REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To ArtCenter College of Design

March 12-14, 2025

Team Roster
Kay Llovio, Dean, School of Humanities & the Arts,
Vice President for Educational Effectiveness, Jessup University (chair)
Peter Senkbeil, Vice President, Special Assistant to the President, Concordia University Irvine
(assistant chair)
John Enright, Vice Director/Chief Academic Officer,
Southern California Institute of Architecture
Laura Schaefer, Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer, Pitzer College
Dianna Graves, Vice President for Student Affairs, Claremont McKenna College
Susan Opp, Vice President and Visit Liaison, WSCUC

Table of Contents

Section I – Overview and Context

A. Description of Institution and Accreditation History

Art Center College of Design (hereafter "ArtCenter") is a private, not-for-profit institution that offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields in art and design. ArtCenter focuses on teaching real-world art and design skills to its students, offering eleven Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees, as well as eight Master of Science and Master of Fine Arts degrees. In 2021, ArtCenter sought and received WSCUC Substantive Change approval to begin offering two online Master of Design degrees. The institution also operates ArtCenter Extension, its continuing education department.

ArtCenter's brief mission statement – "Learn to Create, Influence Change" – reflects the institution's values as it provides a rigorous, professionally-oriented education in various art and design fields and seeks to produce graduates who are critical thinkers and are well-prepared to address global challenges. ArtCenter's core values focus on the success of all students and cultivating, preserving and championing a positive culture with creativity, innovation and integrity. ArtCenter has undergone transition in key executive leadership positions since the 2017 accreditation visit; however, the new president and provost have long and varied experience with the college and champion the historic values. The Hillside Campus, located on 165 wooded acres in the Pasadena hills, has served as the main campus since 1976. In 2004, ArtCenter began acquiring property near downtown Pasadena, and with the additional purchase of adjacent properties in 2011 and 2014, has established the South Campus complex to support growth and innovation (see Standard 3 and the Off-Campus Locations Review in Appendix C).

As of fall 2024, ArtCenter's full-time equivalent enrollment was 2,188 – a decrease from its fall 2023 FTE enrollment of 2,213 and its fall 2022 FTE enrollment of 2,233. The institution also reported that its spring 2025 FTE enrollment of 2,068 was down from its spring 2024 FTE

enrollment of 2,170. Slightly more than 10% of its total enrollment consists of graduate students; the rest are undergraduates. ArtCenter's student population is very ethnically diverse, and as of 2024, 43% of its student body were international students (up from 21% in 2010).

Most of ArtCenter's undergraduates declare a major upon entry, but in 2022, the college launched a First Year Immersion program, in which a selected cohort of students take foundational courses in a number of areas and declare a major at the end of that year. The undergraduate curriculum also includes humanities and science courses, as well as Integrated Studies classes; these provide a general education, opportunities to connect with peers, and a foundation for their selected major. Students may also select one of several optional minors, including a Social Innovation minor offered through its Designmatters program.

Studio classes with an 8:1 student-to-faculty ratio provide many opportunities for detailed critique and feedback. As of fall 2023, the institution reported that it had 113 full-time faculty, as well as 361 full-time non-instructional staff, for a total of 474 full-time employees.

ArtCenter's graduates generally report successful outcomes; according to the institution's one-year-out survey for 2021-22 (the most recent year of data provided), 95% of bachelor's degree recipients and 96% of master's degree recipients reported that they were employed either full-time or part-time. Furthermore, 95% of graduates reported that they were somewhat or very satisfied with their post-graduation occupation.

Founded in 1930, the institution achieved federal tax-exempt status as a non-profit in 1951. It was first accredited by WASC (later WSCUC) in 1955, and it has been accredited continuously since that time. Its last regular reaffirmation of accreditation occurred in 2017; at that time, ArtCenter's accreditation was reaffirmed for a period of eight years, and it submitted an Interim Report as requested in 2021. ArtCenter was previously accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), from 1963-2021 (voluntary withdrawal),

and is currently a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD).

It should be noted that although the ArtCenter campuses were spared in the fires in Pasadena and Altadena in January, members of their extended community suffered losses. ArtCenter pivoted to remote instruction from January 8 until February 1, but saw an enrollment decline in SP-25 of approximately 30 students due to the fires.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The team conducted an offsite review on October 9-10, 2024, at which it reviewed and discussed the institution's report and supporting documentation. The team sent its Summary of Lines of Inquiry to the institution within a week, requesting some additional documents and information, and the institution provided them by January 14, 2025, as scheduled despite the interruption caused by the fires. The team conducted a Zoom meeting on February 7, 2025, to review the additional information and organize for the site visit, which was conducted on March 12-14, 2025. ArtCenter also provided a brief summary of institutional changes between August 2024 (when its report was submitted) and February 2025. On March 11, a member of the team visited and reviewed ArtCenter's South Campus location (see Appendix C). On March 12 and 13, the team conducted 20 meetings with various groups of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, as well as a meeting with members of ArtCenter's Board of Trustees and open meetings with students, staff, and faculty. During the visit, the team requested some additional written materials, including updates on the institution's enrollment and financial outlook, as well as a draft report provided to ArtCenter by Deloitte Consulting; these were provided promptly. On March 14, the team chair met with the institution's president, and the full team met with members of the ArtCenter community to present its commendations and recommendations.

C. Institution's Reaffirmation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

The team found that ArtCenter's institutional report was well-written and thorough, covering all the major areas required. The institution provided appropriate supporting evidence along with the report, as well as additional materials in response to the team's lines of inquiry and to requests made by the team during the site visit. The team notes that in Section B of the report, which was organized according to WSCUC's four standards, the institution did not include references to specific Criteria for Review (CFR) by number. However, as the four subsections of Section B largely addressed the CFR for each standard in sequential order, the team was able to determine compliance with the standards and CFR. In future reports, the team recommends that the institution insert specific parenthetical citations for CFR, in keeping with WSCUC's recommended procedure.

Section II – Evaluation of Institutional Report

Subsection A: Response to Previous Commission Actions

The Commission action letter following the March 2017 Accreditation Visit identified two general issues for further development -- assessment of learning outcomes and program review; and shared governance -- and requested the College to address them in an Interim Report submitted in March 2021, specifically:

1. Evidence of completed program reviews for each degree program, general education, and co-curricular areas. A full cycle of program review (including those done before the Accreditation Visit) for all academic and designated co-curricular areas should be completed by the time of this Report. The Report should include appropriate findings

from external reviewers and the resulting memoranda of understanding with the provost that show how the findings and areas identified for improvement will be addressed with action plans and timelines, as appropriate

2. Core competency assessments, to include four years of longitudinal data (2017 – 2020) for the five core competencies

3. Program learning outcomes assessments, to include four years of longitudinal data (2017 – 2020) for each of ArtCenter's degree programs

4. Summary description of the evolution of shared governance, with specific response to the recommendations from the visiting team report of March 2017, which were:

> "The team suggests that the president and provost follow through on their commitment to fully engage the campus community in dialogue about all the avenues in which shared governance and delegated decision-making authority should occur. The team also suggests that the faculty consider what level of engagement is appropriate for full-time faculty and for part-time faculty on faculty-run and shared governance committees."

The Interim Report Committee received the 2021 report and noted that "The institution has met the stated requirements of the Commission in a remarkable and comprehensive fashion, with significant advances in all four of the activities in which it engaged." Work begun in 2017 that continues to the present includes these actions taken in assessment:

- Core competencies were assessed at graduation points, with data collected from term reviews and graduation shows at the undergraduate level.

- PLO assessments were embedded in curricular activities including term reviews and master's thesis using aligned, standardized rubrics.

- Faculty training was enhanced through the Assessment Liaison Cohort, promoting best practices and the use of data for curricular improvements.

The Interim Report Committee further encouraged ArtCenter to continue its progress in the two general areas leading to the Offsite Review in fall 2024 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2025 (see Interim Report Action Summary letter dated June 3, 2021). In the institutional report submitted in August 2024, progress in each area was evident to the visiting team and is discussed in the report below:

1. Maintain the momentum in the areas of program review, core competency assessment, and program learning outcomes assessments in order to demonstrate continued compliance at the time of the next reaffirmation review.

The team finds that the institution's earlier work on core competencies and program learning outcomes assessment has continued consistently. Although further progress in program review was impacted by substantial leadership changes and academic realignment, ArtCenter researched new best practices and developed a Program Review 2.0 process in alignment with that research, with plans to pilot the new process in the 2025–2026 Academic Year (see Subsection B, Standard 2 for more detail).

2. Further document the advances in shared governance to provide the next reaffirmation review team with evidence of the continued expansion and evolution of this signature activity.

Between the 2017 WSCUC Commission Letter and the 2021 Interim Review, ArtCenter continued its efforts toward enhanced shared governance structures by taking steps to further involve faculty in institutional decision-making. Some key initiatives included: introducing part-time and part-time extended faculty contracts, revising performance review policies to include DEI components, and aligning pay grids and academic ranks (all of which were collaborative

initiatives between Faculty Council, the Faculty Policy Committee, and Chairs Council). Faculty roles were expanded in curriculum development, with the continuation of the Assessment Liaison Cohort to link assessment with curriculum updates. The institution also started work on a new strategic plan with broad community involvement and initiated new facilities programming.

In June 2022, the ArtCenter faculty (full-time and part-time) voted to unionize. Negotiations towards an inaugural collective bargaining agreement (CBA) took place for nearly two years. The CBA was approved by the ArtCenter Faculty Federation and by ArtCenter's board of trustees in April 2024, and it went into effect on May 1, 2024. Throughout the process, faculty and staff were apprised of developments in the faculty contract negotiation process.

In spring 2024 Faculty Council announced its reorganization into two branches: a shared governance branch to support collaborative institutional governance, and the Faculty Institute, which focuses on fostering faculty members' professional growth in collaboration with the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning. The Staff Council has evolved significantly, with a formalized charter and structure with rotating leadership roles. The ArtCenter Student Government (ACSG) appears to remain consistent in its organization and membership. (More discussion is included in Subsection B, Standard 3).

Subsection B: Institutional Essays

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity

Institutional Purposes

Art Center College of Design (ArtCenter) has a clear and defined purpose in U.S. higher education. The institution's mission "Learn to Create. Influence Change." is succinct, but well-defined and clearly explicated through online materials (CFR 1.1). Twice in the last fifteen years, ArtCenter has completed comprehensive, strategic visioning exercises resulting in two core documents, *Create Change 1.0* (2011) and *Create Change 2.0* (2017). *Create Change 2.0*

embedded a deep focus on efforts to ensure the mission is being realized for all students at the college and within the global communities in which students and graduates live and work (CFR 1.2). Accordingly, the institution increased efforts to broaden the representation of students across varied identities and experiences to maximize plurality and deliberative co-creation. A new strategic planning process was launched in 2024, but it was paused in November of that year pending the completion of a report from Deloitte Consulting, expected in April 2025. (Strategic planning is discussed further in Subsection B, Standard 4, below.)

As ArtCenter continues to matriculate talented students from varied backgrounds, the team urges the institution to stay attentive to the support services that allow students to thrive once enrolled. The student affairs staff appear well-qualified and dedicated to student success. Additionally, students are eager to utilize resources that support their well-being. While students appreciate the mental health resources, few counselors are available relative to the size of the student body. The student government and counseling center have collaborated on well-being initiatives to help get upstream of severe mental health concerns. Student government also partners with the Center for Student Experience on events that signal a commitment to its international population, such as Lunar New Year and Holi celebrations, which are open to all members of the ArtCenter community (CFR 1.2).

The decentralization of support services on campus makes it difficult for students to quickly identify and locate sources of support; however, division meetings and the recently reconstituted College Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE) team, which meets weekly, has helped to distribute information about important topics and to develop tailored support plans for students of concern. Recent realignment of the academic organizational structure and the faculty's collective bargaining agreement have shifted faculty expectations and processes by which student affairs staff work with faculty to create co-curricular experiences for

students. Enhanced communication strategies are of critical importance moving forward to maintain valuable staff-faculty relationships. This is especially important in establishing deep connectivity between the constituents at the two campuses. The team recommends that ArtCenter enhance workflow efficiencies to optimize the management of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to support the long-term vitality of ArtCenter's faculty, staff, and administration.

The ArtCenter community uniformly lauds the value of its educational program, and the career outcomes are generally impressive. Alumni in industry are champions of ArtCenter graduates, often hiring young graduates into internships and full-time jobs. ArtCenter truthfully represents its costs and program requirements (CFR 1.3); however, during the site visit, the team learned of student concerns regarding recent tuition increases. The team also learned that while 67% of students receive financial aid, the average aid package is less than $7,000 – roughly 13% of 2024-25 tuition and fees of $54,170.

In line with its mission, ArtCenter emphasizes work-readiness and has implemented professional development programs including the capstone senior experience, off-campus study opportunities, and internships. Additionally, research with faculty, service learning, sponsored projects, and Designmatters partnerships with non-profit and corporate entities allow students to put their learning into practice to address real-world problems (CFR 1.2, 1.3, 1.9). These programs are highly valued by students and contribute to the established professional networks of students, faculty, and industry partners in the Pasadena area. It is not yet clear whether the unionization of faculty might limit faculty members' availability to support future co-curricular experiences with students.

Integrity and Transparency

ArtCenter takes seriously its obligation to achieve its mission and has worked thoughtfully with the Commission to undertake the accreditation process with seriousness and candor (CFR 1.8). The college has undergone substantial shifts in its shared governance model in response to faculty concerns and recently entered into a collective bargaining agreement (CFR 1.4). Separate from the collective bargaining developments, departments were restructured into four divisions, each overseen by a dean, with chairs for each department. This redesign was intended to facilitate greater input in decision-making across institutional priorities and to distribute departmental management more broadly, increasing efficiency. As one example, prior to the realignment, the team learned it was not uncommon for a faculty member to be hired without a systematized approach to their onboarding, provision of email and security credentials, and organized orientation and mentorship. The realignment was cited as making it easier to track the sequencing of hiring for more transparency and predictability (CFR 1.3). Despite examples such as this, faculty, staff, and students all reported concerns with institutional communication regarding important issues. Of particular note was a sense from faculty and students during the visit that they were not kept fully informed about the status or impact of the faculty's recent unionization or the institution's realignment process. Many conflated the two processes and questioned the timing and good intentions of both. Administrators, however, were able to describe their intention in detail, signaling room for enhanced communication across stakeholder groups (CFR 1.7). The team recommends that ArtCenter conduct regular campus climate surveys among faculty, staff, and students to evaluate and address the impact of recent changes, including academic realignment, particularly in light of the institution's stated commitment to shared governance.

