REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

San Diego Christian College

March 1 – 4, 2016

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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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Reaccreditation Process

San Diego Christian College (SDC) is a private, non-profit college now located in Santee, California in the greater San Diego metropolitan area. SDC was founded as Christian Heritage College in 1970 through the efforts of what is now Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon.

In 2005 the College changed its name to San Diego Christian College as part of its commitment to establish its identity as an independent, faith-based liberal arts college. In January 2014 the College completed an additional step in establishing its identity, moving from its original, church-owned facilities in El Cajon, California to a new campus being developed in nearby Santee.

The College had its initial visit by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 1975 and was granted Candidacy in 1976. Accreditation was granted in 1984, and was followed by numerous challenges and Commission actions requiring several focused and special visits to the College. The College has been placed on Probation twice and was under Show Cause action by the Commission in 2006.

In 2007 changes to the Board of Trustees and the hiring of a full-time president provided a foundation to address the issues identified by the Commission in its 2006 Show Cause action. The College had its last Comprehensive Visit in 2008, which was followed by Special Visits in 2012 and 2014. Both special visits focused on concerns about the Institution's financial sustainability (CFR 3.4), strategic planning (CFR 4.6), and continued progress on assessment of learning. (CFRs 2.3-2.7, 4.1)

The WSCUC Action Letter following the 2014 Special Visit included five specific recommendations relating to: 1) continued attention to graduation and retention efforts, 2)

framing a unified vision for traditional and Adult & Professional Studies (APS) academic programs, 3) expanding assessment efforts to provide for educational quality comparisons, 4) defining assessment of co-curricular programs, and 5) enhancing & integrating technology systems.

Since the 2014 Special Visit, SDC has continued efforts to develop its new Santee campus, as well as expand its degree program offerings. They have recently received WASC Senior College & University Commission (WSCUC) substantive change approvals to offer four new online degree programs (BA in Communication, BA in Psychology, BS in Aviation Management, and BA in Leadership & Justice), as well as a Master of Arts (MA) in Teaching.

The fall 2015 enrollment totaled 917 students which included 483 in traditional programs, 397 in APS Face to Face (F2F) and online programs, and 37 in Education-related programs. This was a decrease from the fall 2014 total enrollment of 966 students.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

SDC's *Institutional Review (IR) Report* was submitted to WSCUC in August 2015 along with a number of supporting attachments. This information was reviewed by the WSCUC-appointed Visit Team in advance of the Off-Site Review (OSR) meeting that was conducted at the WSCUC offices on October 19-20, 2015. The OSR resulted in the Team identifying eight lines of inquiry to pursue further during the Accreditation Visit (AV). In addition, they requested 13 additional documents and items of information, which SDC provided on a timely basis prior to the campus visit.

The Team arrived on March 1, 2016 for consultation and planning. From March 2 – 4, the Team conducted onsite reviews of institutional documents and interviews with administrative personnel, trustees, faculty, staff, and students to further refine its initial findings.

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

SDC submitted an 84 page *Institutional Review (IR) Report* and 51 attachments to support their reaffirmation of accreditation. The *IR Report* followed the eight component organizational structure outlined in the *2013 WSCUC Handbook of Accreditation*. In general, each section of the report addressed the topic areas specified by the *2013 Handbook*. However, at times, it required some effort on the part of the reader to locate key information relating to some of the *2013 Handbook* component requirements. The addition of sub-section titles and other formatting devices could have helped to clarify what topics areas were being addressed within the report components. The *IR Report* included appropriate references to *2013 Handbook* Criteria for Review (CFRs) and provided SDC attachments. The attachments that were originally submitted with the *IR Report,* along with their prompt submission of the additional information requested by the Team, provided useful evidence to support the assertions they made in the various sections of their report.

A. Component 1: Response to Previous Commission Actions

As described earlier, the July 10, 2012 WSCUC Action letter identified three specific areas of recommended action for SDC following their spring 2012 special visit. They included: 1) financial stability; 2) strategic planning; and 3) program review. The *SDC IR Report* outlined a number of steps that had been taken since that time to respond to each of these three recommendation areas. As will be cited in later sections of this Team Report, the Institution has given continued attention in regard to each of these recommendation areas.

The 2014 Special Visit Team Report identified the following five recommendations for action that were documented in the July 7, 2014 WSCUC Action Letter to SDC:

1. Continue attention to graduation and retention efforts. (CFRs 1.2, 2.10, & 2.13)

2. Frame a unified vision for traditional and APS/online academic programs. (CFRs 3.7, 4.1, & 4.4)

3. Expand assessment efforts to provide for educational quality comparisons. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, & 2.7)

4. Define student learning outcomes for co-curricular programs. (CFR 2.11)

5. Enhance and integrate technology systems. (CFR 3.5)

Unfortunately, Component 1 of the *SDC IR Report* did not present a clear, organized description of the actions they had taken to specifically respond to each of these five recommendations. A review of other components of the IR Report provided some insight into steps that SDC has taken to respond to several of these recommendations.

SDC IR Report Section 5 provided some information relating to the focus on improving retention and graduation rates. In recent years SDC has begun focusing on establishing "identity groups" (e.g., sports teams, the DHM Leadership Program, Speech & Debate team), and recruiting students into these groups whenever possible. They believe that connecting students

into a group with like interests can have a positive effect on retention. As it relates to recruitment into athletic teams, they have adjusted playing roster sizes to ensure the students on those teams are able to have reasonable playing time (an earlier dissatisfaction with overly large team rosters). They have also created "student success coaches" for their residential, APS onsite, and online programs to provide students with a more personal connection for mentoring and advising. There have been steps taken to better equip online faculty to engage students in the online environment. Based on the longitudinal summaries of retention and graduation rates provided in the report and appendices, it is unclear to what extent these steps have yet resulted in significant improvements in these areas.

In regard to framing a unified vision for the traditional, APS onsite, and online academic programs, a description about overall meaning and degree expectations for SDC graduates was included as part of Component 3 in the *SDC IR Report*. Discussions with the President, faculty, and the Academic Vice President indicated that there is a shared across-program vision for SDC as expressed in their:

- Highly-visible around campus motto of "Truth, Purpose, Impact."

- "Six big rocks" that were outlined in their Vision 2019.

- Recently developed strategic initiatives (known as their ABCs): "**A**cademically Equipped, **B**iblical Worldview, and **C**ultural Involvement."

Discussions with faculty and academic leadership revealed that SDC has recently taken a number of practical steps to strengthen the working relationship between the traditional and APS programs through means such as:

- Placing three traditional program faculty on the APS Senate.

- APS providing instructional design support to traditional faculty to convert their courses to an online format.

- Increasing the number of traditional faculty teaching in APS.

- Offering selected online courses in a "high-flex" format that allows students to complete their course requirements for any given week in either an in-class or online modality. The hope is to be able to develop an increasing number of courses in this "multiple-modality" format to better serve students, and hopefully improve student retention.

As it relates to developing assessment strategies that allow for educational quality comparisons, *SDC IR Report* Section 4 describes the Institution's intention to use the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE rubrics as the basis for comparison of SDC student mastery of the WSCUC-required core competencies with student mastery levels at peer institutions. (CFR 2.2a) They have implemented use of the Oral Communication and Information Literacy VALUE rubrics, and are considering their use in the Critical Thinking and Quantitative Reasoning competency areas.

The report also indicated that SDC had reinstituted administration of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) *Proficiency Profile* as a possible means of gaining external comparison data relating to SDC student mastery of core competencies. However, the Dean of Assessment & Institutional Research indicated that the results from this pilot test were disappointing, in part due to a lack of student motivation and effort for taking the test. As a result, the value of the results for comparison purposes were in question.

The *SDC IR Report* indicated that significant progress had been made in regard to assessment of the co-curricular programs. (CFR 2.11) At the time of the current visit, Program-level Learning Outcomes (PLOs) had been developed for all twelve of their co-curricular programs, and one program review (the DHM Leadership program) had been completed. Discussions with the Student Life staff and the Co-curricular Committee revealed that considerable work had been done in completing the Residential Life program review, but that the director of that program had

left prior to its completion, and a significant portion of the work completed to that date was lost. The Team was able to review the progress that the Athletic program has made to-date on their program review, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of May 2016.

The *SDC IR Report* did not address the fifth WSCUC Action Letter recommendation to enhance and integrate technology systems. (CFR 3.5) However, discussions with the Director of APS Programs and a review of supporting documentation revealed that considerable progress had been made by SDC to design an approach for integrating their major technology systems. They are currently evaluating the best strategy for upgrading or replacing their Student Information System (SIS) since it serves as a foundational component within the overall technological infrastructure.

