation due to the Hill Fire, we developed a comprehensive plan to improve campus emergency communication and response. A new solar array is being installed in 2021, an important step in the campus conversion to green power and long-term savings.

feasibility study for the Early Childhood Education and Care Center was recently completed. A similar study for a Mixed-Use Capital Project (Yuba and Sage Halls) to create a campus hub is also nearing completion. The campus also continues planning for the Gateway Hall complex that will provide space for instruction, offices, and centralized student support functions including Career Development Services, Enrollment Management, and Academic Advising.

Remaining Challenges to be Addressed in Strategic Planning

Since the WASC's Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities last visit to campus, CSUCI has made significant progress in implementing the University's Strategic Plan. The campus has articulated a plan to achieve the University's vision, linked Divisional progress towards SIs to the annual Budget Planning Cycle, and outlined progress towards them across areas within each Division. Still, the University is actively engaged in continuous improvement efforts to facilitate SI implementation through 2023.

Turnover in the Provost's role has impacted the ability of the DAA to develop a long-term divisional strategic plan that aligns with the University's SIs. However, they do include specific actions such as those related to graduate programs. Relatedly, several of the SIs align with the work happening within the University's Mission Centers that reside within the DAA. However, in the absence of a divisional strategic plan, a unified vision for how the centers collectively contribute to the implementation of the mission is absent, aside from individual centers' strategic plans. With these campus-wide initiatives in place, Provost Avila is positioned to develop an Academic Affairs Strategic Plan, one of the priorities he named in his first month of service at CI.

The decentralized SI process is intentional, with decisions on which proposals move forward for funding consideration, allocation of funds, and strategies for assessing progress varying across Divisions. CSUCI is currently in the process of identifying consistent outcome measures for all SI objectives and action items, with plans to build out a University dashboard to disseminate collective progress.

Strategic Planning Timeline

As a growing University, the campus has embraced an iterative and flexible approach to strategic planning while remaining committed to serving a diverse student population. CSUCI is committed to access, inclusivity, and academic excellence, values that have guided the campus in making progress towards achieving our vision in the context of changing external factors, leadership transitions, and new opportunities. Now that our new permanent Provost has joined us, the DAA will embark on the development of an Academic Affairs Strategic Plan and fleshed-out timeline that aligns with campus-wide initiatives.

II. Faculty Hiring

In the July 15, 2015 reaccreditation letter to CSUCI, WASC's Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities requested that the University "...plan to regularize the creation of new ladder faculty lines and to identify new revenue sources to fund them...." As part of the required elements for CSUCI's Interim Report, faculty hiring is identified specifically in the context of strategic planning. In this section we discuss key themes in the University's recent faculty hiring and retention efforts, specifically with respect to increasing tenure density and faculty diversity.

Tenure Density

In response to declines in tenure density across the CSU system and at the request of the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU), on August 5, 2016, Chancellor Timothy P. White established a task force to examine tenure density across the CSU. The charge of the group was to review data surrounding tenure density and make recommendations on best practices and principles to guide campuses in their efforts to increase tenure density. This action acknowledged the ways in which tenure-track faculty are “strategic asset[s]” (*Access to Excellence* 2008, as quoted in the *Report of the Task Force on Tenure Density in the California State University*, 2018), including promoting student success and performing essential service tasks on their campuses. For example, the ASCSU noted that “tenure-track faculty have played critical roles in recent curricular redesign initiatives to reduce time to degree, develop transfer pathways and improve textbook affordability” (AS-3240-15/FGA). Importantly, scholarly research also demonstrates that lower proportions of tenured/tenure-track faculty are associated with lower rates of student persistence and graduation (Jaeger and Eagan 2011; Ehrenberg and Zhang 2004). Further, the 2018 *Report of the Task Force on Tenure Density in the California State University* argues that, due to their disciplinary expertise, tenured faculty have primary responsibility for two campus service functions. First, peer review in the retention, tenure, and promotion processes and periodic faculty evaluations, and second, participation on faculty search committees. To this, we add a third function, the important work of advising and mentoring students, which is typically performed by tenured and tenure-track faculty. Collectively, these insights demonstrate that improving tenure density positively impacts student success while also improving campus operations.

