

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

Visitors' Report

Laguna College of Art and Design

Laguna Beach, CA
Jonathan Burke, President
March 27–30, 2018

Denise Mullen, Oregon College of Art and Craft, Visiting Team Chair
Anthony Jones, Kansas City Art Institute, Visiting Team Member

Degrees for which renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing is sought:

Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Animation; Drawing and Painting (General, Sculpture); Game Art; Illustration (Drawing and Painting, Entertainment, General) (The Entertainment emphasis is being phased out)

Master of Fine Arts-2 years: Painting

Certificate-3 years: Drawing and Painting

Certificate-1 year: Drawing and Painting (Post-Baccalaureate)

Degrees for which Plan Approval is sought:

Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Drawing and Painting (Illustration)

Degrees and programs for which renewal of Plan Approval is sought:

Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Graphic Design and Digital Media (Action Sports, General, Illustration)

Certificate-3 years: Animation; Game Art; Graphic Design and Digital Media; Illustration

Master of Fine Arts (Distance Learning)-2 years: Art of Game Design (listed by NASAD as Game Design)

Master of Fine Arts-2 years: Drawing

Degree with Plan Approval for which Final Approval for Listing is sought:

Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Illustration (Entertainment Design)

DISCLAIMER

The following report and any statements therein regarding compliance with NASAD accreditation standards represent only the considered opinion of the visitors at the time of the visit. Definitive evaluation of compliance and the accreditation decision will be made by the Commission following a complete review of the application, including the Self-Study, the Visitors' Report, and any Optional Response to the Visitors' Report submitted by the institution.

OPTIONAL RESPONSE

It is strongly recommended that each institution submit an Optional Response to the Visitors' Report, which may be used to correct (1) errors of fact, (2) conclusions based on such errors, and (3) any documented changes made in the program since the on-site review. In particular, information in the Optional Response should address noted issues of apparent noncompliance, such as those included in Section P. of this report, and any areas where the provision of further information has been deemed advisable by the institution.

The Laguna College of Art and Design should use the Optional Response to submit transcripts for the degrees for which Final Approval for Listing is sought.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The NASAD visiting team wishes to thank those at Laguna College of Art and Design (LCAD) for the warm hospitality shown to the team during the recent on-site visit. The President, faculty, staff, and students were most generous in making the team feel welcome. The visitors wish to particularly thank Jonathan Burke, President, for his time in explaining the history, current context, and future plans for LCAD. Special thanks also goes to Kerri Redeker, Executive Assistant to the Provost, who oversaw every detail of the visit from the planning stage to the visit.

While on campus the team met with President Jonathan Burke; Chief Financial Officer Jim Godek; Controller Michael Pearlman; Provost Helene Garrison; Registrar and Director of Institutional Research Laura Patrick; Assistant Registrar Michael Zuniga; Director of Institutional Technology Matt Morrison; Director of College Advancement Dominic Munolo; Associate Director of Advancement Tracy Hartman; Director of Assessment and Accreditation Nicole Leshner; Director of Facilities Mark Day; Director of Safety and Security James Wooley; Human Resources Manager Caroline Carlson; Vice President for Student Affairs Susan Miller; Director of Financial Aid and Admissions Chris Brown; Financial Aid Counselor Reggie West; Director of Library Services Jennifer Wormser; Assistant Dean of Students Julian Velarde; Director of Career services Robin Fuld; Alumni Relations Coordinator Julie Baker; Communications Manager Mike Stice; Graphic Design and Digital Media Design Administrator Carol Covarrubias; Webmaster Rick Sanchez; Academic Department Chairs; Institutional Technology staff; Admissions Counselor Jason Umfress; Gallery Director Bryan Hegge; Chair of Fine Art Hope Reilly; Alumni Stefan Cummings; Alumnae Elizabeth McGhee and Karin Cain; and Community Professionals Irin Maharan; Laguna Art Museum Carla Meberg; President of Laguna Outreach for Community Arts Rob Nesler; Obsidian; Tiffanie Bennett and Springsteen von Stoutenburg, Quiksilver/Boardriders.

The NASAD visiting team especially appreciated the LCAD Board of Trustees Chair, Jared Mathis, and members of the Executive Board Nancy Beverage; Nancy Milby, Treasurer; and Lisa Dallendorf, Secretary, taking the time to meet with the NASAD visiting team for a thoughtful and insightful conversation about LCAD and its role in the community—clear evidence of the Board's commitment to the College and its success.

Reflective of the community, the LCAD Board supports the College's mission and understands the value

of the College, its programs, and its students to Laguna Beach, the region and to industry.

INTRODUCTION

“Laguna Beach is a child of that deathless search, particularly by persons devoted to painting and writing, for some place where beauty, and cheapness, and a trifle of remoteness, hobnob together in a delightful companionship” (Hildegard Hawthorne, circa 1930).

Since 1900 the Laguna Beach area has been the haunt of artists and ‘creative types from the world of Hollywood.’ The most celebrated of California’s *plein-air* painters drew attention to the loveliness of the coastline, canyons and vistas, and the village of Laguna Beach became known as an artist’s colony. Homes and studios were established, an art gallery in 1918, and the famed Festival of Art and ‘Pageant of the Masters’ in 1921. A passionate artist’s belief in the preservation of the beautiful locale was widely reported – the residents were called “Lagunatics” ... In the free spirited world of the 1960s and 70s, the colony was a home for “the creative, the bohemian, and the wealthy,” a home for hippies, the breeding ground for ‘alternative life-styles’ ... and that Timothy Leary lived there speaks volumes ... Out of this history, in 1961, came the founding of what is today the Laguna College of Art and Design. This history and geography is critical to understanding the nature of the College, its DNA deeply rooted in where it resides, a college remarkably ‘of its place.’ It also underscores the nature of a respectful and respected long relationship with the community and civic leadership, and how important the College is to the region as a major cultural and educational asset. Far from being simply of historic interest, this relationship is a ‘living history,’ an evolving symbiotic partnership for the common and specific good.

It is from this historical and cultural context that the Laguna College of Art and Design (LCAD) comes to NASAD accreditation, which is built on peer evaluation of standards and guidelines that define best practices in the field of visual art higher education. The standards and guidelines that make up the NASAD Handbook are based on the collaborative work the peer members of the Association. Within these parameters member institutions are encouraged to find their own pathways to serving their students in programs and structures, both academic and administrative, to support the institutions’ missions, programs, and students.

Freestanding art colleges by their nature must define their philosophies clearly and stay at the forefront of visual art education to remain attractive to students and relevant to the industries or fields they serve. Particularly, smaller institutions must carefully balance resources with aspirations to fulfill their respective missions and serve their students with an informed education that will prepare them well for the intended studio, design, and technological environments and the unintended careers yet to emerge, in which they will find themselves in their work lives.

LCAD has built a unique grouping of visual art programs on the undergraduate, graduate, and certificate levels in a dedicated art college environment that provides a specifically tailored educational experience for students interested in pursuing a traditional approach to drawing, painting, and sculpture. This historical commitment has been welded to, and serves as the basis of, digital majors in animation, illustration, game art and graphic design that feeds these industries in Southern California with LCAD’s strength – the ability to draw exceptionally well from observation. Much like the Laguna Beach community in which it has grown into today’s LCAD, the College has consciously decided to remain separate from the norm. Laguna Beach has not allowed its community to become part of the continuous development from Santa Barbara to San Diego. Similarly, LCAD has stayed fiercely committed to its antecedents as an artists’ community of *plein air* painters inspired by the geographical beauty that is the Laguna Canyon where it opens up to the sea.

A. Purposes

On several occasions the team was told that the aspirational model of LCAD is to become “the Juilliard of art schools.” To this model, the atmosphere on campus is professional and focused. There is passion for the place at every level. Students are deeply engaged in their work resulting in strong skill based learning, in which students demonstrate what the skills they have learned without compromising their creativity or individuality. Their pride in their skills is palpable and seems to be empowering.

The tremendous affection for the College and the LCAD students is undeniable and evidenced by the longevity and loyalty of the staff and faculty of the College. Numerous discussions on campus focused on the longevity of service on the part of full-time faculty and staff. The word ‘longevity’ was often paired with ‘loyalty’ in terms of a shared belief in the mission and purpose and passion in their work on behalf of the students. Faculty and staff spoke at length about an institutional sense of self-directed and committed staff, and what these ‘rocks in the flood’ meant in terms of continuity (institutional memory). The feeling of “why would anyone leave” seemed pervasive. Furthering the positive atmosphere, the LCAD Board is enthusiastically in support of the College’s mission and shows demonstrable and impressive commitment to the future of the College.

LCAD’s Mission Statement is clear and concise, and was clearly underlined during the site visit:

“Laguna College of Art & Design prepares its students for careers as creative artists and designers by fostering the acquisition of timeless skill based on observation, representation, and concept development, all the while embracing the benefits of new and innovative technologies” (see Self-Study, Section 1., Purposes and Operations).

The visiting team wanted to observe whether this stated intent and the actual practice meshed together. During the site visit the team did not find any significant discrepancy between the Self-Study document and the delivery of the described mission in the studios. The College’s documents are seen as a reasonable and accurate description of the College’s work. Questions put to individuals and groups were answered straightforwardly, with candor, and were largely consistent with the College’s Self-Study document.

The College mission results in studio-based evidence of a straight line that goes from new work reflective of traditional ‘classical’ oil portraiture and figurative sculpture, to the ‘representational fantasy’ of digitally generated game art. Observation from nature, combined with skills to convert that observation in highly creative ways, is at the core of LCAD. The tradition of representational work based on observation has led to a natural and productive connection with the digital animation and game arts industries in their need to draw the figure. The President articulated a belief that there was no divide between the fine art and design/media, that the College’s core belief in observation and representation was a common purpose, with all disciplines developing from the drawing platform.

This somewhat surprising dual focus does give the College a curricular, though not a political, division. The faculty was described as having common purpose and respect with no fine art versus applied philosophical division. Mastery of skill and technique is seen as leading to creative freedom, to the ability to pivot. This mastery is seen a natural basis for illustration, animation, and game art.

In response to the “vocational” question, the President responded that industry can’t teach liberal arts and high skills. The President is most proud that everyone wants to develop the highest esthetic level of discipline. The President expressed pride in the quality and dedication of the students, across all disciplines, and the range of faculty who teach them. “Passion” and “commitment” were frequently used descriptors.

There are perhaps only few other visual arts colleges in the US that are uncompromising in presenting the nature of their academic thrust in such a manner. No offense should be taken in the team describing

LCAD as a ‘niche art college’ within the ‘niche art-college universe’ in North American higher education – this is their badge of honor. Taking LCAD on its own terms, the team saw a proud College with a well-articulated program of academic offerings, composed to serve students who wanted to direct their creative energy to ‘applied art’ – making work that was original and exciting, desired by the media and entertainment industries, and also the world of galleries and museums. The team noted a large-type statement on a corridor wall that was a useful clue as to how LCAD reminds students of the nature of a career path: “Do what you love...Do what you are good at...Do what the world needs...Do what you can be paid for.”

