

EVALUATION REPORT

CUYAMACA COLLEGE

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A Confidential Report Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Cuyamaca College from
October 22 through 25, 2007.

Dr. Barbara Hioco, Chair

**Cuyamaca College
Comprehensive Evaluation Team**

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Summary of Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Cuyamaca College

DATE OF VISIT: October 22 - 25, 2007

TEAM CHAIR: Barbara Hioco, Ed. D.
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A nine-member accreditation team visited Cuyamaca College from October 22 through 25, 2007. Prior to and during the visit, the team assessed how well the college is achieving its stated purposes, analyzed how well the college is meeting the commission's four standards, provided recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement, and submitted a recommendation to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) regarding the accredited status of the college.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair and team members attended an all day team training session conducted by ACCJC staff in Los Angeles on September 11, 2007. During this training session, team members were taught how to conduct an institutional evaluation in accordance with ACCJC standards. The team also prepared for its visit by thoroughly reviewing the Cuyamaca College self study and documentation made available by the college prior to the visit, evaluating responses to the previous team's recommendations, and assessing online courses. During the visit, the team held meetings with individuals and small groups at Cuyamaca College, met with district officials, and held one open forum.

Prior to the team's visit, team members completed two written assignments in reaction to Cuyamaca College's self study. Team members were asked to evaluate the self study report and respond to the previous team's recommendations. Team members were also asked to submit requests for individual and group appointments to be scheduled by the team assistant. On Monday, October 22, 2007, the team met for approximately three hours to review the self study report and confirm appointments and issues to be addressed during the visit.

Cuyamaca College was well prepared for the visit. The team was provided open access to all documents needed to gather evidence related to the accreditation standards. The staff provided additional evidence when requested by team members. It is important to note that the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District was closed on Monday, October 22, 2007 due to poor air quality as a result of several wildfires occurring in the San Diego area and remained closed to the public during the time of the visit. In consultation with Commission staff, it was decided to complete the site visit as planned. Therefore, although the college was officially closed to the public, the team conducted the visit on the Cuyamaca Campus and completed as many meetings with various committees, groups, and individuals as possible. Cuyamaca College administration facilitated access to these committee members and individuals. The team was impressed with the effort and success of Cuyamaca College in making arrangements so the needed meetings could occur. College administrators, faculty, and staff responded to every need and request of the team and were very generous with their time and assistance. The team continually assessed its ability to conduct the visit in a manner that would

result in a complete, accurate, thoughtful, and fully validated report. At each juncture of this process, the team determined that it could fulfill the obligation to the college, to the district, and to the commission.

The self-study document was well-done and comprehensive being more than 400 pages in length. Each section of the self study was complete and adequately addressed the components of each standard. Planning agendas developed by the college are based on the self-evaluation and conclusions sections of the self study and accurately address the college's next steps in achieving continuous improvement. The team was able to validate the self study's portrayal of the college and its self-appraisal of how well the college is meeting the four accreditation standards. The team was impressed by the thoroughness of the self study report and by the overall condition of the college. However, the team was unable to meet with students or visit class sessions during the visit due to the closing of the campus.

Introduction

Cuyamaca College is located in Rancho San Diego in East San Diego County, California. It opened in 1978 as the second college in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District with an enrollment of 1,538 students. The name “Cuyamaca” is an Indian word selected by the Board of Trustees to reflect the region’s unique history and heritage. The initial plan was for Cuyamaca College to be primarily vocational and accommodate the special occupational programs for the district. However, rapid growth of the adjacent Rancho San Diego community in the 1990’s resulted in greater growth potential than was originally planned. Student growth led to an expansion of the physical facilities and the scope of educational programs. The goal of becoming a fully comprehensive college became firmly established and has been the cornerstone of the college educational master plan ever since.

Cuyamaca College enrollment grew significantly in the 1990’s, increasing 50 percent in a ten-year period. After reaching its peak at over 8,000 students, and in keeping with the statewide trend, the enrollment declined slightly and remained at approximately 7,500 students for several years. In Spring 2007, however, the college once again experienced high growth rates (5.1 percent) and the headcount has again surpassed 8,000.

Cuyamaca College has a sound history of strategic planning based on a systematic and informed process. The college currently functions under its Strategic Plan, 2004-2010. In Spring 2003, the college’s Innovation and Planning Council affirmed the college’s core values and identified needed areas of focus. Subsequently, through a broad-based process characterized by open discussion, faculty and staff prioritized activities in each area of focus, including Academic Excellence and Program Development, Student Success, Facilities and Physical Environment, Community Relations, and Resource Development.

