Harvey Mudd College

Revised Institutional Proposal for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Submitted to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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A. Setting Institutional Context and Relating the Proposal to the Standards of Accreditation

A.1 Institutional Context

Our History and Current State

In 2005, Harvey Mudd College celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its founding. In the half century that the college has been in existence, it has become one of the foremost undergraduate institutions in the United States, ranking side-by-side with elite colleges that in many cases were established more than a century before it. To honor the namesake of the college—mining engineer, entrepreneur, and philanthropist Harvey Seeley Mudd—the founders of HMC envisioned a distinctive educational experience for the college’s exclusively undergraduate students. The curriculum was designed to educate excellent scientists, mathematicians, and engineers with unusual breadth in those areas and in the humanities and social sciences. The classroom experience was intimate and academic programs were demanding, but the college fostered cooperation rather than competition through a student-directed Honor Code. All of these attributes are still at the heart of an HMC education.

To capture a sense of the college’s mission and purpose, President Joseph B. Platt drafted a concise but challenging mission statement in 1956 that continues to “clearly define” the institution’s “essential values and character” (CFR 1.1): “Harvey Mudd College seeks to educate engineers, scientists, and mathematicians well versed in all of these areas and in the humanities and social sciences so that they may assume leadership in their fields with a clear understanding of the impact of their work on society.” Today, the college maintains that mission through a curriculum that is divided into three components:

1. The common core—constructed of foundational courses from each department—provides breadth to our students’ education and essential knowledge for upper-division courses. The core also includes the integrative experience requirement, fulfilled by taking an approved course that explicitly addresses the interface between society, science, and technology.
2. The humanities and social sciences program strengthens the liberal arts nature of an HMC education by providing aesthetic, humanistic, and social scientific perspectives on key social and cultural issues.
3. The major allows both breadth and depth within a particular disciplinary or interdisciplinary domain. Six departments offer majors: biology, chemistry, computer science, engineering, mathematics, and physics. In addition, students may choose an interdisciplinary major (chemistry-biology, mathematical biology, and computer science-mathematics), an approved individual program of studies, or an off-campus major (completed at one of the other Claremont Colleges, and typically in the humanities and social sciences) with a technical minor completed at HMC.

In delivering this curriculum, HMC’s approach to teaching and learning includes but goes well beyond traditional classroom methods. Building on our 9:1 student-faculty ratio, faculty members emphasize active learning through small-group seminars, student-directed team projects, and independent study (see CFRs 2.5, 3.1-2). Before graduation, all students participate in either research or clinic. Research during the academic year and during the summer plays an especially important part in the HMC professor-student relationship. Many students present their research at academic conferences and/or co-author papers with their professors that are published in peer-reviewed journals. Current external support for faculty research projects—which includes twenty-eight National Science Foundation grants, a significant fraction of which are devoted to curricular improvement—suggests the quality of undergraduate research at HMC.

The Clinic Program, a widely recognized hallmark of the college, engages students in the solution of real-world, technical problems for a wide variety of clients. Founded as an innovation in engineering education, this program has become a notable component in HMC’s computer science, mathematics, and physics departments as well, and it has been copied by institutions worldwide. Since clinic was developed at Harvey Mudd College nearly forty years ago, more than 250 companies, agencies, and organizations have participated as clients in over 1,000 projects. In 2006–07, the engineering department initiated Global Clinic—two joint projects with student teams made up of students from HMC and the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez.
From its earliest days HMC has matched its unique curriculum with students of extraordinary quality, and the class that will graduate in 2010 certainly continues this pattern. The 180 first-year students in that class have impressive SAT median scores: reading, 720; writing, 710; math, 760; and math II, 790. Forty-five of these students were National Merit Finalists.

To serve the curriculum, the students, and student life, the college employs nearly 300 faculty and staff members. President Maria Klawe and her cabinet oversee this organization and work closely with the Board of Trustees to ensure the college’s well-being and financial strength and stability. (For staffing and organizational details, see Appendix 2: Organizational Charts; for financial indicators, see Appendix 10: Key Financial Ratios and Appendix 11: College Financial Statement.)

Harvey Mudd College is a member of The Claremont Colleges, a cluster of autonomous institutions each of which excels in a particular academic niche. Students can cross-register for most courses offered by the undergraduate colleges. The consortium, which was loosely modeled on the college system at Oxford University, consists of HMC and four other undergraduate colleges: Claremont McKenna (government, business, and the professions), Pitzer (interdisciplinary and intercultural exploration combined with social responsibility), Pomona (comprehensive liberal arts and sciences), and Scripps (educating women for the arts and professions). In addition, there are two graduate institutions: Claremont Graduate University (masters and doctoral education in a variety of fields) and Keck Graduate Institute (masters and doctoral education in applied life sciences).

HMC has a history of financial strength and stability. As of December 31, 2006, it reported total assets of more than $347 million, and its endowment had a market value of $249 million. The college’s very modest debt of $21 million consists primarily of long-term bonds and payables to annuitants and trust beneficiaries. Moody’s has given the college an A1 rating since 1993 on its CEFA bonds.

Building on Our Last Review

While we are proud of the institution we have built in our first half century, we recognize that maintaining our reputation while responding to changes beyond our walls demands a continual self assessment, an ongoing attempt to understand what has allowed us to succeed and how we can make our college better. It is in this spirit that we addressed our last accreditation review, and in which we look forward to our current self study.

