

College History and Vision

HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE

In 2007, “The Cuyamaca Way” became Cuyamaca College’s official motto, a tribute to the institution’s prevailing sense of community. Thirteen key words that the campus community decided best describe that “Cuyamaca Way” were inscribed in curving concrete bands stretching across the newly paved quad. The words, “beautiful, collaborative, dedicated, innovative, integrity, teamwork, vision, welcoming, student-centered, community, excellence, passionate, and friendly,” became etched in stone.

The declaration of Cuyamaca’s distinct attributes hearkens back to a time some 39 years prior, when District trustees first selected the name “Cuyamaca College” in envisioning an institution that exemplifies the “community” in the words “community college.”

THE HISTORY OF THE CAMPUS

The Cuyamaca College campus is located in the East San Diego County community of Rancho San Diego, nestled in a suburb just outside the city of El Cajon on a verdant 165-acre site that was at one time a part of the Old Monte Vista Ranch. Along with its sister campus, Grossmont College, it is part of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District.

The name for the college reflects the region’s history and heritage. A very old word linked to the land’s Native American past, “Cuyamaca” has been interpreted in various ways, including “above rain,” “beyond rain” and “place where the rain comes from heavens.”

The campus site was acquired by the Board of Trustees in September 1972 and the college officially opened in fall 1978, with 1,947 students and nine associate-degree programs. Its first president was Dr. Wallace F. Cohen. Today, Cuyamaca provides around 165 degrees and certificates, including those in innovative green-energy programs, to its 9,000 students.

KEY EVENTS

Thirty-eight students made up Cuyamaca College’s first graduating class in May 1979. The early ‘80s saw the construction of facilities housing two highly regarded programs – Automotive Technology and Ornamental Horticulture – and the naming of Dr. Samuel Ciccati as the college’s second president.

The following years marked the expansion in earnest of Rancho San Diego and by fall 1988, Cuyamaca’s enrollment had reached 3,600 students. The decade of the ‘80s came to a close with the opening of the Learning Resource Center, a 30,000-square-foot, glass-covered building with a distinctive architecture that has established it as an often-photographed campus icon.

The ‘90s were highlighted by the opening of the privately-funded Heritage of the Americas Museum, as well as the dedication of a new 20.3-acre physical education facility with a fitness center, gym, tennis and volleyball courts, soccer and ball fields, and an Olympic track. Dr. Sherrill Amador began her tenure as college president in 1994 and a year later, Rancho San Diego Parkway opened as the college’s new main entrance, providing better access to the campus. The decade of the ‘90s ended with the opening of the Water Conservation Garden

– a must-visit for all home gardening and landscaping enthusiasts – operated through a Joint Powers Agreement between the college and area water-district agencies.

With the opening of a one-stop Student Services Center, the 21st century got off to a busy start for the college, which also celebrated the unveiling of the Child Development Center. The whimsical facility serves as both a childcare facility for the campus and community, and a learning lab for students in Cuyamaca’s Child Development Studies program.

Dr. Geraldine M. Perri took over the reins as college president in 2002, the same year that East County residents approved Prop. R, a \$207 million construction bond measure to finance upgrades and new building construction at the District’s two colleges.

During a period of rapid enrollment growth, Prop. R transformed the campus into a high-tech learning magnet, bringing older facilities like the automotive technology center into the digital age and adding several state-of-the-art buildings: the Science and Technology Center (now the Science and Mathematics Building), the Student Center, the Business and Technology buildings, and the jewel of the campus, a \$45 million Communication Arts Center. There, a well-appointed performing arts theater built to professional acoustical standards has become a major community asset as a high-demand site for community performances, assemblies, business forums and even, worship services.

Prop. R’s major construction at Cuyamaca College drew to a close in 2011 with the expansion of the LRC. Other campus highlights during those years included music instructor Pat Setzer’s (now Vice President of Instruction) selection as one of four community college instructors statewide to win the 2010 Hayward Award for Excellence in Education, and in 2011, the appointment of Dr. Mark J. Zaccovic to the post of college president.

In November 2012, East County voters once again showed their support for the college district with the passage of Prop. V, a \$398 million bond measure that paves the way for Cuyamaca and Grossmont colleges to address continuing facility, infrastructure and technology needs.