LCAD faculty and staff pride themselves on uniqueness and difference. The Chairs of the disciplines/majors all subscribed to the core mission statement of the College. In short, many said “we are not other colleges like Irvine because we choose to be what we’ve always been – and that is our value.” All spoke of what that value was – noting pride in a classical or traditional curriculum as providing a common language and vocabulary that spoken with many different accents. They spoke of their role in designing a platform for students to launch into the selected more specialized areas. In discussing curriculum assembly, the Chairs spoke of the ‘clarity and focus’ of ‘observation and representation expressed with the individual’s personal voice.’ Asked to articulate the contrast with other colleges, it was noted that at LCAD students learn “the hands-on mechanics of how to paint, what to paint, and why to paint.” Several telling observations about the LCAD curriculum focused on “uncompromised creativity” – that there is no sense of discomfort that LCAD is dedicated to helping students direct their artistic ability into the world of work in the media, entertainment and technology fields, lying alongside the world of galleries, print studios, museums. The Chairs also stated that the culture in many colleges was ‘cut-throat’ and highly competitive, with faculty egos being obstructive to the agreed mission: “that’s not the culture at LCAD, we are collectively outcome-driven, and what validates our work is successful students.” The discussion was notable for being sprinkled with words like “collegiality,” “non-territorial,” “collaborative,” and re-statements of a belief that their views as program leaders were “respected.”

The team respects the faculty’s enthusiasm for the LCAD approach; however, would like to have seen more analysis of quite how and why LCAD describes itself in comparison with competitor colleges. Southern California is rich in colleges and universities with notable art and design programs within the region. All of these colleges also have direct relationships with the same entertainment/media industries accessed by LCAD. It would be helpful if a clear pedagogical and philosophical analysis, accompanied by data on relative costs, credit hours, majors and sub-majors, faculty, support systems and industry relations were to be conducted. What is sought is a clearer exposition of the differentiated value of an LCAD degree in comparison with colleges with which LCAD shares a market.

B. Size and Scope

Faculty and staff

The current number and expertise of faculty, 22 full-time and 110 part-time, is sufficient to support the 636 students (591 undergraduate and 45 graduate and post-baccalaureate) currently enrolled in the degree programs at LCAD. The large percentage of part-time faculty consists of working professionals who bring currency to the programs, especially the digital programs. The downside of having a smaller core of full-time faculty is the potential lack of connection with the whole College on the part of part-time/adjunct faculty who have deep engagement primarily with their programs and not the full College.

It was not clear to the visiting team what the right balance of full- to part-time faculty would be to fulfillment the academic functions such as counseling and project guidance.

Every faculty member with whom the team met was deeply committed to her/his students and the founding mission of the institution. It is in the everyday and in the planning processes that the differences in collegial investment are seen. This phenomenon should be noted though it is not significant enough to affect the overall atmosphere of the College.

The enrollment numbers have steadily increased, doubling in the last ten years with the addition of the digital curriculum. The growth has proven the attractiveness of the curricular offerings and the success of the mission.

Facilities and Location

The College location in the Laguna Canyon area is challenged with non-contiguous facilities located along several miles of Laguna Canyon Road, the only access to Laguna Beach from the east. The off-site Gallery, located in the business district of the beach community helps maintain the College's reputation locally with the general public. The digital programs with direct links to industry in the Southern California region connect the College with industry.

The size and scope of the programs offered, described throughout this report, appear to be appropriate to the facility and equipment resources available to deliver the curricular content offered at each degree level even with the investment and maintenance demands of keeping up with digital technology. The resources appear to be consistent with the major areas of study and the degree levels. The current enrollment demands an adequate number of courses at the advanced level to support the degrees offered.

LCAD leadership's investment in new buildings and renovations, as well as the necessary digital support, make LCAD a viable venue for visual arts education and career preparation.

Students

The small class size serves the students well, and the nimbleness of LCAD allows for tailoring the curriculum to industry needs. Students were attracted to LCAD because of the quality of work produced, the campus, and the affordability as compared to the larger freestanding colleges in the region, the "comfortable" atmosphere, and the track record of industry success among the alumnae.

C. Finance

LCAD is 96% tuition driven, with a strong cash position of \$5 million, and a \$1.5 million endowment, modest for a free-standing college of LCAD's size and modest in its yield. The principle appears to be well managed as it is invested in a Common Fund. For private institutions, a marker of financial health is the length of time the institution could run on the current finances. While LCAD has a two to three year cushion, being tuition dependent, is vulnerable if enrollment declines. Given the recent enrollment growth, this may not be a likely scenario. However, enrollment is the life-blood of LCAD and must be sustained to in ensure its financial health.

The relationships among the purposes, size and scope, and financial resources are currently in balance to support the expectations and aspirations for student learning discussed above. However, it is prudent to engage in scenario planning for a Plan B to consider if enrollment were to decline. When asked to identify what a Plan B might look like, Board members recalled previous iterations of some form of a Strategic Plan as the major navigational guide to the future of LCAD – but also thoughtfully reviewed why those plans are less relevant today, given choice, cost, and the nature of the New Millennial student.

Development and Fundraising

In response to questions about the aspirations of the Strategic Plan, the President noted how constrained LCAD had been by lack of core financing (the relatively low endowment and the healthy

cash reserve fund), the absolute reliance on tuition income (LCAD is 96% tuition-dependent), and fund-raising.

Given that LCAD is so dominated by tuition dependency coupled with the modest scale of the endowment means that it is not delivering ‘bridge-funding’ to close the gap between actual expenses and income. LCAD’s Annual Fund is an important contributor to making a ‘bridge’ and the College is clearly adroit and smart in its efforts to increase the deliverable from this source. At the same time the College struggles, as many do, with growing a solid endowment.

LCAD has a policy that it develops strong equity by buying and owning its real-estate, rather than renting, which is entirely credible. However, LCAD finds itself in a position wherein dollars flowing into the institution are almost immediately spent on laudable projects that have been prioritized. Basically “there are never enough big bucks to cream some off and park them in the endowment.” It was said in different ways that “there’s no cushion.”

The current Plan has identified a key need in the form of a new Student Center for the College, of approximately 20,000 square feet at a cost of \$10–12 million, on land it already owns, with a significant lead pledge from a donor. The team was inquisitive as to whether such a facility would expand and replace existing provisions, or provide for new space – especially addressing the perceived need to consolidate the program into few buildings. This is still under close review by the College. In this sensitive stage it should be noted that confidentiality is key in the community

The project is currently in the planning development stage with the financing possibilities under review. Among the financing possibilities for this project is the consideration of a capital campaign to fund the Student Center. LCAD’s investment in new buildings and renovations has previously been funded through borrowing to fund such projects. The strong relationship with the bank and the apparent willingness of the bank to fund the project is indicative of a positive financial position. However, to not incur further debt and having a lead donor for the project, the visiting team recommends the leadership consider increasing fundraising to support campus expansion rather than taking on additional debt, specifically to seriously consider a capital campaign to achieve this and other objectives in the Strategic Plan. The campaign could have other opportunities for giving, including faculty development and named Department Chair and administrative officer positions. Advancement planning could be organized to accomplish this project and the financial goals in general of LCAD. Further, developing a recurring sequence of capital or fund-raising campaigns as a regular means of revenue generation would benefit LCAD and ease the dependency on tuition.

The creation of a philanthropy group, and LCAD’s intention to appoint outside fundraising counsel to plot a capital campaign show that LCAD is aware of the issue to hand. The recent gift of \$1 million (the largest in the College’s history) is very welcome testimony to the credibility of the College and its long-term future, and is positioned as a magnet to attract more support. In addition to the commitment to more robust fundraising, a Legacy Society for planned giving is under discussion. At present the annual fund consists of approximately 150 donors, many of who have become members of the President’s Circle. This group is seen as a cultivation opportunity as a base for the Legacy Society.

Annual Budget

The annual budget appears to be adequate to support the purposes and the size and scope of both the baccalaureate and graduate curricular and other programs, except as mentioned above. The budget process is managed by the CFO and the CFO’s staff and has the full involvement of the President and the Senior Staff in the budget development process.

Financial and Facilities Planning

Long-range financial planning is accomplished through the Five-Year Strategic Plan and the accompanying Financial Plan, which serves as guide to the senior administration and the Board. It was clear that the team's suggestion of a solid space-audit to evaluate current studio and classroom use would help to better plan new facility expansion, i.e., a Master Space Plan which would underpin the Strategic Plan.

With the college's focus on the five-year term, it would be prudent to formally and fully review the institution's finances and financial position in five years, half way through the projected term of accreditation, to track the results of the fundraising and the master planning efforts to meet LCAD's institutional planning goals.

D. Governance and Administration

1. Overall Effectiveness

College Leadership

The institution's governance structure, in relation to the size and scope of the College, is effective in supporting student learning, continuity, stability, and long-range planning. The senior staff meets every two weeks to discuss and manage the affairs of the College. The intense focus on career preparation and representational skill building requires an academic organizational structure in which a studio Department is intently focused inward and to industry. It has been noted that the relationship among Departments is strong among the Chairs but less robust on the part of the general faculty. The somewhat "city state" type structure can serve the institution well if the communication challenges from and to administration and the faculty and staff can be overcome.

LCAD's President has been at the College since 1980, and provided the team with the President's unique perspective (perhaps not entirely unique – the team noted that many of LCAD's team had been in place for decades, and very much 'of the College,' not just 'at the College'). The President is well-known working artist. The President spoke with the authority and pride of the President's long history with the College, its development, and projections for expansion and an exciting future. In describing the core elements of LCAD, the President noted the lack of a division of the 'fine arts' and 'applied arts.' Of particular note were the President's remarks that LCAD requires a demonstration of learned skills – students were given quite rigorous instruction in materials and methods (whether paint or digital tools) and the 'value' of LCAD studio time was becoming demonstrable adept at using them. LCAD's students were 'career-disposed' and carefully chose the College, which was committed to making them 'career-ready.' The President also described the process that led to the creation of a Five-year Plan/Strategic Plan by dint of a "team effort."

Faculty and staff observations on the difference between the LCAD of 2007—the last NASAD review—and the College of today was that "this is not the LCAD of ten years ago," and they knew that because so many people at LCAD today were also on staff then. The reason identified was that it is more data-driven today. The need for analytics to power the decision-making process was said to have been embraced at every level of the College. Thus the challenge since the last NASAD visit had been to ask 'what data do we need, what do we do with it, and how is it helpful'? Their work was to proactively gather a description of the need and organize the data in a comprehensive and useful way - this was not as evident in times past, and it has changed the culture of the College. While lauding the unique spirit of LCAD, the passion, freedom and openness of its culture, the College now looks more objectively and holistically at all aspects of

its work, to better determine what the measures and metrics mean in terms of making decisions about priorities.

As in all conversations about the College, the team heard about the total buy-in to the LCAD mission of keeping real traditions alive but making them vibrantly relevant in the world of contemporary practice.

LCAD Board

LCAD's stability, solvency and forward program is stewarded by an engaged and lively Board—committed, enthusiastic, and realistic—who collectively love the College, but nevertheless are clear-eyed and careful in their assessment of priorities and the operations of the institution. In meeting with the Board Chair and members of the Board, the team discussed the Strategic Plan. The very supportive Board feels that LCAD is good at the big picture, and that the active, working Board committees, with non-Board members, are the right structure for LCAD. The Board members appeared collaborative and candid, and highly supportive of, and knowledgeable about, the College.

The Board members characterized themselves as the recipients of a “bubbling-up” of ideas and proposals that are discussed in terms of an active partnership, rather than top-down direction. Shared governance was referenced several times, and the Board members stressed that they worked on the basis of mutual respect with the management and faculty. Asked to identify what worried them most, the twin issues of enrollment targets and fundraising in the local community were referenced. Longer-serving Board members recalled that the College did not formerly recruit as heavily as it does now – “students demanded the courses that we supplied” – but the increasing availability of discipline provision in the Southern California region meant they were “spoiled for choice.” All Board members talked about how they supported the College in different ways, while avoiding micro-managing. Likewise, the fiscal issues of the College and how the Board viewed them, were described as being subject to a “very financially responsible analysis.”