The Commission letter that concluded our last review (March 10, 2000) noted that “the educational experience of students at Harvey Mudd can be characterized by a very high degree of rigor and quality teaching, with enviable levels of student, alumni, and employee satisfaction.” The visiting team had “found much to commend,” but also recommended that the college “address issues of student culture,” “encourage experimentation and innovation,” and “continue to strengthen its progress on diversity.” The Commission letter reinforced these points and highlighted other areas that the college needed to consider: clarifying “institutional priorities and intended learning outcomes” for the leadership portion of the mission statement; initiating regular program reviews as part of a comprehensive assessment system; strengthening its leadership role in “innovative science and mathematics education” by looking at what other institutions are doing and embracing more experimentation in teaching and technology; continuing its resolve to encourage healthy social development in its students. During the last seven years, the college has taken the Commission letter to heart by undertaking the many actions summarized in Appendix 16: Responses to Prior Commission Actions.

Regarding the academic program, the most significant such action was the creation in 2002 of a regular program review process (see CFRs 2.7 and 4.4; for process guidelines, see Appendix 14: “Harvey Mudd College Academic Program Review Guidelines” in the May 2007 Harvey Mudd College Institutional Proposal for Reaccreditation). As of Fall 2007, five departments—Computer Science, Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Mathematics, and Physics—have completed reviews. The 2005 Department of Humanities and Social Sciences self-study stands as a good example of how the college plans to use program-review assessment and feedback to improve our curriculum. The department primarily studied its two-semester writing program through self assessments of students in the program as well as through a rubric assessment of submitted papers that utilized readers from outside the college to judge paper quality and student progress in writing. Additionally, the department mounted an online survey of the class of 2004 and conducted exit interviews with a large number of graduating seniors in the classes of 2003 and 2004 to build a data set about student experience in the department. The data collected supported the
department’s hypothesis that the first half of its writing program worked well, the second half less so. It also pointed to substantial student satisfaction with the rationale of the humanities and social sciences curriculum, but revealed, as documented by an external review team, a widespread perception that the curriculum itself contained too many constraints, and that these constraints minimized the electivity that students could exercise. As a result of the study and subsequent faculty and student focus groups, the department brought a motion to revise its curriculum to the faculty in Spring 2006. The second half of the writing sequence was changed into an elective course in humanities and social sciences, and the requirements were simplified in several other major ways to present fewer constraints and allow more electivity to students. The department has been following up on these changes by studying enrollment patterns for first-year students in the spring semester.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the college’s program review cycle will be temporarily disrupted so that, building on an issue that came up often during our strategic planning exercise, the faculty can discuss the possibility of curricular change, especially the creation of more course electivity within the curriculum. The Biology Department will be the next program to be reviewed in 2008-2009, with Chemistry to follow before the overall review cycle begins again. Starting in 2008, the Dean of Faculty will ensure that the special themes we have announced for our current WASC review, diversity and experiential learning, will be directly addressed by each department under review.

A.2 Preliminary Self-Review Under the Standards of Accreditation

Even before Maria Klawe officially assumed the presidency of HMC in July 2006, she had begun to prepare for a concentrated strategic planning process that would occur during her first semester in residence. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee, chaired by President Klawe and composed of trustees, faculty and staff members, students, and alumni, sought input from all of HMC’s stakeholders before choosing themes for four one-day workshops that were held during Fall 2006: “Responding to a Changing World”; “Maximizing Our Impact on Society”; “Optimizing the HMC Experience”; and “Looking Outside the Box.” Planning committees, made up of members from each of the college’s constituencies, developed each workshop, with co-chairs selected from members of the steering committee. Each planning committee selected up to nine specific discussion topics within the main theme.

The college set aside the week of October 16, 2006 for institutional reflection. HMC classes were cancelled to allow faculty and students to participate fully and to hear invited speakers who launched each workshop with talks related to innovation, global economics, diversity, education, collaboration, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics trends. (The strategic planning sessions are outlined and summarized, with supporting materials, at www.hmc.edu/2020.) Over four days, more than 400 people—trustees, students, alumni, staff, faculty, parents, consortial colleagues, and other interested individuals—discussed the current state of and future directions for the college. Ideas distilled from these extensive and inclusive conversations formed the basis for another round of workshops held during the annual retreat of the HMC Board of Trustees. The six themes of the vision that resulted from our detailed self-review are:

1. Innovation, leadership and impact, especially in engineering, science and mathematics.
2. Experiential and interdisciplinary learning.
3. Unsurpassed excellence and diversity at all levels.
4. Nurturing and developing the whole person.
5. Global engagement and informed contributions to society.
6. Infrastructure and resources to support our commitment to excellence and building community.

A.3 Proposal Development, Leadership Involvement

The WASC Steering Committee was convened by the Dean of Faculty in March 2006 to begin planning for the college’s institutional proposal. The Steering Committee, which had begun to develop several themes for the accreditation review, realized that the emergent strategic planning process and the stakeholder conversation envisioned by President Klawe would serve the Committee well as a means of institutional self evaluation. That process, in fact, seemed to mesh very well with many of the WASC CFRs, especially those having to do with institutional purpose and engagement (1.1-1.3) and strategic thinking and planning (4.1). The Steering Committee met throughout Fall 2006, participated actively in the strategic planning process, and continued to formulate ideas
for a thematic review. By January 2007, the Steering Committee had settled on two themes, diversity and experiential learning. Chosen because of their importance to the college’s development over the next decade, these themes elicited extensive discussion during the strategic planning workshops, and they will build on work begun in our last reaccreditation review.

Early in 2007, President Klawe gave her support to a reaccreditation review that centered on these critical themes. The Steering Committee then took its developing plan before the faculty for comment and established general support for the thematic approach and the specific themes to be examined. The Steering Committee next assembled two subcommittees or “working groups,” one to work on each of the WASC themes. These groups discussed the themes and drafted statements about them for this proposal. Writing of the proposal began in earnest in March, with the Steering Committee working collaboratively to gather information and begin drafting the proposal and accompanying appendices.

