4. Integrative Chapter

In Spring 2000, the Self-Study Steering Committee appointed three Task Forces, each with about fifteen members, to study three different areas of campus concern. Each Task Force had two co-chairs, one faculty member and one administrator. Their membership averaged 15. The first Task Force discussed the Steady-State University; the second examined our new General Education program; the third explored the issue of services to students. These Task Forces worked throughout Fall 2000, and their reports were presented to the Steering Committee in Spring 2001.

Task Force I’s topic was the Steady State University, maintaining educational effectiveness in an era of slow growth. This topic included finances, planning, faculty needs, and faculty roles.

In the past decade, the University has grown in both students and staff; indeed, the University has enjoyed ten years of steady growth since the budget crisis of the early 1990s. However, as California experiences an economic slowdown and as the campus reaches its physical limits for further enrollment growth, it is time to take stock of where we are and where we should be going.

To begin with, Task Force I discussed Enrollment Management. Quite clearly, we are already pushing our limits in terms of classroom space as well as availability of faculty to teach in those classrooms. We have requested and received authorization to apply supplemental admission criteria to our freshman applicants. However, this University prides itself on the diversity of the campus; there is no ethnic majority in California, and there is no ethnic majority in this University. There is great concern among both faculty and administration that this diversity not be diminished by the application of supplemental criteria for admission. Indeed, the Academic Senate, in approving the Impaction Plan, asked for annual demographic reports on entering freshmen to track how the new impaction policy is effecting student demographics. Thus, the first recommendation in our Self-Study is to assess the impact of the Enrollment Management Plan on the demographic, social, and academic characteristics of the entering freshman class.

Coming out of a decade of growth into an era of steady state enrollments, planning becomes even more important. Expanding or adding programs may require shrinking or eliminating other programs, and faculty growth for one discipline means faculty loss for another. With the state facing economic retrenchment and the University facing static enrollment, planning is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The University has a number of well-functioning planning bodies; indeed, faculty participation in budgetary planning is one of the highest in the CSU. We had a hard-working faculty council charged with program review, planning, and the formulation of educational policy. In order to place more emphasis on planning and program review, we divided this council into two, one charged with the development of educational policy, and the other responsible for program review and planning. It is our hope that we will be able to conduct more meaningful program reviews as well as to ensure that the appropriate follow-up activities take place. The first recommendation arising from our examination of program review and planning is to revise the program review instructions to departments in order to make the preparation of the departmental program review a more valuable exercise and integrate program review with departmental planning and program assessment. The second recommen-
The university has seen an increase in retirements in the past decade. Able now to appoint a substantial number of new faculty, we need to determine the proper balance between permanent and temporary faculty. However, the current bulge in retirements will end just as the University’s enrollments stabilize. The tenure-track hiring authorizations we make in the next few years will determine the course of academic programs for the next decade. These decisions must be based on careful use of appropriate data. Thus, the first recommendation on the topic of faculty appointments is to develop a common data set, to include at least tenure density, age distributions, student enrollment trends, and the balance of temporary and permanent faculty. This information, distributed annually to departments and colleges, will serve as a basis for faculty planning. However, we should also ensure that the results of program reviews are reflected in our hiring decisions. Thus, the second recommendation arising from our study of faculty planning is to integrate program review with the annual faculty planning process. And yet another problem lurks in the shadows: what is the appropriate balance between permanent and temporary faculty? How should this be determined? Accordingly, the third recommendation arising from the examination of faculty utilization is to develop a long-term plan to achieve and maintain an appropriate balance between permanent and temporary faculty, and update it annually for planning purposes. However, since reducing our reliance on temporary faculty will not be without cost, the fourth recommendation dealing with the faculty of the future is to analyze the costs of increasing tenure density in an era of steady-state resources.