Also in 2012, Cuyamaca was selected as one of three community colleges in the state to be given the inaugural Energy and Sustainability Award from the California Community College Board of Governors. The college was recognized for its sustainable landscaping initiatives, including a conference that has attracted hundreds of industry professionals annually since 2008.

In 2013, an Intergenerational Garden was established adjacent to the Child Development Center, where senior volunteers affectionately nicknamed “Garden Grannies” helped children plant and harvest vegetables consumed by the center’s young wards. This was also the year that the college was first ranked among the nation’s “best of the best” veteran-friendly schools by U.S. Veterans Magazine. The college was the only community college in San Diego County to earn the distinction.

Cuyamaca was a repeat winner of the coveted award in 2014. Another highlight that year was a \$350,000 clean energy grant from the state to lead a regional effort to train students in the booming clean-energy field.

In October 2015, Dr. Julianna Barnes, who previously served Cuyamaca College as vice president of student services, returned to take the helm as president.

Cuyamaca College continues its development as a dynamic learning mecca, a unique campus with a strong allegiance to sustainability reflective of its natural beauty. Yesterday, today and tomorrow, the college remains unwavering in its mission to meet the comprehensive educational and workforce training needs of residents in East County and beyond.

COLLEGE VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Vision: Learning for the Future

Mission: The mission of Cuyamaca College is to serve a diverse community of students who seek to benefit from the college’s wide range of educational programs and services.

In order to fulfill its commitment to student learning, success & equity, the college provides:

- Instructional programs that meet student needs for transfer education, career technical education, general education and basic skills courses
- Programs that promote economic, civic and cultural development

To facilitate this mission, Cuyamaca College provides a comprehensive range of support services including: outreach, access, student success and equity initiatives, academic and learning resources, student development programs, and multicultural and co-curricular activities.

In support of its mission, Cuyamaca College structures its planning processes and engages the college community by pursuing the following priorities, which form the foundation of the 2016-2022 Strategic Plan:

- Acceleration
- Guided Student Pathways
- Student Validation & Engagement
- Organizational Health

Values:

- **Equitable Access:** We value equitable access that facilitates participation in academic programs and support services needed to meet students’ educational goals.
- **Individual Student Success:** We offer courses and programs leading to degrees, certificates, transfer, employment, personal enhancement, and lifelong learning.
- **Academic Excellence:** We employ a variety of methodologies and technologies responsive to students’ needs and conducive to students’ varied educational and experiential backgrounds and learning styles.
- **Innovation and Creativity:** We value innovation and creativity in order to encourage our students to question and to expand their thinking.
- **Diversity and Social Harmony:** We value and embrace diversity and create

opportunities for our college community to work together to meet the challenges of a complex global society.

- **Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability:** We take pride in our campus and its resources, and we strive to be on the forefront of sustainability and green technology.
- **Strong Community Relations:** We recognize our role in the cultural, educational, technological, and economic/workforce development of the communities we serve.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

In order to maximize the opportunity for the development of individuals' personal, social and intellectual qualities, the college provides:

An **instructional** program:

- **Transfer** courses equivalent to the lower division curriculum of universities and colleges for students who plan to continue their education at a baccalaureate institution.
- **Career and technical education** courses to provide technical skills and knowledge for beginning employment, retraining and advancement, respond to local business and industry workforce development and workforce training directions.
- **General education** courses to broaden knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, to develop analytical ability and critical thinking, and to foster interest in lifelong learning in the educational, scientific and cultural fields essential for effective participation in a diverse and complex society.
- **Developmental** courses to assist inadequately prepared students to succeed in college course work.

A **student services** program:

- **Academic, vocational and personal support** services to provide students with sufficient opportunity to achieve educational success.
- **Co-curricular activities** to provide opportunities for personal development and social responsibility.

Learning resources support services:

- **Library collection:** A well-rounded collection of print and electronic materials selected to support instructional programs across the curriculum.
- **Information competency:** Instruction designed to teach students how to locate, evaluate and utilize information resources. Preparing students for lifelong learning is the ultimate goal.
- **Research guidance:** One-on-one instruction to assist students with their course-related and individual research needs.

A **continuing education** program:

- **Noncredit** courses are state-funded and provide students with lifelong learning, college transfer and career preparation opportunities at low or no cost. For many, noncredit programs provide an educational gateway into the college system.