The team noted that the phrase “the spirit of the College” was often evoked in terms of balancing what happens in the studios with the down-time of being in the library, café, and social spaces. The Board also used the word ‘holistic’ as code for the College’s responsibility for ‘the whole student experience.’

The Board was characterized by staff and faculty as visionary with faith in the LCAD management. Board members had notable areas of expertise and experience, which they put at the disposal of the College. In discussing aspects of the Strategic Plan, members were optimistic. It was notable that the recent unfortunate experience of the un-met expectations in the new Creative Writing degree had a sobering impact and was seen as a learning event.

New and prospective Board members are cultivated through a formal meeting, tour of campus and a Board interview. No doubt the enthusiasm of the current board members gives a positive impression of LCAD Board membership to those considering Board membership.

2. Policy-Making

Curricular and educational policies for baccalaureate and graduate programs are established in the LCAD government structure through input from a variety of constituencies. Proposals move from the Faculty Senate to the Chairs' Council to the Provost to the Academic Committee of the Board. Faculty noted the relationship with the Board is good reflected in the rotating Trustee event, which is hosted by a different Department each year.

Faculty Senate meets at least seven times a year as specified in the *Full Time Faculty Handbook 2017-2018* (see Faculty Governance, pp. 87–88). The handbook defines “faculty governance” with provisions for the role of the Faculty Senate and the Senate’s committees on Curricular/Assessment, Personnel, Promotions, and Library as the means of achieving “shared governance.” The President stated that the part-time faculty “come in, teach, and leave.” Given the high percentage of part-time and adjunct faculty and their full voting rights in the Senate, this circumstance makes “shared governance” in its fullest sense difficult to realize in an equitable sense.

All decisions governing faculty employment, salary, and promotion, are articulated in the *Full Time Faculty Handbook 2017-2018* for full-time faculty. The policy-making structure appears to be understood by the full-time faculty and appears to be effective. The recent unionization of the part time and adjunct faculty will lead to specific provisions governing these faculty members who are the majority of the faculty and the voting majority in the Faculty Senate.

3. Art and Design Executive’s Load and Responsibilities

In addition to the duties and responsibilities of the office, the President teaches a class each semester. Though the demands are multi-faceted, the President feels the President has the time, energy, and staff to execute the President’s administrative duties and teaching responsibilities effectively.

4. Communication

Communication, particularly in relation to the planning processes, appears to have room for improvement. As stated previously, the nature of the College, the large number of part-time faculty makes communication difficult. Even when proposals originate or are vetted in the Faculty Senate, not all faculty can attend or follow the life cycle of the proposals that move through the institution. The Faculty Senate serves as the vehicle for fall faculty orientation and the opportunity to address the full faculty. The annual staff meeting serves the same purpose for the staff. The team observed that communication across the institution could be addressed to make sure that all constituencies feel engaged in the planning and operations of the College, in addition to their work in the discrete programs or offices. That said, members of the LCAD community feel a deep connection to the College. The term “LCADian” was used by the Department Chairs to describe the members of the LCAD community.

As mentioned above, the visiting team suggests that a comprehensive Master Plan for long-term future development would be advantageous to the College in devising ways to improve communication, as well as the design of the campus, including traffic flow and economy of scale.

E. Faculty and Staff

Department Chairs feel that LCAD is a truly supportive environment - “an intimate environment in the canyon” - demanding, with the small size leading to the ability to provide a personal touch. They indicated that the discourse emanates from a positive place that is student centric. Strengths that were stated included that the faculty as a group is committed; the College is growing, has a healthy environment, and is unique in the classical training at its core.

In discussion with the team about the assembly of the Self-Study, the Provost reviewed the useful faculty input into both the document and the Strategic Plan. The direction of the Colleges' pedagogic work is based in the value of the Faculty Senate "as an idea engine." The Provost (again a long-serving member of the senior staff) noted that the College was increasingly focused on "diagnostic research," systematic and thorough analysis. The Provost expressed concerns that the College needs to review marketing strategy and to present the College's story in an even more compelling way. At length, the Provost presented a strong belief in the quality of student work and the agility of the senior faculty/staff in identifying academic needs – which ranged over the responsive strengthening of existing programs, to closing or opening new disciplines. Asked to identify a specific area of concern, the Provost described the nature of discussions about marketing, retention, and the worrisome graduation rate. The wide-ranging discussion of the Strategic Plan included proposed solutions to these issues.

The seriousness of purpose among the students was clear to the visiting team. Faculty stated that students help each other. Faculty members seem to work collaboratively within their respective Departments, less so across and among the Departments. The faculty with whom the team met was primarily part-time in the areas of Illustration, Art History, Graphic Design and Game Action Sports. They spoke of the long history of artists in the community and the love of the students for the technical process. They characterized the faculty as collaborative within Departments, less so across Departments and close knit and without egos.

Strategic planning, however, they felt was not as seamless with less participation sought as is necessary to have a fully functioning system of strategic planning. The classic result of not having engagement beyond the retreats that gather information and generate discussion left them feeling out of touch with the final plan. The sense on the part of some faculty was that there are more edicts coming down without discussion. For example, they cited beginning the semester after Labor Day, the doubling of Chair stipends without letting the faculty know why, which was an additional month or work through the end of June. Whether specifically accurate or not, the perception speaks to the need for better communication.

There was a shared concern that there were not enough full-time faculty. This was expressed by students as valuing the current full-time faculty not only as experienced professionals in the studios, but that they were mentors/advisors who give practical advice on how to navigate the College as a whole because "they know where things are, what the processes are, and "they know a lot of things." Students felt that the part-time faculty don't have this insight into institutional navigation.

The College's commitment to relatively small class sizes was discussed with faculty, with an interesting comment that this was important to part-time faculty. This led to the subject of the balance between full- and part-time faculty. Though there were differing views expressed, the subjective sense was that faculty felt LCAD needed more full-time faculty. To the visiting team, the disproportionately large percentage of adjunct/part-time faculty provide the strong professional expertise that distinguishes LCAD in the delivery of the curriculum. However, the challenge of engaging this constituency fully in the work of the College is problematic. The integration of part-time and adjunct faculty in a way that furthers the mission of the institution would seem to be essential to having a cohesive faculty body. The visiting team felt the College might reconsider the balance between full and adjunct/part-time faculty to provide continuity by strengthening the core of full-time faculty. Part time and adjunct faculty at LCAD voted to join the Service Employer's International Union (SEIU) in July 2015. Negotiations are ongoing and include representation from the Union, LCAD faculty, and administration.

Faculty are either full-time, part-time or adjunct and can be appointed for either one or two years. For the purpose of determining workload, an "academic year" for full-time faculty is composed of 30 teaching weeks plus an in-service obligation of 10 days per year, broken into two semesters of 15 weeks each with 10 In-service days in the weeks prior to the fall semester after the spring semester. The normal weekly teaching

workload for the academic year is 18 units. The normal weekly teaching load is 9 contact hours for Liberal Arts faculty and 18 contact hours for studio faculty.

The evaluation process is...used for acknowledging and improving teaching effectiveness and service to the College and the community.” Faculty evaluation is also used in the promotion and/or salary increase or change of status processes. The LCAD Self-Study stated “Faculty evaluation is generally an annual process.” Details on faculty evaluation and promotion can be found in Faculty Handbook (pp. 24-25).

Full-time faculty is on one year initial contracts with the possibility of being awarded a two-year contract after full review. Two-year renewable contracts are seen as the provision for building a committed and dependable faculty. The full-time LCAD faculty is ranked with no tenure or sabbatical. Clear policies and procedures are in place for the full-time faculty in the *Full Time Faculty Handbook 2017- 2018, pages 23-26* (see Self-Study Appendices), for awarding contracts, faculty evaluation, promotion in rank, and benefits, such as health insurance, faculty development and merit pay. The policies related to teaching loads, student/faculty ratio, and faculty development are clearly stated in the *Full Time Faculty Handbook 2017-2018* and appear to be working effectively.

The *Full Time Faculty Handbook*, page 18, states the process for selecting a Chair of a Department. The policy is to look first among the existing faculty: “The provost will first conduct a review to determine if any existing faculty members are qualified to fill the position and a committee will be formed to assist in this process. If qualified personnel are selected, a recommendation will be made to the president. If a qualified candidate is not found among existing faculty, a national search will be initiated.” While this policy has functioned well for LCAD, with the external search being the codified second option, it may be more difficult to refresh a program when necessary to do so.

While the evaluation policies and procedures are clear, they have not yet yielded a diverse faculty that mirrors the student body in that faculty is exclusively Caucasian with male faculty holding four times the seats as female faculty. When recruiting faculty from the professions, building equity can be a challenge. Still the need to provide role models is critical to a student’s success, and efforts should be made to provide clear pathways and inspiring narratives for the students.

In the discussion with faculty-at-large the history of the College was used as a baseline for a discussion of how it works today. Several spoke about the history of LCAD, the relevance of being born as a teaching College out of the Laguna art colony, where respect for the artist was the norm: “You can’t over-emphasize this valuing of the history and the place – no-one at any other college talks about this or feels about this like we do.”

The faculty talked about their choice in teaching at LCAD, noting their respect for the mission as a driving force, which translated into a strong belief in the value of supporting the processes of ‘their kind of teaching, and the kind of creative product that comes from the imagination of students.’

All stressed how hard the faculty and staff worked, and there were many comments of appreciation for the devotion of “every member of the LCAD community.” This group, like the students, discussed the subject of professional practice, which they thought vital; however, they wanted to have a College-wide discussion led by the Provost and Chairs before any decision was made to re-align to curriculum to insert more “life after art school” content earlier than at present.

F. Facilities, Equipment, Technology, Health, and Safety

The artists’ colony history and the tropical climate of Laguna Beach make it an attractive environment for the College. On the other hand, the ‘strung-out’ geographic setting on Laguna Canyon Road is a challenge in terms of traffic delays, lack of public transportation for students, and safety. Additionally, communication between units is harder. Students stated “the more we could be together in fewer

locations, the more we'd know about what else is available in the whole College." The creation of the proposed Student Union (discussed later in the report) is seen as a very positive development.

Students indicated they like the College, the canyon, the town, and the quality of life is good. However, they indicated it's not easy to live in or near Laguna Beach because of the expense. Housing is seen as a problem, better and more student accommodation is important. Many students live in a commercial housing complex a few miles from campus on the shuttle line. One possibility of better integration of those students into the life of the College would be to place Resident Assistants there as well.

The new Student Center plan would be a boon to the College community in helping build that very community. The visiting team concurs that the plan for a Student Center seems well conceived, and that the students would welcome the amenities it would provide, including an expanded food service.

Students were specific in indicating a desire for more dining options; more dependable shuttle service; more space; and more flexibility in scheduling. The Board was sensitive to the social needs of students, as well as to the curricular offerings of the College.

Directly relating to the geographical issue, the Master Plan recommended by the visiting team to be created (separate from but contributing to the Strategic Plan), combined with a detailed space audit, would concentrate on consolidating as much campus activity into as few buildings as possible. However, the visiting team fully understands how difficult it is to find a solution. The value of the location should and will continue to be weighed as the College grows in programs, numbers of attendees, and support service needs. Currently, the general investment in new buildings and renovations, as well as the digital support, make the College a viable venue for career preparation.

In general, the facilities and equipment are adequate for the programs offered in terms of floor space, lighting, temperature and humidity control, audio equipment, sound control, and technological currency. The facilities and equipment are sufficient to support all curricular and associated activities.