The last section of our examination of the university and its faculty is concerned with faculty roles and rewards. We wanted to study how the campus should support the efforts of its faculty in teaching, research, and service so as to maximize their effectiveness, maintain their morale, and assure their retention and promotion. We have already appointed a substantial number of new faculty in the last half-decade, and we anticipate appointing still more in the next decade. We need to examine our personnel policies and practices to ensure that they both encourage and nurture the professional development of these new faculty. Faculty roles have radically shifted in the past few years as the impact of technology and communication has been felt on California’s campuses. Accordingly, the first recommendation is to analyze current faculty workloads, including the number of preparations, student loads, and nature of assignments other than teaching for all permanent and temporary faculty across colleges and departments. This analysis should be a consideration in budget decisions for faculty support, professional development, coordination of existing support programs, and priorities for future funding for faculty. Since the CSU is currently conducting a statewide survey of faculty workloads, our recommendation and the CSU’s current survey dovetail quite nicely. However, especially in light of the changes in faculty workload, there are different demands placed on the University’s facilities by newly-appointed faculty. Thus, the second recommendation is to forecast equipment, facilities needs, and office space requirements for faculty likely to be hired in the next decade. Finally, the campus has seen the average age of faculty steadily increase over the past two decades. We need to be sure that we develop faculty leadership skills as a generation of faculty leaders is lost to retirement. We should also ensure that our personnel policies provide appropriate incentives for
faculty at all stages of their careers. The Task Force’s last recommendation is to review existing RTP policies to ensure that they recognize the varieties of teaching, scholarly and creative activity, and service activities expected of our faculty and the differential experiences at different career stages.

Task Force II was assigned the topic of General Education. The University adopted a new General Education Policy in Spring 1998 and is currently implementing the policy, designing and approving courses for the new General Education plan, and designing ways to assess the results.

As with any new policy, we wanted to see if both faculty and students were aware of the goals of the new program. Since new courses are being designed to fit the specifications of the newly adopted policy, there is concern that both faculty and students understand the purpose and goals of the new General Education package. Although there was lengthy and prolonged discussion of the policy as it was being formulated in 1996–1998, we want to ensure that the General Education program is a living entity rather than an embalmed document. Students should gain more from their education if they choose their General Education courses with an understanding of the program’s purposes. Thus, the first recommendation of the Task Force is to assess the effectiveness of our current orientation and mandatory advising process for helping students understand their educational goals. In addition, student awareness of the goals of our General Education program should be supplemented by faculty awareness of those same goals; not all faculty, and not all departments, offer General Education courses. It would benefit our students if all faculty who teach General Education courses explained how their own courses fit into the General Education matrix. Thus, the second recommendation is to assess faculty awareness of the goals of the general education program, find ways to better inform faculty across the University about those goals, and encourage all faculty to explain to students the relevant general education goals of their courses. The University requires freshmen to receive mandatory advising in their first year; this process was designed to ensure that students take courses in the appropriate sequence as they progress through the General Education Program. The Task Force recommends that the University evaluate the current mandatory advising requirements to determine whether they are adequate to ensure student success and progress in the general education program.

Our General Education program is designed to be dynamic and ever-changing. Further, many new courses must be designed that meet the new General Education criteria. Do these new courses actually do what we intended? Are general education courses offering students opportunities to develop and demonstrate important academic skills? Have new curricula and courses been proposed in response to the new General Education program? Have faculty responded to the challenge of creating opportunities for students to be part of learning communities? Perceiving the need to encourage the development of these new courses, the Task Force recommends that the University support and stimulate faculty curricular innovations through campus award programs and faculty development opportunities. Further, they recommend that the focus of this support be on areas of the general education program most in need of development. However, we also want to learn what effect this increased support for curricular development is having; is the support effective in facilitating course development. Thus the Task Force recommends that the University assess the adequacy and effectiveness of faculty development support for making changes in the general education curriculum, paying special attention
to the outcomes of funded projects.

The ubiquitous presence and pervasive effects of technology are transforming the academy. As students entering the university become more comfortable with our new technology, we need to ensure that our General Education program fosters their growth and technological facility. Are general education courses taking advantage of appropriate technologies in support of student learning? Are students developing sophisticated skills in the areas of information competency and use of computers? Thus, the Task Force recommends that the University gather baseline data on the information competency and computer literacy of entering students and assess the extent to which these competencies are being developed in general education courses. Entering students are sometimes more adept with technology than some faculty; faculty need both training in the new technology as well as the appropriate hardware and software. The Task Force recommends that the University support the necessary training efforts to take advantage of available technologies and to stay abreast of new tools for information access.