Regular meetings are held with the faculty and staff councils to share important information (CFR 1.5, 1.7), and efforts are underway to rewrite the faculty handbook, which was

last revised in 2013. ArtCenter has a student grievance process that is easily accessible and details the rights and responsibilities for parties involved in grievance proceedings. There are formal and informal resolution options. Excellent resources are available online for a range of issues, including Title IX and other civil rights violations (CFR 1.4, 1.5). ArtCenter's policies and disclosures website is well-organized and comprehensive, including information about academic freedom and academic integrity (CFR 1.5, 1.6). Student complaints are tracked in Maxient, and for employees, complaints are tracked by the Employee Experience & Engagement (HR) department (CFR 1.4).

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

Degree Programs

ArtCenter offers an array of design degrees that have clear objectives and standards of performance. As a college focusing on design, ArtCenter has degrees that combine real-world problem solving with fostering creativity and critical thinking. The Designmatters program, in particular, is a robust program leveraging outside industry partnerships and the community that reaches beyond the institution. The entry requirements for programs are clear and well stated on ArtCenter's website and in other documents such as degree program descriptions, catalogues, student handbooks, and viewbooks (CFR 2.1).

Program Learning Outcomes are articulated clearly on the ArtCenter website, which outlines each program's mission statement, skills, and competencies (CFR 2.2). The institution's undergraduate degrees are structured appropriately to bring students into practice, while the graduate degrees cater to advanced students through specific areas of focus. ArtCenter clearly outlines student learning outcomes through Course Learning Outcomes listed in course syllabi, which are aligned with the Program Learning Outcomes. The ArtCenter Academic Advising

Department and the Center for Innovative Technology and Learning (CITL) support both students and faculty in regard to outcomes and expectations. Evidence is accessible and well documented on the college's website for both of these departments and through PLO descriptions for each program (CFR 2.3).

ArtCenter reported that its program review occurs on a seven-year cycle managed by the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE). The process generally encompasses a full calendar year: six months for completion of the self-study, followed by external reviews and culminating in a Memorandum of Understanding/Action Plan. Staff from the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE), the Center for Innovative Technology and Learning (CITL), along with key faculty and the Assessment Liaison Cohort (ALC), work together to form cohesion between the program review process and assessment practices. The college provided evidence of clear Self-Study Report Outline Templates for program review, and examples of past outcomes of program review for each program (CFR 2.4). Past program reviews were provided for BFA Illustration (2016), BS Product Design (2016), Integrated Studies (2018), MFA Media Design Practices (2017), and MS Environmental Design (2018) (CFR 2.4).

ArtCenter has not conducted any program reviews since 2019. Its leaders indicated the following factors had delayed the next cycle of program reviews: the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022 leadership changes, the 2023 academic realignment, and the 2024 collective bargaining agreement. The institution stated that it was beginning a new program review cycle, and that a revised program review process would be vetted by stakeholders in the current academic year. Any changes would be piloted in the 2025-2026 academic year, with the first program reviews starting in spring 2026. All program reviews are then expected to be completed by 2030, during ArtCenter's centennial. The team recommends that ArtCenter reactivate its academic program review process and conduct a full cycle of program reviews. While some

delay is understandable, in the future ArtCenter might consider shorter timelines for program reviews, as the next cycle is scheduled to complete eleven years after the end of the last cycle for some programs (CFR 2.4).

Faculty

ArtCenter has a faculty of over 400 (113 full-time and 360 part-time), many of whom are working professionals, including artists, photographers, painters, filmmakers, and designers of varied disciplines. The college prides itself on a faculty that have rich and diverse academic and professional backgrounds; many are themselves ArtCenter alumni. Faculty are listed on the ArtCenter website, along with demographic data and biographies, and external links to their own creative work. As is typical for a college focused on design, the many faculty-practitioners actively engage with students in direct feedback through term reviews that support a project-based learning culture (CFR 2.5).

The recent academic realignment had also focused on faculty involvement and leadership though the Faculty Council. Evidence from the (Spring 2024) Updated Council Organization document outlines two distinct faculty organizations within the Faculty Council: the shared governance branch and the Faculty Institute. ArtCenter has provided additional documentation of these changes through its website and the 2020 Faculty Council bylaws. In a team meeting with the Faculty Council, employees clarified that the Faculty Institute resides within the broader Faculty Council. Given the school's recent realignment, the structure of the council is evolving, with members being elected by the general faculty, and bylaws being revised. Some members of the Faculty Council voiced concerns about understanding how their role works vis-a-vis shared governance, and how their recommendations are received by leadership (CFR 2.6).

The institution indicated that faculty play an important role in evaluating and creating student learning outcomes and standards of performance. The Assessment Liaison Cohort (ALC)

and the Faculty Assessment Liaison work to determine process, practices, structure, and tool development for educational assessments unique to each department and program. Faculty use "aligned rubric" forms that help assess Program Learning Outcomes and identify curricular needs in collaboration with the Assessment Liaison Cohort (CFR 2.7).

Faculty expectations regarding research, scholarship, and creative activity are evidenced in the Faculty Handbook, Faculty Council, and the recent collective bargaining agreement. This includes descriptive faculty evaluation and promotion procedures and expectations. During meetings with faculty and program chairs, it became apparent that the planned phased program reviews, scheduled to start in fall 2025 and concluding in 2030, had not yet been communicated to faculty. During the visit, Center for Educational Effectiveness staff reported that communications were to begin later in spring 2025. Given the amount of work that all program reviews will entail, the team finds it important that this communication to faculty and chairs occur as soon as possible (CFR 2.4).

Student Learning and Performance

ArtCenter's design and project-based learning methods are demonstrated through regular exhibitions and reviews of student work including term reviews, thesis evaluations, and the "Grad Show." These student presentations involve outside assessment and critique from industry professionals and ArtCenter faculty. The college provided evidence of student achievement vis-à-vis learning outcomes through the WSCUC Core Competencies Analysis 2020-2024, Program Assessment Report assessment examples (Product Design, Brand Design and Strategy, Illustration, Integrated Studies, Graduate Spatial Experience Design, H&S Business minor, and Graduate Film), PLO Learning Outcomes Assessments, and a Summary of PLO and Core Competencies (CFR 2.9).

For 2023, ArtCenter reported a six-year graduation rate for first-time full-time freshman of 83%, impressive in that it exceeds the 75th percentile of WSCUC KID peer institutions. Further, the eight-year outcome measure for transfer students in 2023 was 77%, and eight-year outcome measure for all students was 78%, close to or exceeding the 75th percentile of peer institutions per KID. The college provided detailed evidence though published graduation rates, data tables, and WSCUC KID data (CFR 2.10).

ArtCenter monitors and analyzes success of graduates through Graduate Employment Survey reports that provide insights into employment and professional achievements. The college reported for the classes of 2021-2022 a 95% employment rate for bachelor's (one-year out graduates, 88% knowledge rate) and 96% employment rate for master's (one-year out graduates, 80% knowledge rate). Further data indicated that 83% of bachelor's and 72% of master's graduates report they felt well prepared for the professional world. Other avenues of monitoring success include WSCUC KID data, MDes Exit Survey Report, and the SNAAP alumni survey (CFR 2.11).

Student Support

The institution's Center for Advising and Academic Success (CAAS), created in 2014, is supported by a director and three full-time academic staff. ArtCenter acknowledged the need for more staff in this department to achieve various goals, including outreach to students prior to matriculation, identifying previous high school hardships, and providing resources for faculty who identify students in academic distress. The Provost's Cabinet Objectives and Key Results (OKR) identified the need to map advising across the college; a workgroup was launched in spring 2024, and the work is ongoing. During meetings, the advising staff reported a departmental focus on undergraduate first-year students, with a staff of three and one director for approximately 500 first year students. Staff noted that graduate advising is generally handled by

the program chairs. Remote Zoom meetings for advising since COVID-19 have created the ability for advising staff to meet more students more efficiently. A previous pilot program creating mandatory advising for first year students was successful in terms of improved retention. Staff noted that retention rates vary by program, but they stated that each program is monitored and assessed by the Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Given current staffing, mandatory advising for larger cohorts is not possible.

Information about the CAAS department is described clearly on the institution's website. Students have access to this information, for example the Academic Advising Syllabus, a concise and clear roadmap for students and advisors regarding responsibilities, learning outcomes, and a student checklist (CFR 2.12, 2.13).

The Office of Career & Professional Development (CPD) aids students in the preparation for the professional world through workshops, advising, mentorships and internships. A "virtual office" with remote access is available for alumni and students as a resource as well. ArtCenter also provided evidence of student support of co-curricular programs and services through the Art Center Exchange and Study Away Program, Library, Writing Center, Sponsored Programs, Professional Education and Industry Engagement, and the Center for Student Experience. Assessments through surveys were provided, including the Fall 2021 Expectation Survey, Fall 2023 New Student Survey, Online Transition Student Survey 2020, and the NSSE Report with peer group comparisons (CFR 2.13, 2.14).

Standard 3: Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

ArtCenter is navigating a period of significant change and challenges, as are many higher education institutions. For ArtCenter, this time is marked by efforts to address its financial challenges, optimize its organizational structures, and ensure the sustainability of its educational

mission. While the institution faces certain fiscal pressures, its leaders are building the plans and strategies to address these challenges. The new executive leadership team, coupled with strong board support and collaborative efforts in advancement, suggest a clear path toward resilience and success in the future. However, this will not come without some challenging decisions.

Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

The faculty, staff and executive leadership at ArtCenter are qualified and dedicated to the institution's mission (CFR 3.1). However, the school has gone through significant changes which challenge the culture of the institutional community. Following a recommendation from NASAD in 2019, ArtCenter reorganized its academic structure in 2023, based on meetings and workshops held from 2018 to 2022. This work overlapped with the initial collective bargaining agreement (CBA) of the faculty as part of unionization under the California Federation of Teachers. Collective bargaining negotiations started in June 2022, and the agreement was signed May 1, 2024. While academic realignment was designed to streamline administrative processes, reduce redundancies, and clarify roles within administration, faculty, and staff, other structural challenges that continue to have financial and cultural impacts remain to be addressed. For example, in order to implement the standardized faculty load system set forth in the CBA, the faculty is in process of transitioning to a load and compensation model based on credit hours rather than contact hours. While the institution's aim was to develop a more sustainable, consistent, and efficient structure, during the site visit, a number of faculty expressed concerns that the revision was not beneficial to all employees (for example, that some faculty had teaching loads – and the attendant compensation – reduced). Despite challenges around faculty compensation and union negotiations, the team observed ArtCenter's leadership to be committed to making adjustments to faculty load and compensation with a focus on long-term financial viability (CFR 3.1).

Employee recruitment efforts remain aligned with the institution's goals in rightsizing staffing and faculty structures for cost consideration and operational efficiency. There was some delay in replacing the long-time Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO) who retired in December 2023 and stayed on in a part-time consultant capacity until June 2024. As the new CFAO began July 2024, the nature and scope of the institution's structural operational budget deficits became clearer. Due to the lean nature of staffing, and need for continued cost efficiencies, succession planning in some departments will be increasingly challenging. The partnership between admissions, advancement, and communications seemed effective and was described as a positive collaboration (CFR 3.2).

ArtCenter has turned to consultants to assist in a few areas to address concerns around expense management, revenue opportunity, IT efficiency and security, and team collaboration. ArtCenter is currently navigating financial challenges that became more evident in FY24 and FY25; in both of those years, the institution used one-time donor bequests to achieve a balanced budget after falling short of its enrollment and revenue projections. Its future projections show that expenses will continue to increase at a faster rate than tuition revenue, resulting in continued operating deficits unless changes are implemented. Several factors have impacted the operational budget, including costs related to the CBA, general inflation, and lower-than-projected enrollment. As the scope of these issues became clearer, the executive cabinet and the board decided to pause its strategic planning process in November 2024 and bring in a consultant to address issues of long-term sustainability. After a request for proposal was issued, Deloitte Consulting was selected for a significant review project; their work will conclude in April 2025, with development of a plan by the institution to address the findings scheduled to begin in summer 2025 (CFR 3.3, 3.4, 3.5).

In FY24, total expenses rose by $6 million (4.9%) compared to the previous year. Notable increases included: $1.5 million from staff and faculty cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) in 2023 and 2024; $1.5 million in employee benefit costs driven by higher salaries, insurance premiums, and more eligible participants; and $1.3 million in bond interest and depreciation following the end of the capitalization period for major construction projects. Additional increases came from janitorial and security services, insurance (particularly earthquake coverage), flood-related repairs, and consulting services.

The FY25 budget incorporated a 6% faculty salary increase as required by the CBA; further faculty compensation increases, based on a revised salary scale, are required for FY26 and FY27. A one-time, unrestricted $7.3 million gift was used to help balance the FY25 budget; however, even with that support, a $1 million deficit remains, which will be covered using reserves. The college also had to pause its practice of setting aside a tuition reserve in FY24 and FY25. FY25 projections show an anticipated budget shortfall of approximately 9-10%.

The institution has modeled long-term forecasts to include either no change in annual enrollment or a modest annual enrollment decline (3%), along with tuition increases (3.4%), and continued expense growth (4%). In both enrollment scenarios, the budget forecasts are for annual operating deficits requiring continuing use of reserves and/or endowment funds. While these trends pose challenges, the team learned the institution is working on developing a plan during summer 2025 to stabilize its finances. Institutional efforts will include prioritizing sound budget practices—such as continuing to incorporate depreciation into the operating budget to afford maintaining facilities—and addressing the primary causes of the deficit, particularly declining enrollment and rising costs (CFR 3.4, 3.5).