In the last several years, enrollment growth and responsible fiscal stewardship, coupled with funds secured through the passage of a local construction bond measure, have provided the college with the resources necessary to construct new buildings, expand services, hire additional faculty and staff, and improve campus maintenance. While still focusing on its successful vocational programs, the college has placed a strong emphasis on improving transfer in recent years.

With the recent opening of the two new buildings, the Science and Technology Mall and the Student Center, and the soon-to-be-opened Communication Arts building, the college is able to expand its program and course offerings and provide students with an environment conducive to student learning, student activities, and overall student participation in college life. The campus is well kept and attractive. The overall morale of administrators, faculty, and staff is very positive, as evidenced by the self study and through interviews by the visiting team.

A nine-member team visited Cuyamaca College from October 22-October 25, 2007. On October 24, 2007, five members of the team, along with representatives of the team visiting Grossmont College, visited the district office to meet with the Chancellor and his staff as well as members of the Board of Trustees.

Recommendations

After carefully reading the self study, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Cuyamaca College.

Recommendation 1: Student Learning Outcomes

The team recommends that the college complete the process of identifying Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees, identify SLOs for student services, and other areas of the college, and develop and implement methods for assessing student achievement of those outcomes. The assessment results should be used to guide improvement (Standards I.B.1, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.f, II.A.3.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.c, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.1.c).

Recommendation 2: Program Review

The team recommends that the college complete the program review process for all student services and other areas of the college. The college should provide evidence that the program review process evaluates the achievement of student learning outcomes, along with other assessments that yield quantitative and qualitative data for analysis, and use the results of these evaluations as the basis of improvement (Standards I.B., II.1.a, II.B.1, II B. 4).

Recommendation 3: Resources

The team recommends that the college and the district ensure that the number of full-time faculty and staff is adequate to support the instructional needs and student support services to improve student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution (Standards II.C 1.a, III.A.2).

Recommendation 4: Communication

The team recommends that the college improve communication with classified staff by engaging in dialogue that contributes to increased participation in planning and decision making. This dialogue must include formal and informal communication links leading to equally accessible information and contributions by classified staff to plans and decisions leading institutional change and improvement (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4, III.A.4, IV.A.1, IV.A.3).

Recommendation 5 : Dialogue

The team recommends that the college, the chancellor, and district develop and implement strategies for the improvement of dialogue among the various entities in the district, leading to improved relationships and collaboration among and between the colleges and the district (Standard IV.A.1, IV.A. 2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2).

Recommendation 6: District Leadership and Governance

The team recommends that the district, using appropriate consultation, develop and implement policies and procedures that lead to effective leadership and governance throughout the district. Specifically, the Board of Trustees must

- establish and implement a formal process for consistent and regular self-evaluation for inclusion in its policies and by-laws (Standard IV.B.1.g).
- establish and implement formal policies and procedures for the selection of and regular evaluation of the college president (Standard IV.B.1.j).

Commendations

During the accreditation process, several exemplary accomplishments became apparent, and the team specifically commends the college as follows:

1. The team commends the college on developing a participatory governance planning process that encourages broad participation from all campus constituents. The planning process is fully integrated at every level and provides ample opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input throughout the entire cycle. This collaborative process results in effective decision-making and fund allocation, creating an environment of respect and innovation.
2. The team commends the college on the collaboration and team work demonstrated to provide a climate of service to students, trust in collaborative decision making, and reliance upon a college-wide approach to planning.
3. The team commends the college president and administration for building a culture of respect and a willingness to listen and honor faculty and classified leadership.
4. Faculty leadership is to be commended for leading major endeavors of the college such as Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Program Review, and Academic/Student Services Master Planning. Their commitment to student learning and collegial participation is evident.
5. The team commends Cuyamaca College for the development of a Facilities Master Plan identifying the construction projects in rank order. The plan was developed with input from campus constituents and aligns with other college master plans such as the Academic Master Plan. The Facilities Master Plan is regularly reviewed by the college facilities committee. The fact that the plan was developed several years ago and basically remains unchanged is a reflection of how comprehensive the plan is and that it is supported by the college community. The college was also able to use the Facilities Master Plan as a springboard when the district was identifying projects for Measure R.

6. The team commends the college on the attractiveness of the campus and how the new buildings blend with the surrounding environment. The new buildings reflect new technology and innovation, yet do not detract from the “rural” features of the landscape.

Team's Evaluation of Institutional Responses to 2000 Recommendations

In 2001, the accreditation visiting team submitted five recommendations for Cuyamaca College to address before the next comprehensive visit. The self study report that was prepared for the team's visit in October 2007 provides a response that indicates the college has addressed the five recommendations of the fall 2001 site visiting team. A midterm report sent to the Commission in October of 2004 detailed the progress made by the college in addressing the five recommendations. The Commission accepted four of the five responses and required the college to report progress on the fifth recommendation in October of 2005. The October 2005 progress report accepted by the Commission.