B. Component 2: Compliance with the Standards & Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

1. Standard 1: Defining Institutional Purposes & Ensuring Educational Objectives

The institution's brief mission statement is well disseminated and states, *"San Diego Christian College exists to educate and inspire students through the truth of Scripture and the development of competencies that prepare graduates whose purpose is to impact the world."* (CFR 1.1) In 2014 SDC launched its five-year cycle for strategic planning entitled "Vision 2019." The following three overarching initiatives provide a roadmap to fulfilling the plan:

1. Equip an Academic and Learning Community,

2. Foster a Community Committed to a Biblical Worldview and Godly Character,

3. Inspire Cultural and Global Involvement.

Known by a shorthand "The ABCs" (**A**cademically Equipped, **B**iblical Worldview, **C**ultural Involvement), the fundamentals of the strategic plan are published on the College website, with a robust and systematic process in place to monitor progress. (CFRs 4.4-4.6) The team noted a

widespread and comprehensive "buy-in" to the ABC strategic plan that was apparent in discussions with a broad group of stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and trustees. (CFR 1.1, 1.6) Most departments tie budget requests to the strategic plan. Clearly, SDC excels at providing and disseminating widely through all levels a clear sense of purpose, vision, and values. In addition, SDC publishes student retention and completion data to the public on its website. (CFR 1.2)

The Institution places substantial importance on its developing identity as a WSCUC-accredited faith-based institution of higher education. Following years of struggle, the relocation of the campus has undoubtedly rallied all stakeholders around common purposes and objectives. Moreover, SDC demonstrates a commitment to the public good (CFR 1.1) through the means of its Christian mission as expressed in the three overarching ABC strategic initiatives. The Team found the President and College leadership already engaging with new community relationship initiatives in their new city of residence, Santee.

In its *IR Report*, the College admits to continuing struggles with comprehensive data management. (CFR 4.2) SDC does not have dedicated full-time staff in its institutional research office. Institutional research is assigned to the Dean of Assessment & Institutional Research, among other duties (i.e. Dean of Business & Education), whose work is supported by an assessment committee and a co-curricular assessment committee. While the College has recently instituted a new software package for managing institutional data, there appears to be ongoing difficulties with unneeded duplications and higher workload among those who collect, analyze, and use data for decision-making. (CFRs 1.2 & 4.2) That said, the team found evidence of widespread collaborative decision-making based on data such as are available.

Faculty and staff roles, responsibilities, and academic freedom are clearly detailed in appropriate handbooks, including statements explaining SDC's worldview and Christian beliefs.

(CFR 1.3) Likewise, the Institutional catalog and student handbooks specify the rights and responsibilities of students, including conduct expectations. In its published practices and policies, SDC appears to adhere to its mission and values as a higher education institution dedicated to advancing the pursuit of educational goals in a faith-based context. Faculty governance is clearly outlined, with full-time faculty expected to participate actively in various committees and consultative processes. (CFR 1.7)

SDC has experienced remarkable growth in the percentage of underrepresented students over the past five years. (CFR 1.4) During the visit interview meetings, the Team noted that many individuals from the faculty and staff are highly engaged with students of color, international students, and first-generation students. In fact, the Team sensed a high level of commitment by all members of the community to embrace and celebrate the increasingly diverse student body. However, the Team found that the multicultural committee is not currently using data and analysis for decision-making to support students or recommend institutional improvement and change.

2. ***Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions***

SDC provided clear evidence relating to most Standard 2 CFRs of its commitment to achieve its purposes and attain its educational objectives at the institutional and program level through the core functions of teaching and learning (CFRs 2.1-2.7), scholarship and creative activity (CFRs 2.8-2.9), and support for student learning and success. (CFRs 2.10-2.14)

In the area of teaching and learning, SDC academic programs have clearly written Course-level Learning Outcomes (CLOs), syllabi, and assessment rubrics. (CFRs 2.3-2.7) The course syllabi reference the six Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and Program-level Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in alignment with ILOs. CLOs that engage students in owning their learning

experience, and rubrics are provided that set criteria for the knowledge and skills required to be successful as a student at SDC.

At the program level, SDC has well-developed curriculum maps, and assessment plans that measure student success. (CFRs 2.2-2.4) Program reviews are conducted on a regularly scheduled basis, and involve both internal and external reviewers. (CFR 2.7)

To advance teaching and learning, SDC recently began the development of two key offices (Community Engagement and Career Services) that will support the academic PLOs outside the classroom through community outreach as well as in preparation for internships and employment after graduation. (CFR 2.5)

It will be important for SDC to pay close attention to number of qualified faculty for the type and level of curricula offered. It will be important for them to identify and implement strategies that will result in employing more faculty with terminal degrees in their field of study. (CFRs 2.1 & 3.1)

In the area of scholarship and creative activity (CFRs 2.8, 2.9, 3.3), SDC provides professional development funds to support scholarship and creative activity that is governed by a faculty committee. This committee's funding process affords SDC the capacity to ensure that academic scholarship, teaching, assessment of student learning, and service is promoted. Faculty described opportunities they have had to attend and present at professional conferences, personal development, and co-presenting with students or colleagues. There are requirements that all faculty rewarded professional development funds return to campus to share their experiences with the full faculty at SDC's monthly scholarly forum.

As indicated earlier, it is only recently that SDC co-curricular programs (tutoring and disabilities services, financial aid counseling, Student Success Coaches, residential life, career counseling, etc.) have developed PLOs and drafted plans for assessing student mastery of those

PLOs. Residential Life began the process but with recent staff turnover the data could not be restored. Based on discussions with Athletic department, the currently in-process Athletic PR would benefit from broader participation by the athletic staff and coaches.

SDC currently has inadequate assessment data relating to its co-curricular programs to make informed decisions about how Student Life and other academic support services contribute to the effectiveness of students learning and success. (CFR 2.11) SDC must be committed to give immediate attention to collecting and analyzing data that will inform overall educational effectiveness.

3. **_Standard 3: Developing & Applying Resources & Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality & Sustainability_**

SDC has qualified faculty and staff who are tremendously committed. (CFR 3.1) The Team was impressed with the level of engagement of the faculty and staff with the strategic plan institutional initiatives, and how this has been infused in the day-to-day operations of the College through the "Division, to Department, to Desk" initiative. Through the annual employee review process, employees are engaged in assessing how their individual work and goals contribute to the Strategic Plan initiatives. (CFR 3.2) However, the Team encourages SDC to make a priority of evaluating the professional requirements of each position and ensuring that those filling the positions are appropriately qualified and/or supported to reach that status through professional development and/or further formal education. (CFR 3.3)

Since becoming financially independent from the church, through the work of the CEO, the CFO, and the support of his professional staff, SDCs financial oversight, processes, and procedures have been raised sufficiently to meet the needs of a growing institution of higher education. (CFRs 3.4, 3.6) Positive annual financial results are now the "norm" rather than the exception with "clean" annual financial audits, and a realistic and data-informed multi-year

budgeting process integrated with the strategic plan for allocation of resources. The Team appreciated that the various community groups understood how requests for resources made their way into the annual budgeting process for consideration. (CFR 3.7)

The Team congratulates SDC on the relocation of the College and encourages SDC leadership to continue executing the vision to expand the physical footprint as resources allow in order to support the immediate and growing needs of the student community. Along with this, attention should be given to allocate sufficient resources to support the ongoing work of the Technology Taskforce in its effort to address the critical need for integrated information management systems across the institution. (CFR 3.5) The projected growth of the institution makes this a high-priority issue.

SDC leadership, from the board on down, is composed of well-qualified and highly-engaged professionals. (CFRs 3.8-3.10) They are deeply committed to the mission and vision of the institution. There are established, admirable structures and processes for planning, decision-making, and communication. (CFR 3.7) SDC has made tremendous progress toward educational effectiveness and it is a high-priority to the entire community.