To improve financial sustainability, ArtCenter is focused both on increasing revenue and managing expenses. Revenue strategies will likely include expanding non-degree programs,

developing industry partnerships, and enhancing foundation support. On the expense side, the college is pursuing approximately $16 million in cost reductions. During the site visit, the team learned that the institution's leadership has already identified approximately $10 million in potential savings.

Leadership is also exploring better use of underutilized campus spaces, including leasing options. Partnerships with consulting organizations are helping guide strategic planning and financial management efforts. Fundraising efforts are also being expanded to build a broader base of support and diversify revenue sources. The FY26 budget is currently in development and will be reviewed by the board in June 2025. The team recommends that ArtCenter identify and effectuate realistic strategies to address current and projected financial deficits and align revenue, expense, and enrollment targets, especially in light of recent enrollment pressures (CFR 3.4, 3.5).

Financial, Physical, Technology, and Information Resources

The school's physical and technological resources are being evaluated for optimization. The team found that the institution's IT infrastructure presented a challenge. Much of the technology remains on-premises, with little use of cloud-based solutions, leading to risks associated with hardware aging and protection (CFR 3.6). A recent assessment of the IT team and infrastructure using a consultant, Wunder, highlighted the need for strategic improvements in technology resources to ensure that the institution remains competitive and efficient, as well as a need for a reorganization of staff. The CFAO has oversight of IT and is working with the consultant to take necessary action (CFR 3.6).

ArtCenter's Hillside Campus, located on 165 wooded acres in the Pasadena hills just west of the Rose Bowl, has served as the institution's main campus since its primary building was completed in 1976. Designed in a mid-century modernist style, this building provides facilities for nearly all of ArtCenter's programs. It includes classroom spaces; offices for faculty, staff,

and administrators; a large auditorium, which was remodeled in 2022; a gallery that exhibits current student work from many of its programs; numerous meeting and gathering spaces; a market, cafe, and dining halls for faculty and students; and a student store (CFR 3.6).

ArtCenter provides an impressive set of laboratories, shops, and stages that support the institution's academic programs. These include two 4,600 square foot stages for film and photography; two large photo labs; a model shop; painting, sanding, spraying, and drying rooms; technology studios and spaces for film and video editing; a laser lab; a 3D printing lab; a 3D rapid prototyping lab; various other small fabrication labs; a property and wardrobe storage room, where items can be checked out for student use; and a large equipment center, where students can check out film and photography equipment. ArtCenter's library holds over 100,000 print volumes and 11,000 DVDs; it also provides access to a wide range of online learning resources. The Hillside Campus also includes a writing center, a counseling center, a Center for the Student Experience, and a Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning that supports faculty. The Hillside Campus includes an annex that holds additional office space. ArtCenter does not currently provide any student residence halls, though its leadership has discussed the possibility of developing such spaces near campus. The team found that ArtCenter's physical facilities provide excellent support for the academic programs it offers (CFR 3.6).

The South Campus project has largely been completed, with space recently maximized for revenue-generation opportunities such as leasing to charter schools. Just over twenty years ago, ArtCenter began an expansion of its footprint to the more urban South Campus, located near downtown Pasadena and just a short ride from the Hillside Campus. Opened formally in June 2024 and housed in repurposed industrial buildings, including a famous wind tunnel once used for aerospace research and testing, South Campus is home to many programs, including the Mullin Transportation Design Center, the Mobility Experience Lab by Genesis, Hyundai and

Kia, and the Hoffmitz Milken Center for Typography. The facility renovation preserved its industrial character, and it reflects intentional design choices with flexible, adaptive spaces to support classroom instruction, creative design, studio work, gallery exhibitions, and event space. Students train and become certified to use valuable, state-of-the-art equipment. They are encouraged to consider interdisciplinary approaches to their work, supported by a curriculum that focuses first on basic design principles and manual technical skills before applying those skills to advanced technological platforms. Undergraduates and graduate students are in proximity to one another, offering natural role model and mentorship opportunities. Students are able to access the building with encoded key cards and are trusted to work independently outside of class time. All students are expected to give and receive critiques, sharpening their critical thinking skills and often leading to collaborations. Their creative productivity is evident throughout the campus, with student projects displayed in every classroom, hallway, and gallery area. When not working, students can relax comfortably together in the student lounge area where they can enjoy snacks and conversation (CFR 3.6).

South Campus is an important part of the cultural community of Pasadena. Through the institution's instructor in residence program, community practitioners routinely teach at ArtCenter and often hire students for internships and alumni for full-time jobs. ArtCenter's academic rigor, coupled with its real-world focus, has become a hallmark of the institution, preparing students for meaningful employment and civic contribution.

Completing the full renovation of South Campus and maintaining its facilities and academic program will require concerted effort in the coming years. The team saw evidence of notable investment in connecting the two campuses, literally and figuratively, such as shuttle service and cohesion of students and faculty (CFR 3.6).

ArtCenter has developed a draft plan to revitalize its extension program to generate new revenue through increased public engagement (including use of its workshops, equipment, and recently renovated auditorium) and accessible, educational outreach (such as corporate education and certificate programs) that will benefit the entire community. These efforts may also generate future enrollment. Rising costs and uncertainty in enrollment patterns are topics of strategic discussion. As housing costs increase and local housing availability tightens, ArtCenter must grapple with how it will support the basic needs of its student body. Community partnerships will be important to this effort, and ArtCenter's commitment to its Pasadena neighbors is deep. In March, ArtCenter will transform its automotive design space to host a fundraiser to support local fire victims, and several unused floors of a South Campus building have been repurposed as classrooms for a charter middle school that was displaced by recent fires (CFR 3.6).

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

The senior leadership at ArtCenter has undergone significant changes since the last review, with a new president and executive cabinet and key hires in areas such as finance and communications. During the site visit, the review team found that campus leaders articulated a strong commitment to addressing the institution's challenges with integrity and accountability. The leadership team's focus on both short-term financial solvency and long-term sustainability was evident in their strategic planning and decision-making processes. The introduction of project managers and partnerships with consulting firms like Deloitte appear to have helped to focus decision-making processes by the board and executive cabinet, and the culture of collaboration among leadership seemed to be a strong asset (CFR 3.9).

The governing board at ArtCenter demonstrated deep involvement in guiding the institution through its current challenges. Many of its 26 board members are longstanding, with impressive experience to contribute to the guidance of the college. The board members

interviewed during the site visit expressed a commitment to transparency and to providing strategic direction. The board's role in the governance process is advisory, with a strong focus on oversight and ensuring that the school's financial and operational decisions align with its mission. The board's diverse skill sets in areas such as finance, advancement, and facilities ensure that decisions are well-informed and strategically sound. The board's composition is strong, with members bringing diverse backgrounds and expertise, including finance, the arts, and education. This diversity enhances the board's ability to provide effective oversight and guidance, particularly as the institution navigates complex financial and strategic challenges. In the team's meeting with many of the board members, it was clear to the team that board members understood the recent financial challenges and have a good working relationship with senior leadership in supporting needed changes for fiscal right-sizing (CFR 3.7, 3.8).

Data are being used to inform decision-making at the institutional level, particularly in areas such as enrollment management and financial planning. Some of these practices are new and were implemented by new leadership; others were in response to emerging challenges. The institution now tracks and analyzes enrollment trends and financial performance, and it is working on reviewing program profitability to guide its strategies. One area to consider for improvement is in regard to assessment of the cost to raise funds for advancement, or other metrics to evaluate success of the fundraising efforts beyond the annual budget impact (CFR 3.10).

The institution's organizational structures are in a state of transition, with efforts underway to streamline decision-making processes and complete administrative and operational tasks more efficiently (CFR 3.11). While some challenges remain, particularly around speed and efficiency, ArtCenter is making a concerted effort to create a more agile and effective decision-making culture, as evidenced by hiring a facilitator for decision-making at the executive

leadership level. The strategic planning process, though temporarily paused while awaiting the Deloitte report, is expected to result in clearer, more cohesive structures that align with the institution's long-term goals (CFR 3.11).

ArtCenter is at a critical juncture, with strong leadership and strategic efforts aimed at addressing significant financial challenges. The institution's ability to manage resources effectively, adapt to changing demographics, and leverage its governance and leadership teams will be key to securing a successful financial future for the institution (CFR 3.5).

Standard 4: Creating an Institution Committed to Quality Assurance and Improvement

Quality Assurance Processes

The institution has engaged in two broad quality improvement initiatives during the past several years. In 2023 ArtCenter restructured its academic departments to eliminate redundancies, create consistency across the institution, and streamline a number of academic administration processes. As part of this process, ArtCenter developed its first-ever Standard Operating Procedures manual, a draft of which was distributed in May 2024. ArtCenter also signed its first-ever collective bargaining agreement with its now-unionized full-time faculty. The CBA is being phased in over time; new faculty assignment categories and compensation were introduced in summer 2024, and a new faculty appointment process was implemented in fall 2024. Implementation of a new pay structure is slated for fall 2025. The goals of these two initiatives are to create significant improvements in faculty workload, faculty hiring and evaluation, and faculty compensation. However, as these initiatives have not yet been fully implemented, the team was unable to observe the full impact of the changes (CFR 4.1).

ArtCenter's provost also introduced an Objectives and Key Results system in fall 2023, in which each academic department identifies goals and tracks its progress toward accomplishing those goals. Based on the OKR tracking sheet provided, the team found that some departments

had been more diligent than others in carrying out these tasks, but the overall project seemed to be effective in increasing awareness of progress toward achievement of goals (CFR 4.1).

ArtCenter evaluates student retention and completion on a regular basis. According to the Student Outcomes Overview, in fall 2023 the fall-to-fall full-time first-year retention rate was 82%, which places it above the national median, and its six-year graduation rate was 83%, which is well above the national 75th percentile and above ArtCenter's peers. ArtCenter's Office of Institutional Research collects, analyzes, and distributes its student success data, which is shared regularly with the institution's leadership and its Board of Trustees. The Strategic Enrollment Management Committee also meets regularly to analyze data and suggest improvements. For example, in 2020-21, ArtCenter piloted a new mandatory academic advising process in two departments, which produced favorable results. Full-scale implementation was delayed due to the Covid pandemic, but ArtCenter introduced mandatory advising in its new First Year Immersion program, which resulted in 100% student retention for this limited cohort of 16 students (CFR 4.2).

Since ArtCenter's last Accreditation Visit, the institution has continued to monitor student achievement of the Core Competencies described in WSCUC's 2013 Handbook of Accreditation. Recent findings indicated that students needed more assistance with Written and Oral Communication; this led to ArtCenter investing additional resources into its Writing Center and establishing a peer coaching program for students in all undergraduate majors. More in-class oral presentations were also added. Though no longer required under the 2023 WSCUC Standards, ArtCenter continues to monitor these competencies as a way of assessing student achievement of its general education outcomes. Regarding its retention and graduation data, the institution's report noted "a consensus that the college would be well-served to formalize a more systematic, institutional approach to the ongoing use of this data" (CFR 4.3).

ArtCenter's Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has a regular schedule for reporting data to internal stakeholders; it also publishes "at a glance" data on the institution's website and submits the Common Data Set annually. OIR also produces a dashboard for its board of trustees, as well as WSCUC Key Indicator summary reports, benchmark reports related to other schools of art and design, and IPEDS data feedback reports (CFR 4.4).

Institutional Improvement

ArtCenter has engaged in a series of activities that demonstrate its commitment to evidence-based improvement. The institution's recent engagement in process improvement and its implementation of the CBA have led to plans to make both faculty workload and faculty compensation more fair and equitable; these plans are scheduled for implementation in fall 2025. Recently, ArtCenter has also used other surveys to gather information from students and employees; for example, the institution participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years, as well as the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (CFR 4.5).

ArtCenter's assessment program is well-organized and embraced by the institution's various departments and programs. Faculty from each program (more than 40 in total) participate in an Assessment Liaison Cohort, co-chaired by the Director of Educational Effectiveness and Operations and the Associate Provost for Teaching & Learning and Dean of Faculty. Cohort members review evidence gathered from courses in each program, prepare reports for regular review by all faculty in each program, and discuss both assessment process and results with Cohort faculty from other programs. Program learning outcomes are assessed every semester, and their alignment with course learning outcomes is checked. The Center for Educational Effectiveness produces written reports every two years, based on the data submitted; departments discuss these reports and make changes to curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment

structure. For example, faculty in the MFA in Graphic Design extended the graduate thesis project from one term to two and developed a more structured schedule to guide students through the process. Departments also complete an annual reflection on their self-reported assessment results (CFR 4.5, 4.6).

In addition to assessment, most ArtCenter departments conduct regular portfolio reviews for all their students, during which students receive detailed feedback regarding their work and suggestions for future improvement. For example, in the Photography and Imaging major, student portfolios are reviewed at the end of semesters 3, 5, 7, and 8 (CFR 4.6).

ArtCenter's Board of Trustees has engaged in regular development activities as mentioned in board minutes. The Board's by-laws describe a Governance Committee whose responsibilities include a charge to "periodically recommend initiatives by which the Board shall assess its performance." Board meeting minutes indicate that the Board conducts an annual self-evaluation survey; results are reported at the Board's fall meeting (CFR 4.7).

ArtCenter has engaged in strategic planning regularly; it published five-year strategic plans in 2011 and 2017, as well as a two-year strategic agenda in 2022. The institution also had a campus master plan approved by the Pasadena City Council in 2018. ArtCenter began another strategic planning process in 2024, but paused it in November in order to bring in an external firm to conduct a review of its academic portfolio and current enrollment and financial situation. The consultant shared its preliminary draft findings with the Board of Trustees and the Cabinet in February 2025; the final report is expected in April. ArtCenter informed the team that it intends to incorporate findings from the consultant's report as well as the WSCUC visiting team's report into its strategic plan, to be completed later in 2025. The team recommends that ArtCenter complete the recently paused strategic planning process and implement the approved plan in order to achieve long-term financial and institutional sustainability. The team also

recommends that ArtCenter proceed with its plans to launch its next round of program reviews in 2025-26 as scheduled (CFR 4.8).

