



June 30, 2008

Joe Subbiondo
President
California Institute of Integral Studies
1453 Mission Street
San Francisco 94103

Dear President Subbiondo:

At its meeting on June 19-20, 2008, the Commission considered the report of the team that conducted the Educational Effectiveness Visit to the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) on February 6-8, 2008. The Commission also reviewed the Institute's Educational Effectiveness report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and Vice President of Academic Affairs Judie Wexler. The updates and information you provided, along with your observations about the review, were very helpful.

The framework for the visit was based on previous Commission recommendations and the Institutional Proposal. The previous Commission action letter of July 7, 2006 highlighted a number of areas to be addressed, including financial planning, faculty and staff workload, diversity, assessment, and educational effectiveness.

In its Institutional Proposal, CIIS outlined three themes for its Education Effectiveness Review (EER): Conceptualizing Integral Education; Assessing Capstone Experiences in the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs; and Assessing Dissertation Proposals in the Ph.D. and Psy.D. programs. The Institute's EER report also addressed the issues of assessment and educational effectiveness, stemming from the CPR visit. In all three of its EE initiatives, CIIS achieved preliminary goals toward becoming a culture that is evidence-based. CIIS engaged in "an intensive reflection and Institute-wide discussion of the meaning, methods, and measurement of integral education," and used that dialogue to shape its assessment program.

In its report, the team documented progress in many of the areas that were noted in the Capacity and Preparatory Review. It also made a number of recommendations important to the California Institute for Integral Studies' continued improvement and development. The Commission endorses the team's findings and urges that the Institute give consideration to them and to the summary of recommendations at the conclusion of the team report. The Commission highlighted several areas for the Institute's continuing attention:

Educational Effectiveness Outcomes. CIIS has made genuine efforts to implement academic assessment and review across programs. The Somatic Psychology Program, for example, developed well-defined learning objectives with assessment feedback loops that inform program development, and serves as a model for best practices. Such evidence-based processes for reviewing program and institutional effectiveness are critical to CIIS's ability to demonstrate its effectiveness in integral education. Building on this common understanding, the Institute should focus on articulating explicit, shared learning outcomes, and ensure that assessments provide

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useful information about those outcomes for program improvement and institutional understanding of its performance in this area. The Institute might find its alumni a resource as it articulates the common, applied elements of an integral education. As CIIS moves forward, it should focus on fully implementing more finely tuned assessment plans in all programs and courses. Program/course philosophy, desired program outcomes regarding student learning and competencies, and the processes for achieving these outcomes should be effectively linked. Aggregate outcomes data should be used to improve programs and inform decision making. Adjunct and full-time faculty should both be involved in addressing academic quality and assessment. More explicit connections among integral education goals, courses, and other CIIS experiences will inform the Institute's ability to measure and demonstrate education effectiveness. (CFRs 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.4 4.4, 4.7)

Diversity in the Curriculum and Campus Climate. Although the Institute shows commitment and progress in this area, diversity continues to be a complex issue for CIIS. A three-year plan for recruitment, retention, and inclusivity of minority students, faculty, and staff has been developed. The Psy.D. program, visited by the American Psychological Association out of concern for diversity issues, responded with several initiatives in an effort to build diversity throughout the program. Yet the CIIS community reports limited results in this area. The Commission urges the Institute to move beyond traditional, categorical thinking about diversity and to focus on demonstrable results as the community broadens its conception of diversity and increases the populations of diverse groups at all levels. Faculty (full-time and adjunct), staff, and students should all be involved in exploring and articulating the Institute's conceptions of diversity. Promoting awareness of difference, respect, and competence in the curriculum and climate are intrinsic to the unique mission of CIIS. It should be a high priority in every aspect of the Institute. (CFR 1.5)

Financial growth and sustainability. CIIS has demonstrated an effective commitment to financial stability and has shown commendable progress in its capacity to more productively manage operations and achieve major goals. Strategic planning now actively guides management choices and evaluation, and should continue to determine priorities for resources. As the institution continues its financial development – meeting obligations encumbered in purchasing its new building, diversifying income streams, and developing longer range models and plans – it should increase student financial support and develop appropriate reserve and contingency funds. The Institute should increase its capacity to use data for financial decision making and sustain its practice of transparency and availability with regard to budget information. (CFR 3.5)

Faculty/Staff Support. Raised as a critical issue in the Capacity and Preparatory Review, faculty and staff workload continued to be cited often during the Educational Effectiveness Review. Issues of workload manageability pervade the Institute and directly affect both its capacity and effectiveness in meeting its educational mission. With assessment of student learning outcomes relatively nascent, CIIS should develop better methods of identifying the actual work performed by faculty, along with methods of oversight and reward, to ensure faculty involvement in maintaining and developing educational effectiveness. Similarly, the institution should continue in its efforts to identify and address the root causes for staff dissatisfaction. The team report identified many potential areas for review as the institution focuses on and addresses the causes for these ongoing concerns. (CFRs 2.1, 3.1, 3.2 3.3)

The Commission acted to:

1. Receive the Educational Effectiveness Review report.
2. Reaffirm the accreditation of the California Institute for Integral Studies.
3. Schedule the Capacity and Preparatory Review in spring 2016 and the Educational Effectiveness Review in fall 2017. The Institutional Proposal will be due in spring 2014.

4. Request an Interim Report due in spring 2012, on the issues raised in this letter, including financing of the building, improvement of the financial health of the institution, and progress on diversity and Educational Effectiveness.

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that the institution has satisfactorily addressed the Core Commitments to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness, and has successfully completed the multistage review conducted under the Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review, the institution is expected to continue its progress and be prepared to respond as expectations of institutional performance, especially with respect to educational effectiveness and student learning, further develop under the application of the Standards of Accreditation.

As you know, the Commission has recently approved revisions to the Standards and Criteria for Review (CFRs) and to the Institutional Review Process. Your next comprehensive review has been scheduled in keeping with changes to the timing of the review process. The Commission suggests that you review the changes to the CFRs, which are effective July 1, 2008, so that you are prepared to address the revised CFRs in your next review.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the Chair of the institution's governing board in one week. It is the Commission's expectation that the team report and this action letter will be widely disseminated throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement, and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in them.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,

Ralph A. Wolff
President and Executive Director

RW/iw/aa

cc: Sherwood Lingenfelter, Commission Chair
Board Chair
Judie Wexler
Members of the Team
Ingrid Walker