ESSAY 7 – SUSTAINABILITY: FINANCIAL VIABILITY; PREPARING FOR THE CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT (CFRS 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3-4.7)

CSU Bakersfield’s approach to long-term financial viability depends upon the continued support of the State of California and the Chancellor’s Office. Moreover, CSU Bakersfield’s financial viability also depends upon support from our stakeholders, including tuition and fees from students. The state of California and CSU Bakersfield students have entrusted the university with resources, which must be effectively and judiciously allocated to expand educational opportunities in this region.

7.1 FINANCIAL POSITION (CFR 3.4 and 4.6)

The California State University (CSU) System was created in 1960 to provide quality and affordable education in the State of California. The CSU is the largest four-year public university system in the world, and one of the most diverse university systems in the United States. With approximately 3.4 million alumni, it is estimated that one in every 20 college graduates in the country is a graduate from the CSU. In 2016-2017, the CSU provided education to over 472,000 students. For every $1 invested in the CSU, it is estimated that $5.43 is invested back into the California’s economy [CSU Financial Statements doc. 3.4:26]. CSU Bakersfield was founded in 1965. The University serves approximately 10,000 students on its main campus and the campus in Antelope Valley. The University aims to provide financial transparency, integrity, and funding for future strategic initiatives to increase growth and diversity in learning experience for our students and community [link: CSU Bakersfield Strategic Plan].

In the 2017-18 state budget, the state of California allocated approximately $6.4 billion to the CSU system. The system also received one-time funding of approximately $75 million to support the system-wide Graduation Initiative 2025 to align graduation rates with the national averages. An additional $20 million was provided for enrollment growth, the equivalent of 2,500 full-time students or 3,000 headcount [link: CSU State Budget]. CSU Bakersfield received approximately $126 million of these funds, including $2.4 million related to the graduation initiative and $564,000 for enrollment growth [CSU Bakersfield Final Budget Memo 3.4:24].

For the 2018-19 budget year, the CSU Board of Trustees requested a $282.9 million budget increase to support the Graduation Initiative 2025, compensation, enrollment growth, facilities and infrastructure needs, and mandatory costs [CSU Bakersfield One-time allocation xls. 3.4:25]. The governor approved only $92.1 million of the request. This created a system-wide budget deficit of approximately 1.4%, which poses problems for the system as well as for CSU Bakersfield. Amid the continuing increase in higher education costs and concerns regarding state support, CSU Bakersfield is
committed to academic excellence and the preparation of students for their future careers. CSU Bakersfield remains an affordable option in higher education.

The institution is financially stable and has multiple revenue streams to support its operations. As of June 30, 2017, CSU Bakersfield had combined net assets of $66.8 million. Net assets consist of funding from the state ($23.2 million) and auxiliary organizations ($43.6 million). Auxiliary organizations include student self-governance, the student union and recreation center, philanthropic activities, and externally supported research and sponsored program [CSU Financial Statements doc.3.4:26].

With the concerns regarding state support, CSU Bakersfield has been reviewing initiatives to reduce costs and diversify its financial resources. These initiatives include increased use of technology to streamline processes, transparency in financial reporting with budget software, campus engagement in and awareness of the budget process, and the implementation of a salary management tool to gain a better understanding of salary costs. In the past year, the University President and Vice President of Business Administrative Services conducted quarterly budget forum meetings. This allowed campus to voice concerns and priorities regarding budget funding [link: Webcast CSU Bakersfield Budget Forum]. Information regarding the budget is made readily available to campus on the Budget Central website [link: CSU Bakersfield Budget Central website]. Departments are also requested to review actuals compared to budget dollars on a regular basis. These enhancements have allowed the University to address fiduciary concerns in a timelier fashion.

