

CETYS UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
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Mexicali, BC 21259
México
INTERIM REPORT

Prepared for:
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

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CETYS University System was founded under the auspices of the Northwest Educational Institute Civil Association (*IENAC: Instituto Educativo del Noroeste, A.C.*), which was formed by a group of visionary business leaders who were instrumental in defining its mission. CETYS is comprised of three campuses. CETYS in Mexicali was the first one to be founded in 1961, then CETYS Tijuana in 1972, and Ensenada in 1975. The three campuses were established in the principal cities in the State of Baja California Norte. CETYS University System is recognized as an “institution of excellence” by the Baja California State Government. “CETYS University System’s mission is to contribute towards the development of individuals with the necessary moral and intellectual character to participate in a prominent way in the economic, social and cultural advancement of Mexico” (Evidence # 1 – Board of Trustees minute of April, 1967.)

At both federal and state levels, CETYS University operates consistent with federal education laws and their related operational regulations. As a result, its academic programs are officially recognized by the Secretary of Education and Social Welfare (SEBS). Graduates are registered professionally by the federal government through the Federal Government’s Professions Law, and their professional credential affords them professional reciprocity to practice their profession anywhere in the country.

Currently, CETYS University grants undergraduate and master’s degrees on the three campuses in the fields of Engineering, Accounting, Business Administration, Law, Psychology and Computer Science. It is accredited by the Mexican Federation of Private Higher Education Institutions (FIMPES) national accreditation agency for private universities, and by program accrediting agencies in each of the program areas mentioned above.

CETYS University System was accredited by WASC on March 6, 2012. As CETYS continues to work diligently to respond to the findings and recommendations of the WASC Commission, convinced that doing contributes to the overall quality of the educational experience offered to its students, indeed the work done to achieve these goals is rewarding and produces an important byproduct: continuous improvement in the teaching and learning of faculty and students. CETYS University System believes following closely all of the recommendations received from WASC have made it a more effective and focused institution of higher education; one that fosters the development of reflective educators who are using the results of their academic program review to inform with evidence students’ learning outcomes, a learning that is supported by academically qualified faculty who is developing further a culture of research, where inquiry and data findings guide academic planning, teaching, service and scholarly activities. The entire community of CETYS University System is benefiting with the collection, use, interpretation, and dissemination of evidence and its meaning to support decisions.

This Interim Report responds to the Commission Action Letter CETYS received from the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges dated March 6, 2012 signed by President Wolff. This letter stated CETYS University System had been granted accreditation and requested an Interim Report by March 1, 2014. The process used to prepare this report began in December of 2011, prior to receiving WASC accreditation. The Secretary of Education in Mexico had requested that all of the class syllabi be written with attention to competencies or skills that each particular class was meant to develop. Thus, we integrated this task with the need to have program learning outcomes and the

corresponding learning outcomes (competencies/skills) for each class syllabi. This task was done by the faculty and coordinated by the Center for the Development and Improvement of Faculty (CDMA) director Cecilia Tagliapietra. Immediately after completing the learning outcomes the Academies took on the task of designing rubrics to assess program learning objectives. The institutional learning objectives were defined and their assessment was coordinated by the CDMA director. The three college deans, Alberto Gárate, Miguel Salinas, and Scott Venezia with the support of the associate vice president of academic affairs Héctor Vargas, began selecting classes and faculty where the learning objectives would be assessed. The second cycle of learning assessment started during the second semester of 2012 and continued throughout 2013. In 2013 the CETYS' WASC leadership committee was reconstituted. This committee has two members of the president's cabinet, Ángel Montañez and Jorge Rocha, the associate vice president of academic affairs, Héctor Vargas, as well as the vice president of academic affairs, and academic liaison officer with WASC, Esther Mulnix. This committee met regularly to review and advance the different tasks needed to write this report. Several drafts of this report were reviewed by said committee.

There are four issues addressed here: **program review, faculty qualifications, faculty governance, and institutional data.** The first issue is the “[Completion of] **program review, including documenting progress in the academic program reviews of all programs, steps taken to conduct reviews of the co-curricular area, and the use of external reviewers in this process.**” (Evidence # 2 – Commission Action Letter, 2012, p. 3.)