Key campus recommendations in the report include:

1. Developing a campus-specific tenure density plan that includes targets based on the needs and resources of the campus.
2. Ensuring that when a tenured/tenure-track faculty leaves the campus, their position is replaced with another tenured/tenure-track faculty position.
3. Recruiting and retaining a diverse group of qualified tenured/tenure-track faculty each year that exceeds the number leaving campus.
4. Considering qualified lecturer faculty for tenure-track positions, as appropriate.
5. Monitoring and reporting on these goals (*Report of the Task Force on Tenure Density in the California State University*, 2018).

In September 2018, Provost Geoff Chase convened a Tenure Density Task Force at CSUCI to begin addressing the task force recommendations as well as the concerns identified in the 2015 reaccreditation letter. As evident in CSU-wide reporting (see Faculty Profile for Channel Islands on page 3), tenure density at CSUCI was at a low of 37.0% in 2012, rising to 43.4% as of Fall 2018, a figure that fell far short of the CSU average of 55.9% that year. That calculation, however, incorporates some reassigned (release) time, notably for sabbaticals and chair duties. This results in a lower SFR than the more direct calculation of dividing total FTEF by tenure/tenure track headcount. After the task force report, in May 2019 President Beck committed new resources to tenure track hiring and authorized 21 searches to commence in Fall 2019. Unfortunately, due the pandemic, the CSU Chancellor’s Office instituted a system-wide hiring “chill,” only four (4) positions were filled, and 17 searches were suspended due to deep uncertainty regarding the campus fiscal outlook. Recently, as the statewide fiscal situation has become clearer and more stable, Provost Avila has authorized a limited number of searches to commence immediately and has initiated a process to authorize tenure track searches to begin in Fall 2021, including many of the searches suspended due to the pandemic. At this time, the

Division of Academic Affairs has 29 unfilled tenure track lines, which is sufficient to raise the tenure density to over 50% and close to the system average.

Overall, tenure-track faculty hiring has increased since the last accreditation visit as a result of concerted efforts. Between 2015 and 2019 the total number of tenure-track faculty increased from 122 to 162 and full-time lecturers from 76 to 90 ([Faculty Diversity dashboard](#)). CSUCI's enrollment has doubled in the past 10 years, however, tenure density still remains comparatively low. By Fall 2019 it had risen modestly to 44.2%, resulting in the campus shifting from having the lowest to the second lowest tenure density across the CSU system (by a margin of .01%)—basically not effective net change. Overall, tenure-track faculty growth has only modestly outpaced student growth since 2012, the point of lowest tenure density. Put simply, growth in the student population necessitates increasing the total number of instructional faculty, which dampens the impact of recent tenure-track hires on CSUCI's tenure density.

To better inform decision-making, the DAA has developed and begun to implement standardized ways to document and [track reassigned time](#). Emphasis is being placed on identifying efficiencies in course scheduling and staffing, with the University having developed more robust tools to document and analyze times offered, enrollment caps, and other variables.

Commitment to Faculty Diversity

CSUCI's other focus within the area of faculty hiring since the last accreditation visit has been institutionalizing a commitment to faculty diversity and racial justice. The [student population](#) of CSUCI mirrors the diverse contours of the population of Ventura County. In spite of previous efforts to increase the diversity of the faculty population, with modest increases in the proportions of Hispanic/Latinx and HUGS faculty, CSUCI's faculty is nearly 60% white ([Faculty Diversity dashboard](#)). Considering these discrepancies, alongside CSUCI's official designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, helps to underscore the importance of increasing faculty diversity on campus. Further, Lara (2019) finds that student outcomes improve for everyone, but especially for students of color, in response to increasing faculty diversity, suggesting that CSUCI's commitment to faculty diversity will positively impact student success and CSUCI's progress toward the GI 2025 targets.

In Fall 2019, Dr. Sheila Grant joined CSUCI as the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs, replacing recent temporary holders of that office. This was a crucial step in CSUCI's commitment to faculty diversity in that it brought stability and long-term guidance to Faculty Affairs, which allowed that office to establish consistent and pro-active equity-minded faculty training and recruitment practices at CSUCI. In the area of equity-minded training, CSUCI hosted workshops from the Center for Urban Education (CUE) at the University of Southern California aimed at producing an equity-minded consciousness to undergird recruitment efforts by charging every member of the CSUCI community with taking purposive action to dismantle structural inequalities at the institution. Five key strategies were identified through these efforts: (1) [implicit bias and anti-bias training](#), (2) oversight and certification of applicant pools, (3) diversity advocates on hiring committees, (4) equity-minded position announcements, and (5) equity-minded interview techniques.