In addition, the CSU Bakersfield Budget & Planning Committee functions to make recommendations to the Academic Senate on all policies and procedures related to: setting institutional priorities, allocating and utilizing university resources, approving the Academic Plan and new academic programs, reviewing existing programs, and responding to the needs of the service region. The committee also monitors the university’s planning processes and coordinates revisions to the Mission and Goals Statement [link: CSU Bakersfield Budget and Planning website].

Moreover, the University continues to review other opportunities to diversify its funding sources. This diversification includes expanding programming in Extended University [link: CSU Bakersfield EUD website], increasing philanthropic efforts, and encouraging faculty to secure grants [link: Grants and Sponsored Awards].

7.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL CAMPUS (CFRs 3.5, 4.6, and 4.7)
The Board of Trustees approved the physical plans for the construction of the CSU Bakersfield campus in the spring of 1969. It opened in September 1970 as the 19th campus of the CSU system, with an initial size of 92,000 square feet and 859 students enrolled. During the first decade, additional classroom facilities were built, including Dorothy Donohoe Hall (general lecture), science and physical education facilities. Over the next 40 years, the campus continued to grow to meet the needs of the community. The Icardo Center athletic facility, the Education building, the Music Addition and the Walter Stiern Library were all built in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the twenty-first century, the campus has continued to expand, with the construction of the Business Development Center, a 39,000-square-foot facility including classrooms, offices and conference spaces. In 2009, a state-of-the-art, 75,000-square-foot Student Recreation Center was built. The Visual Arts Center, opened in 2014, includes specialized studio/lab environments for work in ceramics, sculpture, painting, drawing, and digital art. In January 2015, students moved into Student Housing East, a three-building housing complex on the northeast side of campus. And in Fall 2017, faculty and staff in the School of Arts & Humanities moved into a new 13,865-square-foot Humanities Office Building, designated as LEED Gold equivalent, which replaced the seismically deficient Faculty Towers, which has been demolished. The physical infrastructure of CSU Bakersfield reflects foresight and planning to enhance the student experience. The current Master Plan is approved for an enrollment of 18,000 students within the next 15 to 20 years. One challenge with such growth is classroom space. The CSU Bakersfield Classroom Task Force has been developing standards and recommendations for the administration to consider during the next phase of our Master Planning process.

In 2016, the campus underwent a planning process to determine the next academic building that should be added to campus [link: Academic Facilities Master Plan website]. The process engaged both internal and external constituencies in visualizing the next facility, through the use of conversation and data [Academic Facilities Master Plan doc. 4.6:38]. Three proposals were developed in consultation with the faculty, for a new Media and Performing Arts Center [doc. 4.6:36], a new Social Sciences and Education Building [doc. 4.6:39], and an Energy and Engineering Innovation Center [doc. 4.6:37]. The last proposal was selected for further development, while the other two will be priorities for later growth.

The Energy and Engineering Innovation Center will support modern, high-impact practices in teaching; cutting-edge, collaborative, interdisciplinary research; and community outreach and partnerships. It will house the Department of Physics and Engineering, the California Energy Research Center (CERC), the Fab Lab (an advanced digital-fabrication laboratory sponsored by MIT’s Center for Bits and Atoms), and the School of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering (NSME) Office of
Grants and Outreach. It will also include teaching laboratories, student-faculty research labs, and a 240-seat auditorium and event space accessible to the entire university.

Future academic projects will include the proposed Social and Behavioral Sciences Building to consolidate instructional space and faculty offices for the Social and Behavioral Science program in a new centralized building. The Media and Performing Arts Center will provide a new two-story building with a state-of-the-art communications facility on the second floor and multiple performance spaces on the first floor. The facilities in the Center will support the Public Relations, Journalism, Digital Media, Film, General Education, Theatre, Music, and Liberal Studies programs. The Renaissance Hall project will provide a new three-story multi-purpose building to promote collaboration and social spaces and community interaction, including a Welcome Center, a new home for the Academic Advising and Resource Center, and café spaces. The first floor will include spaces suitable for large events and conferences. Upper floors will include inter-departmental classrooms, faculty offices, and student support spaces. The Faculty Office Building, a new three-story faculty office and administration building, is planned to be located adjacent to the newly constructed Humanities Complex. In addition to the new Academic Facilities, two new Student Residence Halls are also being planned in the Northeast area of campus and initial planning has begun on the renovation and expansion of the Student Union facility.