- **Community education** courses offer a wide variety of affordable not-for-credit classes, workshops, seminars and excursions for personal and professional enrichment. Community education programs are self-supporting and are open to all members of the community willing to pay a minimal fee.

A **contract education** program:

- **Customized training** delivered under contract that meets the just-in-time workforce development needs of business, government, and industry.

A **workforce development** program:

- **Education and training** that contributes to continuous workforce improvement of regional business and industry and is in many cases grant funded.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The founders of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District believed that a community college should provide experiences which would greatly broaden the students' educational opportunities and strengthen our society's democratic institutions. The representatives of the community directed the college to provide an education through which students may create rewarding lives, productive for themselves and for society, based on an understanding of the relationship between the past and the challenge of the present and the future.

Cuyamaca College accepts and is committed to these philosophical premises:

- The democratic way of life allows each individual personal freedom and initiative consistent with responsibilities to one another.
- The college recognizes the worth of the individual and the fact that individual needs, interests and capacities vary greatly.
- The maximum development of the personal, social and intellectual qualities of each individual must be encouraged.
- The maximum development and fulfillment of the individual and the development of the community are increasingly interdependent.
- All segments of the college community are encouraged to contribute and participate in the operation of the college.

An educational environment dedicated to these philosophic premises will produce individuals prepared for life and citizenship in a complex, viable society.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are a promise to the communities that Cuyamaca College graduates and those transferring to a four-year college or university, will be able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities contained within all of the ILOs, based on general education and discipline-specific courses. Cuyamaca College students who earn a certificate, or have taken courses for personal educational development, will be

expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities specified within one or more of the ILOs.

1. COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY

Students will communicate effectively to different audiences, through various modes of communication.

2. INFORMATION LITERACY

Students will identify, evaluate, and integrate information effectively in various contexts.

3. CRITICAL THINKING COMPETENCY

Students will analyze situations, evaluate options, and synthesize findings to make well justified decisions.

4. CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Students will interact effectively with others, taking into account their diverse backgrounds, and work competently in cross-cultural situations.

5. ACADEMIC and PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students will set academic goals, use college resources, and have the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their goals in a timely manner.

GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT VISION, MISSION, AND VALUE STATEMENTS

Vision: Transforming lives through learning.

Mission: Provide outstanding diverse learning opportunities that prepare students to meet community needs, promotes a global responsibility, and fosters opportunities for all.

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District fulfills its mission by providing:

- Outstanding undergraduate education for students seeking certificates, associate degrees, and university transfer;
- Excellent career and technical education programs that prepare students for workforce entry and advancement;
- Engaging educational services that meet learners' needs in basic skills and English language proficiency;
- Comprehensive student development and personal support services that contribute to student learning and achievement;
- Partnerships and programs that promote the social and economic development of the region; and
- Community education for personal, professional, and lifelong learning

Values: Cultivate a student-centered culture of excellence, trust, stewardship, and service.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

(BOARD POLICY 4030)

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca College District Governing Board shall promote public understanding and support of academic freedom for the implementation of the educational philosophy of Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the instructor in teaching, and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights.

1. Instructors are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching material that has no relation to their subject. The intent is not to discourage what is "controversial." Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry that this entire policy is designed to foster. Instructors should avoid persistently intruding material that has no relation to their subject.
2. Instructors are citizens, members of a learned profession, and may be viewed by those outside of the District as representatives of the District. When they speak or write as citizens outside of their roles with the District, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and instructors, they should remember that the public might judge their profession and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the District.
3. As colleagues, faculty members have obligations that derive from the code of ethics (adopted by both the Grossmont College Academic Senate [11/16/92] and the Cuyamaca College Academic Senate [4/6/95]). Faculty members do not discriminate against or harass colleagues and students. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas, faculty members show due respect for the opinions of others. Such exchanges shall focus upon the substance and content rather than personal characteristics of individuals. Uncivil, intemperate, or abusive language and behavior is contrary to a productive and safe working and educational environment. This does not contravene academic freedom and free exchange of ideas and opinions, but requires accuracy, appropriate restraint, and respect for the professional expression of others.
4. Instructors are entitled to full freedom in academic research and publication, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties, but research and publication for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding consistent with the collectively bargained agreement between the District and the exclusive bargaining representatives.