Specific actions CSUCI implemented in these areas include equity-minded criteria (e.g., required mentoring statements) in the application process, advertising in diversity outlets, using equity-minded rubrics and interview questions in the hiring process, and engaging in targeted outreach to HSIs and HBCUs. In Fall 2019, the Faculty Affairs office began piloting new Faculty Recruitment Guidelines based on Best Practices for Advancing Faculty Diversity, which aims to significantly enhance the diversity of applicant pools through all stages of the review process. Building on this pilot, the University is in the process of developing a formalized "Faculty Recruitment Guidelines and Best Practices for Advancing

Faculty Diversity” document, which requires all University Discipline Search Committees (DSCs) to use hiring practices that are inclusive and yield high-quality faculty who are committed to serving CSUCI’s diverse student body and contributing to an environment that deeply values inclusivity.

In addition, campus partners have been providing faculty with programming and training focused on equity-minded approaches, with one example being the Community Engagement & Social Justice Faculty Fellows Program facilitated by the Center for Community Engagement.

While the COVID-19 pandemic brought innumerable challenges to all institutions of higher education, including hiring chills across the CSU system, this same time period has also brought issues of racial justice to the forefront of the public consciousness. In Fall 2020, President Beck announced that three faculty searches will move forward to “[i]mplement a cluster hiring of three educators into tenure-track positions with a demonstrated record of success in teaching, research, and/or service with anti-racism and Black/African American populations” (*Racial Justice: A Commitment to Action*). President Beck’s allocation of resources to this cluster hire during this difficult time marks a significant commitment to the ideals of faculty diversity and its relationship to student success, as well as concrete action towards institutionalizing equity and inclusion on CSUCI’s campus.

III. Graduate Programs

In the July 15, 2015 reaccreditation letter to CSUCI, WASC’s Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities requested that the University provide “a plan for the growth in graduate programs aligned with the strategic objectives of the University, and results accomplished from the implementation of that plan.” While the University has made progress towards ensuring the portfolio of graduate programs aligns with the University’s strategic objectives, CSUCI still needs to make substantial progress in this area before submitting materials in preparation for the Offsite Review and Accreditation Visit. This section provides additional context on the University’s progress in this area to-date, discusses the actions taken in support of this recommendation, and provides a timetable, which outlines additional planned actions and outcomes before CSUCI submits materials for our Offsite Review and Accreditation Visit, currently scheduled for Fall 2023 and spring 2024, respectively.

Current Programs

Since inception, graduate education has been integral to CSUCI’s mission. The University currently offers seven graduate programs, with a new Master of Science in Nursing program and an Environmental Technologies Certificate having been launched in Fall 2020. The University also offers four post-baccalaureate credential programs through the School of Education. The University’s graduate programs are diverse, being offered through academic programs in each of the three Academic Schools, and supporting various workforce needs throughout Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. All School of Education graduate and credential programs are supported through state funds, while all other graduate programs are administered through Extended University, which offers traditional and continuing education (also called extended education) programs through the University’s academic self-support unit. The University’s certificate programs are offered through both the University’s state- and self-supported programs.

While graduate, certificate, and post-baccalaureate credential programs are integral to the core academic mission, undergraduate enrollment represented 96.4% of CSUCI’s full-time equivalent (FTE) student population in Fall 2019. Given the University’s rapid growth in undergraduate student

enrollment, coupled with the limited size and scope of existing graduate programs, CSUCI does not currently have a Dean of Graduate Studies or a Graduate Council. All graduate programs that do not have additional program-specific accreditation are required to go through the University's Program Review process. Graduate programs must go through the University Curriculum Process and are governed by Academic Senate policies related to graduate education.