The WASC Steering Committee consists of two deans, two faculty members who currently serve as associate deans, the chair of the faculty, a department chair, and five other faculty members from a variety of departments (see appendix 15 for committee and subcommittee memberships). To ensure clear communication, each working group contains two members of the Steering Committee. Additionally, the Diversity Working Group consists of one professor, one student, the HMC Director of Admissions, and the Dean of Students for the Claremont Colleges Office of Black Student Affairs. The Experiential Learning Working Group consists of a department chair and three faculty members, all from different departments, and one student.

Faculty participation in the review has been and will continue to be high. To date, approximately 15 percent of the college’s full-time faculty has been involved in drafting this proposal. In Fall 2007, more faculty members will become active in the review process, as described in sections B.2.a, C.1, and C.2. As the review progresses, the Faculty Executive Committee will bring various issues before the full faculty for discussion.

B. Framing the Review and Connecting the Capacity and Educational Effectiveness Reviews

B.1 Overview, Vision, and Goals for the Review

Given our themes of diversity and experiential learning, and given the importance of these topics for the future of the college, our overarching goal in relation to both themes is to deepen our understanding of current practices, locally and nationally, so that we can improve our institution and, in particular, student learning.

Through this reaffirmation process we will touch upon all five of the institutional accreditation outcomes listed in the WASC 2001 Handbook. We will engage outcomes four and five most fully. As described in detail below, our diversity and experiential learning themes will help us to gain a “deeper understanding of student learning, the development of more varied and effective methods of assessing learning, and the use of the results of this process to improve programs and institutional practices,” and we will develop a “[s]ystematic engagement of the faculty with issues of assessing and improving teaching and learning processes within the institution, and with aligning support systems for faculty more effectively toward this end.”

In the remainder of this section, we give a more detailed overview of our vision and goals for the review process for each of our two themes: diversity and experiential learning.

Diversity Theme: Overview, Vision, and Goals

In its mission statement, Harvey Mudd College emphasizes the relationship of personal to social understanding. One of many ways to implement this mission is to build a community that represents the larger society we serve. Doing so requires increasing the college’s diversity; indeed, one of the six major themes to emerge from the strategic planning process, as noted above, is “Unsurpassed excellence and diversity at all levels.” HMC needs a more diverse community in order to build a learning environment that educates students in a broad and culturally responsible setting and that attracts and serves the complete pool of potential future scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. In particular, increasing ethnic diversity among the faculty, students, staff, and trustees—and creating a campus climate that is both conducive and committed to the best learning opportunities for all members of such a
diverse community—is critical to HMC’s continued role in educating the next generation of leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

Over the last decade, the college has made steady and significant progress in recruiting and retaining women. In 2006-07 women comprised 29 percent of the student body compared to 20 percent on average in the 1990s. We have also increased the number of women faculty to 35 percent overall. There is plentiful anecdotal evidence that this has had positive impacts on student learning; one aim of this review will be to more carefully document the actual impact these hires have had on our students’ learning. We hope to have similar increased success in hiring more racially diverse faculty. As a part of fulfilling that hope we have recently joined the Consortium for Diversity (CFD), organized through DePauw University. The CFD partners interested institutions with individuals of diverse background seeking post-doctoral positions.

Our progress toward ethnic diversity has been slower. In 2006, black students made up only 1.7 percent of the student body, despite data presented in the American Council on Education’s *Increasing the Success of Minority Students in Science and Technology* that clearly indicate that minority students enter STEM disciplines at the same per capita rate as all other constituencies.

We believe that increasing the gender and racial diversity at HMC will go hand in hand with improving the learning experience for women and students of color at HMC. We also believe that a diverse environment will instill in all of our students an openness to the cultures, attitudes, and experiences of others, and that this openness will prepare HMC graduates to understand and thrive in the multicultural world in which we live. For these reasons, we plan to achieve the following diversity goal through the review process:

**Diversity Goal:** Increase and sustain faculty, student, staff, and trustee diversity at Harvey Mudd College.

Progress toward this goal will be measured against specific, related outcomes listed below in section B.3.a.

The CPR and EER phases will play critical, interconnected roles in allowing us to achieve our diversity outcomes. During the CPR phase, we will answer two overarching, compound questions: “What is the effect of diversity on student learning and how can we measure it?” and “What are the current barriers to diversity at HMC, what practices have been proven at other institutions to achieve diversity, and how can we implement these practices at HMC?” In the EER phase we will implement (or continue to implement) the assessment and institutional programs that we determine in the CPR phase will most likely lead us to achieve our objectives.

**Experiential Learning: Overview, Vision, and Goals**

Learning by doing has been a hallmark of the HMC experience since the inception of the college. Our graduates must complete an academic-year research or clinic experience; our clinic program has expanded to most majors; laboratory experiences are critical components in all sciences, engineering, and the core; our students are leaders in the performing arts across the Claremont campuses; and our summer research program is thriving. Recent experiments in open-ended laboratory experiences in the first year and service learning have met with enthusiastic responses from students and considerable attention in the wider STEM community. Recent discussions at the college have proposed that summer research or internship positions be made available to every student.

We believe that experiential learning experiences have a significant impact on students’ intellectual passion, retention of knowledge, career decisions, and sense of social context for their work. Moreover, this impact can be assessed straightforwardly through course evaluations and surveys, and they can be demonstrated through the public communication of research that is part and parcel of our Presentation Days and Project Days, three days set aside at the end of every spring semester for the sharing of research, clinic projects, and experiential learning.