4. _**Standard 4:   Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning & Improvement**_

SDC has established student learning outcomes for all of its academic and co-curricular programs. (CFR 4.1) Traditional academic programs show three to five years of data from capstone evaluations. Through recent development efforts, APS programs now use the same rubrics for capstone projects as the traditional programs of the same type. Discussions with faculty revealed that different software platforms are currently being used to collect and summarize assessment data from the traditional and APS programs. Transitioning to the use of a single assessment data management system for both academic areas could provide great benefits

enabling efficient analysis and comparison of assessment data across SDC programs and student populations. Institutional Research is becoming well established, but could be significantly strengthened through increased technology and personnel support. (CFR 4.2)

The Leadership is committed to evidence-based improvement. (CFR 4.3) A review of provided documentation revealed that SDC has very detailed faculty and staff evaluations (CFR 3.2) that are aligned with the institution's strategic plan. In addition, faculty are observed teaching in the classroom and the results of the observation are included in their annual evaluations. The results are used to foster improvement in teaching. (CFRs 2.9, 4.4)

There are some processes in place to seek the feedback of multiple stakeholders, and SDC is urged to continue to develop these efforts. (CFR 4.5) The College has developed ways to institutionalize the new mission, vision and strategic plan at every level which became evident during discussions with students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees. (CFR 4.6. The focus on expansion of graduate and on-line programs will need to be tempered by the adequacy of resources. (CFRs 3.5, 4.7)

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the Institution has demonstrated sufficient evidence of compliance with the Standards

5. _**Federal Requirements:**_
   a. *Credit Hours & Program Length Review*

SDC includes its credit hour policy and program length online and in several documents for current and prospective students, including the catalog. Information about both can be found using a search electronically at the SDC website. Standards, program requirements, and definitions are clear. SDC is in compliance with CFR 2.2.

b. Marketing & Recruitment Review

Upon review of the SDC website and internal processes, it was found that SDC student recruiting practices follow federal guidelines. SDC confirms through its *Institutional Report* that information regarding typical length of time to degree and overall cost of degree are made available to students through avenues such as the SDC website, the catalog, and work with "student success coaches" for traditional and "graduation coaches" for non-traditional programs. SDC describes the kinds of jobs graduates are prepared for on the website under each major program description. However, information about the employment of SDC graduates was only noted in the institutional report.

c. Student Complaints Review

SDC has a clearly written Student Grievance Policy & Procedure. Students have access to this policy in the Catalog, website, Student Handbook (pgs. 25-26), and through student life staff. There are written procedures that occur at multiple levels for addressing both informal and formal student complaints to ensure successful conflict resolution.

d. Transfer Policy Review

A review of SDC's website and current Course Catalog was completed prior to the accreditation visit, and it was found verified that SDC has formal published policies for receiving student transfer credit from other institutions of higher education. These policies are clear and easily accessible for students and the public.

e. Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

An inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators was completed by SDC and included as an attachment to their *IR Report*. A review of a sampling of web pages and

syllabi revealed that PLOs for all programs are available in the catalog and in course syllabi. The web pages for some but not all academic programs included a statement of PLOs. Inclusion of these would provide a useful benefit for prospective students. As new programs are launched, SDC can use the IEEI to ensure that assessment of student learning is planned and conducted.

C. Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality and Integrity of Degrees

Although not required to do so by WSCUC, SDC chose the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) to initiate discussions among faculty about the meaning, quality, and integrity of degrees at San Diego Christian College. Among other findings, the faculty determined that "regardless of the degree program … there was a clear expectation established for students to be trained in academic skills and knowledge in rigorous programs that include SDC's faith integration" (*SDC IR Report*, p. 24). Furthermore, the faculty found agreement that "a degree from San Diego Christian does more than train the mind, as there is a holistic approach to equip all aspects of the human learner" (ibid, pg. 24).

These faculty findings were later confirmed by Academic Affairs and the Academic Council. However, it was noted that there should be further examination relating to the quality of the degrees. Following these deliberations each department has begun to work on plans to better represent the degrees on the webpages associated with the degree programs. In addition, the faculty have continued dialogue about quality indicators.

In interviews and meetings with faculty members and academic administrators, the Team verified that SDC was continuing active faculty discussions, especially at the department level and in the General Education committee. (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 3.10) Although the meaning of a degree at SDC is not yet fully defined, faculty are actively seeking to improve their curricula through student outcome-based measures.

According to the *IR Report*, SDC is seeking to produce "quality degree programs through challenging but engaging educational programs, increased performance outcomes, and a staffing plan that supports the curriculum and student learning" (p.27). A summer 2015 proposal was introduced to bring together support elements by providing a full-service academic service office. However, the Team found no evidence that the proposal has yet been adopted.

Student learning outcomes are regularly updated and widely disseminated to better align with the revised mission and vision. The six new ILOs seek to serve as a touch point for institutional learning and quality across all degree programs. They are as follows:

1. Obtain a foundational knowledge of humanities, sciences, and social sciences and a lifelong learning framework.

2. Specialize in at least one academic discipline specific career and life applications.

3. Demonstrate effective communication and social skills.

4. Apply critical thinking skills to scholarly, professional, and personal endeavors.

5. Exercise commitment to a lifestyle that identifies God's preeminent perspective on life based on biblical principles and godly character.

6. Interact effectively through cultural and Global involvement in preparation for a lifestyle service.

These ILO's are commendable, and the Team found that the Assessment Committee and the Dean of Assessment & Institutional Research, along with the department reviewers, monitor and evaluate the ILOs on a regular basis. The Team suggests that SDC continue to further develop its definitions, processes, and evaluation practices related to the meaning, quality, and integrity of all degree programs at the institution.

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

As indicated above, SDC has developed a set of six ILOs. (CFRs 1.2, 2.3) There are also established PLOs for all academic major programs, as well as 14 PLOs addressing expectations

for student mastery of general education (GE) related areas. The development of PLOs for the co-curricular area at SDC has just recently been completed. (CFR 2.11)

A review of selected curriculum maps indicated that SDC faculty have structured the requirements and sequence of courses in the undergraduate majors to systematically build students' skills and knowledge toward mastery of PLOs in their major and emphasis areas. Discussions with SDC faculty during the visit confirmed their purposefully attentive curricular design work in this regard.

SDC has taken the approach of requiring students to complete a major project in the context of a core senior-year capstone course to evaluate student mastery of major PLOs, as well as a number of the GE PLOs and core competencies. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6) SDC's traditional major programs currently use *LiveText* as the software tool to manage their assessment and program review processes. Students submit their capstone assignments as portfolio items into the *LiveText* system. Faculty are able to evaluate student work using previously-developed rubrics. Scoring information is stored in *LiveText* in a format that enables faculty to summarize, analyze, and disaggregate performance data along a number of dimensions. They have also implemented a *LiveText* capability to evaluate inter-rater reliability to ensure that faculty are using the rubrics consistently in their assessment of student mastery levels. Discussions with faculty confirm that they use the inter-rater reliability information to improve their scoring practices to more fully utilize the rubric results for program improvement.

SDC's APS programs also require students to complete a senior-level capstone project that provides the basis for evaluating student mastery of major and GE PLOs. Currently, student work and the rubric-based evaluations are uploaded and maintained in *Edvance 360*, which is the Learning Management System (LMS) used at SDC.

SDC traditional program faculty meet annually following the end of the spring semester to examine the results of the capstone assessments and identify needed revisions to the major and GE curricula. Capstone review reports were provided for almost all of the traditional major programs. Capstone review reports were also submitted for the APS program, but these seemed to be more often completed by the individual faculty member who was assigned to teach that session of the capstone course. The Team reviewed a sampling of the Capstone Review reports, and found that SDC faculty used capstone results to systematically examine and discuss strengths, weaknesses, and needed course/curricular changes to promote stronger student performance relating to each major PLO. (CFRs 2.10, 4.1, 4.2) The Capstone Review template also required the department to list actions taken in regard to the previous year's review recommendations.

SDC has designed their capstone projects to also enable them to evaluate graduating student mastery levels in the written communication, oral communication, and information literacy core competency areas (CFR 2.2a) in the context of their academic majors. While the capstone projects have been designed to also provide an opportunity to assess student mastery of the critical thinking core competency, SDC has not yet implemented a *LiveText* rubric to assess that skill area.

SDC recently reinstituted the administration of the ETS *Proficiency Profile* to assess senior student critical thinking skill levels. This testing instrument also provides SDC insight into student math skills, and a second assessment strategy of student written communication competency. Unfortunately, the level of student effort in taking this assessment was disappointing, and SDC is still considering alternate ways to assess these core competency areas.

Visit Team findings relating to each of the five core competencies are summarized in the paragraphs below:

Written Communication:

As indicated earlier, SDC uses a *LiveText* rubric-based assessment of senior student capstone projects, as well as writing sub-score on the *ETS Proficiency Profile* to assess the written communication core competency. In addition, SDC has identified several formative assessments of writing skill during students' freshmen and sophomore years. However, data from those formative assessments have not yet been systematically integrated and coordinated with their summative writing assessment.

The *LiveText* written communication scoring rubric used to evaluate written communication competency includes seven assessment factors. The faculty assessment of spring 2015 capstone projects indicated that at least 85% of SDC senior students demonstrated an adequate, strong, or excellent level in each of the seven written communication assessment factors.