The visiting team felt it saw a wide range of studios and facilities, and did not identify any health-and-safety issues beyond specific ventilation issues identified in this report. All studios are equipped with health and safety information, MSDS sheets, and eye wash stations as needed. Health and safety in terms of ventilation was not specifically mentioned in the Self-Study report or in the Management Documents Portfolio. Though ventilation requirements for painting, printmaking and sculpture studios are straightforward, the tropical climate in Southern California allows for natural ventilation much of the time, the LCAD students are often working on direct-observation studies of the figure in life-painting studios, in oils, they are working with deodorized terpenoid, the ventilation systems and open-door airflow seemed generally adequate to dispel vapors. However, the visitors were aware that the smell of solvents was strong in some of the painting studios, particularly the two rented studios for the Master of Fine Arts students.

The studios were clean, and the team believes they were not super-swept because of the NASAD teams visit. The visiting team noted that the 'students in the studios were studious.' The clamor, background music, i-Pod mutter, and phone calls common to all art school studios was significantly absent. In multiple studios there was a tangible atmosphere of very diligent attention and focus on the work at hand, and close notice of the instructors as they discussed and demonstrated materials and methods.

No major wear-and-tear or significant problems were evident, with the exception of the Master of Fine Arts studios, which are smallish, fully occupied and somewhat labyrinthine. Additionally, the actual amount of space per student is limited.

“South” Campus

The College has 56 dorm rooms for freshmen on the “South” campus with two Resident Assistants. The College has no meal plan, however, there are discounts at surrounding restaurants in strip malls that surround the campuses. The role of a meal plan was important for a simple and practical reason - leaving the campus involves driving on the canyon road to another (expensive) place, and the traffic problem eats up time. Increased shuttle service from various LCAD facilities was identified as a need by students.

Three new studios have been recently renovated in this area for painting which doubles as a summer gallery space; Graphic Design and Virtual Reality studios with a green screen and XR Design facilities and studio with 18 monitors.

Big Bend “A”

The Big Bend building as others has a well curated vending area and student lounge.

- Speakers space/liberal arts class room with 20 seats
- Lab/studios #12-18 include two Centique lab/classrooms, 18 stations for animation and game art
- McBeth funded classrooms
- Downshooter is on 8 computer stations
- IT help desk (2 offices) with a printing service bureau
- Lab/classroom #11: Animation (2 and 3 D) & lab/classroom #12 Maya classes: 18 stations
- 16 station Graphic Design lab/classroom

Big Bend “B”

Building B serves Animation, Game Art, and Graphic Design.

- Sound recording studio
- #10 Art History classroom is raked with 17 stations
- Lab/classroom #4: Game with 18 stations
- Lab/classroom #5: Game with 16 stations
- Lab/classroom #6 with 10 stations
- Lab/classroom #7 with stations and a sofa, kitchenette
- Lab/classroom #8 with 16 stations – research
- Lab/classroom #9: Corp Identity with 16 stations
- General Graphic Design

Main Campus

- Two fine art studios have eyewash stations, MSDS information scan, emergency action plan, and fan ventilation
- Sculpture studio

- Printmaking studio
- Classroom
- 6 Illustration studios, with 30 tabletop spaces
- Library
- Student lounge

Master of Fine Arts Locations

The renovated office building has 20 individual studio spaces, a common critique space, and a kitchenette. Two additional spaces are rented in an adjacent commercial area.

Information Technology

The visiting team was briefed on campus-wide investment in technologies, appropriate to the digitally driven nature of such programs as game art, animation, sound, etc. Evidence of this was clear in the studios themselves, some of which were in the process of being fitted with new tools and systems. Faculty remarked on the general responsiveness of the College as a whole to keeping up-to-date. The close relationship between LCAD and the design/entertainment industry reveals the need for constant upgrades, and the team was informed that there was a special value in discussions with part-time faculty who otherwise had ‘a day-job in the front line of the industries,’ thus bringing first-hand knowledge of what students needed to work with: these remarks mesh with the College ethos of giving students a thorough exposure to contemporary practice, and being “profession-ready.”

The demands on IT to remain current in hardware and software are huge, the faculty sees it as critical in sustaining the ability to attract a strong student and prepare them for the industry, as does the industry representatives with whom the team spoke. A rolling program of deferred maintenance was described, and the general sense of the team was this was effective in determining priorities.

The IT staff sees the time, dollars, manpower, and managing expectations as the major challenges. The capital budget for IT is \$800,000, and operating has \$890,000 earmarked for IT. The Five-Year Tech Plan primarily covers administrative and infrastructure planning. The Campus SIS is Power Campus. The staff’s opinion is that the last two years of the plan are generally irrelevant as the plan has to be revised on a three-year cycle. The IT Task Force is active with four to five faculty members representing the curricular needs. The refresh cycle is three years for labs, three to five years for projectors, and instructional is five years. The annual survey predictably requests more hours of lab availability.

The Help Desks are staffed with six Full-time techs and student techs, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 10 pm; four systems administrators in the labs; and a database manager. A new hire is seen as being proactive in eliminating repetitive tasks.

There is an IT cost in being spread out in the canyon. The local provider laid dark fiber to connect the campus - 10-gig network over the whole system. Maintenance windows for the network are a challenge with the campus running the full year.

Security

This College has unique problems in terms of securing its facilities, serving students and faculty, and visitors. It is of particular importance to note the geography of LCAD, which conducts its business in multiple buildings on either side of the main highway leading into Laguna Beach which runs through a steep-sided canyon. There is no ‘frontage road.’ The highway is often a clogged artery, and the College suffers from significant and long delays in being able to simply go up and down the canyon,

and across the road. A recent pedestrian crossing at the campus core has been helpful, resultant of a fatal accident, though controversial with drivers and residents. The College cannot erect a pedestrian bridge or dig a tunnel (due to California earthquake issues). Nevertheless, the College is managing to do its best and generally succeeding to overcome extraordinary problems. The College operates a shuttle service to connect the buildings.

In terms of student, staff and faculty safety, the team was briefed on the exceptional vigilance of the Security force, given the number of facilities. While the area is relatively crime-free, there is a wandering population of indigents in the canyon that causes security concerns.

The College reported only one Title IX incident in recent years. In terms of anticipation and prevention, the Security team appears to be very alert, is conducting Active Shooter on Campus and training sessions, and has extended camera coverage. The overall impression is of a professional team taking pride in its work in being alert, interventionist, and contributory. It was evident that the Campus Security team was agile and responsive.

G. Library and Learning Resources

The LCAD library provides a valuable service in supporting holdings directly related to the academic disciplines offered by the College. This is not as easy as it would appear, given that much of the College's work is in areas far from a traditional library approach on both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

While book holdings are good, and are being thoughtfully extended, the library also seeks to carry relevant materials in subject areas like digital design, comics, game design etc. – this material is often in the form of web-delivered journals and magazines, as well as print. It was clear that the library staff works with Department Chairs to ensure the relevance of its holdings, and instances were given of faculty discussions about new courses being supported by enhanced library holdings. The librarian's attendance at faculty senate leads to productive "tell me what you need" discussions.

The library has expanded well beyond books and magazines, as would be expected, to range across world cinema, especially relevant to the curriculum. It was noted that many students use only streaming, rarely using DVD format, but that much material is still only accessible in that older technology. The library has purchased DVD players, which students can borrow, specifically to meet the need. However, the library is fully alert that it will need to advance streaming access in order to keep up with unstoppable trends. An example is that LCAD has a healthy visiting artists program, and most Departments record the lectures by visitors – the library sees its expanding function to access these all these lectures and make them available campus-wide to students in all disciplines.

A pro-active initiative by the staff, the "Pop-up Library," is notably successful in making the holdings and value of the library better understood by students who, perhaps, may think of it as a place only for traditional art books of limited relevance. The Pop-up goes to various campus locations to bring the library as an inspirational and research asset to the attention of both students and faculty. The visiting team was impressed by student comments on the value of the Pop-ups – a common refrain being "I didn't know they had this stuff, and it's cool and helpful." The library pop-ups are an excellent method for reaching the students and enticing them to engage the Library as a content and image resource. The initiative helps students and faculty overcome the geographical problems created by the nature of the spread-out campus.

Though virtually a 'solo librarian-in-charge' operation, the team's site visit revealed a very committed group of part-time and student-workers. LCAD supports the librarian with funds to attend professional gatherings, and is keeping up with current trends in library development as, for example, other independent art/design colleges. Efforts to expand the Monday to Friday open hours were not met with

much student response, Saturday hours were closed down, but new consideration of Sunday evening opening is in discussion.

The library budget is divided into book purchases, which the College logs as capital investment (currently at \$22,000 for volumes) and a substantial percentage of the \$264,768 library budget for journals, magazines, ephemera, DVDs, and general support costs. Donor support is mostly in-kind, but understandable is of desirable expensive art tomes, but almost never publications on illustration, manga, digital expressions etc. The current library is somewhat struggling with a most immediate issue – the mass of un-catalogued materials. There is an obvious quick-fix solution by increasing staffing – even temporarily – to dilute the backlog, and it appears to be able to continue forward for another one or two years. Inevitably the College will need to address adding more full-time staffing at some point to support the graduate and undergraduate curricular needs. The overall impression is of a responsive and agile library taking an intelligent tactical view of its immediate future, and very committed to forward thinking on an expanded role in support of the academic programs.

The visiting team observed that the Library staff should be included in all strategic and programmatic planning to appropriately support the academic programs as they are developed. In two to three years, the question of appropriate library staffing will need to be addressed.

H. Recruitment, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, Advisement, and Student Complaints

1. Recruitment, Admission, Retention

Recruitment and Admissions: Baccalaureate Programs and Graduate Programs

Students choose LCAD because of the quality of the observational focus of the College, the quality of the student work, and the location of the campus. Recruiters indicated that students come for the faculty; their family members are most often seeking a job path for their students.

As stated earlier, enrollment is the life-blood of the College and LCAD spends a great deal of its effort to secure the target admissions numbers. Admissions staff were competent and convincing in their articulation of the recruitment-acceptance-enrollment sequence, and spoke with the authority of largely being alumni themselves. The staff responded clearly to questions about how they impart the value of an LCAD education, properly describing the mission and direction of the College. There was palpable pride in the College's connection to industry, and the credibility of this track record informed the way in which Admissions described career opportunities to potential students. The 'pedigree' of the faculty was remarked upon as an essential component, with the professional success of teachers being underlined – incoming students would be taught by highly-regarded professionals.

The Admissions and Financial Aid staff stated that the Strategic Plan is revisited every few years. Given that enrollment is the primary revenue stream for the College, the staff is realistic about growth in their annually projected numbers. With the Director of Admissions and Financial Aid serving as a member of senior staff, the leadership of the College is well-informed and has input on the status of enrollment at LCAD.

New, cutting-edge programs, such as Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality, are seen as diversifying and building on existing programs to attract students to LCAD. The admissions team consisting of five recruiters, all alums, stated that the intimate campus, small class size; professionally practicing faculty, the proximity of industry (animation in Los Angeles, game design in Irvine, Orange County) provides the best faculty and best experience. The challenges are the cost of living in South Orange County and the busy traffic in the canyon. Two new recruiters are to be

brought on board to help with national recruiting. The alum network is just beginning to be activated for recruitment.

Admissions staff spoke well about their perception of LCAD as being different from the regional private colleges of the visual arts and university art departments. Asked to identify major obstacles, it came as no surprise that staff spoke about a need for merit-based and need-based scholarships to attract the best students.

The Admissions staff earmarks LCAD's competitors as several nearby multipurpose institutions — all California schools in the system. The visiting team had a different take on who local competitors might be. Southern California is rich in colleges and universities with notable art and design programs - all are either free-standing art colleges or University of California system institutions within the region. All of these colleges also have direct relationships with the same entertainment/media industries accessed by LCAD. A deep analysis of the other colleges where LCAD students applied, and where accepted LCAD students who did not choose to attend LCAC enrolled, would be helpful in possibly defining new pools for recruitment.