We need to determine if the management structure now in place is fulfilling its purpose of nurturing the growth of General Education program. Thus, the Task Force recommends that the University assess the effectiveness of the structure for supporting curriculum development within the general education program, examining the roles of the General Education Governing Committee, General Education Coordinator, other faculty governance bodies, and academic administrators.

The new General Education program will not be successful unless and until it is absorbed into the lifework of our academic departments. We need to know if departments that have responsibility for General Education are incorporating it as a meaningful part of their mission. Further, how are departments with responsibility for Foundation courses responding to the challenge of staffing these courses? Are departments treating their General Education responsibilities as adjuncts to, or integral parts of, their academic roles? The Task Force recommends that the University monitor and assess the sufficiency and nature of faculty staffing resources in departments with heavy general education responsibilities, including the balance between temporary and permanent faculty. In addition, it recommends that the colleges encourage their departments to deploy larger numbers of permanent faculty in the general education program.

As Task Force I discussed, the University is rapidly reaching the limits of its ability to provide both classrooms and instructors for the General Education Foundation courses. In view of our burgeoning enrollment, can the University deliver Foundation and other general education courses over the short and long term in sufficient supply to accommodate our students? In the light of increasing demand for General Education Foundation courses, it is even more important that students be advised to take the appropriate classes. The Task Force recommends that the University assess the effectiveness of the advising program (SOAR) with respect to advising of students taking general education courses. In addition, CSU policy urges campuses to provide remedial courses to students within their first year of matriculation. How does the challenge of first-year remediation affect the implementation of general education reform? To explore this question, the Task Force recommends that the University support efforts to reduce the need for remediation in mathematics and English composition and to move students through the required remediation in a timely fashion. In spite of our best efforts, it is likely that
there will still be a significant shortfall in classrooms and instructors for the required first-year General Education Foundation classes. The Task Force recommends that the University monitor course scheduling and continue efforts to reduce the backlog in demand for general education courses, especially in Foundation courses.

As we implement the new General Education Program, we must examine whether that program is working. What effect will the new requirements have on student success in terms of measurable advancement of skills, retention, and progress to degree? In order to obtain the data necessary to understand the effects of the new General Education program, the Task Force recommends that the University develop a comprehensive ongoing assessment plan for the General Education program focused on a review of overall program goals and an evaluation of the extent to which the program goals are being met in practice. The Task Force recommends that the University assess the student learning outcomes of the General Education program.

While there are at least two more years in the implementation phase of the General Education program, the challenge of implementation is gradually being replaced by the long-term needs of coordination and management. Thus the next recommendation is to develop a plan for this coordination. Finally, it will be a priority when the new Student Administration system is implemented to use that system to monitor student progress in completing General Education requirements. Accordingly the Task Force’s final recommendation is to develop such a tracking system.

Task Force III was assigned Services to Students. A common theme that has run through much of our report has been good advising. As the campus becomes more crowded, it is more important than ever that students receive excellent advising services. Indeed, the University has been making an effort to improve academic advising and to see that all incoming students receive advising before enrolling in classes. However, as discussed under Task Force II, two recent changes have made advising especially critical for freshmen: the new General Education policy and the requirement that remediation be completed in the first year. Further, students need to make a smooth transition between the advising provided by the University-administered SOAR and Academic Advising Center and major advising done by academic departments. Thus, the Task Force recommends that we help students move smoothly between General Education advising and departmental major advising. One way to facilitate that transition is to let students know whom to see about what. The Task Force recommends that the University provide students with directory information appropriate to their advising needs. Although at the university level there is considerable consistency in the advising provided to our students, there is considerable variation in the advising provided to students at the department level. Accordingly, the Task Force recommends that the University review the levels of advising provided within each major in order to develop standards and expectations for faculty advising. In order to ensure that advising is both expected and rewarded, the Task Force recommends that the University review appropriate faculty personnel policies and practices to ensure that advising is evaluated as part of teaching effectiveness. Finally, the Task Force addressed the issue of remediation within the first year by recommending that the University work with local high schools to encourage students who need remediation in English or mathematics to enroll in required pre-baccalaureate courses during the summer before their freshman year.
This University has long served non-traditional students. Recently, almost all entering freshmen have been traditional full-time students. This has caused us to re-think the types of services we need to offer. Indeed, the recent increase in the number of traditional, full-time freshmen and residential students has increased the demand for a variety of student services such as personal and social development opportunities, health and psychological services, and sports, athletics and recreational opportunities. Recent events at other CSU campuses have led to the Task Force’s recommendation that the University establish a University-wide committee to develop a comprehensive approach to alcohol and other drug education, prevention, and recovery programs. After a number of years of soft demand, student housing is now overflowing and there is a long list of students who are waiting for a chance to live in the dormitories. To meet this demand, the Task Force recommends that the University develop a description of options, timelines, costs, and funding alternatives so that an early decision can be made on how the University will respond to the unmet demand for student residential housing. As the proportion of traditional students has increased, so has the popularity of the Greek system. In response, the Task Force recommends that the University hone its relationship with fraternity and sorority students, with special emphasis on leadership, responsibility, and service. With more traditional students comes their desire to participate in student government. The Task Force recommends that the University expand leadership development programs for all students. And, as our students increase in number, so does the number of students with disabilities, for whom we must provide services. We have welcomed a disproportionate number of students with disabilities, and we are working vigorously to find the additional resources these students require in order to succeed in our academic environment. The Task Force recommends that the University work with the CSU Chancellor’s Office to develop a funding formula that recognizes the need to provide support for students with disabilities, with the funding based both on the number of students and on the types of disabilities that are accommodated.