As discussed in the prior section on Strategic Planning, while the University has made significant progress towards translating the University's vision into an actionable plan, the DAA has not developed a specific Academic Affairs Strategic Plan, which would typically include a Strategic Plan for the growth and alignment of graduate programs. Turnover in the Provost's role, with four permanent or interim provosts serving between 2015 and 2020, has impacted the ability of the DAA to develop a long-term strategic plan aligned with the University's broader Strategic Initiatives. However, the Strategic Initiatives do include areas that reference the student body, broadly defined, as well as specific actions related to graduate programs (e.g., Develop Extended University offerings in concert with area businesses, communities, and other regional stakeholders that support economic vitality and civic prosperity). In support of this Strategic Initiative, several Academic Programs, in collaboration with Extended University, developed new courses and programs in response to emerging regional needs (e.g., Amazon Web Services cloud computing training course, a Bilingual Authorization program for credentialed teachers in Ventura County, and a Python Programming Language training course with the Navy).

Since the WASC Accreditation team's visit in 2015, graduate programs at CSUCI have undergone considerable change. Beginning in Fall 2020, the University is now offering a Master of Science in Nursing through Extended University, as well as a new Environmental Technology Certificate through the Environmental Science and Resource Management program. Extended University programs, which represent 88% of the graduate student enrollment at the University, have made progress in developing some of this structure for their graduate programs, designing a clear Academic Program Director Position Description, providing clarity and overseeing the review process for the University's use of Continuing Education Revenue Funds (CERF), and streamlining the Academic Program Director and faculty payroll process.

CODEL Program Discontinuation

In support of recognizing that growth cannot be achieved without carefully assessing program outcomes, the University has committed to continuous improvement in evaluating new program offerings. In 2015, CSUCI, in partnership with California State University, Fresno, launched an online Doctoral program in Education, the Collaborative Online Doctorate in Educational Leadership (CODEL) program. In 2019, with the expiration of the initial Memorandum of Understanding with Fresno State University for the Collaborative Doctorate in Educational Leadership (CODEL), the School of Education at CSUCI conducted 6 focus groups with stakeholders, including external school leaders, CSUCI faculty, CODEL students, and others, to review resource, staffing, and fiscal capacities at CSUCI to sustain participation in the program. In addition to the focus groups, the process for exploring CODEL's future at CSUCI entailed a thorough examination of CODEL's founding documents (bylaws, original MOU, WASC proposal, fiscal records, etc.). This process led campus leadership to determine we would not sign a new MOU and that CODEL would, as the teach-out plan outlined, continue as an online doctoral program at Fresno. As set out in the teach-out plan, existing CSUCI CODEL cohorts became Fresno State doctoral students, with cohorts 2, 3, and 4 completing their EdDs at Fresno State. CSUCI School of Education faculty are continuing to serve on CODEL dissertation committees and are teaching some CODEL courses, as well. Deans from CSUCI and Fresno State conducted Zoom meetings with each of the cohorts

to provide information, answer questions, and respond to concerns students had about the transition. Finally, CSUCI has assisted in transitioning learning supports to Fresno State counterparts in order to minimize any disruption experienced by CODEL students. Subsequently, the University transitioned the functions within the Graduate Studies Center to Academic Advising, as well as the Writing & Multiliteracy Center in the John Spoor Broome Library as part of a strategy of decentralizing support for graduate students.

Academic Master Plan and Future Growth

CSUCI has several graduate programs on the Academic Master Plan. The University has made limited progress in moving these programs from their short- and long-form applications through the curriculum process and into implementation, which has also impacted the number of new proposals that have come forward since the University's last WASC accreditation visit. Several contextual factors have limited the University's progress in launching new graduate programs and developing a Strategic Plan for Graduate Studies at CSUCI:

1. Turnover in the Provost's position, with four Provosts since our last accreditation visit, and a new, permanent Provost joining the campus in spring 2021.
2. Currently, graduate programs and their related support services span the portfolio of all the Academic Deans, with some programs operating through state-funds and others operating through the University's academic self-support unit, Extended University. There is no organizational structure, Senate committee, or primary administrator tasked with overseeing the assessment, growth, and development of Graduate Studies at CSUCI.
3. In Fall 2019, the University moved to a new Curriculum Approval Process, designed to decentralize approval of minor curricular modifications to one of four "Local Curriculum Committees," with the University-wide Academic Policy & Planning Committee (APPC) reviewing and updating the Academic Master Plan on an annual basis, as part of their charge. The new process was designed to expedite curricular modifications, freeing the University-wide committee (the APPC) to focus more of their time and effort on identifying emerging fields and degree opportunities that align with the University's mission. The committee is tasked with providing recommendations on majors, minors, emphases and other programs to the Provost and Academic Senate; and coordinating the introduction of state-support and self-support programs in concert with the Dean of Extended University. However, in the transition from the old curriculum review process to the new, decentralized process, coupled with the implementation of a new curriculum management system (Curriculog) and compliance to a series of executive orders from the CSU Chancellor's Office, the University has experienced a backlog in curriculum review. As of January 2021, the curriculum backlog has been addressed and additional faculty supports have been added, allowing for further clarification of and efficiencies in new processes.