The Admissions team could benefit from more analysis of how and why LCAD describes itself in comparison with competitor colleges – on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It would be helpful if a clear pedagogical and philosophical analysis, accompanied by data on relative costs, credit hours, majors and sub-majors, faculty, support systems and industry relations were to be conducted. What is sought is a clearer exposition of the differentiated value of an LCAD degree in comparison with colleges with which LCAD shares a market.

A consideration of tuition at competitor institutions should accompany this analysis. At present the LCAD discount rate is 25%. Does this average percentage bring the LCAD tuition in line with its competitors? If not, the message described above could make a case for its value.

While the overall impression was very positive, there was a concern that the process of recruitment, applicant review, and enrollment was not a seamless whole. In reviewing that process, the team sensed that there may be a 'disconnect' between the hard-working Admissions team, tasked to find terrific students, and the true 'admission arbiters' or 'quality controllers,' i.e., the faculty who inherit the enrolled students. It seemed the faculty were not as intimately a part of the admission process as they would like. The Admissions staff confirmed that the full office, serving as the Admissions Committee, accepts students with no faculty scrutiny of applications or portfolios. The visiting team suggests that as this matter lies at the heart of LCAD's desire to attract and enroll the very best students to "the Julliard of art schools," a review of how to improve or re-create a dynamic partnership rooted in the admissions process would be beneficial.

International recruiting, while still in a nascent stage, has begun. Working with agencies or individual agents, LCAD has reached out to prospective students in Turkey, India, China, Korea, Taiwan, and Brazil.

The gender and sex distribution of the undergraduate students is as follows:

- Bachelor of Fine Arts - Asian and Latin students each comprise one-third the number versus Caucasian students.
- Female students are twice the number of male students.
- Master of Fine Arts - Caucasian students comprise the vast majority of students.
- Male students are twice the number of female students.

Consideration should be given in student recruitment to the need to make the student body as diverse as possible to create a rich and varied learning environment.

Retention: Baccalaureate Programs and Graduate Programs

A new position (formerly Student Life), the Assistant Dean of Students was hired in July 2017 to assist with instituting broader ranging student services policies and procedures. Already the effect of the position can be felt in making students feel more a part of the larger LCAD community. Clubs have been started and a new Student Handbook is in process. An immediate goal of better integration of Career Services and the professional practices in the curriculum is evidence that areas for improvement identified by the students are being taken seriously and addressed. The intention of the Assistant Dean is to create “clear, transparent processes.” The challenge is a small staff and the need to scale properly. The experience the Assistant Dean brings to this position, is evidence that these challenges will be met. Already a new student internship has been established in Student Services to work on community service.

As a commuter campus at the upper levels of the Bachelor of Fine Arts and all of the Master of Fine Arts, the challenge of engaging the Master of Fine Arts students is high on the list of things to do. Working with the thesis presentations is the first step.

Further goals include: enhanced collaboration between Student Life and the alumni/ae of LCAD. Co-curricular initiatives on mental health and community outreach/community service/social justice are seen as providing opportunities for Career Services, Alumni/ae and Student Life to work together with an emphasis on diversity.

Students and Alumni/ae

The team commends the increased alumnae outreach and the efforts to build a co-curricular strategy by adding student services staff to continue to improve retention and address the persistently low graduation rates. The ability of regional alums to come back and take classes is positive in building the LCAD network and providing continuing professional development.

2. Record Keeping

The LCAD recordkeeping appears to meet NASAD standards and best practices in the area of recordkeeping at both the baccalaureate and graduate levels. The institution uses PowerCampus; and students’ physical file records, including portfolios, are transferred from the Admissions Office to the Registrar’s Office upon matriculation.

3. Advisement

The advisement and counseling system appears to be effective aided by PowerCampus as an integrated student management system, in managing course limits, prerequisites, academic plans and conducting degree audits. The collaboration among the registrar, Chairs and faculty aided by electronic communication through PowerCampus forms a support system for LCAD students.

Students felt that Career Services was not proactive enough in providing co-curricular professional preparation and experiences, though the initiatives of the newly installed Assistant Dean of Students may address this need.

4. Student Complaint Policy and Its Effectiveness

LCAD’s student complaint policy and procedures are clearly stated in the Code of Conduct Adjudication Protocol (138 MDP) and appear to be effective in practice and in the students’ ability to progress through their prescribed courses of study.

I. Published Materials and Websites

Marketing and PR

Marketing currently focuses on scale, quality of life, and location. The introduction of comparatives would add substance to the promotional message. For example: in terms of tuition, how much more do similar art/design institutions cost? With their discounting? What is the actual cost to cost comparison?

The communications staff of the Communications Director, the Webmaster, and the designer work together with the Program Chairs and Admissions staff to craft the LCAD message. It was confirmed by staff that LCAD is rated #2 for best value colleges of art and design. In conjunction with the high employment rate of graduates and the small size, the value message is clear. The challenge is funding for marketing initiatives. In the conversations that the visiting team had while on campus, neither funding nor strategy appeared to be centralized, though the Communications strategy appeared to come from the Board and the Communications staff.

The LCAD catalog and the published materials have a consistency of design and message that is clear, accurate, comprehensive, and has proven to be effective.

K. Community Involvement; Articulation with Other Schools

As indicated in the introduction to this report, LCAD has for many years taken the role of cultural resource for the Laguna Beach community seriously. Working closely with organizations, institutions, companies and corporations are a defining feature of LCAD. The Gallery in downtown Laguna Beach is the primary manifestation of this commitment, however, it is one of many of the community partnerships listed on the LCAD website.

LCAD also maintains articulation agreements with similarly focused institutions, including the Florence Academy of Art, the Art Students League, the NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, Academy for Digital Entertainment, the Netherlands, and the Vermont College of Fine Arts that provide a variety of study opportunities to LCAD students. Closer to home, building on the resources of the Laguna Art Museum could build a stronger relationship to utilize their internships and take advantage of their professional development programs and teaching opportunities.

L. Non-Degree-Granting Programs for the Community (if applicable)

With regard to non-degree granting programs offered to high school students and other interested parties in the Laguna community under the category of postsecondary non-degree granting programs, the institution appears to meet all applicable standards. Following the history of Laguna Beach as an artists' community, these offerings are taught by professional artists and designers for the general community focusing on building skills leading to the creation of portfolio-ready bodies of work. For example, a Saturday Figure Drawing Workshop open to LCAD students and other community members is offered at no charge for students, faculty and alumni and pre-college courses provide prospective students an introduction to foundation courses for college credit.

N. Programs, Degrees, and Curricula

1. Credit Hours

a. Definitions and Procedures

(1) Definition of Credit and Methods of Assigning Credit

At LCAD the following statements articulate the institutional policy on the definition of credit and methods of assigning credit:

“Credit hours are established in terms of time and achievement required. Credits for a course are a means of measuring a student’s progress in an academic program and represent the standards for the amount and quality of work required in a course. LCAD awards credits based on a semester system.

Credit is earned only when curricular, competency, and all other requirements are met and the final examination or equivalent is satisfactorily passed.”

Some students expressed concern over the six-hour format.

(2) Publication of Definitions and Policies

LCAD publishes the current definitions of credit and methods of assigning credit in the institution’s published materials, the website, and the campus constituencies’ handbooks. Transfer of credit policies are also clearly and appropriately stated.

(3) Procedures Used to Make Credit Hour Assignments

Traditional Classes

For general education courses at LCAD, liberal arts and art history courses, a credit hour is defined as one hour in class with an average expectation of two hours of work outside of class each week, which equates to three hours in class and six hours outside of class per week for a three-credit class over a 15-week semester.

For studio courses, a credit hour at LCAD consists of two hours in class with an average expectation of two hours of work outside of class each week. For a three-credit class, this would equate to six hours in class and six hours outside of class per week during a 15-week semester. In the Self-Study it is noted: “out-of-class time expectations are averages only and may vary depending on the level of the course as well as individual ability and learning style of the student.”

Blended Learning and Online Classes

A minimum of 135 hours is expected to successfully complete a three-credit blended or online course with 45 hours of synchronous and asynchronous, online and face-to-face instructional engagement, including “submitting academic assignments, listening to class lectures or webinars, taking exams, interactive tutorials, conducting research and reading online resources, attending a study group assigned by the College, contributing to an academic online discussion, initiating contact with a faculty member, externship or internship.”

There is an expectation of completing an additional 90 hours of preparation, including study time and other research work needed to complete assignments and projects.

The LCAD procedure for developing the learning outcomes and assigning units in asynchronous online courses is to determine the amount of student work expected to equal the amount of work in the definition of credit hour or an average total of approximately 135 hours. Time on task is calculated using specific appropriate standards.

(4) Means Employed to Ensure Accurate and Reliable Application

Validating Credit Hours

Each semester credit hours and contact hours are validated and confirmed by the Registrar's office during the scheduling process for each course being offered. The Self-Study states that "for new courses, the Faculty Senate validates credit hours when the course proposal is submitted for approval.

If hours fall outside of the required hours as described above, the Chair is notified. If the variation is plus or minus five hours, the course must be revised immediately.

(5) Procedures of Free-Standing Institutions

LCAD designates its regional accreditor as its gatekeeper for the purpose of participation in federal programs.

b. Evaluation of Compliance

Institutional definitions and practices seem to comply with NASAD standards (see *NASAD Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation III.A.) and seem to be within the range of commonly accepted practices in art and design programs, including the norms indicated by NASAD credit hour standards.

c. New, Experimental, Atypical Formats or Methods

There are no new, experimental or atypical formats or methods for delivering instruction and awarding credit that need to be assessed.

2. Specific Curricula

As stated previously, the philosophical and curricular soul of LCAD was described as a commitment to representational skill development and telling stories with drawing - the accuracy of representation and language of form - as the connector of the programs. The purpose of LCAD is preparing the students to be "industry ready." The character of the program ranges from traditional and classical to high-end digital media with a good dose of magic mixed in.

The range of courses in the curriculum has great breadth; some are tight and specific, but others were 'hybridizations' (as noted by the academic leadership and faculty). In areas like 2-D hand-drawn animation, 3-D 'stop-action' or 'clay-mation,' the College is responding to the blurred lines students will encounter when they enter the industry, and where hard disciplinary boundaries would bar creative innovation across expressions. There was a general sense that the students were hearing about 'life after art school' from professionals who were not only teachers but also creative contributors to the professions. When asked whose class they were taking, multiple students firstly gave the instructors name, then immediately followed it by saying that he or she had worked on "Up" or "Toy Story," etc. Several students noted that they attended LCAD because of its reputation of having studio professors who were well known in the industry. Equally, several students complimented their instructors by saying they were "the real deal."

The College does not offer a traditional Foundation program wherein all first-year students take a common-core of courses, to prepare them for whatever disciplines they choose as they move to the sophomore and subsequent levels. At LCAD every major has a "defined portfolio" of first level courses, some of which overlap from major to major. Each Department ensures that its specializing students were given an in-depth history of the genre, e.g., "History of Illustration" that serves as "an interpretation of the subject." The team expresses some concern over this, suggesting that a broad-based comprehensive course or survey that unifies what is happening in contemporary design, architecture, vehicle design, costume and fashion, accessories, jewelry, furniture, etc., combined with

current ‘design thinking,’ would open doors to even wider universes of images, objects and philosophies beneficial to students. Faculty stated that art history and liberal arts courses are interconnected to reinforce the relevancy of what the students are learning and to create a larger context of understanding on their parts. They see Liberal Arts as articulating place and vision and art history as creating context for the students in their respective majors.