The quality of the enrollment services we provide is critical to the success of our students, and yet for many years these services were underfunded. Not by coincidence, for many years, dissatisfaction with Enrollment Services appeared high on the lists of student complaints. The University has made substantial effort to improve all administrative services to students. The implementation of the new Common Management System will require both a large amount of money and a large amount of staff time, but should provide further improvements in services. Yet, as this system is implemented, we must assess how well it is serving our needs. Thus, the Task Force recommends that the University systematically examine the capabilities of the new Student Administration System to monitor and enforce existing academic policies. However, Enrollment Services may be facing yet another challenge. As we move toward Year-Round Operations (YRO), we are faced with the need to provide services as well as classes on a year-round basis. As we modestly expand our distance-learning efforts, we must provide comparable service to those students as well. Thus, even as we are refocusing on the increasing proportion of traditional students, the Task Force recommends that the University also assess its ability to provide appropriate and comparable services to non-traditional, distance-learning, and summer students.

California State University, Long Beach was founded in 1949. Many of our buildings were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s. Fifty years of hard use has taken its toll, and
our aging physical plant is in desperate need of maintenance just at a time when the summer “down time” in which to perform maintenance is threatened by the advent of YRO. This heavy usage of our aging physical plant presents a challenge in maintaining classrooms and providing safe, orderly, and attractive campus grounds and facilities. The Task Force accordingly recommends that the University develop a plan to carry out required maintenance, taking into account the increased utilization resulting from year-round operations. However, in addition to meeting the need for maintenance, we must also find ways to use our existing space more efficiently as our enrollment reaches its physical ceiling and as we appoint more faculty. The Task Force recommends that the University develop plans to meet increased needs for office space for faculty and staff. Finally, to ensure that new and renovated spaces meet the needs of those for whom they are designed, the Task Force recommends that the University consult with users in planning renovations and improvements in facilities.

Short-Term Recommendations that Do Not Require Additional Funding

1. Revise the Program Review instructions to departments in order to make the preparation of the departmental Program Review a more valuable exercise and integrate Program Review with departmental planning and program assessment.

2. Establish a clear line of accountability for the Program Review process itself (e.g., the roles of the department chair, dean, Program Review and Academic Planning Council, and Office of the Provost).

3. Analyze the costs of improving tenure density in an era of steady-state resources.

4. Review existing RTP policies to ensure that they recognize the varieties of teaching, scholarly and creative activity, and service activities expected of our faculty and the differential experiences at different career stages.

5. Find ways to encourage development of faculty leadership skills.

6. Assess the effectiveness of the current process for helping students understand their educational goals (e.g., SOAR orientation and mandatory advising).

7. Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of faculty development support for making changes in the general education curriculum, paying special attention to the outcomes of funded projects.