CETYS continues to learn from its program review process. The Academies (department faculty members) are evolving, discovering, learning and embracing the review process. They have noticed how different pieces of the process fit together (competencies or learning objectives, assessment, program review, and curricular modifications) as well as integrating requirements of different accrediting institutions (national and international, institutional and program). For example, currently all academic programs and classes have student learning outcomes that are assessed with rubrics, and the student learning outcomes are compared with those obtained from an external national measure (The General Exam for Undergraduate Program Graduation EGEL.) This validates student learning. In addition, the results of assessment are used by the Academies to support the recommendation of curricular modifications. CETYS is convinced that program review helps improve its educational programs and provides an opportunity to become a more effective organization.

CETYS has completed the review of 16 academic programs (11 undergraduate and 5 graduate: 4 in the College of Administration, 6 in the College of Engineering and 6 in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities), and has defined a plan for the periodic review of these and all other programs (Evidence # 3 – Master Schedule for Academic Program Review). The programs reviews incorporated the reports of external reviewers, as requested by WASC. While it was not easy to identify, invite, and bring external reviewers to Mexico. CETYS was able to involve reviewers from WASC accredited institutions who taught similar programs to the one they were invited to review. Given the US Department of State travel advisory, reviewers were initially concerned about coming to Mexico. However, once they arrived in Mexico, their experiences were very good and none of them had an incident where they felt threatened or at risk. While CETYS' psychology and law programs were difficult to match with similar programs in the

USA, as these are not very similar to their counterparts in the USA, both psychology and law reviewers found a common ground in the practice of these two professions and were able to review and submit a useful report about the programs.

The results from the Program Review reflect some opportunities for improvement. Results were organized on three major natural themes: faculty, students and curricula (Evidence # 4 – Review of Programs).

With regard to **faculty**, the review process identified the need to improve communication between the faculty and the staff that manages institutional data needs. It requires integration, so that the way in which data is collected responds to faculty needs. Also, faculty increasingly understand the reasons behind data collection, thus they can solicit what is needed at the aggregation level desired. For example, requesting levels of data aggregation needed to respond to questions of student academic success, such as retention and graduation. (Evidence # 6 – Graduation Rates Tables.) The analysis of data trends and their correlation with student services supported departmental and budget priorities. Further, it became clear that some of the faculty needed training to design tools for learning assessment, as well as in the application of descriptive statistics to understand the significance of variance in different samples. CETYS' CDMA designed specific workshops to respond to those faculty development needs. Also, faculty began using each other (peer-review process) to revise assessment tools and replicate best practices. There are technology, pedagogy/andragogy, and English workshops that the CDMA organizes for the faculty every semester (Evidence 5 – 2014 CDMA Workshop Schedule).

The second theme reflected by the program review results was **students**. Data showed that Students' undergraduate graduation rates (2004 – 2007) at year 6 across CETYS University System, and in the different colleges, fluctuated between 59 to 67%. There was no significant statistical difference among the colleges or campuses (Evidence # 6 – Graduation Rates Tables). CETYS' average of 64% graduation rate at year 6 is above the 54% reported by other comparable, private not for profit and WASC accredited institutions in the USA such as Azusa Pacific University, California Institute of the Arts, California Lutheran University, and Chapman University (Evidence 7 – Custom Peer Group <http://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/institution/#id=234207>). CETYS has the practice of accompanying students throughout their educational experience so that the majority can succeed. CETYS' Center of Student Development (CEDE) is part of many students' co-curricular experience. CEDE supports students with several retention strategies such as: math, and writing skills classes taught to at-risk students who are admitted conditionally with SAT math and verbal combined scores between 900 and 1000, prior to starting their first year; also individual math and writing tutors, when a student seems to be getting behind in those classes; and workshops on topics like time management, study habits, domestic violence, dating, alcohol and drugs (Evidence # 8 – CEDE Summary 2012-2). CEDE began using the Information System of CETYS University (SICU) to store and aggregate data so that it can identify best practices. In addition, it will follow up closely those students that after having been identified as at-risk are not receiving the support services. Currently, the services are offered with voluntary attendance. However, it will begin to report lack of follow up and design a reach out plan that will be put into practice the second semester of 2014 to improve the success rate reported by CEDE from 85% to 88% by 2016.