HMC, of course, is not alone in the belief of the value of applying conceptual learning through experience. National organizations supporting the expansion of undergraduate research opportunities include Project Kaleidoscope, the Council on Undergraduate Research, and the National Science Foundation. Harvey Mudd has participated in the NSF-ROLE project, recently highlighted in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (August 17, 2007), that documents
many learning outcomes as they relate to undergraduate research in the sciences. Most faculty, students, and many education researchers consider the opportunity to apply theoretical learning in practical experiences to be some of the most exciting and beneficial opportunities in a college education. Many past and present students can testify to the powerful, even life-changing, enthusiasm some of these opportunities can provide.

For these reasons, we plan to achieve the following experiential learning goals through the review process:

**Experiential Learning Goal 1:** Optimize current student experiential learning opportunities at HMC.

**Experiential Learning Goal 2:** Understand the impact of HMC’s experiential curriculum on our students’ learning and utilize this understanding in future curricular changes.

Progress toward these goals will be measured against specific, related outcomes listed below in sections B.2.b and B.3.a, below.

As with the diversity theme, the CPR and EER phases will be essential steps in helping us achieve these goals. The CPR phase will allow us to develop a better understanding of how experiential learning impacts overall student learning. During the EER phase we will implement any curricular or institutional changes suggested by the outcomes from the CPR phase.

**B.2 Approach to the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR)**

**B.2.a Self-Assessment of Capacity**

Generally speaking, the college has excellent capacity to embark on the WASC review process. As detailed in the Appendices 10 and 11, HMC is in very good financial health, and Appendix 4 shows that we have an enviable student-to-faculty ratio of 9:1. Our information technology resources are “consistent with the institution’s purposes, and are appropriate, sufficient, and sustainable” (CFR 3.6). However, as we seek to improve the diversity of our campus and our experiential learning curriculum, we may need additional financial and physical resources. As we proceed through our review, we will test our capacity against the criteria and questions in WASC Standard 3, “Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability.” As a first step in that process, we specifically call out the question of financial and physical resources in the research questions detailed below (section B.2.b).

A large piece of our review plan involves developing and refining student learning assessment methods in the context of diversity and experiential learning, so we will require resources specifically devoted to this task. Since our last reaccreditation review, we have established an Office of Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment which will be directed by our soon-to-be-hired Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. This office annually compiles benchmark, historically cumulative information about HMC; within the college, much of this information is available for use online at http://www.dof.hmc.edu/Facts/default.html. The office also makes public the various findings of the Office and the Assessment Committee; these findings are available for use from within the college at http://www.dof.hmc.edu/pira/findings/index.html. The institutional research arm of the Office is also responsible for completing a variety of external surveys, such as those from IPEDS, USNWR, numerous guide-book publishers, and the Claremont Colleges consortium (see Appendix 17 for a list of regularly collected survey data). The office has also been extensively involved in the implementation of new data systems at the college.

Departmental program review reports are available through the Dean of Faculty’s Office and are used by programs for curricular planning.

Clearly our themes have implications for long-term capacity issues. Regarding diversity, the largest capacity issues will be financial: to increase student diversity, we will need more resources for financial aid; to build a more diverse faculty we will need additional faculty lines and more physical space for offices. Regarding experiential learning, the most significant capacity issues will also be financial: we will need larger budgets to support equipment purchases and cover summer stipends for students and faculty members; more space dedicated to laboratories,
The committee and staff structure at HMC will be a tremendous help in accomplishing a successful review. We currently lack, however, the professional institutional research and assessment expertise that will allow us to move forward most effectively. We are in the process of remediying this shortcoming through the hiring of a Director of Institutional Research and Assessment; we hope this person will be in place by January 2008. The Director will help coordinate CPR and EER efforts and will work hand-in-hand with the appropriate faculty standing and ad hoc committees, in some cases serving as a committee member. As we currently envision the CPR and EER process, a large number of faculty standing committees will be involved: the Assessment, Budget, Campus Life, Curriculum, Research, Teaching and Learning, Department Chairs, and Faculty Executive committees will all provide key support. Additionally, several faculty ad hoc committees will be involved: the Strategic Vision Diversity and Strategic Vision Curriculum committees will be central to our efforts, and of course the WASC Steering Committee, which will coordinate our efforts.

The Dean of Faculty will be intimately involved in the review process by dint of his administrative role, but also because of his membership on the Faculty Executive Committee and WASC Steering Committee. The Dean’s staff will be involved in the review process through the work of the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment and the Director of Academic Operations.

The President and the Board of Trustees will also be involved in the review. The President’s Cabinet will have an important role to play as we expand the diversity of our campus. The President must approve all faculty hiring decisions and her Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid will be primarily responsible for formulating student admission strategies. The Board of Trustees Educational Planning Committee will provide input and will be kept informed by the Dean of Faculty and the Chair of the Faculty, both of whom sit ex-officio on that committee.

B.2.b Outcomes of CPR, Key Indicators, and Organization Activities

We propose a deliberate and methodical process for improving the campus diversity and experiential learning curricula. This process will be driven by a series of goals and hypotheses.

Diversity

We believe that a more diverse campus—one that attracts, retains, and sustains diverse people—will have a positive impact on our students’ learning by enhancing the communication and consideration of diverse ideas, points of view, and experiences. This belief leads to our diversity goal, which we repeat from above:

Diversity Goal: Increase and sustain faculty, student, staff, and trustee diversity at Harvey Mudd College.

