B. Framing the Review Process to Connect the Capacity and Educational Effectiveness Reviews

The overarching goal for this accreditation review process is to build our reflective, academic research-based culture of evidence in order to enhance student learning. Pepperdine's research-based culture of evidence lies within the academic community itself, where students and faculty seek the truths offered through research and are transformed by those truths. The subject under inquiry in this research model is the academic process itself, where students and faculty are both mentors and protégés of the discipline in which they engage. Faculty teach in order to prepare students for a life of the mind, based on the ability to critically navigate their worlds—asking questions, formulating approaches to answering these questions, and reflecting on what they learn. In other words, the purpose is to teach so students learn deeply how to learn for their entire lives. And in turn, students assist faculty in becoming students of the teaching/learning process.

In the academic world, perhaps most especially in a school in which there is a focused mission and a sincere effort to maintain ties with the spiritual roots of the founder-- autonomy and individuality have traditionally been highly prized. Assessment serves the valuable role of bringing all of the players together around the same table of inquiry, thereby creating community. Faculty members discuss student learning and course structure in order to make adjustments to curricula and syllabi. In the safety of focused discourse, both effective and ineffective approaches to pedagogy are identified. To capture faculty imagination and turn it into an intellectual inquiry, research questions are posed about the academic program, such as how well students are meeting the goals established for each discipline. Using a research model to investigate courses allows us to rely on actual student learning and performance as evidence for the quality of our academic programs.

The purpose of building a culture of evidence is not the mere accumulation of data, but rather the honing of fruitful inquiry and ongoing dialogue about our academic community. Although we are accumulating many data-rich artifacts in our Institutional Portfolio, the most important part of this process is our ability to ask good questions and draw solid conclusions. A research-based culture of evidence has begun to flourish at Pepperdine University among students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board of Regents who anticipate the WASC process as important in assisting the institution in increasingly becoming a reflective group of learners who rely on and utilize meaningful data.

Connections to Institutional Proposal Themes

Assessment employs a key pedagogy, reflective repetition, and is therefore part of the **deep learning** process. Reflective repetition requires that we re-experience learning and therefore engage with our discipline more deeply than can occur in one sitting. Only when we become authentic in a reflection on shared work—research—can we learn most deeply. Furthermore, assessment requires an end, a destination for its work. Our goal is to build

programs and educational experiences that help our students contribute to the **common good**. Our program review process helps us accomplish this by forcing us to focus on what students will become as a result of their learning experiences.

Approach for the Capacity and Preparatory Review

The Capacity Review is our opportunity to demonstrate that we are faithful stewards of the capital (spiritual, human, financial, and physical) that are required to sustain an academy. In order to conduct this review, we plan to use the model of the academic conference. Our own university community will host and participate in this conference, featuring our capacity and preparatory review, while WASC visiting team will serve as our guests and adjudicators. Thus, we see this as both a formative and summative opportunity to engage our own campus culture in an important academic conference about ourselves and to summarize the work we have done since our last reaccreditation cycle.

Academic communities gather at conferences to collaborate and engage in the advancement of their discipline. Thus, as a natural extension of our research-based culture, both the capacity and educational effectiveness reviews will be presented as academic conferences. Each conference will include a conference book, containing the papers and presentations that are planned for conference. At each conference, we will have plenary, concurrent, and poster sessions that demonstrate and substantiate the claims made about our work as a university.

The conference format will allow us to share our WASC accreditation process and to strengthen our research-based culture. Modeling our approach as an academic conference will also help bring about our goal for the WASC review: to enhance student learning. These processes have and will continue to engage our entire community, thereby strengthening us, as well as helping us communicate with one another about how we learn as an organization. We will reflect on both our ability to provide a space for learning and our faithfulness to the disciplines as they effectively advance learning. To enhance our research-based culture, we use the research methodology of the academy, a methodology that we employ throughout our institution: hypothesize, experiment, analyze, and change. The academic conference format allows us to include all four of these components.