The summary of SDC student scores from 2008 to 2012 on the writing portion of the *ETS Proficiency Profile* indicated that they are performing at around the 55th percentile based on ETS 2010-15 comparison data.

Oral Communication:

SDC began implementation of an institution-wide assessment of oral communication in spring 2014. They have chosen to use the AAC&U VALUE rubric for assessment of student mastery in that skill area. This rubric was integrated in to the *LiveText*-based assessment of the capstone projects. SDC is still early in the implementation process with only eleven senior student capstone presentations being evaluated in spring 2015. The summary of results indicated that at least 82% of SDC senior students performed at an adequate level or better in regard to each of the six evaluation factors. SDC is also beginning a parallel AAC&U VALUE rubric formative assessment of entering students in their first year oral communication courses.

Information Literacy:

While SDC faculty have discussed evaluating this skill area for some time, it was only in spring 2014 that the decision was made to implement use of a *LiveText*-based rubric to assess senior student capstone projects. This rubric includes most of the AAC&U VALUE Information Literacy rubric factors along with several additional institutionally-defined factors. The faculty assessment of spring 2015 senior student capstone projects indicated that percent of students performing at the accomplished or mastery level on each information literacy assessment factor ranged between 54% and 65%. SDC has begun to take steps to strengthen the instruction relating to student research practices, and to provide more electronic resources to students relating to this area.

Critical Thinking:

SDC has used the *ETS Proficiency Profile* Critical Thinking sub-score to assess student mastery in regard to this core competency area. The summary of SDC student sub-scores from 2008 to 2012 indicate that they are performing at around the 48th percentile based on ETS 2010-15 comparison data. The faculty are currently discussing how to improve both their strategy for assessing students in this area, as well as strengthening student critical thinking skill levels.

Quantitative Reasoning:

SDC has not yet implemented any institution-wide strategy to assess student skill levels in regard to this core competency. A few of the academic departments have begun to include a quantitative element as part of their capstone project requirements. The math sub-score of the *ETS Proficiency Profile* provides some limited insight into SDC student skill levels in this area. The summary of 2008-12 data indicates that SDC students scored at the 56th percentile based on ETS 2010-15 comparison data.

The Team encourages SDC to continue its implementation of the capstone project, where appropriate, as a summative student assessment strategy of both core competencies and major-specific PLOs. In the written communication, oral communication, and information literacy core competency areas, this will involve broadening the number of students and faculty across major departments in the assessment process. In other areas, it should be a priority to come to consensus on, and move quickly toward implementation of appropriate assessment strategies as part of and/or in addition to the capstone project to assess the remaining core competencies as well as major-related PLOs across academic departments. SDC also would also benefit from the development of more explicitly-defined mechanisms for formatively assessing student mastery levels in core competencies and major-related PLOs.

The development of processes to benchmark SDC student performance with students from a peer set of institutions has not yet been undertaken at any substantial level by SDC faculty. Implementation of the AAC&U VALUE rubrics in some of the core competency areas holds yet-to-be-developed potential in this regard. Their long-standing use of the *ETS Proficiency Profile* has provided some level of national comparison data. Several different methods for obtaining external major-related benchmarking data have been adopted by SDC's academic departments including: the ETS Major Field Test in Biology, participation in a national computer-based simulation by business major students, and professional licensing pass rates in the kinesiology and aviation fields. The Team recommends that near-term attention be given to the design and implementation of benchmarking strategies to compare SDC student performance with students from a peer group of institutions. (CFR 2.4)

E. Component 5: Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation

SDC's Board of Trustee Vision statement has provided direction to enable the administration to reorganize the College's operational structure to more effectively accomplish the three

strategic initiatives to enhance student success. As described earlier, the three new strategic initiatives are referenced as the "ABCs" - *A*cademically Equipped, *B*iblical Worldview, *C*ultural Involvement. This new vision affords the institution the opportunity to focus on strengthening SDC's students' learning, retention, and graduation, as well as communicate to its external community a clear commitment to student success.

The President and his administrative leadership team demonstrated exceptional ability to be inclusive in the communication process as a mechanism to insure that all stakeholders knew about the revisions, could own them, and live them out – both in and out of the classroom. It was evident to the Team through conversations with students, faculty, staff, and around the campus that the ABCs are not just a catchy reference but a critical move forward to the success of SDC students both in the traditional undergraduate as well as the APS programs. (CFRs 1.1-1.2)

Student Learning:

SDC's academic programs are designed to ensure students meet the defined ILOs, PLOs, and CLOs to demonstrate mastery in meeting the academic requirements for graduation. In their review of a sample of course syllabi, the Team found a framework that was comprehensive and detailed to help provide a successful teaching and learning experiences for the student. The course requirements, learning outcomes, credit hours, grading policy, assignments and other essential guidelines for the successful classroom experience were provided in detail. (CFRs 2.1-2.6)

SDC's academic curriculum is designed to build on the foundational GE core coursework in a variety of ways appropriate to the major fields of study. There are curriculum maps that were designed by the faculty in their programs to ensure skill development from introductory to mastery throughout the course of study at SDC. (CFR 2.4) These maps have allowed the

programs to implement benchmark signature assignments to assess mastery of learning in the academic fields of study. The assessment results of student work are used by the faculty, department chairs, and the Assessment & Institutional Research office to determine the quality of the student learning experience in each SDC major program. It also assists the faculty to identify needed course changes, and department chairs to evaluate possible program changes important for contributing to academic student success. (CFR 2.7)

SDC has developed a number of co-curricular programs that serve as a complement to the academic programs and are purposefully designed to contribute to student success. They include student life, campus ministry, residential life, spiritual life, outreach, career services, registrar, student success coaches, athletics, disability services, library services, math and writing tutorial services, and the multicultural committee. (CFR 2.11)   As indicated earlier, each of these programs has a set of recently developed PLOs that flow from SDC's ILOs and the three strategic initiatives. Measureable assessment strategies have been preliminarily designed to assess the student experience in the co-curricular area. The Team found that the co-curricular programs had little official data as evidence to measure effectiveness of these programs to enrich the students learning outside the classroom at SDC.

During meetings with the Team, the SDC co-curricular staff shared some qualitative and anecdotal data that would affirm the effectiveness and importance of these programs. However, there was little systematically-collected quantitative assessment data provided. This makes it more difficult for the Team to validate how effectively these programs contribute to SDC student success. One example in this regard is the use of student success coaches to promote retention and graduation. The Team heard and observed that success coaches provided exceptional support to students, faculty, and athletic coaches to assure students are being advised correctly, transfer students are admitted with limited hurdles, and at-risk students are supported, with the

overarching goal of enhancing student retention and graduation rates. There were verbal conversations with Team members by faculty, staff, and students expressing appreciation for the work of the success coaches. However, there are little assessment data that measure effectiveness as it relates to improving student retention and graduation rates.

In summary, implementing objective assessment strategies, based on the drafted PLOs for these programs, will provide valuable decision-making data to help refine co-curricular program structures, processes, and resourcing to further enhance the potential for SDC student success.

Retention & Graduation:

SDC provided the Team with a table report summarizing fall student enrollment (2005-15), fall-to-fall student retention (2012-15), and graduate rates (entry in 2006-08). The enrollment and retention data was disaggregated by program (traditional vs. APS). Retention and graduation rate data were provided for both first-time freshmen and transfer students. A review of these data indicated that one-year retention rates for traditional program full-time freshmen have declined somewhat over the past three years, while the retention rates for transfer students have been mixed. (CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1) Retention rates for APS program F2F and online transfer students (the large majority of their student population) have decreased over the past three years. The six-year graduation rates appear mixed for first-time freshmen students (averaging around 41%) beginning in 2006-08. The six-year graduation rates for transfer students over the same period has trended upward in both the traditional program (averaging around 58%), and the APS F2F program (averaging around 68%). While comparison data were not provided, these retention and graduation rates appear to be somewhat below the rates published in recent U.S. News& World Report rankings for typical peer institutions.

SDC provided additional summaries of retention and graduation rate data for athletes. While there are sport-to-sport and year-to-year differences, the overall rates seem to be similar for those

of the larger student population. Enrollment data, disaggregated by ethnicity, was provided, but accurate retention and graduation rate data seemed less readily available.

SDC is encouraged to expand its institutional research processes to produce a standard set of enrollment, retention, and graduation reports that provide easily-interpreted summaries both aggregated across and disaggregated by dimensions such as program, gender, and ethnicity. Many institutions have benefited from development of a series of dashboard-type reports in this regard. These types of data will be critical for SDC to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the various retention initiatives they are currently implementing.

SDC has launched a number of initiatives that are focused on improving their student retention and graduation rates. As described earlier in Section II.A of this *Team Report*, these include attempting to connect students into identity groups, limiting the roster size of athletic teams, and implementing the use of Success/Graduation Coaches for student advising.