In late 2015, CSU Bakersfield created a two-tiered governance structure to support and champion information technology and to deliver those services sufficient in scope, quality and currency to support the institution’s academic and administrative needs.

The Information Technology Committee (ITC) discusses issues, challenges, needs and opportunities that should be realized to support the campus community [ITC Charter doc. 3.4:31]. ITC has faculty representation from each school and academic leadership from the Library, Instructional Development, Academic Operations and Support, Sponsored Program Administration, Enrollment Management, Institutional Research, as well as representation our Associated Students and Student Affairs division. This cross-sectional committee develops an annual roadmap and funding requests, and sets the priorities and funding for information technology projects and services that will benefit students, faculty and staff in achieving our campus strategic objectives. The funding requests are discussed and prioritized by the University Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee, with the President making the final decision.

Within the ITS Roadmap, CSU Bakersfield has identified permanent funds to invest in the quality and currency of our instructional facilities and computer labs, providing students with access to up-to-date computers, software, and high-speed internet. Our investments also aim to increase the availability and proliferation of the campus wireless
network, the primary network for learning and extra-curricular activities [ITC Roadmap 3.4:34].

CSU Bakersfield has also invested in moving campus services to the cloud, notably the Learning Management System, Blackboard, adding to the reliability and availability of technology services to our students and faculty. Faculty who wish to teach online or in a hybrid course are required to be certified to deliver training. The certification is dictated by the Distributed Learning Committee (DLC), and the standard is informed by the Distributed Learning Policy. To date, 180 faculty have been certified to teach online/hybrid courses. There are also general training courses available on campus for tools and technology that are used. To support the administrative tools for faculty, Office 365 training is offered several times per term. From 2015-2017, 107 faculty have attended general training courses to increase their proficiency with technologies.

One of CSU Bakersfield’s self-supported projects is the University Police Relocation. This project will expand and relocate the University Police Department and Emergency Operations Center to a more visible, accessible location. The project will renovate an existing modular building, provide a new relocatable structure, and parking for police equipment and vehicles.

7.3 THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF (CFR 4.7)

The number of all full-time teaching faculty, increased by 13.8% in 2016-17 compared to 2011-12. In 2016-17, seventy-one percent of all full-time faculty at CSUB were either tenured or on tenure-track. The comparable system-wide number is 79%. Faculty hiring can have a significant impact on the direction and growth of the university as it prepares to address new academic priorities as well as the availability of resources. Unlike in the past, the number of new hires grew significantly in academic year 2016-2017. This growth was experienced in all of the academic schools. Moreover, there was gender parity among the new hires in 2016-2017. However, the racial/ethnicity of the new hires do not adequately reflect the student population [Faculty and Staff Profile doc.4.7:26].

A diverse faculty can benefit the university by uniquely engaging students in the classroom, improving student retention and degree completion rates, and enhancing campus pluralism. One of the more compelling arguments for diversity is the direct impact teaching practices have on student learning outcomes. Faculty members of color are more likely to engage students in classroom dialogue and provide additional readings on issues of race and ethnicity that challenge students’ preconceived ideas of racial/ethnic groups.
The Faculty and Staff profile data shows that, in comparison to student body, African Americans and Hispanics are underrepresented in the faculty. The percentage of female faculty is also low in comparison to the student body. Despite efforts to hire tenure-track faculty the tenure density percentage at CSUB has progressively declined over the last decade. CSUB’s tenure density has closely mirrored the system-wide percentage until fall 2016. With the recent allocation of funding for new tenure and tenure-tracks hires, the percentage is expected to improve [Faculty and Staff Profile doc.4.7:26]. In reference to the diversity of the university’s staff, the data indicates that 56% of the staff are non-Caucasian persons. Clearly, the diversity of CSU Bakersfield’s staff mirrors the diversity of the student body and overall community in Bakersfield.