Subsection C: Reflections - Synthesis of Insights as a Result of the Reaffirmation Process

ArtCenter presents a clear, detailed list of its strengths that emerge from the evidence presented in the report and are connected to the WSCUC Standards (CFR are cited in this section of the institution's report). The team concurs that ArtCenter's curriculum and institutional mission are well-aligned. It appears that the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) will bring clarity and focus to faculty roles and, consequently, to faculty support. However, since phased implementation of the CBA is not yet complete, the team found that it could not gauge the effect of the collective bargaining agreement on shared governance at the time of the report. While ArtCenter acknowledged the liminality of many of the initiatives in its report, the team noted that at the time of the site visit, the institution's leadership was still in the midst of formulating and implementing short-term plans to improve financial stability and sustainability, that its program review process had been paused for more than five years, and that its strategic planning process was on hold pending the completion of an external consultants' report in late spring 2025. At the time of its report, the team found that ArtCenter has not articulated a clear view of the challenges, changes, and headwinds in art and design education that will shape the next strategic plan, particularly in light of societal changes and their impact on art and design education.

Subsection D: Compliance with 2023 WSCUC Standards

As described under Subsection B, above, the team has reviewed ArtCenter's Institutional Report and its completed Compliance with 2023 WSCUC Standards Worksheet, as well as the supporting documents provided. Overall, the team's finding, which is subject to Commission

review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance with each of the four WSCUC Standards.

Section III – Other Topics, as Appropriate (such as Substantive Change)

As ArtCenter has not submitted any additional Substantive Change proposals since the ones approved in 2021, the team is including no additional information here.

Section IV – Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

Art Center College of Design is to be commended for:

1. Its singular mission, borne out by a strong commitment from administration, faculty and staff to a curriculum that provides excellent preparation for students for careers and social innovation.

2. Its engagement in the professional community, as demonstrated in initiatives such as the Designmatters courses and the Mullin Transportation Design Center.

3. Its investment in facilities and equipment at both the Hillside Campus and South Campus, which reflect intentional design choices that support interactive classroom instruction, creative design, studio work, gallery exhibitions, and event spaces.

4. The resilience of its extended community, which has remained stalwart in the face of challenges including the pandemic and the recent, devastating fires in the Pasadena and Altadena communities.

Recommendations

The team recommends that ArtCenter:

1. Identify and effectuate realistic strategies to address current and projected financial deficits and align revenue, expense, and enrollment targets, especially in light of recent enrollment pressures. (CFR 3.4, 3.5)

2. Complete the recently paused strategic planning process and implement the approved plan in order to achieve long-term financial and institutional sustainability. (CFR 4.8)

3. Enhance workflow efficiencies to optimize the management of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to support the long-term vitality of ArtCenter's faculty, staff, and administration. (CFR 1.3, 1.7, 2.6, 2.8, 3.2)

4. Conduct regular campus climate surveys among faculty, staff, and students to evaluate and address the impact of recent changes, including academic realignment, particularly in light of the institution's stated commitment to shared governance. (CFR 1.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.11, 4.3, 4.5)

5. Reactivate its academic program review process and conduct a full cycle of program reviews. (CFR 2.4, 4.1)

Appendices

A. Federal Compliance Forms

    1. Credit Hour and Program Length Review

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? X YES
	Where is the policy located? https://www.artcenter.edu/about/get-to-know-artcenter/policies-and-disclosures/enrollment-guidelines.html
	Comments: Policy is accessible, as indicated above.
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? X YES
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES
	Comments: Upon proposing a new course, ArtCenter educational programs work with their Chairs, Divisional Deans and Enrollment Services (Registrar's office) to verify that the credit hour assignment for the course is appropriate. Curricula are reviewed annually by these same parties via the annual curricular update process, which includes review of the credits assigned to courses.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? X YES
	Comments: Schedule contains the required information.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	How many syllabi were reviewed? 4
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Online
	What degree level(s)? Graduate (Master's) and Undergraduate (Bachelor's)
	What discipline(s)? Graphic Design, Interaction, Design, Humanities & Sciences, Integrated Studies
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES
	Comments: The syllabi reviewed demonstrate compliance.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours	How many syllabi were reviewed? 4
	What kinds of courses? Graduate Internship Example, Independent Study Example, Study Abroad Example, Undergraduate Internship Example
	What degree level(s)? Graduate (Master's) and Undergraduate (Bachelor's)

(e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) *Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.*	What discipline(s)? Graduate Transportation Systems and Design, Graphic Design, Study Abroad (is for multiple majors), Undergraduate Transportation Design
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? X YES
	Comments: The syllabi reviewed demonstrate compliance.
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 36 individual degree programs and 1 non-degree program (First Year Immersion), see ArtCenter Curricula 2023 - 2024
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Undergraduate and Graduate programs
	What degree level(s)? Bachelor's and Master's degrees
	What discipline(s)? All programs
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? X YES
	Comments: ArtCenter delineates and describes all credit hour and program lengths for all of its degree programs in detailed, course by course and semester format. The college operates on a semester system with the majority of classes being weighted at 3 credits each. For instance, the BS Spatial Experience Design degree is a typical eight semester sequence, with an average number of classes of six per semester equating to 18 credit hours per semester, or 144 total degree credit hours.

Review Completed By: John Enright

Date: March 13, 2025

2. Marketing and Recruitment Review

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? X YES
	Comments: The information provided demonstrates compliance with federal regulations.
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? X YES
	Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? X YES
	Comments: The typical length of study is specified in the acceptance letter based on the individual major. ArtCenter acknowledges that this is quite variable based on time taken off, internships, or personal choice to take additional semesters. Cost is provided by semester as students can elect to take varying numbers of semesters per year and the tuition typically changes each year. The institution is therefore unable to predict the total cost of the degree, but it provides information on tuition and fees when set as well as estimates on living expenses. The latter are variable as ArtCenter does not currently offer student residences.
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? X YES
	Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? X YES
	Comments: The linked information below demonstrates ArtCenter's compliance with federal regulations. https://www.artcenter.edu/admissions/tuition-and-aid/tuition-and-fees/estimated-cost-of-attendance.html https://www.artcenter.edu/about/get-to-know-artcenter/policies-and-disclosures/graduate-employment.html https://cms.artcenter.edu/assets/21356/src/ArtCenter_Classes-of-2020-2021-Employers-and-Position%20Titles.pdf https://www.artcenter.edu/outcomes/overview.html The Viewbook also includes information about employment after graduation. Information is collected via the college's Graduate Outcomes process, which includes an annual survey of graduates one-year post-graduation and a Knowledge Rate (internet research conducted by the institution to confirm or expand on survey data). The Career and Professional Development department offers many career resources for current students including a list of firms that regularly recruit graduating students.

Review Completed By: Laura Schaefer   Date: March 24, 2025

3. Student Complaints Review

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? X YES
	If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? https://www.artcenter.edu/about/get-to-know-artcenter/policies-and-disclosures/student-grievance-procedures.html See 1_2_a_ArtCenter Catalog and Student Handbook 2023-2024, pp112-114
	Comments: Policy is clear and accessible, as required.
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? X YES If so, please describe briefly:
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES
	Comments: https://www.artcenter.edu/about/get-to-know-artcenter/policies-and-disclosures/student-grievance-procedures.html See 1_2_a_ArtCenter Catalog and Student Handbook 2023-2024, pp 112-114 The information provided demonstrates that the institution is in compliance.
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? X YES If so, where?
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? X YES If so, please describe briefly: The college uses Maxient Software.
	Comments: Maxient software generates reports based on the types of cases recorded. Complaints in which one of the parties is a student and the other party is an ArtCenter employee are tracked in Maxient by the college's Title IX office if they are related to Title IX considerations. If they are not related to Title IX, the records would be kept by Employee Experience and Engagement (EEE), although this situation has not arisen in several years. In the event of such an occurrence, EEE would use a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that is privately accessible to that office.

	The information provided indicates that the institution is in compliance.

Review Completed By: Dianna Graves
Date: March 13, 2025

4. Transfer Credit Policy Review

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? X YES
	Is the policy publicly available? X YES If so, where? https://www.artcenter.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/transfer-students.html https://www.artcenter.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/transfer-credit.html
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? X YES
	Comments: ArtCenter's policies are described below, and are in compliance. **Grade to Transfer** A maximum of 60 units of studio and academic credits may be transferred in total from other accredited institutions. Studio art/design classes are eligible to transfer with a grade of "B" or better from an accredited college if the course content closely resembles the requirements offered at ArtCenter and equivalent skills are demonstrated in the application portfolio. Program-specific Humanities & Science Courses are eligible to transfer with a grade of "B" or better from an accredited college if the course content closely resembles the requirements offered at ArtCenter. Elective H&S Courses may transfer based on the general categories below with a grade of "C" or better from an accredited college. **Accreditation** Transfer credit can be accepted from colleges or universities that are accredited by one of the six U.S. formerly regional associations of schools and colleges, or by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). International programs will be evaluated on an individual basis. **Credit System** ArtCenter uses a semester credit system. Transfer credit hours from institutions using other credit systems (quarter, ECTS, etc.) will be evaluated and recalculated for semester credit equivalency. ArtCenter has relationships with several community colleges. Transfer credit guidelines are available on the college's website. **Graduate Transfer Policy**

	Transfer credit for graduate classes is limited in nature and is offered at the discretion of the individual graduate program. Studio transfer credit is evaluated based on portfolio equivalency to ArtCenter classes and a transcript demonstrating eligible classes. Only graduate-level classes with a "B" grade or better are eligible for consideration. A maximum of 15 graduate credits total may be transferred. Transfer credit for prospective or incoming students is evaluated by the Graduate Admissions Committee, which includes the department chair, faculty and admissions staff. Notification of any pre-matriculation transfer credit will be provided at the time of admission.

Review Completed By: Peter Senkbeil

Date: March 26, 2025

B. Distance Education Review

Institution: ArtCenter College of Design

Type of Visit: Comprehensive Review for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Name of reviewer/s: Dianna Graves, Claremont McKenna College

Date/s of review: March 12, 2025

Section Completed: **SECTION A:** Institutions with Approved Distance Education Programs

1. Programs and courses reviewed
   Courses with hyperlinks will be accessed in Canvas, the college's LMS
   <u>MDes, Brand Design and Strategy</u>
   For curriculum alignment, see <u>Sec_B4_ii_ArtCenter Curriculum Alignments for each program of study</u>

GBDS-501	Branding Studio 1	3
GBDS-510L	Branding Lab 1	0
GBDS-511	Brand Seminar 1	2
GBDS-512	Writing for Brand	3
GBDS-513	Branding and Design History	1
GBDS-521	Design Research and Strategy	3
GBDS-531	Business and Branding	3
<u>GBDS-551</u>	Branding Studio 2	3
GBDS-560L	Branding Lab 2	0
GBDS-561	Brand Seminar 2	3
GBDS-562	Systemic Thinking	3
GBDS-563	Brand/Culture/Anthropology	3
GBDS-571	Branding Futures	3
GBDS-610L	Branding Lab 3	0
GBDS-655	Capstone Project	6
GBDS-700	Completed Thesis	0
	Total Required Units	36

<u>MDes, Interaction Design</u>
For curriculum alignment, see <u>Sec_B4_ii_ArtCenter Curriculum Alignments for each program of study</u>

GIXD-501	Products, Services & Systems	6
GIXD-502	Design Research & Strategy	3
GIXD-503	Creative Prototyping 1	3

GIXD-514	Writing for Interaction	3
GIXD-550	Grad Lab	0
GIXD-601	People, Environments, and Society	3
GIXD-602	Strategies: People, Process, and Leadership	3
GIXD-603	Creative Prototyping 2	3
GIXD-610	IxD Topic Studio	3
GIXD-614	IxD History & Futures	3
GIXD-650	Capstone	6
GIXD-700	Completed Thesis	0
	Total Required Units	36

2. Background Information (number of programs offered by distance education; degree levels; FTE enrollment in distance education courses/programs; history of offering distance education; percentage growth in distance education offerings and enrollment; platform, formats, and/or delivery method)

- o Number of programs offered by distance education: 2
- o Degree levels: Master's level (Master of Design)
- o FTE enrollment in distance education programs/courses: fall 2023 FTE (23.5), fall 2022 FTE (17.0)
- o ArtCenter did not offer distance education programs before fall 2022 (like most institutions, and with WSCUC's authorization, we pivoted to Remote Instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency).
- o The overall number of programs and percentage of classes offered via distance education at ArtCenter remains small. The two MDes programs, launched in fall 2022 after WSCUC Substantive Change approval, were the inaugural distance education programs for the college. In fall 2023, distance education programs represented 8.7% of the college's overall graduate enrollment and 1% of overall enrollment based on FTE. As of spring 2024, standalone online classes are rare – composing approximately 4% of total section offerings—the other 96% of class sections are delivered via traditional brick-and-mortar means.
- o Enrollment growth for each program as of this report:
  - § MDes, Brand Design and Strategy: fall 2022 enrollment (10 students / fall 2023 enrollment (16 students) = a 60% increase
  - § MDes, Interaction Design: fall 2022 enrollment (7 students) / fall 2023 enrollment (8 students) = a 14% increase.
- o Platform formats: Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) and Miro licensed enterprise online whiteboard tool.
- o Delivery method: Synchronous delivery.

3. **Observations and Findings**

Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of distance learning relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How are distance education offerings planned, funded, and operationalized?