During Team discussions with the Student Life department, the staff indicated that little had been done to identify and quantify the reasons for students leaving SDC. It is often assumed that a student has a hardship with financial resources when in reality there are often other reasons for her/his departure. To date, there seems to have been limited outreach to exiting students. SDC is encouraged to consider implementing some type of exit process that would provide an opportunity to systematically collect concrete data in this regard of how to assist these students.

SDC currently has a standing Multicultural Committee that could provide the institution with valuable ideas for strategies to engage diverse students. They could also be assigned the responsibility for collecting and analyzing data to better identify why ethnic, international, and other students leave the Institution. The administrative leadership is urged to strongly encourage the work of the Multicultural Committee or an identified group to look closely at data collection on the students of color and their challenges with retention. It will be important for the

Administration to give this committee adequate resources and personnel support to maximize the opportunity for what the data could provide for strategic planning and increase retention at SDC. (CFRs 1.2, 1.4, 4.1)

As part of their recent organizational restructuring, the President has placed the co-curricular and academic programs under the same Vice President. This can provide a great opportunity for the co-curricular and academics programs to build synergy in implementing strategies with potential to increase graduation rates. SDC is encouraged to engage in conversations and approaches to jointly identify, collect, and analyze data in order to support a data-driven plan for increasing retention and graduation rates. (CFRs 4.1, 4.2)

Overall, it is clear that student success is important to SDC leadership. The revisiting and change of the mission, vision, goals and strategic initiatives provides clear evidence of SDC's commitment to its students. The faculty has built a comprehensive approach to identifying educational effectiveness in their academic majors. The co-curricular programs have limited, mostly anecdotal data to provide evidence of assumptions made about how and what students are learning as a direct outcome of being involved in co-curricular activities. SDC is encouraged to continue to implement strategies that have potential to improve student success, retention, and graduation. (CFRs 1.2, 1.4, 1.6)

F. Component 6: Quality Assurance & Improvement: Program Review, Assessment, Use of Data and Evidence

Academic Program Review

SDC has an Academic Program Review process that includes a well-constructed template for the academic programs which establishes the required elements to be included in the review. They have also developed a *Handbook for Comprehensive Program Review* that provides greater detail about requirements for each element of academic program review. Expectations include

an examination of analyses of student achievement relating to major PLOs. It also includes a requirement to examine retention and graduation rate data, as well as evidence from external constituencies, such as employers. (CFR 2.7) The handbook also describes the roles and responsibilities of faculty and other personnel involved in academic program review.

The Team was able to review the published master schedule that defines a six-year cycle for review of all academic programs. An examination of the program review documents showed that the program reviews started in 2012-13 had only a few years of student learning outcome data to summarize, rather that the full set of years since the previous review. SDC indicated that the process to collect and examine multiple years of student learning data is relatively young. The Institution is now using *LiveText* to collect and summarize capstone rubric information for their traditional academic programs.

Internal and/or external review are components of SDC's program review process. There was ample evidence that, for those programs that had an external reviewer, the department had integrated the observations and recommendations of the reviewer into their action plans. It was not clear that all programs had been examined by an external reviewer.

SDC has developed a rubric for evaluating the quality of the program reviews conducted. The Assessment Committee also provides the WSCUC Program Review Rubric to the department/program faculty/staff when they begin to conduct their review. Academic program reviews address each of the elements of the rubric. The Dean of Assessment and Institutional Research uses the rubric, housed in *LiveText*, to assess each element as it is completed in the process. The rubric has been utilized for those academic programs that have completed the review process. It is expected that the rubric will also be implemented with co-curricular programs and new academic programs as they become more mature in the program review process.

SDC traditional program faculty meet annually following the end of the spring semester to examine the results of the capstone assessments and identify needed revisions to the major and GE program. It is expected that program review documents summarize the findings of the capstone outcomes. The Team carefully reviewed a sample of the program review documents. Program review documents for Aviation include an analysis of student achievement, examining several dimensions of success, and comparisons with standards. Faculty reflection and actions based on these results are well-documented. Documents examined for Psychology from 2008 – 2013 summarize how students are assessed and faculty actions regarding the assessment of student learning, but do not indicate the results of student learning outcomes assessment on which the actions are based. Documents examined for Biology describe the evidence and provide the analysis of the results from the ETS Major Field Test. History/Social Science presents a good summary of the interpretation of the results of assessment of student learning outcomes. The external reviewer's report was not uploaded to the exhibit area.

Overall, the attached Capstone Reviews don't include the results of the assessments on which the interpretations are made. The team recommends ensuring that assessment summaries, including a summary of the data are recorded in *LiveText* annually so that the data may be aggregated over several years and enable faculty to assess the effectiveness of changes made to the curriculum.

SDC's APS program review included a review of the division, and of each program in the division. Data for APS programs are summarized on a table of first-year enrollment patterns, and a table of retention and graduation outcomes for students in each of the programs. It does not include a summary of student achievement for each of the programs. The Department Actions Page contains an actions checklist of steps to achieve the departmental objectives. There are no academic program specific actions related to program improvement. It is not clear in the

program review documents how the APS academic programs assess the achievement of student learning outcomes. The review includes an examination of student survey responses aggregated across all APS programs. However, there is no evidence that faculty have examined survey evidence disaggregated by program. (CFR 2.10)

The Team suggests that APS more closely follow the SDC program review guidelines. Also, it is important that they assure that reviews are completed at the major program rather than just the department level. Each program of study benefits from external review, even if the same reviewer were to look at all of the programs in one department or division.

Co-Curricular Program Review

SDC has a co-curricular review process and a *Co-Curricular Program Review Template* that was patterned after their academic program review processes and template. (CFR 2.11) As programs move through the process, SDC may want to seek their feedback to ensure that the template includes all appropriate elements for the co-curricular areas to examine.

Since the time of the last WSCUC visit, SDC's co-curricular program reviews have had a slow start. Although SDC has developed a master schedule for co-curricular program review, as well as the *Co-Curricular Program Review Template*, SDC has had a number of delays in this area. In particular, Residential Life began the process, but the data were housed on an individual computer and were lost when there was a change in personnel. Documents and discussions during the campus visit indicate that Athletics is currently conducting its co-curricular review using the co-curricular template and expects to have the process completed in May. The team was able to verify that the Dr. Henry Morris Leadership program has completed a co-curricular program review and that Student Ministry is starting the process at the time of the on-site visit. The co-curricular area leaders are committed to collecting annual assessment data that will inform their programs.

The student role in program review is not clear. Although students are surveyed by most academic and some co-curricular areas, there is no evidence that students are involved in focus groups to follow up on survey results. Student work seems to have been reviewed by many of the external reviewers. None of the reports from external reviewers mention meeting with students.

Quality Assurance

SDC has a program approval process that is outlined in the *Program Change and Approval Process* document provided to the Team for the Offsite Review. The Team recommends that this document be expanded or supplemented with more detail on the proposal and approval process for a new program. At present it states, "New program recommendations should be submitted to the Academic Vice President and will be processed initially through Academic Affairs." In addition, SDC would benefit from clearly articulated substantive change policies and procedures for existing programs (e.g., converting an onsite program to an on-line program).

SDC has a framework for assessment that includes almost all aspects of the institution's operations. (CFR 4.1) Typically, a framework for assessment zeroes in on the assessment of educational quality and student achievement. As academic and co-curricular programs develop and refine their assessments of student learning outcomes, SDC might consider using a more standard "cycle of assessment" model of assessment as a guide for the process. It is clear from the documentation of the relationship between ILOs, GE PLOs, and major PLOs, as well as from meetings during the Team's on-site visit, that much attention is being given to student learning at SDC.

The University Assessment Committee, led by the Dean of Assessment and Institutional Research, has representatives from programs and departments recently or actively involved in the process of academic or co-curricular program review. Those who are experienced in the process assist those starting their program reviews. As this group becomes more experienced in

assessment, there will be great opportunity to provide increased assistance to the Dean of Assessment and Institutional Research regarding the oversight and improvement of annual program assessment and the program review process.

<u>Institutional Research Capacity</u>

At the time of this review, SDC has a Dean for Assessment and Institutional Research who is also serving as Dean of Business and Education and SDC's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). She is also temporarily overseeing Student Disability Services. This is a great deal of responsibility for one person, albeit a very capable person. The data functions of institutional research would be significantly improved by the integration of technology resources and increased attention to improving the current SIS to facilitate data reporting. The team further suggests that SDC carefully evaluate strategies for ensuring a breadth of involvement and adequate resources to support institutional research and assessment efforts.