7.4 FINANCIAL PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING (CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 4.3, and 4.7)

Over the last 15 years, CSU Bakersfield has employed a strategy to make the University more accessible to students in the region. Under President Horace Mitchell, the campus undertook a series of physical, programmatic and cultural projects to support this strategic goal, including:

- Transitioning to a Division I Athletics program
- Constructing buildings for the Schools of Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering, and a new dormitory complex
- Expanding Discretionary Funding through Student-Supported Fee Initiatives
- Shifting some services to self-support status

In July of 2018, Dr. Lynnette Zelezny became the fifth permanent President of CSU Bakersfield and its first female President. Dr. Zelezny will be developing a strategic vision and direction for the university in consultation with students and faculty.

Over the past decade, the funding model in the CSU has been an allocation-based model, whereby the governor and legislature negotiate in a process that considers state financial resources and the priorities of the governmental and political systems. Generally, the model is increased or decreased incrementally from the base budget of the previous year. Funds are then controlled by the CSU Chancellor’s Office and allocated to each campus based on enrollment growth [link: CSU Budget webpage]. The dissemination of funds from the Chancellor’s Office has varied over the past decade, in both amount and timeliness.

CSU Bakersfield has entered most operational years with a picture of expenses from the past year, but no firm expectation of revenues for the new year. In some years, the base budget has been increased based on FTEs, while in other years the campus has been informed that FTEs increases would not be funded. Over the past decade, CSU Bakersfield has sometimes faced declining allocations, slow growth, and increased
costs. About 90 percent of expenditures are for salaries and benefits, and 70 percent of revenues are from financial aid [University Strategic Planning and Budget Cmte. Presentation ppt. 3.4:29]. In the CSU Bakersfield service area, this has meant students and families must assume more of the financial responsibility for tuition, and the university has had to assume more responsibility for managing the structural imbalances.

The President's Council is responsible for developing the strategic plan and delegating implementation of the plan to the University Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Group, a 31-member body that includes the President’s Cabinet and other department and program representatives [University Strategic Planning and Budget Cmte. Charter doc. 3.4:27]. The actions of the University Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (USPB) have been directed toward “maintaining institutional viability in light of fiscal challenges and opportunities.” Recently this group recognized the need to adapt the incremental budget and planning model, and began to incorporate a more strategic focus toward a blended financial model. The committee has now reorganized to focus attention on prioritizing strategic objectives and linking them to financial resources, but the financial model itself is still evolving. Also key has been developing a communication structure that links strategic planning objectives to faculty, staff and students on, and also communicates the outcomes, strengths, and limitations of the continuous quality improvement processes. Three themes emerged from recent USPB meetings, which constrain CSU Bakersfield’s strategic direction.

- The fixed expenses, salaries and benefits, are ninety percent of the budget and increasing.
- The FTE reimbursement rate in the CSU began and ended the decade at $2.97 and was marked by a low in AY 2011-12 of $2.00 per FTE.
- Funding for special initiatives, deferred maintenance, and infrastructure improvements are one time allocations.

In recent years, tension has existed between several faculty members and the administration regarding a lack of budget information, which was interpreted as a lack of transparency and a disrespect for shared governance principles. The Academic Senate’s Budget and Planning Committee and the Academic Senate focused attention on these issues over the past two academic years. Competition for scarce resources has escalated, especially over position funding control and the hiring of new faculty. The process of approval of new lines was unclear, and in response, the Provost has returned to linking UPRC Program Review results with the position approval process through a MOU with degree programs.
This tension resulted in several changes, in terms of communication and structure. First, the Academic Senate resolved that “that faculty will actively participate in the annual university budgeting process, as indicated in the attached calendar; and be it further that the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment (IRPA), and the Budget Office provide requested data, based on the timeline laid out in the annual budget calendar, to the Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) of the Academic Senate” [RES 171813 doc. 3.7:15].