Institution's Response:

While most of our programs and classes continued to be delivered in brick-and-mortar fashion, the college recognized there could be specific instances where leveraging distance education as a modality could be appropriate. The Master of Design (MDes) programs are graduate-level offerings at ArtCenter that enable us to expand upon our institutional mission ("Learn to Create. Influence Change.") in new ways. They allow us to engage with working professionals looking to change career trajectories within their respective fields and thereby expand the impact of their creative work beyond its current scope. They are able to remain in their local environment and engage as a working professional while completing their education. The MDes degrees are designed to build upon the early-to-mid career experience of individuals in related fields, enriching the skill sets and voices of developing creatives to position them for potential advancement into more hands-on and higher-level roles in the design industries. In this regard, we equip these students to create at a very high level, with the greatest possible impact on their professional teams and the world at large through the product of their design knowledge and practice. Moreover, the online delivery format of the programs allows us to overcome geographic and time-based limitations that have previously precluded us from fulfilling the needs of working students pursuing degrees at ArtCenter without diminishing the rigor and intensity of an ArtCenter education.

Discussions regarding the development of focused, professional online degree programs have been embedded in our strategic planning process for years. For example, as far back as the college's 2012 strategic plan, the college specifically identified the need for a low-residency master's degree, and the 2016 strategic plan indicated numerous online initiatives such as, "new models of matriculation," and "more efficient and affordable curricular structures." Generating proposals for the MDes programs included extensive participation from faculty at large, the Faculty Council, the Faculty Policy Committee, and all levels of the administration. The institution also considered how to gradually building capacity towards this goal through the careful evaluation of its current onsite programs in Graphic Design and Interaction Design. The need for online programming was accelerated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which also collectively prompted the college's educational and institutional leadership to recognize capacity, personnel, and resources and realize to the ability to implement these online graduate programs.

ArtCenter's 2017-21 strategic plan — Create Change 2.0 — and its 2022 – 2024 Strategic Agenda outline the commitment to diverse pathways, professional preparation for creative leadership, and the drive for ongoing innovative pedagogy. This mission informed the Graphic Design and the Interaction Design department's specific initiatives, commitments and strategies that underpin the creation of a Master of Design (MDes) in two distinct fields, Interaction Design and Brand Design and Strategy.

- The MDes programs align with the strategic plan through curricular innovation and advancement in the field of design and technology. These programs support the broader postsecondary landscape regarding international students, graduate and working students, in the areas of research, and emergent practices. The MDes capstone project and sponsored studios support ArtCenter's deep historical engagement with industry.
- The college has eight existing successful graduate level MFA and MS programs which require a 2-3 year on-campus commitment. Expanding graduate programming online, and crafting a 1-year interdisciplinary program, has provided us access to a broader, more diverse student population. The online MDes has amplified the institutional imperative of increased diverse recruitment and retention of students and faculty who are outside of the Pasadena/Los Angeles area.
- The creation of the MDes aligns with the robust development of leadership, pedagogy, and infrastructure to support online creative and professional development, including the opening of The Heavin studio, and the accelerated and sustained 2020 pivot to online education due to COVID-19. The college's commitment to building a series of graduate offerings, expanding The Graduate Center for

Critical Practice, and exploring new pathways for students through our ArtCenter Extension programs such as certificates and badges. The college also identified the need to move to a more robust Learning Management System, due in part to what was learned from the pandemic, from Moodle to Canvas in 2022 to support capacity for enhanced online, digital, and media-based content, and facilitate asynchronous interaction, assignment submission, and feedback and evaluation, between faculty members and students. Additional areas for teaching and learning resources were reviewed and enhanced for online program support. Adjustments were made to faculty orientation and faculty development to support online course development and delivery and additional online resources were acquired by the library for these programs.

The college incorporated the delivery of distance education into its current Strategic Agenda approved by the Board of Trustees and adopted institutionally in January 2022. The work to develop an integrated and holistic approach between multiple educational offerings that focuses on lifelong learners is of great importance to the college. Today's students—and tomorrow's—require flexible education models that can be shaped around busy schedules and geographic boundaries, allow for different levels of learning and skill-building, and result in qualifications that align with their creative and career objectives. The studio-based curriculum for a remote teaching and learning environment, developed in response to the pandemic, increased the speed and effectiveness of faculty/student communication and interaction that would have previously been unimaginable. The agenda focused on a near-term, tactical approach to developing an omnichannel portfolio over two years (2022 – 2024). The College used the strength of its degree programs as a basis to explore enhancements to non-degree programs and evaluate online offerings and new learning opportunities and the ways in which completion is recognized. Plans to add educational intensives, certificates, and badges to ArtCenter's educational portfolio are still in progress. An Omnichannel Task Force composed of college leaders and industry experts convened in 2022 to develop and evaluate a long-term strategy and investigate expansion into certificate programs and new educational models beyond fall 2023.

Both MDes programs are administered under the existing administrative infrastructure, which limited start-up costs involving licensing, hardware, software, and training as these elements are already in place; however, since these are online programs, the College has invested in additional IT/Tech support and administrative support. The College plans for and achieves institutional operation surpluses on an annual basis and has adequate tuition revenue along with the incremental allocation of institutional costs for additional IT/Tech Support controlled to meet the demand of enrollment proportionately. Graduate tuition for the Fall 2024 to Summer 2025 terms is currently $28,052 per term plus a $542 per term universal access fee. The MDes programs consist of two full-time and one part-time (6 unit) term, the total program cost is approximately $70,130. Supplies and books cost up to $2,000 per term as well. These costs would be subject to any annual tuition increases that might be implemented in the future. The college also applies a 21% discount rate to our graduate programs, which is not included in the estimated program cost. A minimum enrollment of approximately 10-12 students annually is necessary to balance the budget; however, IT/Tech Support will scale incrementally in lockstep with enrollment, which will allow us to control costs accordingly if enrollment does not reach this level. Should enrollment ever meet or exceed the target of 20 new students annually, the allocated funds would be used as indicated; however, should enrollment come in short of the target, the investment would be proportionately controlled—any deficits incurred beyond this strategy are addressed through the college's reserves.

Reviewer's Comment: The history of these programs is described, including how they align with the mission of the college and work within existing operations and the administrative structure. The enrollment estimates support the programs' financial model.

Connection to the Institution. How are distance education students integrated into the life and culture of the institution?

Institution's Response: Distance education students are connected to ArtCenter's campus culture and college resources through remote access to peer support (coaching and Writing Center) and the college's research and instruction and reference librarians. Online students work with the same shared platforms as on-ground students, using the same instance of the LMS (Canvas) with the same access to the internal portal for campus communications, notifications, and events (Inside). All online students can participate in the "Grad Show" via a shared platform (Grad Show Preview website) and have similar access to remote recruiters, etc. All online students can participate in remote or in-person campus life activities as administered through the Center for Student Experience.

Reviewer's Comment: Appropriate efforts have been made to integrate distance education students into the life and culture of ACCD. Many of the resources are already available online as ACCD is not a residential campus.

Quality of the DE Infrastructure. Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the institution conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?

Institution's Response:
Our pedagogical strategies, curriculum design, and methodologies are based on a long history of conservatory-like practice in art and design education. This kind of teaching and learning is very personal, hands-on, and iterative. It incorporates a combination of direct instruction, discussion, and scaffolded demonstration in project-oriented, studio-based courses. All courses include regular instances of faculty-initiated interactions with students, as well as student/student interaction, and academic engagement through deliverables such as projects and assignments. Courses also include exhibition opportunities, student presentations, and regular faculty and colleague critiques. To deliver a signature pedagogy in an online teaching and learning environment, the college analyzed the curriculum design and methodologies used in a traditional classroom and determined the appropriate modalities and technologies needed to create a substantial ArtCenter learning experience. Course syllabi for the MDes programs are frequently reviewed to ensure the learning design is appropriate for synchronous and asynchronous teaching methodologies. Online learning best practices are referenced in the review, including the Online Learning Consortium's Quality Scorecard Suite.

For our synchronous teaching sessions, faculty and staff work together to create active learning environments for our online students. Faculty and students engage in virtual environments where the faculty has curated the entire course, including the teaching approach. Students have access to primary and secondary resources, including library materials, through the LMS, and faculty work with the learning design staff in Digital Teaching & Learning (DTL) to proactively maintain a community of learners by engaging them in substantive conversations, sharing a variety of resources to immerse learners in the content, and facilitating both large discussions and working sessions as well as personal meetings and small group break-out rooms. Faculty use multiple tools for students to share work, video, audio, text, image displays, and live presentations including Miro. Students and faculty are also provided with virtual storage for each course as well as a final, virtual online gallery for their capstone projects. All of the content developed for advancing the learning in the synchronous course sessions, along with additional supplemental content, has been built within the course's LMS learning modules. Faculty contribute to the live class and LMS course design. Along with the asynchronous tools, faculty have been taught to record key learning content for asynchronous use as well as live course sessions and to make all content available on the LMS via an embedded media management system for students to view asynchronously as needed throughout the course. Faculty are also provided with access to a 'studio in a box' kit for use during the term to create high-quality synchronous or asynchronous demonstrations with multiple, simultaneous angles for viewing. These are distributed and supported by the Heavin Media Production Studio. Additional tools for synchronous distance learning on Zoom allow for student and instructor screen share, the use of breakout rooms to accommodate small group or team-based work, and one-to-one support.

Combined, this approach supports multi-modal delivery of content, access to resources, academic engagement, and formative and summative feedback. Canvas is used by institutions worldwide to provide the highest-level facilitation of instruction and support for appropriate faculty/student interaction. To help prepare faculty to teach in the online environment using the LMS, the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning conducts a New Faculty Orientation where faculty are provided with guidance on course planning and online pedagogy. This occurs in conjunction with a Digital Teaching & Learning Orientation, which includes individual sessions with each new faculty member. Current or continuing program faculty have access to ongoing coaching and resources for pedagogy and online course design. The college provides students with a combination of asynchronous messaging, breakout platforms, and synchronous, remote events through the Graduate Center for Critical Practice, and online programming via a 0-unit lab course (Branding Lab for Brand Design and Strategy and Grad Lab for Interaction Design students) to build a community of practice.

ArtCenter College of Design has the following technologies in place across the college that are available to the faculty in the MDes program. Each of these identified technologies also has dedicated training staff and tech support for the faculty and students.

1. The college's LMS, Canvas, has a dedicated Manager who also trains the faculty on general site use and assists with key areas of focus, including setting up grading rubrics, grading, adding a syllabus, adding course content, using Zoom through the platform and other traditional online course shell needs. There are online PDF and video-based resources that can be accessed via self-service by faculty, and there is regular outreach at the start of each term to faculty teaching in online programs/online courses.
2. Zoom is the online synchronous platform that the College uses to deliver online instruction. It is integrated into our instance of Canvas and has dedicated staff that train faculty and provide tech support for the tool. Zoom is also integrated into our intranet (Inside) through single sign-on, so faculty have access outside of their Canvas course shell. Strict Zoom safety requirements are in place to prevent unauthorized people from entering the learning space, and policies and guidelines about Zoom recordings have been developed by the college.
3. The Studio in a Box is a self-contained setup that is sent to a faculty member's home so they can record or livestream a class session. The setup includes three GoPro cameras, a small switcher, a fully portable lighting kit, a Lavalier microphone, all cords, directions, and support provided by a dedicated group of staff. Currently, faculty use Studio in a Box for live teaching through Zoom and as a stand-alone way to record direct instruction course content meant to be played by students as asynchronous learning content designed to be studied outside of the live class environment.
4. The YuJa video platform is also integrated into Canvas and the college's intranet, Inside ArtCenter. YuJa provides a location for faculty and students to add Zoom, Studio in a Box, or other recordings and share them with faculty and other students. The YuJa platform provides closed captioning for recordings. This video platform also provides tools for students to write comments on the videos for their faculty and classmates, and download key frames that a student selects to create a personalized study document. There is a dedicated team that supports faculty using the Studio in a Box set-up on campus (following the City of Pasadena and LA County COVID-19 guidelines), as well as synchronous coaching when a faculty member is using the set-up within their home.
5. Miro is a new tool for the college that is currently in use by the MDes programs. It is a digital collaboration platform designed to facilitate remote and distributed communication for project management. It can act as a collaborative whiteboard space for classroom critique, discussion, or note-taking purposes, as well as other internal activities (curriculum planning, communication with faculty, etc.)

Two teams provide technology support for the tools mentioned above.

1. Through the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, the Digital Teaching & Learning team offers support for Canvas LMS and other digital tools like Miro. The Heavin Studio provides support for the Studio in a Box and YuJa.

2. The College's IT Help Desk offers information on the College portal, Inside ArtCenter, that includes FAQs, training documentation, helpful tips, and video tutorials. Requests for assistance are handled by phone, email, remote access, and virtual meetings. The Help Desk provides first-level technical support to all constituents including staff, faculty, and students. The Help Desk is staffed to respond to technical inquiries during ArtCenter's business hours, with an extended team of lab assistants in the Computer Labs, providing classroom technology support outside of business hours, which operates 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week.

If there are outages with any of the technologies mentioned above, the following plans will be implemented:

1. Any outage of the LMS will be communicated via email along with the estimated time that it will be back online.
2. In the event of a failure with email or the portal, the LMS, becomes the platform for communication about academic engagement and faculty/student interactions and is also where global and local (college and department) announcements will be made.
3. If a Zoom session drops during a class and it is not able to be recovered within a 10-minute window, the faculty member will record him/herself teaching the rest of the lesson and will post it on the LMS. The faculty member will also remind students about his/her office hours and may also plan to schedule an additional session with the class.

There is no need to notify students about Studio in a Box challenges separately from Zoom (faculty often use the Studio in a Box setup to teach through Zoom).

Reviewer's Comments: Appropriate investments in IT infrastructure have been made, including a transition to Canvas LMS. Many components are synchronous with opportunities for rich student to student and student to professor interactions. Tech platforms such as Heavin Media Production Studio facilitate demonstrations that can be accessed in synchronous or asynchronous environments. I appreciate the plans for unanticipated tech or power failures. Based on observations made during the visit, faculty receive adequate training to maximize the use of tech tools such as Canvas, Studio in a Box, and Heavin Media Production Studio.

Student Support Services: What is the institution's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services, academic support and other services appropriate to distance modality? What do data show about the effectiveness of the services?