In terms of curricular planning, LCAD seeks to be at the cutting edge, especially focused on its relationship with industry. However, the visiting team would not characterize the College as having a ‘trade school’ approach, having seen and heard much evidence that stressed originality, creativity, a ‘fine art ethos,’ and high standards of expressiveness. It can be fairly said that LCAD is highly sensitive to the professions *as they are*, but are preparing artists and designers who will influence or direct how they will be.

The course offerings at LCAD are bountiful – but at first bewildering, including the distinction between an emphasis versus a minor and the listing of the degrees on the front page of the Self-Study as compared to the NASAD Directory. Once past the ‘industry-speak’ and nomenclature specific to the thrust of its offerings, e.g., “Survey of Monetizati” or “Ergodic Literature”, the team began to comprehend how the teaching structures in various disciplines ‘ribs’ attached to a ‘spinal column’ of the major and support courses.

The team pondered, however, whether the density of rich offerings might not be better served by a set of clearer ‘groupings’ or clusters, which would show how each disciplinary curriculum might relate to a neighbor. This comment relates to a concern heard from students that the curriculum “is packed so tight it’s hard to see how to access great stuff in disciplines other than your own major.” Again, there were multiple references to the electives which students indicated get taken up by the Department telling them what to take.” Students thought that ‘professional practice’ studies should be introduced earlier than at present, that they “are not add-ons” but are as vital as the studio teaching: “we are all going to be pros when we leave here, so we need to start learning how to act like them as soon as possible, like *life after LCAD* isn’t abstract, it’s nuts-and-bolts stuff we need to absorb.” A student anecdote will suffice: “I’m in X Department as my major, and what I do there would be much, much better if I could find a way to take a dance class, and a music class, because they relate to what I do – but there is no flexibility, no room, for me to do any of that.” The College might find it useful to reflect on the electives issue in its curricular structure to determine whether this and similar comments deserve review and response. These remarks would suggest that as the College regularly reviews the structure and composite parts of the curriculum, it would be useful to delve further into this issue.

Students and alums indicated a need for more classes in professional and business practices and entrepreneurship, even economics, to be offered earlier in their academic careers. They are “career ready” when they graduate; however, there remains a concern for the timely introduction of career preparation and business skills.

An additional area of concern on the part of the students was the cost of materials directly related to fulfilling course requirements beyond those covered by studio fees. The team anecdotally heard that a major project in the senior year could unexpectedly load \$300 on a student’s shoulders – “the college could be much clearer in helping us budget, not surprise us with wham-o requirements at the last minute.”

a. General Content and Competency Standards

Given the LCAD commitment to representational skill development and telling stories with drawing as the connector, the purpose of LCAD is preparing the student to be “industry ready.” The character of the program ranges from traditional and classical to high-end digital media with a good dose of magic mixed in. The tradition of representational work based on observation gives

the College a relatively unique perspective and has led to a natural and productive connection with the digital animation and game arts industries in their need to draw the figure. The small class size serves the students well, and the nimbleness of the College allows for tailoring the curriculum to industry needs.

Students were attracted to the College because of the quality of work produced, the campus, and the affordability as compared to the larger freestanding colleges in the region, the “comfortable” atmosphere, and the track record of industry success among the alumnae. As LCAD has grown and become valued by the industries, public perception of the College has become enhanced. The Provost is proudest of the student work, the strong representational foundation they receive, of 30 years of institutional progress, and that students are successfully employed in the field.

The majors and programs seem to have been developed in great depth within the various Departments rather than through a broader vision of the whole LCAD platform of degree offerings. The silo structure leads to confusion on the part of the external population as to majors and concentrations that are often very similar. The team recommends considering a focus on both depth within the majors and the breadth of the full body of offerings, which would provide a more “T” shaped curricular experience.

The current few elective opportunities limit the students’ educational experience. Adding electives, such as music, dance, acting, etc., would enrich the students’ range of knowledge to bring to their work, for example, a comprehensive survey of contemporary design, which could include architecture, jewelry, vehicle, fashion, in addition to individual histories of disciplines would set the larger context in which the students live work and live.

Increasing the existing partnerships with other institutions and expanding the list for curricular exchange could provide a source of electives. Along this line of thinking, aligning with other like-institutions across the country could open productive partnerships for exchange and other activities.

b. Individual Curricula

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Illustration (General)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the general Illustration major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree’s curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would rise to the next level.

- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Illustration (Entertainment Design)

- (1) **Status.** Submitted for Final Approval for Listing.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Illustration major with an emphasis in Entertainment Design are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. However, there do not appear to be sufficient courses to differentiate this degree from the degrees with majors in Illustration (Entertainment) (which is being phased out) and Illustration (General), and also the new Entertainment degrees. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a sufficient amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of an emphasis on developing high competency in drawing and the representation of 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would rise to the next level. Given the aspirational peers of LCAD, adjusting the curriculum to include additional classes in concept development would seem to be a positive direction.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for the degree programs with the exception of the expected concept development on the advanced level.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with and produce results in alignment with the stated goals and objectives.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Illustration (Drawing and Painting)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Illustration major with Drawing and Painting Emphasis are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. However, there do not appear to be sufficient courses to differentiate this degree from the degree with a major in Illustration (General). These two degrees have only two Fine Art courses and three Illustration courses to differentiate them. This is one of a number of instances in which a major has an emphasis in the subject area of another major. While a case can be made in each instance, the presentation appears confusing and brings into question the discrete nature of the degrees. Possibly a better approach could be to create a menu of majors and a menu of emphases with a rationale for each combination. The approach could articulate the career opportunities to which each

combination would lead in a way that is not only structurally clear but would increase students' comprehension of the majors and the careers to which they lead.

The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a sufficient amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of an emphasis on developing high competency in drawing and the representation of 3-D form.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for the degree programs with the exception of the expected concept development on the advanced level.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with and produce results in alignment with the stated goals and objectives.

Certificate title: Certificate-3 years: Illustration

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in Illustration are consistent with the expectations of a Certificate in Illustration. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional certification.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Illustration (Entertainment)

- (1) **Status.** The institution is phasing out this degree program.
- (2) **Curriculum.** N/A

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** N/A
- (4) **Student Work.** N/A
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** N/A
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** N/A

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Graphic Design and Digital Media (General)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** Graphic Design and Digital Media was explained as an outlier at LCAD as it is not based on an observational mind set. Possibly due to not being a direct offshoot of LCAD's tradition, the degree is not as clearly articulated as the other degree areas to those not directly involved in LCAD. For example, the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written curriculum or syllabi as it was in practice. However, class observations by the visitors revealed deeply integrated creative approaches to theory, research and conceptual development as students fulfilled course assignments.

As a result, the content and competency development in the Graphic Design and Digital Media major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written course syllabi.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Graphic Design and Digital Media (Action Sports)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** Graphic Design and Digital Media was explained as an outlier at LCAD as it is not based on an observational mind set. Possibly due to not being a direct offshoot of LCAD's tradition, the degree is not as clearly articulated as the other degree areas to those not directly involved in LCAD. For example, the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written

curriculum or syllabi as it was in practice. However, class observations by the visitors revealed deeply integrated creative approaches to theory, research and conceptual development as students fulfilled course assignments.

Further, the strong and admirable commitment to traditional, technical skill sets which at first look appeared to come exclusively from the fine arts courses in their combination with conceptual and idea generation, were also evidenced in the upper level Graphic Design studio courses which include conceptual development on an idea-based platform. Given that the nature of work is changing, using the strength of the career focus and building on that to more fully develop students' abilities beyond the problems at hand would seem to serve the students.

The content and competency development in the Graphic Design and Digital Media major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing competency in design and concept development.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written course syllabi.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Graphic Design and Digital Media (Illustration)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Graphic Design and Digital Media major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

The emphasis in Illustration does appear to give added experience in illustration content. However, this is one of a number of instances in which a major has an emphasis in the subject area of another major. While a case can be made in each instance, the presentation appears confusing and brings into question the discrete nature of the degrees. Possibly a better approach could be to create a menu of majors and a menu of emphases with a rationale for each combination. The approach could articulate the career opportunities that each combination would lead to in a way that is not only clear but sheds greater light on the majors and the careers to which they lead. In using the "menu"

approach, a rationale for each combination would not need to be made. Also, the blocks of credits set aside for an emphasis could also be filled with electives of a student's choice thus solving the need and desire for more electives.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content accept as indicated above in regard to the emphasis area.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing competency in design, concept, and representational skill development.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written course syllabi as it was in practice.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Certificate title: Certificate-3 years: Graphic Design and Digital Media

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Graphic Design and Digital Media are consistent with the expectations of a certificate program. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing competency in design and concept development.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though the degree to which design thinking and theory is woven into the expectations for students was not as clear in the written course syllabi.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Game Art

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing

- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Game Art major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree. Evidence of the acquisition of these attributes is the 92% job placement according to faculty in the program. Indicative of strong ties with industry, employees from Blizzard serve on the LCAD Advisory Board.

A collaboration with USC is in place in which coding and technology knowledge from USC is enhanced by LCAD's visual assets. Further faculty indicated that students in Game Art are collaborative.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing competency in design and concept development.

The best determiner of the success of a program is the student work. The visiting team met with members of the community that partner with LCAD in a variety of ways to get their opinions of the effectiveness of the LCAD students' collective performances in internships and careers. In game design, the LCAD internships are at the junior art position level. The students are "well rounded". Their ability to represent human anatomy is seen as leading directly into careers as character or concept artists in the game world. LCAD is seen as creative.

- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Certificate title: Certificate-3 years: Game Art

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval

Curriculum. The content and competency development in the Game Art certificate are consistent with the expectations of a certificate in curricular structure, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a certificate.

- (2) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (3) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing competency in game design and concept development.

The best determiner of the success of a program is the student work. The visiting team met with members of the community that partner with LCAD in a variety of ways to get their opinions of the effectiveness of the LCAD students' collective performances in internships and careers. In game design, the LCAD internships are at the junior art position level. The students are "well rounded". Their ability to represent human anatomy is seen as leading directly into careers as character or concept artists in the game world. LCAD is seen as creative.

- (4) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities.
- (5) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Drawing and Painting (General)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Drawing and Painting major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

Faculty emphasized the content was fine art-based, with observational representation at the core of the instruction, as opposed to atelier-based. The distinction being that a personal voice was welcome within the academic focus. They further elaborated that the approach was a natural outcome of being located on the West coast, the home of Disney and Hollywood.

Retention within the sophomore year drawing and painting major continues to be a challenge, though the reasons are not clear. Determining the cause and addressing it would be advisable.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would be enhanced.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Drawing and Painting (Sculpture)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Drawing and Painting major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would be enhanced.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Drawing and Painting (Illustration)

- (1) **Status.** Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Drawing and Painting major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

In the case of the illustration emphasis, the instructional emphasis on technical development may be dictating the need for a redundant program.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would be enhanced.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Certificate title: Certificate-3 years: Drawing and Painting

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Drawing and Painting certificate are consistent with the expectations of a drawing and painting certificate in curricular structure, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a certificate.

Faculty emphasized the content was fine art-based, observational representation, and not atelier-based, e.g., that a personal voice was welcome within the academic focus. They further elaborated that the approach was very much the result of being on the West coast, the home of Disney and Hollywood.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Certificate-1 year: Drawing and Painting (Post Baccalaureate)

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Drawing and Painting post-baccalaureate certificate are consistent with the expectations of a drawing and painting post-baccalaureate certificate in curricular structure, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a Post-baccalaureate certificate.