G. Component 7: Sustainability: Financial Viability, Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment

Over the last ten years SDC has faced significant financial challenges, overcoming important obstacles to obtain financial independence and seek financial viability. In 2011 the College strengthened its financial and operational oversight through the hiring of an experienced finance professional, Steve Chaney of Chaney and Associates. He, under the leadership of the president, executed the full separation of the College's finances from the church. (CFR 1.5) Mr. Chaney continues in the role of Chief Financial Officer. (CFR 3.8) In response to earlier recommendations and identified internal needs for more robust and accurate financial planning, the CFO developed a 5-year budget model that has been actively used since its inception in 2011/12. This tool has aided in the positive financial results for the following years. For fiscal years 2011/12 and 2012/13 the total change in net assets were $2,545,077 and $1,702,513

respectively, and total net assets end-of-year were $4,562,651 and $6,265,164 respectively, per the annual audited financial statements. Each of these years resulted in surpluses of well over $1MM in cash from operations which was earmarked by the administration to support the successful purchase of and relocation to the Santee property. (CFR 3.4)

The 2013/14 fiscal year brought with it significant challenges – some expected and others unexpected by the SDC administration. In January 2014 SDC moved the entire College from its former location on the Greenfield property of Shadow Mountain Community Church to the new Santee campus. From the *IR Report* the Team learned that "The College was not able to transfer all of its real property for the Greenfield Campus property. This required the write-down of assets of $2.5MM that resulted in a loss of disposition of assets of $295K." And, although SDC leadership had strategically allocated surpluses from the two prior fiscal years for move-related expenses, "the relocation build-out required an additional $1.7MM to complete."

In addition, challenges with transition to a new recruiting partner for the non-traditional program resulted in lower than expected enrollment and related tuition revenue. SDC also engaged a new audit firm, CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, for the 2013/14 audit of the financial statements and the A-133 related to the federal student aid program. Through the work of the audit, it was noted that "In prior years, deferred revenue was not recorded properly in accordance with GAAP. As a result of this restatement [of net assets for the prior year], previously reported unrestricted and total net assets decreased by $269,317 (Note 13)." The Team learned from the *IR Report* that "The affected net change reduced income by $750K." The total change in net assets per the annual audited financial statements was ($2,413,824), reducing the total net assets at end of year to $5,995,847.

The negative change in net assets for 2013/14 resulted in a Composite Financial Index (CFI) score of -1.4 and a U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) composite financial score of 0.1.

Having a composite financial score below 1.0 pushed the College into the "fail" zone, resulting in the requirement to post an irrevocable letter of credit for $1.47MM to secure the Title IV federal student aid for the coming fiscal year. For the 2014/15 fiscal year, both the CFI score and the USDOE composite score both had been published and brought up to 2.2 and 1.2, respectively. The increase in the USDOE composite score means that at next review SDC will be released from the letter of credit. While these important key performance indicators (KPI) have increased, SDC is urged to continue monitoring these very closely and to establish specific internal "financial health" goals for these KPIs that are tied directly to the 5-year budget/financial plan.

The difficulties for 2013/14 were compounded by the finding of nine significant deficiencies that were disclosed related to the audit of the major federal award programs for SDC. Conversations with the President and the CFO confirmed that all nine findings have been addressed and that structures and processes have been refined or instituted in order to ensure full compliance going forward. The final 2014/15 audit report confirms this by stating that there were no findings. The Team believes that SDC should continue to closely monitor these changes, particularly with recent and future personnel changes, to ensure they are adhered to.

Through the *IR Report* the Team understands that "The College leadership believe that fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 was an isolated year." After reviewing the 2014/15 financial audit, the updated 5-year budget and completing interviews with the CEO and CFO, the Team supports this assertion. The successful build-out of and relocation to the new beautiful campus is to be commended, even with the challenges it presented. This very necessary and strategic move has given new life to the College community, and inspired a renewed love and long-term commitment to SDC by the entire community. The *IR Report* expresses it this way, "Our campus has collectively dedicated our focus to achieving the marks of viability and sustainability desired

from our accreditors and our Board of Trustees, and ones that we believe should be marks of our identity." (pg. 10)

SDC recovered financially in the fiscal year 2014/15, and was able to realize a positive change in net assets of $283,955 contributing to net assets at end-of-year totaling $3,865,978. SDC also engaged a new auditor for the 2014/15 fiscal year, KPM Accounting & Management Solutions. Admirably, SDC expeditiously completed the annual financial audit so that audited financial results would be available to inform the *IR Report* and serve as valuable evidence of financial progress.

One minor issue was discovered. In Note 6, the audit report states that, "In conjunction with its loans, the College is required to comply with certain reporting and ratio covenants. The College was not in compliance with all of the covenants as of June 30, 2015." In discussion with the CFO, it was reported that the lender of record had used for-profit covenant standards rather than those pertaining to a not-for-profit organization. The CFO states that the lender has not required any response at this time and that the College is currently in the process of refinancing its debt.

While the financial "bottom line" showed positive for the 2014/15 fiscal year, it was not without its own financial and operational challenges. SDC over awarded $1.4MM of institutional financial aid. Interviews with the CEO and CFO confirm that the VP for Student Affairs at that time, who was responsible for admissions and financial aid was not performing his job in conformity to the established SDC policies and procedures. SDC leadership acted quickly to address the issue, including change in personnel, reorganization of certain departments to other divisions for closer oversight, and the implementation of new internal structures and processes to ensure this is not likely to go undetected in the future. The CFO assumed oversight of Student Accounts (which was formerly under Student Affairs) and gave closer attention to the activities

of the Financial Aid department. The College recently added a financial assistant to provide administrative support to the CFO and serve the needs of the staff who need essential and accurate reports from the Finance office. The CEO, who has prior experience in higher education enrollment and marketing, is now directly managing the Admissions department, and the Academic VP now oversees Student/Spiritual life and Athletics departments. Satisfied that the major issues have been resolved, the CEO admits that this is a short-to-mid-term solution and is carefully and cautiously analyzing his options for the future.

The final challenge SDC faced in 2014/15 was a realization that the partnership with the 3rd party recruiter for the online program, to whom SDC paid a significant up-front service fee, was not meeting the goals of the College. SDC began immediately looking for a partner that could meet their needs and also negotiating the release of the existing vendor. The Team was informed during interviews with the CEO and CFO that SDC has successfully negotiated a satisfactory release from the agreement with the original vendor and secured the services of the new vendor under a more favorable "revenue share" model. While the enrollment projections for the online program have been significantly constricted in the 5-year projected budget for the years 2016-2020, SDC is optimistic that this is a much better partnership.

SDC regularly receives well over 90% of its revenues to cover operating expenses from tuition and fees. It is generally accepted that institutions that receive over 60% of their revenues from tuition and fees are considered "tuition dependent" and extremely sensitive to fluctuations in student enrollment. SDC understands this issue and has identified two specific ways they intend to mitigate this concern. The first way is to build specific allowances in the 5-year budget projection model to insulate SDC from the normal fluctuations in enrollment. They intentionally budget "flat" for future fiscal years of traditional enrollment and 35% below the projection for online enrollment. (These projections for online enrollment are provided by the 3rd party

recruitment vendor with whom SDC partners.) This has worked for SDC in the past, and was the strategy used to build the cash reserves needed to relocate the campus. The second way is through an intentional and strategic fundraising effort. SDC recently hired an experienced Director of Development who has the skills, passion, and resources necessary to begin steadily increasing the annual gift income year by year. Provided they are successful, these strategic initiatives can support the efforts of SDC in securing the resources necessary to achieve financial stability for the long-term.

The interim January 2016 financial statements look positive, with both revenue and expenses on track to meet budget. Budgeted net income for fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 is projected at just over $88K.

The SDC Board and Finance Committee meet three times per year, and are provided with regular updates on the financial status of the College, including period financial statements and the most recently updated iteration of the 5-year budget. The Team believes that the SDC leadership is capable and competent to make data-informed decisions to ensure the long-term viability of the College. (CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 3.9)

It is clear that SDC leadership are informed and engaged with the changing higher education environment and thoughtfully consider these issues at the appropriate level. The CFO discussed with the Team potential consequences of final guidance expected regarding the termination of the Perkins Loan Program. SDC holds $178K Perkins Loan liability that could potentially need to be repaid, depending on the final guidance issued. The CFO thoughtfully discussed the unsustainability of the current higher education economic model of higher pricing and discounting, a subject that weighs on institutions across the nation. SDC leadership are actively discussing religious freedom issues and taking thoughtful action to protect SDCs ability to continue to adhere to their deeply held religious convictions.