Here is an outline of the format of our conference:

Capacity Conference: Our Academic Space
>   Plenary Addresses
>> *Pepperdine University as an Academic Space*
>> *Our Space within Christian Higher Education*
>   Concurrent Sessions – Papers and presentations by university leaders - including
>> *Key Indicators: National Benchmarks & Local Metrics*
>> *Spiritual Capacity Among our Faculty*
>> *Spiritual Capacity Among our Students*
>> *Intellectual Capacity*
>> *Social Capacity—Diversity & Moral Development*

Financial Capacity
Physical Capacity
Technological Capacity
Library Capacity
Faculty Scholarship
Poster Sessions by faculty, students, administrators, and alumni
Criteria For Review – Self-Review & The Four Standards

Our plan is to submit our Capacity & Preparatory Review Report to WASC in the form of our final *Conference Program*, complete with the required elements designated by WASC, as well as materials prepared by the university community. We will make this report (program) available to the visiting team before the Conference itself. When we actually convene the WASC site visit, our university community will host the Capacity Conference, engaging in active dialogue with one another and with the WASC visiting team.

Our timeline for The Capacity & Preparatory Review/Conference process is as follows:

- Call for proposals - Concurrent Sessions, Papers, Posters – January 2010
- Screening of Proposals – Spring 2010
- Preparation of Draft of Capacity & Preparatory Review Report (Preliminary Capacity Conference Program) – including all required WASC elements, Conference Schedule, abstracts of Plenaries, Concurrent Session abstracts, Paper highlights, and Poster summaries - Summer 2010
- Capacity Conference Program Submittal – October 15, 2010
- WASC Visiting team participation in **Capacity Conference: Our Academic Space** – January 15, 2011

Approach for the Educational Effectiveness Review

The Educational Effectiveness Review culminates our WASC reaccreditation activity, giving us the opportunity to present accumulated program review evidence that our students are experiencing deep learning. For the Educational Effectiveness site visit, Pepperdine will follow the model of our Capacity and Preparatory Review and host a traditional academic research conference, where the research topic is evidence that our students are engaged in the learning process and practicing pedagogies that maximize their deep learning and prepare them to contribute to the common good, as evidenced in our ongoing program review work. The conference will feature plenary addresses by university leaders and concurrent sessions led by faculty, students, and alumni who will report on ongoing program reviews and the effects of our deep learning and common good initiatives.   We plan, as with the Capacity Conference, to conduct the conference as a means of both formatively growing our culture of evidence and inviting the WASC site visiting team to observe a summary of our efforts to improve student learning since our last reaccreditation experience.

Our conference format is:

Educational Effectiveness Conference: Student Transformation

       Plenary Addresses

              Deep Learning

              The Common Good

              Program Review as Research

       Concurrent Sessions

              Program Review Reports from the Faculty

              Student Stories

              Alumni Stories

              Evidence of Learning from NSSE & HERI Surveys

              College Learning Assessment

              Poster Sessions

              Specialized Accreditation Presentations

              Strategic Planning

Our plan, as with the Capacity Review, is to submit our Educational Effectiveness Review Report to WASC in the form of our final *Conference Program*, complete with all of the required elements designated by WASC as well as content from our university community who will host and run the conference. We will make this report (program) available to the visiting team before the Conference itself. When we actually convene the WASC site visit, our university community will host the Educational Effectiveness Conference, engaging in active dialogue with one another and with the WASC visiting team.

Our timeline for the Educational Effectiveness Review/Conference process is:

- Respond to Capacity Review feedback from WASC – Summer 2011
- Call for proposals - Concurrent Sessions, Papers, Posters – Fall 2011
- Screening of Proposals – January 2012
- Draft of Educational Effectiveness Conference Report (Preliminary Educational Effectiveness Conference Program) – including all required WASC elements, Conference Schedule, abstracts of Plenaries, Concurrent Session abstracts, Paper highlights, and Poster summaries – Spring 2012
- Educational Effectiveness Conference Report Submittal – May 15, 2012
- WASC Visiting team participation in our **Educational Effectiveness Conference: Student Transformation** – August 15, 2012