8. Assess the effectiveness of the structure for supporting curriculum development within the general education program, including the roles of the General Education Governing Committee, General Education Coordinator, other faculty governance bodies, and academic administrators.

9. Assess the effectiveness of the SOAR Program with respect to advising of students taking general education courses.
10. Review the levels of advising provided within each major in order to develop standards and expectations for faculty advising.

11. Review appropriate faculty personnel policies and practices to ensure that advising is evaluated as part of teaching effectiveness.

12. Establish a University-wide committee to develop a comprehensive approach to alcohol and other drug education, prevention, and recovery programs.

13. Work with the CSU Chancellor’s Office to develop a funding formula that recognizes the need to provide support for students with disabilities, with the funding based both on the number of students and on the types of disabilities that are accommodated.

14. Develop a description of options, timelines, costs, and funding alternatives so that an early decision can be made on how the University will respond to the unmet demand for student residential housing.

15. Examine systematically the capabilities of the new Student Information System to monitor and enforce existing academic policies.

16. Assess the campus’ ability to provide appropriate and comparable services to non-traditional, distance-learning, and summer students.

Short-Term Recommendations that Do Require Additional Funding

1. Assess the impact of the Enrollment Management Plan on the demographic, social, and academic characteristics of the entering Freshman class.

2. Evaluate the current mandatory advising requirements to determine whether they are adequate to ensure student success and progress in the general education program.

3. Develop ways to track student progress, including timely progress toward completion of general education requirements in the new student administration system.

4. Assess the student learning outcomes of the General Education program.

5. Develop a plan to carry out required maintenance, taking into account the increased utilization resulting from year-round operations.

Long-Term Recommendations that Do Not Require Additional Funding

1. Integrate program review with the annual faculty planning process.

2. Hone the institution’s relationship with fraternity and sorority students, with special emphasis on leadership, responsibility, and service.

3. Consult with users in planning renovations and improvements in facilities.
Long-Term Recommendations that Do Require Additional Funding

1. Develop a common data set, to include at least tenure density, age distributions, student enrollment trends, and balance of temporary and permanent faculty, for annual distribution to departments and colleges, to serve as a basis for faculty planning.

2. Develop a long-term plan to achieve and maintain an appropriate balance between permanent and temporary faculty, and update annually for planning purposes.

3. Analyze current faculty workloads, including the number of preparations, student loads, and nature of assignments other than teaching for all permanent and temporary faculty across colleges and departments. This analysis should be a consideration in budget decisions for faculty support, professional development, coordination of existing support programs, and priorities for future funding for faculty.

4. Forecast equipment, facilities needs, and office space requirements for faculty likely to be hired in the next decade.

5. Assess faculty awareness of the goals of the general education program. Find ways to better inform faculty across the University about those goals and encourage all faculty to explain to students the relevant general education goals of their courses.

6. Support and stimulate faculty curricular innovations through campus award programs and faculty development opportunities. Focus this support on areas of the general education program most in need of development, such as Pathways.

7. Gather baseline data on the information competency and computer literacy of entering students and assess the extent to which these competencies are being developed in general education courses.

8. Support the necessary training efforts to take advantage of available technologies and to stay abreast of new tools for information access.

9. Monitor and assess the sufficiency and nature of faculty staffing in departments with heavy general education responsibilities, including the balance between temporary and permanent faculty.

10. Encourage departments to deploy larger numbers of permanent faculty in the general education program.

11. Develop a plan for the coordination and management of general education, including further definition of the roles and responsibilities of the Coordinator and academic administrators.

12. Support efforts to reduce the need for remediation in mathematics and English composition and to move students through the required remediation in a timely fashion.
13. Monitor course scheduling and continue efforts to reduce the backlog in demand for general education courses, especially in Foundation courses.

14. Develop a comprehensive ongoing assessment plan for the General Education program, focused on a review of the overall program goals and an evaluation of the extent to which the program goals are being met in practice.

15. Help students move smoothly between General Education advising and departmental major advising.

16. Provide students with directory information appropriate to their advising needs.

17. Work with local high schools to encourage students who need remediation in English or mathematics to enroll in required pre-baccalaureate courses during the summer before their freshman year.

18. Expand leadership development programs for all students.

19. Develop plans to meet increased needs for office space for faculty and staff.