From this goal, we form the following hypotheses:

1. Our mission goal of graduating students who understand their impact on the society around them will be more strongly inculcated in students who work closely and live with others from different groups within that society.
2. Students who work in a diverse environment will become better leaders in the future because they develop a broader cultural understanding while in college.

In order to create a more diverse campus, one where student learning will be enhanced, we seek to better understand diversity at HMC. This improved understanding will be initiated through a research process. We will:

- Gather information and insight about national demographics pertinent to diversity issues at HMC;
- Look outside our institution to examine best practices for recruiting and retaining students, faculty members, and trustees;
- Broaden the campus conversation about the rationale and climate for diversity at HMC;
- And determine the resources necessary to meet our emergent diversity goals
As part of this process, the majority population must understand the actual conditions and environment for underrepresented populations on campus. We will build this understanding, in part, by conducting diversity forums and student interviews, and by analyzing already collected data. It is not enough merely to increase the numbers of diverse students and faculty at HMC. The college will likely need to put structures in place for students of all backgrounds to make academic and social connections with faculty and peers: within and across cultural boundaries; for faculty to receive mentoring in cultural awareness and diversity-inclusive pedagogy; and for the working and living environment to be attractive to faculty and students of diverse backgrounds.

Motivated by these considerations we will investigate research questions in three broad categories: the STEM pipeline, the HMC curriculum, and the HMC climate for diversity.

**Pipeline**
- **Q1.** What is the pipeline for underrepresented students and faculty using traditional measures for admission or hiring at HMC?
- **Q2.** How would increasing the number of underrepresented students and faculty at HMC affect the pipeline for the STEM disciplines?
- **Q3.** If HMC’s pipeline of diverse students is narrow do we have the financial resources to be competitive in attracting these highly sought after students?

**Curriculum**
- **Q4.** Does our curriculum present obstacles to attracting and retaining diverse students?
- **Q5.** Does our curriculum present obstacles to attracting and retaining diverse faculty?
- **Q6.** What knowledge, skills and attitudes do diverse students need to succeed at HMC, in the classroom and more broadly?
- **Q7.** Which knowledge, skills and attitudes of traditional HMC students may be changed by the creation of a more diverse HMC campus?

**Climate**
- **Q8.** What is the climate at HMC for underrepresented students, staff, faculty and trustees?
- **Q9.** How can we improve the culture for diversity at Harvey Mudd College for all students, staff, faculty and trustees?
- **Q10.** What are the likely impacts of implementing a diversity awareness program for all members of the community?
- **Q11.** In what ways are HMC students educated on a diverse campus different from the HMC students educated on our current campus?

To benchmark our progress as we answer these questions and develop assessment tools, we will document impact on student learning using outcomes that may include:

- Having admitted and graduated a more racially diverse student body;
- Having hired and retained a more diverse faculty;
- Having students and faculty report that they feel that there is an increasing openness to the culture, attitudes, and experiences of underrepresented students;
- Having developed and documented a better understanding the impact of gender and racial diversity on student learning at HMC.

As answers to our research questions emerge we will implement new diversity practices throughout the college, both on the residential and the academic sides.

**Experiential Learning**

We believe that experiential learning at HMC is an important and powerful part of our curriculum, and that student learning is significantly and positively impacted by participation in such learning environments. This notion is supported by the aforementioned NSF-ROLE study that documented educational gains for those students who participated in undergraduate research in the sciences. Among these gains were the students’ ability to think like a scientist, career clarification, and confidence. While we have some institutional data on experiential learning that is
specific to HMC, most fully through the Engineering Department’s concurrent ABET accreditation, what is unclear is precisely how experiential learning as practiced at HMC impacts our students. This point is not idle, as the college anticipates considerable further investment in supporting undergraduate research, clinic, and other ways students may follow their passions. As noted above, we set ourselves two goals:

**Experiential Learning Goal 1:** Optimize current student experiential learning opportunities at HMC.

**Experiential Learning Goal 2:** Understand the impact of HMC’s experiential curriculum on our students’ learning and utilize this understanding in future curricular changes.

In relation to these goals, we form the following hypotheses:

1. Experiential learning educates students in ways that cannot be achieved in the traditional classroom;
2. Experiential learning increases students’ analytical and quantitative reasoning skills;
3. Experiential learning increases students’ ability to apply knowledge to open-ended “real-world” problems;
4. Experiential learning increases students’ oral and written communication skills across disciplinary boundaries;
5. Experiential learning increases students’ passion and the independence of mind necessary for developing life-long learning.

Our ability to test these hypotheses and achieve our goals will follow from a better understanding of the national context of experiential learning and its precise role at HMC. This understanding will be created through the following process:

- Gathering information and insight about our current experiential learning curriculum;
- Looking outside our institution to examine other effective modes of experiential learning;
- Broadening the campus conversation about the modes, value, and effectiveness of experiential learning;
- Undertaking a cost-benefit analysis to better understand the resource (capacity) implications of experiential learning;

To help achieve our goals we will follow this process to answer specific research questions, which include:

- **Q1.** How do we define and measure the effectiveness of experiential learning?
- **Q2.** Is experiential learning effective for student education frosh through senior year?
- **Q3.** Are all modes of experiential learning (e.g., research, clinic, community engagement) equally effective?
- **Q4.** Do we have the infrastructure and resources to maintain our experiential learning curriculum? To expand it?
- **Q5.** What are the specific educational benefits of earlier exposure to research experiences?
- **Q6.** What are the specific educational benefits of having participated in an academic-year or summer research program?
- **Q7.** What is a student capable of who has participated in summer research that other students are not?
- **Q8.** Are career choices of students affected by summer research experiences?
- **Q9.** What are the specific educational benefits of HMC’s clinic program?
- **Q10.** What is a student capable of who has participated in clinic that other students are not?
- **Q11.** Are career choices of students affected by clinic experiences?