The third theme reflected by the program review results was the **curricula**. CETYS institutional learning outcomes are four: effective written and oral communication in Spanish, information literacy, critical thought, and tolerance to cultural diversity. Assessment of the institutional learning outcomes indicated that 20% of the students assessed did not score a level of sufficient in effective communication in Spanish (Evidence # 17 Institutional Assessment Data Table). This learning outcome will be strengthened adding specific tasks in two of the general education classes that all students take (Advanced Spanish, and Management of Information Systems beginning on second semester of 2014.) Some of the academic programs need updating to better respond to the reality and current priorities of the market, employers' needs, financial matters such as taxation modifications (International Business, and International Accounting), and practical orientation in law and psychology. Also, some of the Engineering Laboratories need updating (Mechanical) or more equipment (Mechatronics.) Improving the laboratories will assist faculty to enhance students' learning with regard to the program learning outcome of identifying and solving problems. This is a program learning outcome where 20% of Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering students score below their programs' desired outcome. The laboratories are being updated by 2015. Faculty would like to see the courses of Professional Practice I and II and Social Service I and II as part of the formal curricula, in the area of specialization or minor. This will assist law students. They scored lower than expected with regard to the program learning outcome of solving legal conflicts. Bachelor psychology students scored below the expected program learning outcome of understanding research methodology. Faculty will enhance the content of the Research Methods class to facilitate student learning beginning in 2015. Psychology master students program learning outcome of preventive interventions was assessed and the scores reflected the need to improve student learning. Faculty will revise the content of Clinical Interviewing and Psychotherapy I, and II to make sure they include preventive education and other techniques beginning in 2014 (Evidence #18 – Program Learning Outcome Data.) Some of these modifications are planned to take place during the second semester of 2014 and others during the first semester of 2015.

The General Exam for Undergraduate Program Graduation (EGEL) external Mexican measure, currently used to assess student learning, reflects that the majority of our students score above or at the level of the Mexican national mean. This validates that our students are learning what our programs depict (Evidence # 14 – EGEL Results.) Nevertheless, there are two programs where students' scores gathered around the low end of the interval that includes the national mean. This is the case with International Business and Mechatronics Engineering. Thus, CETYS' Academies are recommending these programs to be strengthened in different ways, from updating the curricula and changing the course sequence, to adding content about a particular subject, aligning practices and internships with the specific minor area, and adopting the practice of reviewing (virtually or in person) the core competencies of the programs during the last semester prior to graduation (Evidence # 4 – Program Review.)

In addition to reviewing CETYS' academic programs, faculty began to define and identify curricular content in all undergraduate programs that demonstrate learning of the Distinctive Elements of CETYS Education (EDECs). The EDECs were defined operationally, rubrics were designed for their assessment and they have become part of our institutional learning outcomes (entrepreneurship, internationalization, sustainability, social responsibility, linkages with

business and industry, and information literacy. Evidence # 9 – EDECs) and will be assessed as such during 2015.

The program review is being extended to co-curricular system wide programs, such as: student services (libraries, and student support), and entrepreneurial competencies. The latter, is also a distinctive element of CETYS education. The staff and faculty that provide the co-curricular services are benefiting from the reflection that gathering data to support and evaluate their services is affording them. This is a new way for CETYS' staff to think about student services and it has taken some time to train, support and motivate them to reflect in this manner. Preliminary results (Evidence # 10 – Libraries Summary) indicate that the majority of graduate students do not take the library introductory course, and while conversations take place between the faculty and the library staff about resources needed, these conversations have to be more consistent and occur throughout the system. Best practices where the librarian joins an introductory graduate class to give an induction to the library were found in CETYS Ensenada and will be replicated in Mexicali and Tijuana during the second semester of 2014. There is a plan to use the *iSkills* test on a random sample of CETYS students to assess and compare their use of library resources with those of similar institutions during 2014. Preliminary results obtained by CEDE about student academic and emotional support services suggest in an aggregate fashion that 85% (Evidence # 8 – CEDE Summary) of those students served persisted in their studies at CETYS. Data will be disaggregated in different ways including type of service, to identify interventions that might need improvement as well as best practices by the end of 2014. Based on the application of a European pilot instrument on entrepreneurship, preliminary results of CETYS' students' entrepreneurial skills (Evidence # 11 – Entrepreneurial Survey Report) indicate that engineering students lag behind administration and social science students; that entrepreneurial skills need to be measured with a rubric that assesses the level of sophistication attained (descriptive, synthetic or evaluative) with the entrepreneurial skill. This will be anchored in a series of classes and the learning outcome will be assessed in 2015. CETYS' student support services staff understands more fully how data collection and analysis of results provides them with evidence to support results and improve practices, thus they are embracing the review process. They are experiencing satisfaction and pride as they are able to demonstrate their effective results.