The tension also led to a university-wide conversation about the amount of budget information shared across the university at all levels, as well as better mechanisms to facilitate communication. In 2018, President Mitchell approved a new structure whereby the Chief Financial Officer would serve as an ex officio to the Academic Senate’s Budget and Planning Committee (BPC). The purpose of the change was to “…improve BAS understanding of faculty concerns and needs, and BPC’s understanding of campus budgetary resources, processes, and reporting” [RES 171810 doc. 3.7:14]. The campus expects these conversations to continue under the new Zelezny administration.

7.5 STRATEGIC RESOURCE DECISION-MAKING (CFRs 3.4, 4.3, and 4.6)

The University Strategic Planning & Budget Advisory Committee (USPB) was established with the intent to monitor progress towards the achievement of CSU Bakersfield’s strategic plan and related goals and objectives. The USPB reviews the strategic plan and institutional metrics and data, and provides input on the budget strategy. It makes budget priority recommendations to the President to support the strategic plan and academic mission and maintain institutional viability in light of fiscal challenges and opportunities.

Despite continuing budget constraints, CSU Bakersfield has remained committed to President Mitchell’s vision of providing more access to all first-time freshman and upper-division transfer students who meet CSU’s admission requirements within the local service region. A newly released report by the California Department of Education shows that Kern County’s high school graduation rate is 79.8 percent, an increase of 3.4 percent over last year. Kern High School District (KHSD), among the largest high school districts in the nation, has nearly 40,000 enrolled students. KHSD graduation rate is 84.4 percent, an increase of 4.8 percent from last year. With the exception of Nursing, CSU Bakersfield intends to remain an un-impacted campus. This status has resulted in significant enrollment growth, exceeding funded enrollment targets (from 6,681 in fall 2012 to 7,724 in fall 2017). In this period, headcount increased by 13.6% while full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment increased by 8.5%. Clearly, this level of enrollment growth is consistent with the strategic vision of increasing access.
The USPB puts shared governance into practice by gathering input regarding broad budget allocations [USPB 16/17 Budget Presentation ppt. 3.4:29]. As can be seen in the fiscal year 2016-17 budget history, CSU Bakersfield had a total budget of $116,081,774, of which $62,226,248 (53%) was allocated to Academic Affairs. When this allocation is combined with the co-curricular allocations for Student Affairs ($8,038,031), the total allocated to student learning and develop is over 60% of the total university budget. This pattern of allocation is consistent with the current strategic vision of the university [CSU Bakersfield Budget History 16/17 doc. 3.4:37].

Because CSU Bakersfield’s tenure-track faculty are the foundation of its present and future success, the university has made a commitment to increase the percentage of faculty that are on the tenure track, also referred to as tenure-track density. Tenure-track density peaked before the mid-decade recession at just under 70%, as can be seen on slide 10 of the USPB 2016-17 Budget Presentation [USPB 16/17 Budget Presentation ppt. 3.4:29]. By 2016, the CSU Bakersfield’s tenure track density had fallen to roughly 55%. In recognition of the importance of tenure-track faculty to the university, a campus-wide conversation has developed in reference to the allocation of resources to increase tenure-track density over a five-year period.

The Faculty Hiring Initiative is an example of the shared governance process at CSU Bakersfield. Moreover, the initiative shows the university’s willingness to ensure educational effectiveness in the future, beyond the five-year period. In 2017-18, the Academic Senate conducted an analysis that compared the institution’s graduation rate to the campus-wide student-faculty ratio (SFR) [Faculty Hiring Initiative doc. 3:4.37]. In general, the analysis demonstrated that as SFR increases there is a negative effect upon the institution’s graduation rate. The Academic Senate passed Resolution #171809 in support of spending university resources to increase tenure-track density. After reviewing the Academic Senate’s resolution, President Mitchell tabled the resolution pending the opinion of CSU Bakersfield’s new President Zelezny.