Institution's Response:
The Center for the Student Experience (CSE) coordinates the student affairs co-curriculum of the College and includes programming, activities, and events that cover student engagement, student leadership, student government, and student clubs. The CSE also provides free mental health counseling for students (and makes referrals as needed), promotes student health and wellbeing, coordinates the college's student health insurance program, advises all international students, coordinates academic accommodations for students with disabilities, implements the student code of conduct, and investigates grievances and complaints related to the student experience and including any student conduct that violates our policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. The office has a staff of thirteen that includes an Associate Dean of Students and Director of the CSE; a Director of Campus Life and Campus Life Coordinator; a Director of Mental Health Services and Campus Counseling plus three licensed mental health counselors; a Director for International Student Services, and two international student advisors; an Associate Director for Student Conduct; in addition to the Vice President Student Affairs/Dean of Students. Depending on the nature of the student's question or inquiry, staff are available to help and provide general information to students during normal business hours, which are generally from 8:30am - 4:30pm PST Monday – Friday. Open advising hours are also available to students on a limited basis, and individual programs or events are sometimes hosted beyond the usual business hours, to better accommodate

student schedules. Students may call during scheduled office hours, email their questions, or request an appointment via Zoom. Students may also reach staff by leaving a voice mail message and calls will be returned as soon as possible.

Students in the MDes programs have the same financial aid resources available as the students in the on-ground programs, including but not limited to, individual counseling with an assigned financial aid counselor, the ability to apply for state and federal aid through the FAFSA, and consideration for institutional and donor scholarship funds. The Financial Aid office is open from 8:30am - 4:30pm PST Monday – Thursday, and 10:30am - 4:30pm PST on Fridays. The office has a staff of eight who are available to assist all students during normal business hours. If the student's assigned counselor is not available another staff member will assist the student. Students may call during scheduled office hours to discuss their financial aid, email their questions, or request an appointment via Zoom. Students may also reach staff by leaving a voice mail message and calls will be returned as soon as possible

Students are provided with access to Career & Professional Development's virtual office, ArtCenter Connect, at any time. ArtCenter Connect offers a wide array of professional development resources for designers and artists, including an online job and internship board. The Career and Professional Development office offers one-on-one career advising with two dedicated Career Advisors when students request an appointment through the digital office, ArtCenter Connect. The Career and Professional Development team consists of five full-time staff members.

Students have access to the yearly CPD Mentorship Program as well as virtual workshops covering topics that include (but are not limited to) resume and cover letter creation, internship searching, job preparation, networking and outreach, freelancing, and funding an artistic practice. The team also provides access to these resources through classroom visits. Students can also participate in Grad Show Preview recruiting events hosted by the department, both virtually on Zoom and in person at the Pasadena Convention Center.

Career and Professional Development is open 8:30 am-12:00 pm and 1:00-4:30 pm PST, Monday – Friday. The office is available during business hours in person on the Hillside Campus, as well as via email and phone. Career advising is available via Zoom and in person.

In addition to Career and Professional Development, students have access to Entrepreneurship and Professional Practice's (EPP) online resources and programs. These workshops, lectures, symposia, and industry immersions equip artists and designers for a wide range of leadership paths and professional outcomes spanning business, innovation, impact and the creative economy. Students are supported with direct connections to an external network enabling engagement and collaborations with industry partners, doctors, scientists, engineers, researchers, and policy-makers. EPP provides startup support for student capstone projects preparing graduates as they launch products, services, studios, businesses, consultancies, and nonprofits to realize their professional and creative goals. This includes prototyping strategy as well as legal, marketing, and manufacturing expertise with connections to grants-funding as well as angel, venture, and institutional investment. The EPP team consists of two full-time staff as well as entrepreneurship and business faculty across academic departments. EPP is open from 9:00am-12:00pm and 1:00-5:00pm PST, Monday – Friday. The office is available during business hours via email and phone as well as for appointments via Zoom. Much of EPP's content is recorded and archived available for access whenever needed.

The ArtCenter College of Design Library offers a comprehensive collection of resources on art and design. This includes over 380,000 eBooks, more than 32,500 journal titles, over 84,000 digital media including digital images and streaming video, and 45 subscription databases, as well as links to open access resources; online resources for digital libraries and archives, and research guides for book collections and resources related to specific subject(s) of interest. Access to specific resources such as O'Reilly Learning, LinkedIn Learning, ProQuest eBook Central databases are also available. The Interaction Design and Graduate Media Design Practices Online Maker hub with a technology library is also available to all MDes Interaction Design students.

The programs work with the library at multiple levels: program, faculty, course, assignment, and individual students. There is a dedicated Research and Instruction Librarian for Interaction Design and Graduate Media

Design Practices and one for Graphic Design who extend their expertise and services to the MDes programs. Library staff and support resources include:

- Online Library Chat M-Th 10:00 am-9:00 pm PST, F-Sat 10:00 am-5:00 pm PST
- Dedicated support and consulting to students and faculty on specific MDes research and archiving come from:
  - o College Librarian and Managing Director
  - o Director, Archives and Special Collections
  - o Program specific Research and Instruction Librarians

Library virtual workshops are available to MDes students including:

- Discovering the Library
- Business and Market Research
- Innovation and Inspiration at the Library: Trends, Materials and Colors
- Exploring the Virtual Archives

In addition, the Research and Instruction Librarians give specific information via the Library Video Tutorials:

- How to sign into resources off-campus, request a purchase for new online books and films, and problem-solve access issues
- Working with the Lead Archivist to access Archives & Special Collections, highlighting collections students can use for research, including photographs, graduate theses, rare books, documents, and historical video

As faculty develop coursework, they engage with the Library in multiple ways:

- working with the dedicated Research and Instruction Librarian to develop course-specific materials;
- receiving assistance with research assignment development, research readiness via online library instruction as well as locating content such as articles, books, book chapters, eBooks and films that support course needs;
- working to create digital course reserves;
- working to create library research guides and engage in inter-departmental outreach efforts.
- acquisition of materials as needed by courses;
- within the weekly assignments in the online syllabi, students are provided with numerous readings, references, and sources found online in the library.

Additionally, the dedicated Research and Instruction Librarians and the college's Writing Center are available to support individual student research and Capstone development.

The Associate Chair serves as the primary academic advisor for the MDes students. The Associate Chair is available to students by appointment and during GradLab hours, special department hours, etc. Students participate in an advising session the week before registration for the subsequent semester, and regular check-ins occur while the college is in session and by appointment.

MDes students also have access to peer coaches for curricular support. The Peer Coaching program is managed in conjunction with the Writing Center and under the same supervision.

Reviewer's Comments: Student Support Services appear adequate and include a range of services. Students report that they are aware of the various student support services available to them and are able to access those services as needed.

Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? Do they teach only online courses? In what ways does the institution ensure that distance learning faculty are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution? How are faculty involved in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? How are faculty trained and supported to teach in this modality?

Institution's Response:

Each program has one to two full-time faculty and six to seven adjunct faculty teaching during the academic year. Some of these faculty already are full- or part-time at ArtCenter in other departments and teach part-time for the MDes. ArtCenter intentionally relies on part-time faculty who are active in industry and their own creative practices; they bring extremely current expertise into the classroom. At the same time, the full-time faculty add continuity and longitudinal curricular development, in addition to participating in student advising and other organizational service to the College.

In parallel to the MDes program faculty, the department chair, associate chair, and senior coordinator for the department provide the administrative and technical infrastructure to allow faculty to focus on the student learning experience: PLOs, syllabus development, mentorship, and creative development.

To build consistency across faculty and other contributors, the program:

- Holds regular workshops on syllabus design and development and PLO/CLO alignment sessions where interdepartmental work to ensure the alignment of all levels of programming with the Program Learning Outcomes.
- Conducts regular faculty meetings to develop and revise curriculum, evaluate assessment mechanisms, and engage in pedagogy discussions to drive ownership and faculty agency.
- Supports the co-teaching model and guest critique of course sections, allowing faculty to serve as assessors in student milestone reviews to build a shared framework of assessment and creative collaboration.

ArtCenter has a regular faculty performance review process and cycle that includes the following criteria:

- Teaching effectiveness and professionalism
- Professional growth, activities, and accomplishments outside of the College
- Service to the College (Full-time faculty only)
- Student evaluations

Faculty members will go through the regular review cycle, have access to the same resources, and participate in the same way. These faculty are included in our outreach for events, programs, and resources (often held online and/or recorded by CITL for accessibility). Coaching is similarly made available, and Faculty Orientation activities are scheduled with online and in-person faculty members to create community, with touchpoints across the first term of teaching.

Faculty Development resources include coaching for course development and pedagogy, and in-class teaching observation as part of the faculty performance review process, by faculty request. Significant self-service PDF and video-based resources for pedagogy and instruction and equitable teaching are also available through the college's intranet. All full-time and part-time faculty participate in an overarching New Faculty Orientation one-on-one meeting and are also invited to attend a Digital Teaching & Learning New Faculty Orientation. They also receive outreach at the start of every term with online resources and coaching services. There are ongoing faculty development workshops and best-practices series offered throughout the term open to all faculty. Workshops are recorded and available for asynchronous access on the Faculty Development resource page.

The New Faculty Orientation process occurs concurrently with the Human Resources onboarding process. New faculty members are invited via email with a PDF welcome letter from the Associate Provost, Teaching & Learning and Dean of Faculty to schedule their (required) 1:1 New Faculty Orientation. The Digital Teaching & Learning team conducts outreach once the faculty member receives access to Inside ArtCenter and their Canvas course site. The email includes links to a faculty development webpage with resources for course planning, syllabus templates and samples, a section to help them prep for Day 1, and other areas of support.

- The Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning contacts new faculty individually via email with a link to orientation and course prep materials via early access to the Faculty Development Inside ArtCenter webpage (the link allows for early access to the page as their credentials are in process of being issued). The email also asks the new faculty to schedule their 1:1 Orientation meeting.
- The 1:1 (individual, synchronous) New Faculty Orientation meeting with the Director, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning encompasses a review of syllabus and policies, classroom expectations, resources/support, curriculum, best practices and pedagogy, grading, course evaluations, Title IX and mandatory reporting, etc.
- Following the 1:1 Orientation, new faculty members are connected via email with the chair, associate chair, or administrator in their department for syllabus review and department-specific information.
- Next, new faculty members are invited to the Digital Teaching & Learning New Faculty Orientation (group meeting that is synchronous, recorded, and available on the Faculty Development Inside ArtCenter webpage), and given a link to the Digital Teaching & Learning site for introduction to the LMS, Internal video recording tool (YuJa), guide for teaching with Zoom, etc. Digital Teaching & Learning New Faculty Orientation meetings are held for all new faculty (online, synchronous, recorded) 2-3 weeks before the start of the new semester.
- During this time period, the faculty member receives an email from the Help Desk with their ArtCenter email address and User ID and temporary password for Inside ArtCenter, followed by an email to their ArtCenter email account with their Zoom account activation link – Digital Teaching & Learning is CC'd on this email and follows-up with outreach to the new faculty member to help access, set-up, and populate their Canvas course site.
- Faculty Development and Digital Teaching & Learning offer continued 1:1 Coaching for specific course design, instructional design support, and software or platform (LMS) support.

Off-campus and international faculty also receive an orientation to the following:

- The department and program to give context for the MDes, the opportunity to connect and collaborate with their teaching community and other graduate (online and face-to-face) faculty.
- In-person or online orientation to the history, development, and faculty/staff for the program with the Chair and senior faculty who organize in-person workshops.
- Teaching at ArtCenter and online: the Associate Provost, Teaching & Learning and Dean of Faculty and the Director, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning provide mentorship, materials, resources and the following topics:
  - Coaching and Classroom Observations
  - New Faculty Orientation (Undergraduate and Graduate)
  - Checklist for Day One
  - Syllabus and Weekly Plan
  - Developing Rubrics
  - FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
  - Liaison Librarian Program
  - Faculty Performance Review
  - Supporting English Language Learners
  - Students Receiving Accommodations
  - CARE at ArtCenter (Communicate Assess Refer Evaluate)
  - Course Evaluations
  - Academic and Creative Integrity
  - Faculty Professional Development
  - Grants for Faculty Members (TAA, FPG, HMTC)
  - Week 1, 3, 7 Reminders

- ○ Re-Tooling Your Classroom
- ● Teaching online: The Digital Teaching & Learning (DTL) team supports faculty training on the use of online tools available and the development of online-specific pedagogies

While the basic part-time faculty contract does not include duties beyond those related to instruction, responsibilities also may involve administrative, service, and instructional duties, either inside or outside of the faculty's department, and which may include occasional substitute teaching, service on college-wide committees such as Faculty Council, faculty and student mentoring and advising beyond course-related office hours, curricular planning, scholarship and portfolio student reviews, and outcome assessments with corresponding data collection. ArtCenter compensates part-time faculty with a stipend or equivalent course release for the performance of these duties.

Faculty in the MDes programs participate in norming sessions before the Capstone review and other assessment activities through a structured workshop delivered in conjunction with the Associate Provost, Teaching & Learning and Dean of Faculty. Additionally, the department holds an orientation where the diverse group of faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisors share their pedagogical philosophy, experience, and syllabus plans. The Associate Chair works with the program's Faculty Assessment Liaison for the Assessment Liaison Cohort (the group of faculty that partners with the Center for Educational Effectiveness and the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning on assessment-related activities and initiatives). The Associate Chair and Liaison ensure that the program's assessment plan and activities are being carried out and that data is delivered to the Office of Institutional Research and the Center for Educational Effectiveness for analysis and the annual reflection on assessment is completed as part of the college's requirements for WSCUC.

Reviewer's Comments: The programs are staffed appropriately, with full time and adjunct instructors. Orientation programs and the ongoing faculty development seem adequate, appropriate, and intentional. Part-time faculty can participate in the broader life and certain aspects of the governance of the college. They are compensated additionally for those efforts. The report mentions that significant self-service PDF and video-based resources for pedagogy and instruction and equitable teaching are also available through the college's intranet.

Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the distance education programs and courses? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to on-ground offerings? (Submit credit hour report.)

Institution's Response:
During the proposal phase, collaborative envisioning conversations about the MDes degrees happened with program faculty, administrators, and institutional leadership. Faculty, chair, and administration in both departments worked to design a draft curriculum for the MDes programs. Syllabi were crafted and Course Learning Outcomes were created with the competitive landscape and with existing offerings in mind; a strategy for hiring, onboarding and supporting online faculty was also developed, along with plans to work directly with the leadership of teaching & learning, academic affairs, student affairs and other relevant areas to review curriculum and specific online syllabi needs and build LMS ready materials. Department faculty, the chair, and key administrators held additional review and due diligence/capacity discussions starting in mid-2020; these discussions continued regularly throughout the proposal development process. In accordance with the college's program development process, in Fall 2020, the program proposals underwent review by the program faculty, the chair and the provost, including contextualization of its place in the graduate education division ecosystem of the college and how it aligns with the strategic plan. In early 2021, the proposals went through the next stages of internal vetting, undergoing review by additional constituents, including educational leadership (Chairs Council), the college's Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, and the Executive Cabinet. Feedback from these groups was incorporated into planning and the proposals, which returned to the Provost/Academic Affairs and the

President for final review and approval, before being submitted to the Board of Trustees for the final step in the College's internal approval process in February 2021 prior to submission to WSCUC for Substantive Change review.

The MDes programs were designed by faculty who develop courses, syllabi, and assignments in co-teaching teams to ensure cross-class alignment, scaffolded skill development, and appropriate Course Learning Outcomes. This is done following the same timeline each semester:

- Week 1 - 3: Newly proposed new classes or revisions of existing courses are discussed with faculty; syllabus and CLOs are drafted and sent to the Chair for review
- Week 4 - 8: the syllabus is refined by faculty and re-sent to the Chair for comment and further review
- Week 9: the syllabus is finalized and a request is sent to the Registrar's office to assign a subject code and course number, the course description is sent to attach to the course in the College's student information system, Colleague

Syllabi are created by faculty based on pre-set Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) that coordinate with the PLOs. The program's curriculum committee consists of the department chair, associate chair, the faculty assessment liaison, and faculty review syllabi submitted prior to the implementation of course delivery. Syllabi are typically approved or the committee suggests modifications. Syllabi are reviewed again by the committee at the end of the semester so that faculty have enough time to make any necessary adjustments before the start of the following semester. The MDes programs also use Miro to ensure all faculty are aware of each other's studio content and to share information and assets related to curriculum and syllabi at the start of each term. This is a direct approach to making faculty aware of the student trajectory and concurrent learning.

Midterm and finals are attended and assessed by other faculty and the chairs. Students complete online course evaluations each semester, which are used by the faculty and program administrators to make curricular changes at the program and course level and to inform planning for additional programming and address student needs. An annual review of the program is conducted by faculty, external advisors, and the Dean. Ongoing collaboration with the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning and Digital Teaching & Learning (DTL) ensures that pedagogy is optimized for online learning modality.

The classes are taught by the same faculty that teach in and/or develop the curriculum for the degree program. The content taught and the learning outcomes are comparable to what we would expect to see in our degree program courses.

Reviewer's Comments: ACCD has only recently added distance education in a formal sense. The report details how the programs were developed, and demonstrate a commitment to seeking input from a range of stakeholders. The distance ed programs were approved by WSCUC. Each new course is vetted on an established timeline through a clear process. Syllabi are aligned with course and program learning outcomes.

Faculty Initiated Regular and Substantive Interaction*.* How does the institution ensure compliance with the federal expectation for "faculty-initiated, regular and substantive interaction"? How is compliance monitored? What activities count as student/instructor substantive interaction"?

Institution's Response: Classes for the MDes programs are offered online and with instruction delivered in a live, synchronous format at regularly scheduled times each week. Each student is assigned an enterprise Zoom license for their personal use. They are able to meet with classmates to work on projects and study within the online environment, and with faculty throughout the program by scheduling meetings during office hours. Students also have opportunities to email, web conference, text, and make videos to engage with each other, faculty, and department representatives. Instructors provide feedback to students each week and actively engage in group discussions in Zoom breakout rooms. In-class observations are conducted by the chair and associate chair and other collaborators to evaluate the person-to-person dynamic. There is also a regular review of the number, timeliness, and completeness of student assignments submitted via Canvas, and a review of the usage rate of chat,

forms, and collaboration and related industry tools (e.g. Canvas, Miro, etc.) used by faculty and students. Interspersed throughout the term are individual and group projects, organized by the faculty member and facilitated by the students. Additionally, the college monitors student's academic engagement and success, ensuring that faculty are responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with students as needed, and on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

Reviewer's Comments: The synchronous nature of most class meetings allows for regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students as well as among students.

Academic Engagement. How does the institution ensure compliance with the federal expectation for "Academic Engagement"? How is compliance monitored? What activities contribute to academic engagement?

Institution's Response:
Canvas course sites are available to students five (5) days before the beginning of the course so they have time to review the syllabus, secure any required materials, and prepare any pre-first class work. All of the course content for the MDes program is housed within a Canvas course shell. Zoom is integrated into Canvas and Zoom and YuJa are integrated into Inside ArtCenter. All students and faculty can access all three tools through their assigned ArtCenter email and by logging into the intranet (Inside) where all three tools can be accessed independently.

Each course has an asynchronous Canvas course shell that includes Zoom links for the live course periods. Instruction is synchronous and the course shell is used to house the syllabus, additional teaching materials, course packet content, links to the live Zoom sessions, and links to the recordings housed in Zoom and YuJa.

All faculty who are teaching complete a specially planned series of training sessions to familiarize them with all of the identified tools. The training sessions take place during the onboarding period so that faculty have the opportunity to learn about each tool in hands-on training sessions, work with the training team to build out their course shells and learning content, practice their teaching through the Studio in a Box environment and learn how to implement all of the learning features within the YuJa media environment. All faculty are required to use Canvas and Zoom; the other two tools are not mandatory.

The Digital Teaching & Learning team works with the departments to develop a schedule for providing training to both faculty and students. Once a student is selected to be a member of a cohort, they receive a schedule that includes technology review and training, which includes directions for accessing and using the available learning technologies as well as how to get help with each tool. Students receive access to the orientation platform from the Center for the Student Experience in advance of the term to access resources and engage with orientation leaders and other students.

Reviewer's Comments: The mandatory use of Canvas LMS and Zoom allows straightforward monitoring of students' engagement. Students and faculty receive training from the Digital Teaching & Learning team.

State Licensure Requirements. Describe, as appropriate, the institution's process for disclosing to students how state licensure requirements are met by distance education programs, whether licensure requirements are not met by programs, or whether the institution has not determined where licensure requirements are met by the programs.

Institution's Response: The MDes programs do not result in licensure.

Reviewer's Comments: NA

Student Identification Verification and Privacy. What is the institution's process for student verification, e.g., a secure login and pass code; proctored examinations; other technologies or practices that are effective in verifying

student identification? What precautions are taken by the institution to protect technology from cyber security intrusions on its or outsourced systems? Are additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity disclosed at the time of registration or enrollment?

Institution's Response:
ArtCenter College of Design verifies the identities of accepted and enrolled online students using the following methods:

1. All ArtCenter students are issued a student ID with a student's image and a unique identification number. This student ID is retained by students throughout their matriculation period and is used in key identification processes, such as online proctoring.
2. ArtCenter IT provides each student with a unique email, username, and password with two-factor authentication using Global Protect VPN and Duo (mobile app). Students use their secure username and password to access the College's portal, Library, LMS, and integrated learning tools, including Zoom, YuJa, Teams, and other support resources. Student passwords are encrypted so they can safely access the portal, Library, LMS, or other integrated tools via Single Sign-On (SSO).
3. The faculty dashboard for the course in the portal contains a roster used for attendance with the student's image from their student ID, the student's legal name, and student identification number.
4. All students participating in an approved online program must follow the processes developed directing acceptable online learning experiences in both synchronous and asynchronous ArtCenter environments. These processes, are shared with the students and are reviewed and updated regularly.
5. Digital Teaching & Learning is the department managing the LMS educational experience, delivering all the online courses, and implementing the online learning and distance education standards.
6. ArtCenter uses the YuJa Video Platform to capture the image of the enrolled MDes students for identification confirmation. The YuJa Platform contains a feature that supports student authentication. It captures the image of a student and prompts the students to show their ID before they begin their first class session. This is stored for future reference to ensure that the students participating in the course are the students accepted to the program. This is used at the initial enrollment level for authentication at the point of admittance.

Student enrollment in each course section is managed by Enrollment Services; students gain access to their Canvas course site when they are officially enrolled in the course.

Reviewer's Comments: The institution has very clear processes for identifying students in a secure manner—Duo authentication, image identification, and encrypted passwords are just some of the security measures in place. Coordination between the Registrar and financial systems exists.

Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students taking online courses and programs? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to on-ground programs and to other institutions' online offerings? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed?

Institution's Response:
ArtCenter offers two online graduate Master of Design (MDes) degree programs. Formed in 2022, the graduate Interaction Design and Brand Design and Strategy programs represent the college's first online degree offerings. The programs are one-year, 3 semester (term) programs. The inaugural cohort across both online programs was 17 students (7 Interaction Design students and 10 Brand Design and Strategy students). Of those 17 students, 16 students completed the full program within the three terms and one student completed one additional term for a total of four. In 2023, the both cohorts totaled 23 students (8 Interaction Design students and 15 Brand Design and Strategy students). Of the 23 students, 20 are on track to complete the program within three terms (at the end of Summer of 2024). While term-by-term (semester-by-semester) retention rates are not available, departments receive reports each term, which provide a snapshot of data on new and returning students, leave of absence,

demographics, and additional data points. Departments also receive an annual report on the number of terms to completion, which includes the average number of terms taken by students as they complete the program. This report indicates that for both the MDes programs the majority of students who entered the program in Fall 2022 completed within 3 terms (96%).

The overall trends for the first two years of the program were positive. Compared with other graduate programs at the college, the MDes programs have a higher graduation rate for the 2022 cohort (100%), which could be related to the difference in the number of terms. ArtCenter's on-ground graduate programs (MFA and MS programs) are expected to take between two or three years to complete with an average of 6 terms to completion. Master's recipients between 2021 and 2023 had an average of 7 terms to completion. This indicates that the average graduate student completes their program with only one additional term than the established course of study. This additional term is often a result of the need for additional time to complete thesis requirements. The MDes programs have a capstone as opposed to a thesis, which also allows for a shortened program and a higher completion rate. Based on this data, no significant discrepancies were found.

Given the specialized nature of the MDes programs, there are very few institutions that offer similar courses of study. While some programs cover similar fields or topical areas, such as human-computer interactions or graphic design, they are often Master of Sciences or PhD programs with an extended curriculum often focused on research as opposed to being design-centered. All of these programs were relatively small in size, and information may not be available due to privacy protections. Since these are graduate-level programs, federal reporting requirements differ from undergraduate degree programs, and standard public information that could be used for benchmarking is minimal or not available. Institutions that were used in to compare with ArtCenter's include Carnegie Mellon for the Interaction Design program and Harvard, which offers a concentration. UC Berkeley offers a similar program to Brand Design and Strategy.

Since these are relatively new programs, they have not received information on graduate outcomes. To ensure that the program had student experience feedback to complement their strong completion data, the program faculty and administration partnered with the Center for Educational Effectiveness to conduct an exit survey with all graduates from the Class of Summer 2023. The programs have been reviewing this data and working to create a plan to improve and enhance student learning, tools, resources, and needs related to the online student experience. The survey will be conducted again at the point of graduation to supplement data that is available at the point of one-year-out post-graduation.

Reviewer's Comments: Though the distance education program is very young, recent data suggest that retention and graduation outcomes exceed those of many ACCD in-person programs. The MDes programs have a capstone and not a thesis, which could contribute to this outcome. There are very few similar distance education programs. Exit interviews may provide more information about how students feel about the program. Disaggregated data not provided, but extremely small Ns to draw meaningful conclusions.

Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning for online programs and courses? Is this process comparable to that used in on-ground courses? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results of on-ground students, if applicable, or with other online offerings?

Institution's Response:
Students receive direct and indirect feedback and evaluation throughout the program via critique, assignments, and projects:

- Course learning outcomes assessed through projects aligned to the course level (see syllabi)
- Course learning outcomes are aligned to program learning outcomes (see curricular alignment and syllabi)
- Program learning outcomes are assessed at the summation of the program (capstone project).

The program culminates with a Capstone course and a Capstone project is produced. The course encompasses the assessment of all of the PLOs. The program's assessment rubric for the Capstone includes definitions, criteria, and scaffolding across degrees of quality that are reviewed for understanding, and the group practices applying the rubric to a sample capstone project – individually and then collectively, sharing initial score placements, rationale, and engaging in evidence-based discussion (returning to review of the project) for Program Learning Outcome scoring with significant variation across the group. Program Learning Outcomes data is collected annually in the summer term. A committee comprised of external advisors, invited guests, and MDes faculty participate in a review of each student's Capstone Project and assess the work based on the fulfillment of the PLOs. Students are scored with a rubric using a four-point scale and must achieve at least a "passing" score of 2 to have successfully achieved the PLOs at the completion of the program. The automated form that is used to capture the scores based on the rubric is completed and sent to any additional faculty or stakeholders before it is considered final.

Completed student forms and assessment rubrics are stored by the department in a folder on the college's server. They are submitted via email to the Center for Educational Effectiveness once the spring semester has concluded. The Office of Institutional Research analyzes the data in early fall and shares the resulting report with the Chair, Associate Chair, and Faculty Assessment Liaison. The report typically includes an introduction page with methodologies; benchmarks set by the program for the analysis; PLO longitudinal data comparisons and trends, once the program has been in session for a year; averages and standard deviation of scores; and individual PLO score comparison charts and tables that include longitudinal data after one year. All data is presented in aggregate to protect personally identifiable information such as ethnicity and gender.