The second issue addressed here is “[Enhancing] **faculty qualifications, including qualifications of any new faculty hires and an update on the overall qualifications of faculty.**” (Evidence # 2 – Commission Action Letter, 2012, p. 3.)

CETYS continues to increase the proportion of faculty members holding doctoral degrees. CETYS' last report to WASC reflected that during 2008-2010, 17% of full time faculty held a doctoral degree. By December of 2013, 41% of CETYS' faculty held a doctoral degree. Despite the scarce number of faculty with doctoral degrees in Mexico, there has been an improvement of 24 percentage points in 3 years (Evidence # 12 – Faculty Doctoral Degrees). The goal that CETYS 2020 Strategic Plan stated about faculty qualifications was that 50% of the full time faculty would have a doctoral degree by the year 2020. However, upon discussion and review among CETYS leadership and the CETYS' Board of Trustees (IENAC) the goal has been raised to 70% by 2020. It is estimated that by 2015 CETYS will already be at 50% and might be that before 2020 CETYS would have achieved the goal to have 70% of the full time faculty with a doctoral degree. This ambitious goal is on target given two important endeavors: hiring new

faculty with a doctoral degree and motivating and supporting CETYS faculty to obtain a doctoral degree. Currently, there are 15 professors studying a doctorate and 8 more completing their dissertation. This will bring about 23 more professors with a terminal degree during the next couple of years (Evidence # 13 – Summary Academic Initiative 3). There have been several processes that needed to be put in place in order to achieve this goal. These processes have required a cultural shift, as well as the willingness and full support of the board, the president and the institutional academic leadership. What once was achieved by word of mouth has become a national search with well-established system-wide search hiring committees, and rubrics to evaluate a full day of interviews with different publics. Also, the Mexican government National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) and their scholarship support for doctoral degrees has produced some candidates for several faculty searches. CETYS will continue hiring faculty with a terminal degree and plans to stay on or above the 70% target.

The third issue is “[Developing] **faculty governance, including changes and further improvements in the role of faculty in governance.**” (Evidence # 2 – Commission Action Letter, 2012, p. 3.) CETYS continues to develop its faculty governance model and faculty exercise academic leadership by actively participating in the planning and decision-making of the university process through the Academic Advisory Council (CCA). The CCA began its operation in 2010, and it is now in its third term, each term lasts 2 years. The faculty members that constitute the CCA are elected officials. They are elected by full time faculty and they represent each campus and college of the system. They meet once a month to work on their commissions as a group, and once a trimester they hold an open session in a different campus (Ensenada, Mexicali or Tijuana.)

The CCA organizes itself in four working commissions. These commissions are: Curricula and Co-Curricula, Faculty Development, Policies and Procedures, and Student Life. The CCA reported (Evidence # 15) that over the last two year term their achievements in the Curricula and Co-Curricula and Faculty Development Commissions were: secure CETYS faculty participation in the development of the National General Exam for Undergraduate Program Graduation (EGEL), ensuring the exam samples effectively the curricula being taught at CETYS (implemented in 2013 with the Program of Graphic Design); suggest communicating more clearly the functions of program coordinators, making sure these functions are similar across the university (implemented in 2013); suggest possible inclusion of adjunct faculty in some of the benefits that full time faculty receive, such as training and development (CDMA), awards for seniority achieved, and active participation in the CCA (to be explored again in 2016). The Policies and Procedures Commission achieved the following: the graduation ceremony now includes a member of the CCA in the presidium, so that the faculty is fully represented in this manner; a member of the CCA spoke on behalf of the faculty during the ceremony when CETYS received the WASC Accreditation (September 2012); participated and provided its perspective when the CETYS’ Institutional Research Commission was created (CII), and the Complaint Policy was established; assisted in the implementation of changes to CETYS’ web site (special space for professoriate). The Student Life Commission participated in meetings with student associations and suggested the consideration of class schedules when organizing co-curricular activities. The CCA has been an integral part of CETYS University System’s transformation. Faculty continues to discover, like in many other institutions of higher education, a balanced way to articulate the faculty voice so that changes benefiting the institution can be implemented.