7.6 CAMPUS BUDGET PRACTICES (CFRs 3.4, 4.3 and 4.7)

The CSU Chancellor’s Office has established a budget oversight policy, ensuring that the chief financial officer on each campus certify that budget reviews occur during the fiscal year; compare budget, actual revenues and expenditures; and take action to resolve any discrepancies in a timely manner [CSU Bakersfield Budget Oversight Policy doc. 3.4:36]. In addition, each campus is required to establish written policies and procedures reflecting the frequency of reviews to monitor budget performance. CSU Bakersfield has established a campus fiscal responsibility policy, stating that the
campus will exercise appropriate fiscal responsibility over all funds appropriated to and, or, deposited within the campus [Fiscal Responsibility Policy doc. 3.4:35]. The annual university budget process fulfills the requirements of shared governance by gathering input from campus stakeholders, including the Academic Senate and the Information Technology Council (ITAC). The campus budget is then built in draft form and shared with the President’s Cabinet before implementation [Budget Governance Process doc. 4.7:25]. Appropriate fiscal responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Ensuring that expenditures and expenditure commitments do not exceed available resources.
- Ensuring that funds are expended for the purposes, and within the time periods intended.
- Ensuring that internal controls are applied to protect campus funds from misuse.
- Ensuring that all receipts and expenditures are correctly classified to meet external reporting requirements and to provide for internal management reporting.
- Ensuring compliance with all CSU and campus policies relating to the collection, deposit, and expenditure of funds.

As part of its commitment to fiscal responsibility, the campus conducts several university-wide financial assessments annually, which include a mid-year as well as year-end review. The financial assessment includes communication with the following representatives:

- Campus President
- Division Vice Presidents
- Division Associate Vice Presidents or College Deans
- Division and/or College Budget Liaisons
- Vice President for Business and Administrative Services/Chief Financial Officer
- Associate Vice President for Financial Services/Controller
- University Director of Budget
- Budget Analyst(s)

This policy has been established to ensure compliance with state and CSU system-wide agreements and to develop a mechanism for better understanding of the full cost of campus activities.

7.7 AUXILIARY RESOURCES (CFRs 3.4 and 4.3)
Auxiliary organizations provide supplemental services and support to CSU Bakersfield. Auxiliary organizations are structured as legally separate non-profit organizations that operate according to written operating agreements with the CSU system's Board of Trustees. Each auxiliary organization has a separate governing board, and follow all legal rules and policies established by the CSU system and the campus [link: CSU Auxiliary website]. Auxiliaries are created to support functions that may be restricted or not supported by state funding. In addition, auxiliaries can also provide an additional source of revenue to enhance the student experience. Importantly, the university harnesses these additional resources to reduce the burden of overall expenses. Through the strategic plan, the university aligns these additional resources with its educational mission. CSU Bakersfield's auxiliary activities include the following:

- Student self-governance (Associated Students, Inc.)
- The Student Union and Student Recreation Center
- Externally-supported research and sponsored programs, including workshops, institutes or conferences (Auxiliary for Sponsored Programs)
- Philanthropic activities, including acceptance of donor gifts (CSU Bakersfield Foundation)

Associated Students, Inc. (ASI,) established in 1976 as a student self-governance organization, represents the student body’s interests and addresses issues impacting the student experience on campus. This auxiliary collects student fees to support a variety of clubs and organizations, activities, service, athletics, and the Children’s Center on campus. ASI collected $3.6 million in fiscal year 2016-17 and $3.3 million in 2015-16 to support these activities [link: ASI Audited Statement website].