Challenges to be Addressed Regarding the Growth of Graduate Programs

The University has made limited progress in developing a Strategic Plan for Graduate Studies at this time. In addition to the last WASC Team's recommendation that the University develop a Strategic Plan for Graduate Studies, program reviews from recent graduate program-level review also reflect the need to strengthen the administrative, academic, and financial support systems for students and faculty affiliated with graduate programs.

Turnover in the Provost's role has impacted the ability of Academic Affairs to develop a strategic plan for graduate programs. As previously indicated, Provost Avila began his position on January 1, 2021 and has indicated that a comprehensive strategic plan for creating new academic programs will launch in Fall 2021, including the development of additional graduate programs. This includes working to develop the infrastructure, policies, and processes, necessary at this stage in the University's growth to support the existing graduate programs. As part of strategic planning for the DAA, the intent is to develop a fleshed-out timeline and plan for growth in graduate programs beginning in Fall 2021.

Given the rapidly shifting needs in our local workforce, there are numerous opportunities for CSUCI to expand our graduate program offerings to meet the region's needs. A thriving Graduate Studies program will not only support graduate students but also benefit CSUCI in several ways. In addition to providing educational opportunities for students, graduate programs also offer valuable academic and professional development opportunities to enhance undergraduate student and faculty success. Improving support for Graduate Education will raise the profile of graduate programs at CSUCI and enhance the University's image, helping to attract students, faculty, and staff. As part of the University's work to develop a Strategic Plan to guide the expansion of graduate education, CSUCI is committed to maintaining excellence in education, while also being mindful of resource constraints. To that end, the University will explore how to enhance and expand complementary revenue opportunities through offering Graduate Programs through Extended University.

Identification of Other Changes and Issues Currently Facing the Institution

Instructions: This brief section should identify any other significant changes that have occurred or issues that have arisen at the institution (e.g., changes in key personnel, addition of major new programs, modifications in the governance structure, unanticipated challenges, or significant financial results) that are not otherwise described in the preceding section. This information will help the Interim Report Committee panel gain a clearer sense of the current status of the institution and understand the context in which the actions of the institution discussed in the previous section have taken place.

Note: discussed in previous sections.

Concluding Statement

Instructions: Reflect on how the institutional responses to the issues raised by the Commission have had an impact upon the institution, including future steps to be taken.

The CSUCI community is proud of our tremendous accomplishments and growth in a relatively short period of time. As the only public four-year institution in Ventura County, we are proud of our ability to support our local students and communities in profoundly meaningful ways and in the midst of changing circumstances. Through the preparation of this Interim Report, the University has been able to mark significant progress and maturation in some areas, while also acknowledging areas for continued growth. We have highlighted improvements in strategic planning, faculty hiring, and student success alongside our assessment of challenges that have hindered different areas and our plans to address them. Overall, we are making progress on our retention and graduation rates by making data-informed commitments to equity-based programs and practices. Further, some potentially long-term improvements have arisen out of or have been amplified by the pandemic response and the shift to virtual instruction⁵. Grounded in our commitment to equity and social justice, we look forward to furthering our efforts to plan and improve after welcoming a new Provost in January 2021. In spite of recurrent leadership transitions and significant instability in our local and global communities in recent years, CSUCI remains steadfast in its dedication to developing the sound and sustainable structures and processes that are needed for our institutional maturation precisely because these acts will enable us to provide meaningful and developmental educational experiences to our students. The University is fully committed to utilizing this as an opportunity for continuous improvement, which will lay the groundwork for the University to achieve its vision “to be nationally recognized as a leader in providing equitable, affordable, and transformative education that enables and social and economic mobility for its diverse student population.”

⁵ See Appendix: Response to COVID-19.