H. Component 9: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

There is much to celebrate at SDC as the Institution continues to mature and stabilize following its move to Santee. The Team agrees with the Institution's reflection that the self-study revealed an elevated sense of mission and identity (CFR 1.1), increasing external partnerships enabling better ties to both the local and higher education communities, remarkable enrollment and program growth, and commendable growth in diversity with a commitment to serve the entire student demographic at SDC in increasingly effective ways. (CFR 1.4)

The Team appreciated SDC's self-reflection on areas for improvement including an immediate need to increase the comprehensive and consistent use of data analysis for decision-making (CFR 4.3), standardized testing, competency standards (CFR 2.2a), and improvements in academic support. (CFRs 2.10, 3.5) The Institution also recognized the need to deepen co-curricular program review. (CFRs 2.7, 2.11) The Team found that SDC continues to experience challenges in developing traction toward progress in assuring all co-curricular programs are regularly evaluated, with findings used for improvement.

While SDC noted a "secured… sense of sustainability in the growth of assets as well as a smart financial model" (p. 80), the Team is concerned about the financial sustainability of the Institution, given the expenses related to the recent move to Santee, a less-than-aggressive fundraising program, as well as troubling USDE composite and CFI scores. The Team was somewhat surprised that the Institution did not identify financial stability and sustainability as an important plan for improvement.

In large part the description and analysis of SDC's APS online programs has been included in the broader discussions in Sections I and II of this report. The *Distance Education Review – Team Report Appendix* briefly outlines many of the critical aspects of the program's history and design.

To summarize, SDC began offering online programs in 2010, and these programs currently account for approximately 25% of their undergraduate enrollment. An Associate of Arts (AA) degree and eight BA degree programs are available in the online format. Undergraduate courses are structured in a five week term format, and delivered using the Edvance 360 learning management system. APS has begun designing 8 and 15 week versions of some of the online courses to be more accessible to traditional SDC students. They are experimenting with use of a "high-flex" delivery strategy in which students can choose on a week-by-week basis whether to complete that week's course requirements on-campus or online. While there could be great benefit to students to have this level of flexibility to accommodate their personal life schedules, it will be critical for SDC to implement fairly advanced attendance and assignment tracking mechanisms that enable both students and faculty to have a clear, current, and accurate snapshot of student status within the course.

SDC has contracted with a 3rd party firm to recruit students in their online programs. WSCUC staff liaison, Dr. Christopher Oberg, has reviewed the contract, and discussed its terms with SDC staff. He has indicated that the terms of the contract are reasonable and fall within WSCUC guidelines.

SDC online programs and courses are developed by the APS staff working with SDC faculty and other subject matter experts. A mixture of full-time traditional program faculty and adjunct faculty are used as instructors to administer developed courses each time they are offered.

Courses have been designed to include assignments that are used to assess student mastery toward PLOs. Each program includes a major capstone assignment as part of their final course that provides a summative assessment of student mastery levels. (CFRs 2.2-2.4) It is recommended that SDC consider transitioning to use of an assessment management system that would allow for more efficient analysis and reporting of assessment results that span across years and across program modalities. (CFR 4.1) In addition, it is recommended that within each major program, APS involve as many faculty as possible in the annual review of the capstone assessments in order to strengthen and broaden the quality of the review process. (CFRs 2.4, 2.7)

SDC APS staff regularly review online courses to ensure they meet their established credit hour policy requirements. However, to date, those results have not been formally documented. SDC is strongly encouraged to implement a formal documented audit process on a periodically scheduled basis.

Finally, SDC has given attention to providing a number of co-curricular support services to online students as appropriate to that modality. They have implemented the use of "Graduation Coaches" who serve as a contact point for students to be able to obtain assistance in a wide range of areas including: class enrollment, degree audit, financial aid assistance, technical help using Edvance 360, etc. This is one of the strategies that they hope will improve online student retention levels that are currently somewhat below those of traditional SDC students. (CFRs 1.2, 2.10, 4.1) SDC is encouraged to continue to pursue mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of the current co-curricular services available to online students as a means of improving program quality and student success. (CFR 2.11)

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the campus visit and a review of San Diego Christian College's accreditation history, *IR Report*, and supporting documents, the Team has developed the following commendations and recommendations.

A. Commendations

The Team commends SDC for:

- A noteworthy and highly dedicated president, widely respected throughout the institution, as well as an engaged, well-informed, and high-performing trustee board passionately dedicated to the success of SDC.

- The successful move of the college, under challenging circumstances, to an attractive and practical new physical plant cementing the identity of the institution and providing new opportunities for growth and community engagement.

- Its engagement with and communication of the mission. Faculty, staff and students represent an inclusive faith-based environment where individuals feel cared for and valued.

- Embracing WSCUC reaffirmation for accreditation as a beneficial, value-added process for institutional improvement.

- A meaningful, living strategic plan with initiatives broadly incorporated throughout the daily operations and activities of the entire institution.

B. Recommendations

The Team recommends that:

- Following unsuccessful attempts over past years to institutionalize and regularize co-curricular reviews, it is critical that SDC take immediate steps to complete all overdue

reviews and continue to carry-out future co-curricular assessment processes on the established cycle. (CFRs 2.7, 2.11)

- SDC continues to press forward with the in-process efforts to integrate administrative technology systems that can provide efficient access, summarization, and reporting of the institutional information critical to data informed decision-making across the Institution. (CFRs 3.5, 4.2)

- SDC engage teams such as the Multicultural Committee and the Enrollment and Retention Committee in the use of data to track diverse students (domestic and international) and to identify strategies for engagement and intervention to promote retention, persistence, and graduation. (CFRs 1.4, 2.2a, 2.10)

- SDC continues to closely monitor the 5-year budget forecasting tool and the overall financial health of the College, as demonstrated by self-identified Key Performance Indicators, such as the CFI and USDE composite score. In addition, the Institution is urged to closely monitor, and refine as appropriate, the recent personnel and process changes initiated to address oversight of Admissions and Financial Aid. (CFRs 3.4, 3.6, 3.7)

- SDC carefully balance their vision and planning for future programmatic expansion with the present foundational need to adequately equip current personnel, and the need to resource existing academic and student service programs. (CFRs 3.3, 3.5, 3.7)

APPENDICES

A. Federal Compliance Forms

    1. Credit Hour Review

    2. Marketing and Recruitment Review

    3. Student Complaint Review

    4. Transfer Policy Review

B. Distance Education Review Form

1 - CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	If so, where is the policy located? The policy is on line, in the catalog, as well on syllabi.
	Comments:
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: It is apparent that there are several procedures to review the policies. Program Review includes a review, but faculty are engaged at least annually to ensure that each program's credit hours are appropriate, and to ensue that this information is clear for student and prospective students.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: Sample schedules show that on-ground course meet the prescribed number of hours.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? 6
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? both
	What degree level(s)? ☐ AA/AS ☒ BA/BS ☐ MA ☐ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Biblical Studies, Business, Communication Human Development, Research (required for several disciplines in Adult & Professional Studies)
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: The Credit Hour Policy is in included on each syllabus.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? 0
	What kinds of courses?
	What degree level(s)? ☐AA/AS ☐BA/BS ☐MA ☐ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? ☐YES ☐ NO
	Comments: Labs are considered part of a regular science course. Internships and clinical experiences are generally included within a course and meet the required hours. No syllabi for independent study were reviewed. (It is clear that independent study is a rare exception.)
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 13
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Traditional and Adult & Professional Studies
	What degree level(s)? ☒AA/AS ☒ BA/BS ☒ MA ☐ Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? What discipline(s)? Aviation, Biblical Studies, Biological Science, Business, Communication, Education, English, History/Social Science, Human Development, Kinesiology, Leadership & Justice, Performing Arts, Psychology
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? ☒ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: Information in the catalog is very clear in terms of requirements for each of the programs. Catalog and other information is available on the website.