The Student Union, established in 1994, and Student Recreation Center, established in 2005, share a mission of enhancing the quality of student life on campus through exposure to various student-centered programming and events. The Student Union provides a space in which students can meet, organize, attend events, study engage socially [link: Student Union website]. The Student Recreation Center (Center) provides an environment in which students can develop their physical and mental well-being through fitness, sports, and wellness programming. The Center provides a variety of programming and services, including outdoor adventure trips, group exercise classes, intramural sports, rock climbing, personal training, special events, etc. Combined these two organizations generated revenues of $4.8 million in fiscal year 2016-17 and $4.2 million in fiscal year 2015-16, including student fees and other revenues generated from the rental of facilities, membership fees, etc. [link: Student Union Audited Statements].

The Auxiliary for Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA) was established in 2009 to support the university in obtaining grants and contracts for faculty and staff research.
and educational projects. Awards may be generated from federal, state, or local resources. These awards assist in educational, research and service related-activities that enhance the learning opportunities of the students [link: GRASP website]. In fiscal year 2016-17, SPA administered 60 new and continuing awards totaling approximately $8 million, which represents a $1 million increase over 2015-2016 [link: GRASP Audited Financials].

The CSU Bakersfield Foundation was established in 1969 as a philanthropic organization to increase private support, i.e. donations and gifts, to the university in the areas of student scholarships, campus programming, and improvement and enhancement of campus facilities [link: CSU Bakersfield Foundation website]. From fiscal year 2015-16 to fiscal year 2016-17, contributions decreased from $5.8 million to $3.8 million. Despite this decrease in contribution, the university’s endowment held by the Foundation increased to approximately $33 million, compared to $28 million in fiscal year 2015-2016 [link: CSU Bakersfield Foundation Audit Statements].

7.8 RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROGRAM REVIEW AND EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.7)

As described in Essay 6, the faculty-driven Academic Program Review process requires that academic programs submit a Self-Study to the University Program Review Committee (UPRC). Each academic program is evaluated every seven years [link: Program Review Schedule]. The department’s or program’s self-study reflects upon measures of student involvement in scholarship and/or creative activities as well as evidence of alumni and employer satisfaction. Data on student retention and graduation rates, time to degree, and units at graduation is provided and analyzed in terms of program effectiveness [link: Academic Program Review Process]. In addition to the content described in detail in Essays 3 and 6, the program review process at CSU Bakersfield includes a considerable resource allocation component, which starts with the data provided through the program profile. The program profile is a data summary of the degree-granting program’s academic and student success metric, including financial information [Program Profile Summary Data xls. 3:7.16]. In the referenced file, the first tab indicates the instructional cost of each academic program disaggregated by faculty type. This information is used to compute the overall cost of each degree. The UPRC reviews this data with specific attention to comparing the current and historical costs of delivering the program as well as the university’s average program costs. Importantly, this data is also made available to the external reviewer, who provides an outside perspective on department expenses.

After external review, the UPRC composes a letter that outlines the UPRC’s observations and recommendations. Recommendations usually address possible areas
of improvement as well as support for or reservations about program requests for new positions and other resources. As described in Essay 6, the Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plan (MOUAP) is the final step in the process [MOUAP Tracking Grid doc. 4.4:66]. The MOUAP is a central document where the alignment of resources with the educational goals of the department and the university can be identified [MOUAP Template doc. 4.4:67]. For example, in 2015, the Art Department completed the MOUAP process, which demonstrates its negotiated and transactional nature, as the department’s strengths and weaknesses are noted [Art Department 2015 MOUAP doc. 4.4:68]. Importantly, the Art Department also stipulates areas in which the university needs to provide better financial and facilities support. Lastly, the document indicates projected hires for the department.

7.9 CONCLUSIONS

This essay has conveyed the institution’s approach to financial viability, and its dependence upon the continued support of the state of California and the CSU Chancellor’s Office. The process and systems used to determine the university’s resources, including the role of the state and the Office of the Chancellor, are described in detail. Moreover, this essay elaborates upon the systems used to align those resources with the strategic direction of the university, as well as its educational effectiveness.