To benchmark our progress as we answer these questions and develop assessment tools, we will document impact on student learning using outcomes that may include:

- Having developed and documented a better understanding of the impact of experiential learning on student learning at HMC;
- Have students report a better sense of their professional path;
- Have students report more confidence when approaching open-ended problems;
- Have students report developing better analytic skills;
• Having, if appropriate, modified our research and/or clinic curriculum to take better advantage of experiential learning opportunities.

As answers to our research questions emerge we will implement new experiential learning practices and adapt our curriculum as appropriate to accommodate experiential learning.

Answers to both the diversity and experiential learning research questions will be a jumping off point for us as we move toward developing more refined assessment vehicles. With better assessment in place, we will use our newly gained knowledge to modify our educational inputs and practices—climate, summer programs, clinics, study abroad, hiring practices, admission practices, and so on—and we will close the feedback loop to student learning.

It is fair to say that the vast majority of the HMC faculty is involved in some form of experiential learning instruction. This is a foundational element of the curriculum, and the faculty is committed to better understanding its value. Faculty members will therefore be heavily involved in the assessment and development of this theme, as is detailed in the work plan below (section C1).

B.2.c Relevant Criteria for Review (CFRs) Identified

For the Capacity and Preparatory Review, the relevant CFRs can be divided topically by our themes. For the diversity theme, CFRs 1.5, 2.9, 2.10, 2.13, and 3.2 are particularly important for our efforts to create and sustain a more diverse campus. For the experiential learning theme, CFRs 2.2-5, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 3.2, and 3.5 will help us to consider the current effects of experiential learning on student learning, and to improve our practices for the benefit of future students.

We note throughout this document that we will use the Capacity and Preparatory Review to build a stronger “culture of evidence” at HMC. In that effort, we will be engaged deeply with CFRs 3.11, 4.3-5, and 4.7-8.

B.3 Approach to the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER)

B.3.a Outcomes, Systems of Quality Assurance To Be Reviewed

With an eye on our diversity and experiential learning goals we seek to put into place methods and instruments of assessment that will take us from an emergent culture of evidence to an institution that finds compelling value in trying to better understand whether or not its goals and outcomes are consistent.

We expect that if we achieve our institutional goals for diversity and experiential learning —stated in section B.2.b—we will have a significant positive impact on student learning at HMC. The reasons we believe this are detailed in the discussion and hypotheses found in section B.2.b, above. Outcomes that will be evident at the time of the EER should we achieve our goals include:

Outcomes for diversity:
• Having admitted and graduated a more racially diverse student body
• Having hired and retained a more diverse faculty
• Having students and faculty report that they feel that there is an increasing openness to the culture, attitudes, and experiences of underrepresented students
• Having developed and documented a better understanding of the impact of gender and racial diversity on student learning at HMC.

Outcomes for experiential learning:
• Having developed and documented a better understanding of the impact of experiential learning on student learning at HMC
• Have students report a better sense of their professional path
• Have students report more confidence when approaching open-ended problems
• Have students report developing better analytic skills
• Having, if appropriate, modified our research and/or clinic curriculum to take better advantage of experiential learning opportunities

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To assure quality control and that we are working effectively toward achieving our goals, the WASC Steering Committee will work closely with the Faculty Executive Committee, the Dean of Faculty and the new Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. We will continue our ongoing program of departmental review by outside committees (developed in response to our last WASC review), we will regularly review and update our internal procedures and instruments for assessment, and we will continue to subscribe to national surveys described in section 2.B.a and those listed in Appendix 17, “Survey and Other Data Regularly Collected and Utilized by the Office of Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment and/or the Dean of Students Office”. Further, we are currently offering a pilot e-portfolio curriculum that may find uses as an instrument in establishing quality control in our curriculum.

B.3.b Research Questions, Methods, and Key Indicators

A close reading of section B.2.b demonstrates how our proposal is organized as an inquiry based upon research questions to be answered and hypotheses to be tested. Section B.1 specifies why we have chosen our themes (see “The Rationale for the Diversity Theme” and “The Rationale for the Experiential Learning Theme” in that section). Section B.2.b presents an extended discussion of how the inquiry relates to the CPR and self review as a whole.

As noted above, 15 percent of the entire HMC faculty has already been involved in developing our proposal for review. By the time of the EER, the fraction of faculty involved in our review will probably exceed 50 percent, given the expected faculty committee involvement (see section B.2.a for a discussion of committee involvement and sections C.1-2 for our work plan).

Section B.3.a describes our institutional systems of quality assurance. We distinguish process from findings in section B.2.b, where we discuss process, goals, hypotheses, and research questions, and in section B.2.a, where we discuss outcomes.

B.3.c Current State of Student Learning Outcome Assessment

Our program review process will carry forward our commitment to organizational learning. Our soon-to-be-hired Director of Institutional Research and Assessment will work closely with the faculty Assessment Committee and the Dean of Faculty to develop and disseminate new and appropriate instruments for institutional program review.

To date, HMC has relied on the traditional means of assessing student learning: course evaluations, exit interviews, student retention, external program review, success in admission to graduate programs, job placement, and grade point averages, to name only a few. While these methods provide a great deal of important information, they are primarily indirect in nature, and thus they do not provide the level of direct information about student learning we want to have. It is clear that our student learning outcome assessment is only emerging. We expect that this emergent sense of assessment will be refined by the time of our CPR. Over the course of this accreditation cycle we expect to improve our means of directly assessing student learning and communicate those means with the faculty. We will accomplish these goals through an on-going dialogue among the faculty and on numerous faculty committees, as well as between the faculty, the Dean of Faculty, and the office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

B.3.d Relevant CFRs Identified

Throughout the EER phase, we will build on the work begun during the CPR phase on strengthening the “culture of evidence” at HMC. As noted in B.2.c, we will be engaged deeply with CFRs 3.11, 4.3-5, and 4.7-8 as we continue this process.