It was noted that the post-baccalaureate candidates come from other schools to hone their representational skills either to pursue higher degrees or to pursue professional studio achievements.
- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of post-baccalaureate certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of

a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form.

- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Bachelor of Fine Arts-4 years: Animation

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Animation major are consistent with the expectations of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree.

The faculty, primarily from the Disney studios, appeared committed to sharing what they have learned in the Disney studios, which begins with the hand drawn rather than digital approach. This characteristic of the program is currently seen by faculty as a value asset in the industry. Students see it as a potential professional detriment at the expense of more digital work and expressed a desire to learn more current software. Of the 22 faculty in Animation, four are full-time.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team a large amount of student work on the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form. It appears that with more emphasis on concept development the work would be enhanced.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Certificate title: Certificate-3 years: Animation

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Animation are consistent with the expectations of an animation certificate. The degree's curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a certificate.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The title of certificate appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The faculty and staff of LCAD made available to the visiting team, a large amount of student work. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities though how they are assessed is less clear.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives. Learning outcomes are listed; however, how these outcomes are met is less clear.

Degree title: Master of Fine Arts-2 years: Painting

The respective Master of Fine Arts programs in Painting and Drawing form an impressive ‘center of excellence’ within the College’s offerings.

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Painting and Drawing graduate programs are consistent with the expectations of a Master of Fine Arts degree. The degrees’ curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional Master of Fine Arts degree.

A valuable add-on to the Master of Fine Arts-specific program is being able to audit undergraduate courses in the College (i.e. the Yale model). The team was impressed by the non-studio academics and visiting artist program, and the mentorship structure. Of particular note was the diversity of the enrollment; and a snap survey of where the Master of Fine Arts students had studied before choosing to attend LCAD, and why, was instructive. The diversity of undergraduate experience and the competency evidenced in the student work was impressive. There is, however, a concern that the occupants need more studio space to offer opportunities for larger scale work. In terms of studio-space provision, the amount of studio allocated was at the lower end of most Master of Fine Arts programs familiar to the visiting team.

Faculty is intently focused on the students’ developing a voice while acquiring skills - why the personal is relevant in the contemporary discourse. The Master of Fine Arts students were clearly a lively and energized cohort, and the team would like to have had more time with them to discuss in greater detail their perceptions of the strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes of the program. The team suggests that an independent survey of the last few years of graduates/alumni (a kind of “post-exit interview”) would be helpful in gaining a better sense of the strengths and needs for maintaining and increasing the success of the program.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.

- (4) **Student Work.** The visiting team viewed a large amount of student work in the Master of Fine Arts studios. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form, as well as a personal voice.
- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with, the stated goals and objectives.

Degree title: Master of Fine Arts-2 years: Drawing

The respective Master of Fine Arts programs in Painting and Drawing form an impressive ‘center of excellence’ within the College’s offerings.

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Painting and Drawing graduate programs are consistent with the expectations of a Master of Fine Arts degree. The degrees’ curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional Master of Fine Arts degree.

A valuable add-on to the Master of Fine Arts-specific program is being able to audit undergraduate courses in the College (i.e. the Yale model). The team was impressed by the non-studio academics and visiting artist program, and the mentorship structure. Of particular note was the diversity of the enrollment; and a snap survey of where the Master of Fine Arts students had studied before choosing to attend LCAD, and why, was instructive. The diversity of undergraduate experience and the competency evidenced in the student work was impressive. There is, however, a concern that the occupants need more studio space to offer opportunities for larger scale work. In terms of studio-space provision, the amount of studio allocated was at the lower end of most Master of Fine Arts programs familiar to the visiting team.

Faculty is intently focused on the students’ developing a voice while acquiring skills - why the personal is relevant in the contemporary discourse. The Master of Fine Arts students were clearly a lively and energized cohort, and the team would like to have had more time with them to discuss in greater detail their perceptions of the strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes of the program. The team suggests that an independent survey of the last few years of graduates/alumni (a kind of “post-exit interview”) would be helpful in gaining a better sense of the strengths and needs for maintaining and increasing the success of the program.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** The degree title appears appropriate for program content.
- (4) **Student Work.** The visiting team viewed a large amount of student work in the Master of Fine Arts studios. The quality of the work produced was clear, focused, and directed toward strong skill development in representational work. There was evidence of a sustained emphasis on developing high competency in observational drawing and 3-D form, as well as a personal voice.

- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities.
- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with. the stated goals and objectives.

Degree title: Master of Fine Arts (Distance Learning)-2 years: Art of Game Design

- (1) **Status.** Renewal of Plan Approval.
- (2) **Curriculum.** The content and competency development in the Art of Game Design graduate program are consistent with the expectations of a Master of Fine Arts degree. The degrees' curricular structures, content, and time requirements appear to comply with NASAD Standards and to be sufficient for students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional Master of Fine Arts degree. However, at this moment in time, the outcomes didn't appear to mirror the aspirations of the program description. Three courses seem to have a theory component but not a strong connection to other fields or disciplines. The degree does seem to have a collaborative connection with the undergraduate program in students being able to audit undergraduate courses in the College.

As a curriculum associated with distance learning, the program seems to meet the standards set in terms of operational and curricular structure. LCAD has chosen a delivery process used in business for the distance instruction. More clarity in how the process used can establish that the student who registers in the course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit, as well as provisions for the protection of student privacy would be helpful in assessing the degree. This information could be included in the Optional Response.

- (3) **Title/Content Consistency.** There appears to be a discrepancy with regard to the listing of this degree. Please note that the name of the degree currently used by the institution is Master of Fine Arts in the Art of Game Design, while NASAD lists the degree as Master of Fine Arts in Game Design.
- (4) **Student Work.** There was less work available in this particular degree for the visiting team to view and to come to an informed evaluation of the quality of work.

That said, the student work is valued by those in industry. The visiting team met with members of the community that partner with LCAD in a variety of ways to get their opinions of the effectiveness of the LCAD students' collective performances in internships and careers. In game design, the LCAD internships were evaluated as being consistent with the junior art position level.

In the case of the undergraduates, the students are seen as "well rounded". Their ability to represent human anatomy is seen as leading directly into careers as character or concept artists in the game world. LCAD is seen as creative. The challenge will be to move the Master of Fine Arts students to the same level of competence in a two-year distance program.

- (5) **Development of Competencies.** Course descriptions appear to address appropriate essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities.

- (6) **Overall Effectiveness.** The curriculum appears to be consistent with, and produce results in alignment with. The stated goals and objectives.

Assessment

The Director of Assessment and Accreditation at LCAD was hired just before the recent regional accreditation visit. The Director stated that program reviews involve students and alums, as well as faculty and Department Chairs. The review results move to the Faculty Senate where a rubric is used to assist in the evaluation of the program, then to the Provost and on to the Academic Committee of the Board.

External program reviews are conducted every six years. The assessment process is focused on one core competency reviewed each year. “Quantitative reasoning” is the featured competency for the current year.

The team was aware that LCAD had invested time and effort in a new curriculum and degree track, Creative Writing. The initiative had gone through all the College’s channels, including needs assessment, and been approved by the Board. However, upon offering the course there was little or no interest, and it failed to enroll a critical-mass cohort. The low response to the program can be diagnosed in hind sight with causes, including the proximity of internationally known programs in close proximity to LCAD. However, the distance-education and low residency aspects of the degree could have worked in its favor had the program been messaged more accurately as to its content and intention.

LCAD withdrew the degree. The visiting team was given a thorough and very candid review of the lessons learned from this ‘calamity.’ Further, it was clear that the internal mechanisms of checks and balances were under active re-evaluation at every level of the College. Though a somewhat painful experience, the College’s thoughtful analysis of what happened is now informing the future planning discourse. A two-year process of course and program approval has been instituted to give sufficient time to thoughtfully consider every aspect of planning.

LCAD has hired external consultants, which is seen as a providing knowledgeable assistance in ranking LCAD’s competition, analyzing the strategic fit of existing and future programs, as well as comparing employment data with different schools. This consultancy is seen as a help in avoiding the recent failure in the launch of the Creative Writing program.

The program reviews of Animation and Game Design led to the Graphic Design and Digital Media area launching the new Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality program to be instituted in the fall of 2018. The institution is reminded to submit an application for Plan Approval for this new degree prior to enrollment of students and publication of its availability.

Life After Art School

The team wanted to hear what had happened to alumni of the College and had the opportunity for a group discussion with former students from different majors who were working in the region. The common thread was, as to be expected, a strong belief in the value of the studio-based work of the College. The alumni expanded on this by contrasting LCAD with a similar institution known for its focus on critical discourse and theory, whereas LCAD was seen as a ‘practical’ College: “the strength of nuts-and-bolts teaching is that I learned.” None of the alumni felt that they had been ‘herded’ or had compromised their own creative vision. Rather on several occasions in this conversation, the words ‘I was respected’ were used. There was a palpable sense of loyalty and appreciation for the College. On two separate occasions, individual alumni said they hoped to become successful enough to gift the College a new building. Each alum expressed a concern about the affordability of LCAD and if it was pricing itself out of the ability of

potential students to attend. Several had information about the comparative cost of attending a good state university versus LCAD. The alumni/ae congratulated the College on permitting them to return to audit classes on a space-available basis. The several who had done so saw it as a regenerative opportunity. Every alum noted that only time constraints prevented them from ‘coming back,’ as they had reviewed the LCAD course offerings, spotted courses they wanted to take and had ‘wish-listing’ them.

3. Study of the Transcripts of Recent Graduates and Comparison with Catalog Statements

In reviewing transcripts, the visitors verify the correlation of the stated LCAD policy on credit and clock hours to those granted in the institution’s stated curricular requirements. The correlation exists on both the baccalaureate and graduate levels.

4. Exhibition

LCAD is fortunate to have a prominently located gallery in the heart of downtown Laguna Beach to highlight work of faculty and students. The location gives the College a high profile in the community and provides a venue for making the case that LCAD is a community partner in the fabric of the city and has accomplished faculty and students.

Exhibition of student work is prominently placed in the hallways throughout the campus buildings. More permanent installations of the work of faculty and alums, both 2D and 3D, set the tone and focus of the institution in physical form.

With the campus opportunities and the off-site gallery, students are served by having exhibition opportunities of their own and the opportunity of seeing faculty work in a prominent setting as well as work of outside professionals. For the industry focused degrees, temporary presentations of student work are arranged in prominent venues near the industry locations to present the students’ skills and preparation for the particular industry, such as at Disney for the animation industry.

M. Art/Design Unit Evaluation, Planning, and Projections

1. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections Development

Institutional Planning

The current Strategic Plan covers academic, financial, and facilities planning. A consultant was employed to engage in a visioning process with the whole College over multiple weeks. The process was seen as a chance to pull together and determine what the College community wanted to do. The precursor to the current five-year rolling strategic plan was seen as too aspirational, hence the current one is task-oriented with most aspects updated each year. While helpful to maintaining focus, the lack of big ideas made more of a to-do list. The Financial Plan is a companion to the Strategic Plan and seems to be more valued by the Board than the Strategic Plan as a planning document.

The Self-Study refers to the assembly of the Strategic Plan and the input sought in the process. Senior Staff meetings and the Faculty Senate were identified as the vehicles to vet the development of the plan and assess its progress. It was evident that core and senior faculty were fully briefed, but the team has a nagging doubt that the corpus of the College en masse understands the scale and implications of the plan.

There appears to be a sense on campus that there was not full engagement of the campus community in the planning process. One reason for this may be the large number of part-time faculty members who do not stay on campus other than to teach their classes. Their value is the professional connection they bring; the disadvantage is the lack of connection with the full College community and a sense of the good of the whole.