Both MDes programs follow the same model assessment: process, schedule, and deliverable in the form of the report that is generated for all on-ground and online academic programs at the college. These programs are held to the same standard and use the same instruments for curriculum and assessment as on-ground students. While the data are shared and discussed with the faculty and staff in the department, and used to inform updates to curriculum, pedagogy, and student success support, the program review process specifically requires departments to draw from the data and describe how they have used the data as part of their assessment plan, and its impact on departmental strategic planning including budget and resource allocation.
In addition, the college conducts a one-year out-graduate employment survey with all students, and course evaluations are administered each semester to gather feedback on the student experience. Both of these surveys may inform changes to the curriculum and programming. Most recently, both programs administered an exit survey to their first cohort, which showed that Student support services were an area of need for online students. In many cases, respondents indicated that they were either not aware of available resources, or felt they did not know how to navigate or access them. Both programs are considering how to incorporate additional support beyond what is offered through curricular or advisory activities, build better partnerships with co-curricular and services departments, and evaluate the methods of communication with students about resources and services to increase awareness, as well as working to ensure that program faculty and administrators have appropriate training and guidance on available departmental and college resources and how to direct students is also encouraged. Student life was another area that students felt could use improvement. The programs work with CSE to determine how to expand on or enhance student connections to campus activities, programming, and events. 42% of alumni who responded to the survey indicated that one of the activities they were engaged in post-graduation was "starting my own business." However, the results also suggest that respondents felt the program may not have promoted further development of skills related to business. Programs are working to review the curriculum and determine whether adjustments or enhancements are needed in courses that teach business skills, as well as provide students with referrals to the Career and Professional Development and Entrepreneurship and Professional Practice departments.

MDes Brand Design and Strategy

Building on its practice of indirect assessment in the on-ground undergraduate and graduate Graphic Design programs, the faculty in the MDes program conducts indirect, ongoing assessments each term. Internal and

external reviews happen in core courses, with department faculty, administration, alumni, and industry professionals offering critiques during final presentations. Faculty also participate in indirect assessment of the program through feedback and sharing of student work during regularly scheduled department meetings. Learning outcomes and projects are also discussed between faculty members and the chairs and work in progress is reviewed regularly.

Internal Review Process – conducted over Zoom:

- Three times a term with Faculty and the Associate Chair
- Once every term with Faculty, Associate Chair, and the Department Chair
- Once a term for the Associate Chair and their faculty team to ensure short, mid and long-term goals are in alignment.

External Review Process – conducted over Zoom:

- Alumni and guest speakers are provided an overview of the program and asked to provide feedback via survey and follow-up Zoom call
- Outside professionals provide guest critique and review for finals as well as Capstone projects.
- Recruiter, hiring managers, and alumni in the industry, interviewing grads during Zoom graduation show, provide feedback via surveys forms and follow-up calls on the performance of graduates and program.
- All feedback is then relayed up to the dean, chairs, and faculty for review.

Preliminary data results for the Summer 2023 Capstone assessment

The program received a report in October 2023 that included cumulative average scores for each PLO and PLO benchmark comparisons. The following observations and recommendations were provided to program leadership and the faculty by the Office of Institutional Research.

- Norm the group that is completing the scoring (if there are additional faculty involved in the scoring of the PLOs for each student).
- Across the PLOs, the benchmark for the score of 4 was not met. The program should consider whether students can achieve this level of development according to the program rubric and if any adjustments need to be made.
- PLO 3, Leadership, had the lowest average score, indicating that students may have difficulty with meeting expectations according to the rubric. It is recommended that the program consider how it defines leadership, the language in the rubric, and how student work is being evaluated to determine if adjustments to curriculum or course content would help improve scores.
- With the understanding that the first cohort analyzed by OIR was quite small, with one specific anomaly (a student did not complete in the summer term), it is recommended that the program consider additional student support for individuals who have issues completing the Capstone and receiving scores that do not meet the level that is considered to be "passing" (above a score of 2) according to the rubric.

MDes Interaction Design

Faculty give formative feedback to students at the course level each term using artifacts created from projects and other assignments that are generated from the CLOs. Formative feedback is often given through critique and is embedded in the grading process. The syllabus for each course shows the alignment from CLO to project or assignment, and the PLO Curricular Alignment (curriculum map) indicates which courses align with specific PLOs. Formative feedback is also given by the department at the program level through the mid-point assessment, which occurs during the spring semester in the GradLab course.

Preliminary data results for the Summer 2023 Capstone assessment

The program received a report in October 2023 that included cumulative average scores for each PLO and PLO benchmark comparisons. The following observations and recommendations were provided to program leadership and the faculty by the Office of Institutional Research:

- Norm the group that is completing the scoring (if there are additional faculty involved in the scoring of the PLOs for each student).
- Consider the distribution of scores in terms of benchmarks due to the high number of scores of 4 for all the PLOs. Work with OIR to consider adjustments to the benchmarks for the next assessment cycle and reevaluate them after there are two years of data.

Both MDes programs will receive an updated report with comparative results of the PLO assessment within two years (assessments completed in Summer 2023 and Summer 2024). The program will provide actions in that report taken based on the preliminary data and will work with the Center for Educational Effectiveness, the Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, and the Dean to address any areas of opportunity and make requests for resources necessary to enhance or improve course offerings, programming, student and faculty experience, and online delivery of instruction based on the new data. Given that the MDes programs have an entirely different model of delivery (one-year program) and are offered exclusively online, it is difficult to compare the results of the Program Learning Outcomes assessment with other on-ground programs. Is this due to the course sequencing and deliverables at the conclusion of the program, including a Capstone project and when the assessment is conducted (with Capstone). However, when looking at the achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes in comparison with the other programs in the department, students perform at or above the anticipated level of achievement according to the benchmarks.

Reviewer's Comments: ACCD does a good job of aligning syllabi with program learning outcomes and uses the capstone to assess. Assessment practices are defined, scheduled, and routinized. Online programs are included in the scheduled program review cycle.

Contracts with Vendors. Are there any arrangements with outside vendors concerning the infrastructure, delivery, development, or instruction of courses? If so, do these comport with the policy on *Agreements with Unaccredited Entities?*

Institution's Response: NA

Reviewer's Comments: NA

Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover distance education? What evidence is provided that distance education programs and courses are educationally effective?

Institution's Response:
As the college worked to develop the proposals for the MDes programs, it undertook a landscape/market analysis with UPCEA (University Professional and Continuing Education Association) to deepen the understanding of the demand/need for each program. UPCEA conducted an analysis of job analytics, a survey of employers, and a survey of non-matriculated applicants to ArtCenter to test our assumptions. A summary of the findings, which complemented the internal research completed by college stakeholders was included with the proposals. The ArtCenter team developing the proposed program discussed the findings and determined as a result that adjusting the originally planned title of one of the programs—Branding and Innovation Strategy—to Brand Design and Strategy would more effectively communicate the learning outcomes to prospective students and align clearly with the college's specific art and design focus.

The MDes programs have been incorporated into the college's existing academic program review process and calendar, which includes a robust self-study, and evaluation by external reviewers, and culminates in an Action Plan/Memorandum of Understanding with the Dean. Assessment is an important part of the program review and departments are asked questions as part of the self-study regarding their assessment plan including formative and summative assessment activities on an annual basis. The programs participate in various other activities to collect information and conduct the review of the program including course evaluations (each term), the annual reflection on assessment and curriculum completed each summer (Assessment Liaison Cohort Online Form), discussions on annual curricular updates for the next catalog year and annual curricular planning for faculty assignments and course offerings, and the evaluation of survey data and other feedback from student that inform the program's integrity and the decision-making at the Dean and Chair level regarding budget and resource allocation.

Reviewer's Comments: ACCD conducted a landscape/market analysis that reinforced internal research relative to the promise and long-term success of these distance programs. This process, coupled with annual assessment activity, lends confidence to the relevance and sustainability of these programs.

C. Off-Campus Location Review

Institution: ArtCenter College of Design

Type of Visit: Reaffirmation
Name of reviewer: Dianna Graves
Date/s of review: March 11-14, 2025

1. **Site Name and Address**
   ArtCenter South Campus
   950 S Raymond Ave, Pasadena, CA 91105

2. **Background Information** (number of programs offered at this site; degree levels; FTE of faculty and enrollment; brief history at this site; designation as a branch campus or additional location by WSCUC)

Just over 20 years ago, ArtCenter expanded its footprint to the more urban South Campus, located near downtown Pasadena and just a short ride from the Hillside Campus. Located in three repurposed industrial buildings, including a famous wind tunnel once used for aerospace research and testing, South Campus is home to several undergraduate and graduate level programs. The 950 building houses the Mullin Transportation Design Center, the Mobility Experience Lab by Genesis, Hyundai and Kia, and the Hoffmitz Milken Center for Typography. The 870 building provides dedicated space for the Fine Art and Illustration programs, and the 1111 building includes classrooms and administrative offices. A private shuttle allows students to move from one campus to the other within minutes, and it is common for students to have classes at both the Hillside and South campuses in the same semester, so there is no set enrollment number.

3. **Nature of the Review** (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

In addition to reading the entirely of the ArtCenter report and materials, I spent time visiting the South Campus and toured the 950 Building with the President, Vice President of Facilities and Campus Planning, and Associate Provost of Academic Operations. I was also able to speak with students who take classes at South Campus.

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required
For a recently approved site. Has the institution followed up on the recommendations from the substantive change committee that approved this new site?	N/A	none

Fit with Mission. How does the institution conceive of this and other off-campus sites relative to its mission, operations, and administrative structure? How is the site planned and operationalized? (CFR 1.1, 3.1, 3.6, 4.1)	Located just minutes from the Hillside Campus (less than five miles away), South Campus shares a mission and administrative structure. Students, faculty, and administrators move fluidly between the two campuses.	none
Connection to the Institution. How visible and deep is the presence of the institution at the off-campus site? In what ways does the institution integrate off-campus students into the life and culture of the institution? (CFR 1.5, 2.10, 4.3)	South Campus is a deeply integrated part of ArtCenter. South Campus is an important part of the cultural community of Pasadena. Through the institution's instructor in residence program, community practitioners routinely teach at ArtCenter and often hire students for internships and alumni for full-time jobs. A free shuttle runs between the Hillside and South campuses so students can readily access events and support services offered at either campus. They view themselves as ArtCenter students who have access to both campuses, and not only as a student at one campus or the other.	none
Quality of the Learning Site. How does the physical environment foster learning and faculty-student contact? What kind of oversight ensures that the off-campus site is well managed? (CFR 2.5, 3.1, 3.6)	The facility renovation preserved its industrial character, and reflects intentional design choices with flexible, adaptive spaces to support classroom instruction, creative design, studio work, gallery exhibitions, and event space. Students train and become certified to use valuable, state of the art equipment. They are encouraged to consider interdisciplinary approaches to their work, supported by a curriculum that focuses first on basic design principles and manual technical skills before applying those skills to advanced technological platforms. Undergraduates and graduate students are in proximity to one another, offering natural role model and mentorship opportunities. Students are able to access the building with encoded key cards and are trusted to work independently outside of class time. All students are expected to give and receive critiques, sharpening their critical thinking skills and often leading to collaborations. Their creative productivity is evident throughout the campus, with student projects displayed in every classroom, hallway, and gallery area. When not working, students can relax comfortably together in the student lounge area where they can enjoy snacks and conversation. Vice President of Facilities and Campus Planning, Rollin Homer, and Associate Provost of Academic Operations, Jay Sanders work together closely to ensure the South Campus is well managed and effectuating the academic mission of the college.	none

Student Support Services. What is the site's capacity for providing advising, counseling, library, computing services and other appropriate student services? Or how are these otherwise provided? What do data show about the effectiveness of these services? (CFR 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 3.6, 3.10, 4.34.1)	While the South Campus has some support services such as the writing center, students primarily shuttle to Hillside for other services such as mental health, financial aid, student accounts, student activities, library, etc. Computing resources at South campus are strong and students have access to state-of-the-art equipment and supplies.	none
Faculty. Who teaches the courses, e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct? In what ways does the institution ensure that off-campus faculty is involved in the academic oversight of the programs at this site? How do these faculty members participate in curriculum development and assessment of student learning? (CFR 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 4.8)	Courses at ArtCenter, at both campuses, are taught by a mix of full-time and part-time faculty and are considered a single faculty body. Through the institution's instructor in residence program, community practitioners routinely teach at ArtCenter and often hire students for internships and alumni for full-time jobs. Faculty evaluate core competencies and program learning outcomes. The new CBA defines the roles and responsibilities of faculty.	none
Curriculum and Delivery. Who designs the programs and courses at this site? How are they approved and evaluated? Are the programs and courses comparable in content, outcomes and quality to those on the main campus? (CFR 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 4.2)	Programs and courses at both campuses are approved and evaluated through a unified faculty process with common standards. Program review on both campuses has been paused in recent years and must be resumed.	none
Retention and Graduation. What data on retention and graduation are collected on students enrolled at this off-campus site? What do these data show? What disparities are evident? Are rates comparable to programs at the main campus? If any concerns exist, how are these being addressed? (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5)	The retention and graduation rates for students are not disaggregated by campus since students move fluidly between both and take classes at each. Graduate level programs taught primarily at one campus or the other have similar retention and graduation rates.	none
Student Learning. How does the institution assess student learning at off-campus sites? Is this process comparable to that used on the main campus? What are the results of student learning assessment? How do these compare with learning results from the main campus?	The assessment of student learning is the same on both campuses, which are viewed uniformly as ArtCenter.	none

(CFR 2.4, 2.7, 2.9, 2.11, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5)		
Quality Assurance Processes: How are the institution's quality assurance processes designed or modified to cover off-campus sites? What evidence is provided that off-campus programs and courses are educationally effective? (CFR 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6)	ArtCenter's quality assurance processes are the same on both campuses, which fall under the same governance and oversight system. The ACCD report detailed assessment findings for its programs.	none