B.3.e Plans for Improving Student and Organizational Learning

We note in several sections above (A.1, B.2.a, B.3.c) that, in response to our last WASC review, we now have a thoroughgoing, consistent, and regularly timed cycle of program review. Based on a recommendation from the WASC Steering Committee, the Dean of Faculty has already discussed with the Department Chairs Committee a
new requirement that all future program review will include diversity and experiential learning components specifically focused on student learning outcomes.

In section B.3.c, we describe our need for and plan to improve our capacity for direct assessment. In that same section, we indicate some of the indirect methods we already utilize; Appendix 17, “Survey and Other Data Regularly Collected,” augments that discussion.

C. Work Plan and Engagement of Key Constituencies

C.1 Work Plan and Milestones; C.2 Data Gathering and Analysis

Our two themes, diversity and experiential learning, will evolve along somewhat different time frames. Defining, developing, implementing, tracking and feeding back to optimize diversity at HMC will necessitate a long-term and strategic process with many milestones to benchmark our progress. For example, we will carefully scrutinize the racial make up of our application inquiries, applications, admissions, student yields and graduating classes each year. It may take a number of years to find the resources and people to build a significantly more diverse faculty, and creating a more diverse student body may take many admission cycles. We are committed, however, to reaching our diversity goal. HMC already has a well developed experiential learning curriculum. For this theme we will be more focused on finding out what works well and what could be improved in our current program, and on establishing at the institutional level a process of annual evaluation and feedback. Because of these incongruous time lines, we have provided, within each time period of our work plan and milestones, separate and specific calendars for our strategic themes.

At the general level, progress on the work plan outlined below will be monitored by the WASC Steering Committee, the Faculty Executive Committee, the Dean of Faculty, and the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, as well as by the President and her Cabinet. At the level of specific tasks, primary responsibilities for monitoring progress are indicated below in parentheses.

Fall 2007: Complete the advertised search for the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment (search committee chaired by the Dean of Faculty); establish baseline data by undertaking a comprehensive review of the internal and external surveys we participate in, determining their relevance regarding our current accreditation themes, and determining where more data, and of what kind, is needed (Assessment Committee).

Diversity: Report to the faculty on progress and findings to date (Strategic Vision Diversity Committee, Faculty Executive Committee); begin to answer the diversity research questions posed in section B.2.b (Faculty Campus Life Committee).

Experiential Learning: Begin an annual, fall-semester evaluation of surveys given to all students who participate in the HMC summer research program (Dean of Faculty, Associate Dean of Administration, Director of Academic Operations, Faculty Assessment Committee); begin to answer experiential learning research questions posed in section B.2.b (Faculty Research Committee); bring any recommendations for change in the experiential learning curriculum before the entire faculty (WASC Steering Committee, Faculty Executive Committee).

Spring 2008-Fall 2008: Gather external data related to both themes; make this data available via publications or publicly accessible websites.

Diversity: Survey and report on current national practices for improving the diversity of applicant pools (Office of Admissions); the Faculty Executive Committee may task the Strategic Vision Diversity Committee to review and report on published research on diversity on college campuses across the nation.

Experiential Learning: review and report on infrastructural needs for the academic-year experiential learning curriculum and summer research (Dean of Faculty, Board of Trustees Educational Planning Committee, Faculty Budget Committee); review and report on experiential learning literature and, based on those findings, make recommendations for improving the HMC program (Faculty Curriculum Committee); evaluate the impact of any changes made to the experiential learning curriculum based on previous review
recommendations and report to the faculty on their effectiveness (Associate Dean of Administration, Director of Academic Operations, Faculty Assessment Committee, Faculty Executive Committee).

Spring 2009: Draft the CPR report based on findings from the activities described above (WASC Steering Committee).

Fall 2009: CPR site visit.

Spring 2010-Fall 2010: Gather data and make recommendations; evaluate progress towards goals, and evaluate outcomes; make data available via publications or publicly accessible websites (WASC Steering Committee, Dean of Faculty, Faculty Executive Committee).

Diversity: Based on the careful consideration of feedback from the CPR site visit and data gathered in anticipation of that visit, make recommendations for best-practices to hire more diverse faculty members, admit a more diverse student body, recruit more diverse trustees, and improve the general campus culture for diversity (WASC Steering Committee, Dean of Faculty, Faculty Executive Committee).

Experiential Learning: Evaluate the impact of any changes made to the curriculum based on previous review recommendations and report to faculty on their effectiveness (Associate Dean of Administration, Director of Academic Operations, Faculty Assessment Committee).

Spring 2011: EER site visit.

C.3 Commitment of Resources in Support of the Review

The review process is being overseen by the WASC Steering Committee, the members of which were appointed by the Dean of the Faculty (for membership of this body and its current subcommittees, see Appendix 15). Throughout the review the Steering Committee will work closely with a large fraction of all of the college’s faculty standing committees (see section B.2.a for the list of committees), the Dean of Faculty, the Office of Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment, and with the President and her Cabinet.

The Steering Committee is authorized to create subcommittees or working groups when necessary to gather data or in order to encourage wider discussion of the review themes. These subcommittees will be staffed with representatives from the various stakeholder communities at the college—students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees.