While no-one raised any serious criticism of the plan, close questioning did not lead to a sense that everyone fully embraced the directions – on a few occasions the team heard that the ‘second tier’ of staff and faculty were ‘given the news,’ rather than being part of its formulation. These faculty recalled that the plan was presented for notes and felt it could have been more collaborative.

A state of the college meeting is held on campus at the beginning of each academic year for the campus community. In addition, a state of the college event is presented to those donors of \$1,000 and up for community members. The President is at the ready and available to speak at community organizations and share the uniqueness of the College with the Mayor and City Council. Staff indicated a need for a full-time Marketing Director, and while this position would help both with internal and external messaging and marketing, it will not solve the complex problem of communicating with the full LCAD community. The disproportionately large percentage of adjunct/part-time faculty provide the strong professional expertise that distinguishes LCAD in the delivery of the curriculum. However, the challenge of engaging this constituency fully in College planning is two-pronged. As professionals employed in the fields, they don’t have the time, nor in many cases, the academic expertise to develop curricular programs. To be truly successful in the future, LCAD must find a way to integrate part-time and adjunct faculty in a way that furthers the mission of the institution.

To be helpful, the team suggests that the College try to get all full-time, adjunct/part-time faculty, and all staff, perhaps augmented by local alumni and friends, to hear the President and the Board present an “Our Future” briefing, in a spirit of shared governance and common purpose. The ambitions of the Strategic Plan are admirable, but a tipping point for the College, engaging ‘buy-in’ from as large a cast as possible would seem to be the most obvious and logical and healthy way forward.

Planning processes can be organized to be more inclusive and communicated more widely to encourage greater participation and ownership among the faculty and staff. It was observed that “we’re all in this together.” There is an advantage to deepening and widening the comprehensive understanding of the LCAD Strategic Plan among the College constituencies. The team recommends defining and refining the Strategic Plan with a five-year action ladder with all the resource implications attached to clarify agreed upon priorities.

A comprehensive master plan for long-term future development, as discussed at other points in this report, would be advantageous to the College. The plan could consider consolidation of the campus to improve communication, traffic flow and economy of scale.

Messaging

LCAD prides itself on its uniqueness and difference. The team, however, would like to have seen more analysis of quite how and why LCAD describes itself in comparison with competitor colleges. Southern California is rich in colleges and universities with notable art and design programs within the region. All of these colleges also have direct relationships with the same entertainment/media industries accessed by LCAD. It would be helpful if a clear pedagogical and philosophical analysis, accompanied by data on relative costs, credit hours, majors and sub-majors, faculty, support systems and industry relations were to be conducted. What is sought

is a clearer exposition of the differentiated value of an LCAD degree in comparison with colleges with which LCAD shares a market.

Evaluation

The value of the last regional accreditation report coupled with this NASAD visitors' report is in providing a structure for internal evaluation. Using these external reviews to help the staff and faculty fulfill the goals and aspirations of LCAD can be a powerful catalyst for progress. An "action ladder" - the steps that can take LCAD from where it is to where the "college" collectively wants to be - could be developed by laying the regional accreditation report alongside this NASAD report and melding the recommendations to create an action-ladder to guide the path forward.

The internal review leading up to the two visits seems to have led to a deep internal look at priorities. The advantage of forecasting and the beginning of risk management has created a context in which the administration and Board can truly own strategic planning and be invested in making it work. A Five Year plan based on the Action Ladder could feel more authentic to, and be more effective for, LCAD.

The team came away with the view that the current planning condition of the College is in four interlocking parts:

- i. Continued regional and specialized accreditation is vital. The re-accreditation exercise has been valuable on all levels. Though never characterized as a 'distraction,' the amount of time and effort required over the past 2-3 years now needs to move on to an 'action ladder' with timelines and benchmarks to serve as triggers to indicate success in the Plan or the need on when and how to move on Plan B.
- ii. Work on the Strategic Plan evolved in harness with the re-accreditation self-studies, and LCAD is now in a far better position to determine its priorities and deliverables.
- iii. Re-evaluation of the College's finances, recognizing the risks associated with a 95% tuition dependency is a healthy exercise, as is the determination to build the new Student Centre at Big Bend. And the creation of a focused Capital Campaign is vital to the long-term health of the College.
- iv. Internal reviews of the academic offerings continue to offer a dynamic and relevant 'profession ready' curriculum are already in progress. Evaluation of the support systems (full-time/part-time ratios, diversity in faculty and students) is an integral part of this process.

2. Completeness and Effectiveness of Self-Study

The College's Self-Study was well-organized, complete and sent in a timely manner to the visiting team.

N. Standards Summary

The team found no issues of non-compliance with NASAD Standards at the College.

O. Overview, Summary Assessment, and Recommendations for the Program

After careful consideration of the institution's purposes and of the local context, the visiting team produced the overall analysis:

1. Strengths

Mission and Purpose

- On several occasions the team was told that the aspirational model is to become the Juilliard of art schools. The atmosphere is professional. There is passion for the place at every level, as well as a diligent application to the work resulting in strong skill based learning, in which students actually demonstrate what they have learned – a demonstration of skills without compromising their creativity or individuality.
- The LCAD Board is enthusiastic in their support of the College’s mission and shows demonstrable and impressive commitment to the future of the College.
- Tremendous affection for the College and the LCAD students is evidenced by the longevity and loyalty of the staff and faculty of the College.

Programs and Curriculum

- The soul of LCAD is a commitment to representational skill development and telling stories with drawing as the connector. The purpose of LCAD is preparing the student to be “industry ready.” The character of the program ranges from traditional and classical to high-end digital media with a good dose of magic mixed in.
- The tradition of representational work based on observation gives the College a relatively unique perspective and has led to a natural and productive connection with the digital animation and game arts industries in their need to draw the figure.
- The small class size serves the students well, and the nimbleness of the College allows for tailoring the curriculum to industry needs.
- As a center of excellence within the College, the Master of Fine Arts program is impressive; however, there is a concern that the occupants need more studio space to offer opportunities for larger scale work.
- Students were attracted to the College because of the quality of work produced, the campus, and the affordability as compared to the larger freestanding colleges in the region, the “comfortable” atmosphere, and the track record of industry success among the alumnae.
- As LCAD has grown and become valued by the industries, public perception of the College has become enhanced.

Facilities and Location

- The artists’ colony history and the tropical climate of Laguna Beach make it an attractive environment for the College. The setting on Laguna Canyon Road is a challenge in terms of traffic delays, lack of public transportation for students, and safety.
- The investment in new buildings and renovations, as well as the digital support, make the College a viable venue for career preparation.

Students and Alumni/ae

- The team commends the increased alumnae outreach and the efforts to build a co-curricular strategy by adding student services staff to continue to improve retention and address the persistently low graduation rates.

- The ability of regional alums to come back and take classes is positive in building the LCAD network and providing continuing professional development.

2. Recommendations for Short-Term Improvement

LCAD prides itself on its uniqueness and difference. At this time, it would seem prudent for the institution to study and analyze how and why it describes itself in comparison with competitor colleges. Southern California is rich in colleges and universities with notable art and design programs within the region. All of these colleges also have direct relationships with the same entertainment/media industries accessed by LCAD. It would be helpful if a clear pedagogical and philosophical analysis, accompanied by data on relative costs, credit hours, majors and sub-majors, faculty, support systems and industry relations were to be conducted. What is sought is a clearer exposition of the differentiated value of an LCAD degree in comparison with colleges with which LCAD shares a market.

Institutional Planning

- Planning processes can be organized to be more inclusive and communicated more widely to encourage greater participation and ownership among the faculty and staff. It was observed that “we’re all in this together.” There is an advantage to deepening and widening the comprehensive understanding of the LCAD Strategic Plan among the College constituencies. The team recommends defining and refining the Strategic Plan with a five-year action ladder with all the resource implications attached to clarify agreed upon priorities.
 - The Library should be included in all strategic and programmatic planning to appropriately support the academic programs as they are developed. The library pop-ups are an excellent method for reaching the students and enticing them to engage the Library as a content and image resource. In two to three years, the question of appropriate library staffing will need to be addressed.
- The team recommends the leadership consider increasing fundraising to support campus expansion rather than taking on more debt, specifically consider planning a capital campaign to achieve objectives in the Strategic Plan.

Curricular Planning and Development

- The majors and programs seem to have been developed in great depth within the various Departments rather than through a broader vision of the whole LCAD platform of degree offerings. The silo structure leads to confusion on the part of the external population as to majors and concentrations that are often very similar. The team recommends considering a focus on both depth within the majors and the breadth of the full body of offerings, which would provide a more “T” shaped curricular experience.
- The menu of course offerings is hard to understand and a challenge to navigate. The numbering and the titling would seem to suggest that if the courses and degrees were organized into more cogent and understandable clusters, students would better understand the relationships among the content areas.
- The degree listing at the beginning of the Self-Study was not consistent with the NASAD Directory List. The discrepancies have been identified in the listing at the beginning of this report and in the Curriculum section. If any degrees currently approved under Plan Approval are being put forward for Final Approval for Listing, or being submitted for Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing concurrently, LCAD should provide the

requisite number of transcripts (two for a graduate program and three for an undergraduate program) and any other appropriate documentation in the Optional Response.

- The current few elective opportunities limit the students' educational experience. Adding electives, such as music, dance, acting, etc., would enrich the students' range of knowledge to bring to their work. Investigating partnerships with other institutions for curricular exchange could provide a source of electives. Along this line of thinking, aligning with other like-institutions across the country could open productive partnerships for exchange and other activities.
- A comprehensive survey of contemporary design, which should include architecture, jewelry, vehicle, fashion, in addition to individual histories of disciplines is needed to set the larger context in which the students live work and live.

Faculty

- Faculty seems to work collaboratively within their respective Departments, less so across and among the Departments.
- The College should reconsider the balance between full and adjunct/part-time faculty to provide continuity by strengthening the core of full-time faculty.

Facilities

- The plan for a Student Center seems well conceived, and the students would welcome the amenities it would provide, including an expanded food service.
- Students and alums indicated a need for more classes in professional and business practices and entrepreneurship to be offered earlier in their academic careers. They are "career ready" when they graduate; however, there remains a concern for the timely introduction of career preparation and business skills.
- Students indicated a desire for more dining options; more dependable shuttle service; more space; and more flexibility in scheduling. They also mentioned the surprising cost of materials beyond those covered by studio fees.
- Attention to the ventilation in the individual Master of Fine Arts painting studios would provide a more professional environment in which to work and instill a stronger sense of best studio practices.

Marketing and PR

- Marketing currently focuses on Scale, Quality of life, and Location. A review of comparatives could assist the institution to further laser-focus its published statements to align with its own specific and particular mission.

Partnerships

- Utilizing the resources of the Laguna Art Museum and build a stronger relationship would provide the ability to utilize their internships and take advantage of their professional development programs and teaching opportunities.

3. Primary Futures Issues

- 96% tuition driven, with a \$1.5 million endowment and strong cash position of \$5 million, the College is vulnerable if enrollment declines. What pre-determined buttons will be pressed if there is a 5, 10 or 15% decline in enrollment? What is Plan B? A runway projection should be developed to give the Board a clear sense of the relationship among the short- and long-term financial resources, expenses, and investments.
- A Five Year plan based on the Action Ladder described in the report could feel authentic to, and be effective for, LCAD as a planning document.

4. Suggestions for Long-Term Development

- A comprehensive master plan for long-term future development would be advantageous to the College. The plan could consider consolidation of the campus to improve communication, traffic flow and economy of scale. The plan should plot out a recurring timeline for capital and fund-raising campaign as an integral component of the development strategy.