Review Completed By: Paula Krist
Date: 3/4/16

2. MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

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

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? ☑ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: For traditional undergraduate student recruitment, SDC follows federal guidelines. For APS student recruitment, SDC follows federal guidelines. For Online student recruitment, SDC contracts with a 3rd party vendor under a proprietary agreement. This agreement was review by WASC liaison and confirmed to follow federal regulations.
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? ☑ YES ☐ NO
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? ☑ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: From the SDC IR: …over the past two years there has been a concerted effort to improve both the communication of programs and policies, and the technology available to inform students of their progress and financial options. In the most recent iteration of the College Catalog, and on web pages, transfer students are informed about the ability to complete a degree in the two years that most transfers desire. The cost of attendance calculator was added to the website within the requirements of the Department of Education several years ago. When asked to provide accurate information on standard costs, fees, and special assessments, the SDC staff copied the information from the website demonstrating our intended transparency. (CFRs 1.6, 2.14) Currently, we have all costs, benefits, policies, procedures, program applications, and grievance processes posted on our public website.
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? ☑ YES ☐ NO
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? ☑ YES ☐ NO
	Comments: Evidence of the kinds of jobs graduates are prepared for is on the website under each major program description. Could not locate information about employment of graduates on the website, however the report said this: We have been able to learn that 53% of our graduates are employed full time or part time in a job related to their field of interest. Another 30% are employed in a job unrelated to the course of study. Finally, 7% were pursuing a graduate degree as their main focus after obtaining a degree from SDC, leaving 10% between jobs or in transition of some kind. (CFRs 2.13, 4.5)

*§602.16(a)(1)(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: Dawn Dirksen
Date: March 3, 2016

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.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
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? The policy and procedures were in the student handbook and on a formal document with the Student Success Coordinator. The Vice President for Academic Affairs also maintains the file in his office since he is the final decision maker based on their protocols.
	Comments:
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? ☒ YES ☐ NO If so, please describe briefly: There is a step process that allows the student to meet with the faculty, Student Success Coordinator, Student Life and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? ☒ YES ☐ NO Students are aware of the process and will often find resolution at the Student Success Coordinator level.
	Comments:
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? ☒YES ☐ NO If so, where? The records are kept with the Student Success Coordinator. However, the Director of Student Life and the Vice President for Academic Affairs may have the records of resolutions that would reach their level.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? ☒ YES ☐ NO If so, please describe briefly: The Student Success Coordinators are central to the tracking and monitoring process of student related concerns, issues and complaints.
	Comments:

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

Review Completed By: Doretha O'Quinn
Date: March 15, 2016

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.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
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? In the SDC College Catalog and on their website.
	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: The SDC Transfer Credit Policy is easily accessible. It provides clear information about the process for having possible transfer credit evaluated, and criteria for what types of credit will be accepted.

*§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: John Hughes
Date: February 18, 2016

B. Distance Education Review-Team Report Appendix

Institution: **San Diego Christian College**

Type of Visit: Accreditation Visit

Name of reviewer/s: John Hughes

Date/s of review: March 1 – 4, 2016

1. Programs and courses reviewed (please list)
   a. Programs:
      - Aviation Science (online)
      - Human Development (online)
      - Psychology (online)
      - Christian Ministries (online)
      - Communication (online)

   b. Courses:
      - BI391: Biblical Perspectives
      - CM410: Nurture & Discipleship
      - Math115: Liberal Arts Math
      - AVT405: Practical Aviation Law
      - ICS 305: Intercultural Communication
      - RSH 495A: Research Capstone 1
      - HD460: Transition, Loss, & Grief
      - BI393: Historical Perspectives of the Gospels

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)

   Figure 1 presents a summary of background and fall 2015 enrollment data for current SDC online degree programs.

Figure 1: SDC Online Programs			
Majors & Degree Levels	**Year Initially Offered**	**Fall 15 Enrollment**	**Percent of Total Fall 15 Enrollment**
AA in General Studies	August 2013	21	2.3%
BA in Christian Ministries	August 2010	66	7.3%
BA in Communication	May 2014	7	0.7%
BA in Human Development	August 2010	73	8.1%
BA in Leadership & Justice	October 2015	New Program	NA
BA in Psychology	May 2014	23	2.5%
BS in Business Administration	August 2010	53	5.8%
BA in Aviation Management	June 2014	0	0%

In fall 2010, SDC began offering online courses toward BA degrees in Christian Ministries, Human Development, and Business Administration. The WSCUC-provided SDC Accreditation History indicates that in August 2013, they received WSCUC substantive change approval to

offer an online AA degree in General Studies. In May 2014 approval was received to offer online BA programs in Communication and Psychology.   Their online BA program in Aviation Management was approved in June 2014. Just recently, in October 2015, approval was received for an online BA in Leadership & Justice.

Figure 2 provides a summary of the growth of the SDC online programs since their beginning until now.

Figure 2: Growth in Student Enrollment in Online Programs						
	Fall Semester Student Enrollment					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Enrollment in all SDC programs	508	676	804	914	966	917
Enrollment in SDC online programs	15	134	271	258	239	245
Percent of online programs enrollment vs. total enrollment	3%	20%	34%	28%	25%	27%
Percent growth of online programs from previous year	N/A	793%	102%	-5%	-7%	3%

SDC currently uses the Edvance 360 learning management system for the delivery of their online program courses.

All undergraduate courses are offered in a 5 week term format. Online programs are structured in a rolling non-term format with students being entered into the SDC student database system in either a fall or spring term. The term dates are different than those for the traditional program, but generally run on the same calendar as the APS onsite programs. For example, the fall 2015 APS term for online runs from 8/17/201-3/20/16 while the spring 2016 APS term will run 3/17/2016 through 9/18/16. The number of five week sessions varies for each term depending on the calendar. It is planned that courses in the graduate programs will be eight rather than five weeks in length.

The course requirements for onsite and online versions of the APS majors are equivalent in order to allow students to move between the face-to-face format and the online format when needed. This provides flexibility in the lives of their adult students.

SDC has contracted with a 3rd party recruiting firm to locate and assist individuals through the admission process for the ASP onsite and online programs. This past year they concluded their contractual arrangement with one firm, and have transitioned to work with a second recruiting firm that has provided better service and a more favorably financial revenue-share based arrangement to the Institution.

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

The Team reviewed a variety of program and course level documentation provided by SDC prior to the visit.   This included policy manuals, sample syllabi, assessment summaries, enrollment, retention and graduation data, and the most recent APS Program Review report.

The Edvance360 online instructional materials courses listed in #1 were reviewed by one visit Team member.

During the campus visit, Team members had a series of meetings with the Academic VP, the APS leadership team, APS faculty, and APS program students.

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry (refer to relevant CFRs to assure comprehensive consideration)	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
Fit with Mission. 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?	SDC's vision is to provide students the options for "multiple-modality" instruction that best meets their needs. They are working toward a unified vision built around their mission statement and strategic plan. The program is one department in the Academic division. Their budget development & management follow the same processes as the other academic departments.	
Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?	Online students are included in a portion of the normal communication flow that goes to all SDC students. All online students are assigned a "graduation coach" who provides a contact for information and support with any issues they might encounter.	
Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the site conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	SDC uses Edvance 360 as their LMS. It has provided a very adequate learning platform for online students including interaction between students and faculty. The College would benefit from stronger integration with its other software platforms.	A stronger strategy for collecting & summarizing assessment data across semester is needed.
Student Support Services: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?	SDC graduation coaches provide a contact point for many of the academic services needed by APS online students. Students are very positive about the support of their graduation coaches. There is limited data about the effectiveness of other services.	Implement mechanisms to more systematically collect data relating to student services.
Faculty. 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?	The APS online program uses a combination of full-time SDC traditional program faculty and adjunct faculty to develop and teach online courses. SDC staff teach some sections of courses. A growing number of APS online courses are becoming available to traditional program students. Online faculty are required to participate in initial orientation and annual renewal training.	A broader range of APS faculty should be involved in the assessment of capstone projects, and discussions about possible program changes.
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)	Programs are designed by APS staff working with faculty. Courses are designed by subject matter experts (faculty & others) working with their designers. Courses are designed to be as close to traditional and APS F2F courses as possible. They check credit hour requirements every cycle the class is offered.	Periodically complete & document a formal credit hour audit.

SDC AV Team Report

Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions' online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?	SDC online programs have not operated long enough to provide useful graduation rate data. SDC provided summaries of retention data for SDC programs in all modalities. Retention rates for online students are somewhat less than for the residential programs. A number of initiatives have been implemented to begin improving in this area.	Give continued attention to implementing strategies for improving online student retention rates.
Student Learning. 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?	Assessment strategies for online programs have been designed to mirror those used in their APS F2F program. Student performance levels appear comparable, but more time and data collection will be necessary before anything definitive can be determined.	
Contracts with Vendors. 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?*	WSCUC staff liaison, Dr. Christopher Oberg, has reviewed the 3rd party recruiting contract, and discussed its terms with SDC staff. He has indicated that the terms of the contract are reasonable and all fall within WSCUC guidelines in this area.	
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?	SDC APS department uses the same process and template for Program Review (PR) that is used by traditional academic programs. Their most recent PR was in 2014. There is a need to update the PR with analysis of student performance data that is specific to each APS major program being offered.	Complete an annual review of APS Capstone projects that involve a wider group of APS online faculty. Update the APS online PR with separate assessments of each major program being offered.