With the help of a new Associate Dean of Students/Diversity, an institutional research staff member assigned to support the WASC accreditation efforts, the Assessment Committee, the Strategic Planning and Diversity Committee, and the Strategic Planning Curriculum Committee, we will further develop a detailed plan of assessment for our goals.
D. New and Revised Appendices

For Appendices 1 through 14, please see the *Harvey Mudd College Institutional Proposal for Reaccreditation*, May 2007.
Appendix 15. Membership of the WASC Steering Committee and Its Subcommittees

The WASC Steering Committee:
- Thomas D. Donnelly, Chair, Associate Professor of Physics and Associate Dean of the Faculty for Faculty Development
- Christine Alvarado, Assistant Professor of Computer Science
- Robert J. Cave, Professor of Chemistry and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of External Studies
- Ziyad H. Duron, Jude and Eileen Laspa Professor of Engineering
- Daniel L. Goroff, Vice President and Dean of Faculty
- Jeffrey D. Groves, Professor of Literature
- Jon Jacobsen, Iris and Howard Critchell Assistant Professor of Mathematics
- Kerry Karukstis, Professor of Chemistry
- Jeanne Noda, Vice President and Dean of Students
- Lisa M. Sullivan, Professor of Economics and Chair, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Hal Van Ryswyk, Professor of Chemistry and Chair of the Faculty

The Experiential Learning Working Group:
- From the Steering Committee, Thomas D. Donnelly and Ziyad H. Duron
- William Alves, Associate Professor of Music
- Shenda Baker, Professor of Chemistry
- Alfonso Castro, Kenneth A. and Diana G. Jonsson Professor of Mathematics and Chair, Department of Mathematics
- Zachary Dodds, Associate Professor of Computer Science
- Amanda Hickman, HMC Class of 2007

The Diversity Working Group:
- From the Steering Committee, Thomas D. Donnelly and Jon Jacobsen
- Marianne de Laet, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Science, Technology, and Society
- Diana Hawkins, HMC Class of 2008
- Peter Osgood, Director of Admissions
- Hughes Suffren, Dean of Students, Office of Black Student Affairs, The Claremont Colleges
Appendix 16: Responses to Prior Commission Actions

As noted in section A.1 above, over the last seven years the college has addressed the March 2000 Commission letter in a variety of ways. That letter focused our attention on issues of student culture and social development; academic program review; leadership; experimentation, innovation, and educational leadership; and diversity. The list below is divided according to those topics and summarizes the various actions undertaken. Some of these actions are complete, some are ongoing. Taken as a whole, they indicate that we have made good progress in areas highlighted by our last review, especially in the area of student life. They also suggest, however, that we still have work to do in other areas, in particular in curricular development and diversity.

Student culture and social development
  • Added a full-time position in Student Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Emotional Health.
  • Converted the position of Freshman Division Director into the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, a position filled by a faculty member who interacts regularly with the Student Affairs staff and manages the interface of curricular and co-curricular issues.
  • Founded workshops, organized collaboratively by the Assistant Dean for Emotional Health and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, that focus on study skills, time management, and stress management.
  • Began a faculty-in-residence program that places a faculty member (with a programming budget) as a long-term resident in a student dormitory.
  • Initiated proctor training, provided by the Assistant Dean for Emotional Health, on gaming and internet addiction.
  • Through Student Affairs, established the Friday Forum, an informal, weekly discussion of political, social, and campus topics of interest to the community.
  • Through Mudders Making a Difference, a student group, organized regular spring break community service trips.
  • Expanded residential options (including off-meal-plan housing and apartments) for married couples.

Academic program review
  • Founded the Office of Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment and introduced the position of Associate Dean for Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment.
  • In 2002, began a regular process of program review; by May 2007, all academic departments except for biology and chemistry will have completed a review (see appendix 14 for program review guidelines).
  • In 2006, began a review of the entire curriculum, in particular to examine how the curriculum affects student learning.
  • Assessed, through the Assessment Committee, the integrative experience requirement and the summer math program.

Leadership
  • Initiated an annual, elective course in leadership.
  • With an Annenberg Foundation grant for endowment support, instituted the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Visiting Professorship in Leadership and Management.

Experimentation, innovation, and educational leadership
  • Included experiential learning in a wider range of courses.
  • Moved forward with a plan to increase summer research opportunities, with the goal of being able to promise such an experience to every entering student who wants one.
  • Substantially improved our study abroad rate (this year, 20 percent of our juniors have studied abroad).
  • Initiated the Horizontally-Integrated Core Curriculum to ensure that core courses meet multiple facets of the mission statement.
  • Created Associate Deans for Administration and for Special Projects to assist the Dean of Faculty in promoting (among other things) summer research and new faculty development.
Diversity

- Created an Office of Institutional Diversity directed by an Executive Assistant to the President for Institutional Diversity; the executive assistant position was upgraded in March 2007 to Assistant/Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity housed in Student Affairs.
- Founded the Summer Institute, a 2.5 week residential summer program that offers an introduction to campus life at HMC and helps entering students negotiate a smooth transition from high school to college.
- Changed financial aid policies to encourage a more diverse enrollment.
- Founded the Corporate Scholars Program, a scholarship program aimed at students from groups traditionally underrepresented in engineering, science, and mathematics.
- We conducted a three-day Multicultural Forum for faculty and staff members in May 2007.
Appendix 17: Survey and Other Data Regularly Collected and Utilized by the Office of Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment and/or the Dean of Students Office

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<th>Completed by</th>
<th>Timing</th>
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<td>New students</td>
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<td>CIRP College Student Survey</td>
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<td>Seniors</td>
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*Indicates that this survey is listed more than once*