Finally, the fourth issue is “**Institutional data, including improvements in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data.**” (Evidence # 2 – Commission Action Letter, 2012, p. 3.) CETYS faculty and staff continue to develop CETYS Information System’s capacity and effectiveness. There are several new additions to CETYS Information System, such as: the CETYS University System of Information (SICU), the Academic Portal of Information (PIA), the Registry of Research Projects, and the student electronic portfolio. The largest and most widely used of the systems is the (SICU). This system is used for aggregation and disaggregation of information at different levels, such as: system, campus, college, school, program, and student/s. It stores and provides information about faculty, students and curricula. Currently, it is anticipated that as SICU becomes more efficient it will save faculty precious time. Conversations are occurring in a regular basis among faculty who need the data and the staff that manage it. Faculty are beginning to anticipate ways in which data would be helpful and solicit them from the staff, also, sometimes the staff suggests other ways to present or make sense of data. Examples of some professoriate data stored in the SICU are: faculty evaluations that are being used to inform and plan faculty development (technology, teaching, research); faculty academic qualifications that are being used to map out the needs of specialization or field of expertise on the new faculty hires and lines of research in the Centers of Excellence of each College; academic and administrative indicators that when reviewed biannually support decision making for the leadership team. Some examples of how SICU is being used with student data are: retention and graduation rates. CETYS’ graduation rates reflect that at year six the classes of 2004 through 2007 were at 63%. This is very good as compared to national or international standards. Nevertheless, there are some areas of opportunity in the College of Administration (Evidence # 16 – Information Systems Summary). Along this line come retention strategies that CETYS is implementing, but now it is beginning to use SICU to store information about interventions that the Center for Student Development (CEDE) carries out to accompany at-risk students to support their academic success. Aggregate data suggests all 3 campuses have an 85% of success (Evidence # 5 – CEDE 2012-2 retention) with the students they serve. Thus, we are beginning to understand, disseminate and replicate best practices. An example of using SICU with curricular data is storing and managing the statistics of learning assessment. All of the above examples are speeding the process of data gathering, thus faculty is having more time to reflect and analyze the results.

Identification of other changes and issues currently facing the institution

CETYS continues to move forward with its long range strategic plan called CETYS 2020 (Evidence # 19.) Investment in raising the quality of the professoriate will continue to be a priority, specifically ensuring more full-time faculty with doctoral degrees and the presence of visiting professors through the Distinguished Chairs and International Visiting Faculty Programs. In addition to the institution’s continuous improvement via WASC, CETYS has successfully engaged in the Mexican re-accreditation process with FIMPES (Mexican Federation of Private Universities), as well as approval of the CETYS MBA and Master’s in Engineering by the Mexican Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) and inclusion in the CONACYT registry of quality graduate programs (*Padrón Nacional de Posgrados de Calidad.*) Based on the requirements and challenges of CETYS 2020 and the aspiration of becoming “One Dream, One Team” that supports the future development of CETYS, the CETYS Board of Trustees (IENAC)

has engaged the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) to facilitate a review and identify areas of improvement of the current membership, policies, and procedures. IENAC anticipates that the end result will be a more engaged and committed board working to achieve the goals CETYS 2020 and beyond. Between 2013 and 2014 at least 6 new buildings and/or facilities will have been constructed across our three Campuses. As CETYS 2020 calls for further investment between now and the year 2020, we have added a System-wide Advancement Officer to enhance and provide greater leverage across the Campus based fund raising efforts. Lastly and perhaps more importantly, CETYS will be launching a major review of Student Life/Student Development during 2014 that will help us reinforce and improve the development of the whole person across all campuses and programs.

In closing, CETYS University System continues to improve its educational capacity and effectiveness by enhancing its academic programs, developing its faculty, and collecting and using institutional data in a reflective manner. WASC accreditation and the strategic plan currently under implementation (evidence # 19 – CETYS 2020) have positioned the institution in a transformational decade. CETYS University System is finding new ways to fulfill its mission as it follows the leadership of the Board of Trustees (IENAC), the President, its leadership team, and the professoriate.

CETYS UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

INTERIM REPORT FOR WASC

Inventory of Evidence (1 – 19)

1. Board of Trustees Minute (1977)
2. WASC Commission Action Letter (2012)
3. Periodic Review Plan (2015-2020)
4. Report of the Review of 16 Programs
5. CDMA Workshop Schedule 2014-1
6. Graduation Rates Table
7. Custom Peer Group Graduation Rates Comparison
8. CEDE Summary 2012-2
9. EDECs
10. Library Report Summary
11. Entrepreneurial Report Summary
12. Faculty Doctoral Degrees
13. Academic Initiative # 3
14. EGEL Results
15. CCA Summary
16. SICU and other information systems´ Summary
17. Institutional Assessment Data
18. Program Learning Outcomes Data
19. CETYS 2020 Strategic Plan