The 2007 visiting team's assessment of Cuyamaca College's progress in addressing the previous recommendations is as follows:

Standard Two: Institutional Integrity

2001 Recommendation #1

The college diversity policy and practices should align directly with the district diversity goals, as noted in the District Strategic Plan, and that faculty and instructional administrators foster diversity awareness training opportunities for all college personnel, particularly instructional faculty.

This recommendation was addressed adequately in the mid-term report and the college has maintained a focus on increasing the awareness of diversity through appropriate staff development workshops. These workshops, combined with other efforts such as the Title III grant related to high-risk students, have kept the issue of meeting the goals of diversity awareness at the forefront. The self study reported that fifty-five faculty members participated in the nationally recognized *On Course* program providing methods to "create learning centered environments" to help high-risk students in their learning. (Self Study, page 44) The college has recommended to the district that diversity training become part of all hiring committee orientations.

In addition to the diversity workshops noted in the midterm report, the college has met the recommendation "to embrace the diversity of the changing population" by recognizing the growing Chaldean and Spanish-speaking populations within the community. Courses are now offered in Aramaic and Arabic, and a Chaldean counselor who is fluent in Arabic and a Spanish-speaking counselor were hired. The college also uses its College Hour to present forums and events that address diversity.

The college has incorporated diversity awareness into its Annual Implementation Plan, which aligns with one of the goals of the district diversity goals. In addition, Cuyamaca has made significant and frequent attempts to promote diversity in hiring, provided diversity training for hiring committee members, and conducted diversity workshops. Accreditation survey results indicate students, staff, and faculty affirm that the college infuses a global perspective into its educational programs and services, another one of the district's goals.

Despite the commendable efforts, it was not evident that the college has been successful in achieving the district goal ensuring that faculty and staff reflect the community service area. The team recognizes that during the past few years hiring opportunities were limited. With hiring opportunities increasing, the college should pursue alternatives that will improve its ability to meet this goal. The District recognizes this continuing problem and has recently organized a district-wide diversity task force headed by the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources. This task force is presently creating its vision and mission statements in order to develop a strategic plan and goals.

The team confirmed that the college has adequately addressed this previous recommendation.

Standard Three: Institutional Effectiveness

2001 Recommendation #2

The college should develop a master plan for Student Services that focuses on broad participation of Student Services staff, faculty and students and integrates research into planning and evaluation. The college should ensure that planning by Student Services is integrated with instructional and administrative services to address common issues affecting all units.

A comprehensive Student Development and Services Master Plan was approved and adopted in Spring 2005. The planning process emphasizes achievable, observable and assessable outcomes. The plan is presently integrated with the college's planning processes and with the two other major college units, Instruction and Administrative Services. The college also is in the process of implementing a student services program review process that considers qualitative and quantitative data. The student services program review process feeds the overall Student Development and Services Master Plan. Planning is linked to the 2004-2010 District Strategic Plan and drives the budget allocations.

It is imperative that the college continually follow up to ensure that the program review process is completed, that results are measured, and that the results are used to implement change.

The team confirmed that the college has adequately addressed this previous recommendation.

Standard Six: Information And Learning Resources 2001

2001 Recommendation #3

The college should develop and implement systematic planning, policies and procedures which will ensure the annual enhancement of a core book collection from a stable funding source.

In order to formulate a collection development plan, the college collected data summarizing the number of instructional courses and the number of students supported through the library collection. Since 2003-2004 the library book budget has grown from \$10,000 to \$30,500, and a line item from the general fund unrestricted budget has been established.

The college satisfactorily responded to this recommendation by committing \$10,000 of the college budget toward the book fund and increasing it to over \$30,000. This allocation is now an on-going annual allocation.

Standard Seven: Faculty And Staff

2001 Recommendation #4

The college and district should ensure that formal evaluation of part-time faculty be completed in a timely manner, with consideration for maintaining appropriate protections for faculty and students as embedded in current practices.

Since the last accreditation visit, the college has made significant improvements to ensure the timely completion of evaluations for part-time faculty. Each semester, faculty to be evaluated are identified. The procedure calls for a peer and manager report as well as a student evaluation. An expedited process for return, review, and sign-off by the evaluatee, peer, and manager has been implemented. Follow-up of the evaluation process as to action, tracking, and review of recommendations for subsequent evaluations is incorporated into the evaluation process.

Taking this recommendation literally, it would appear that the college has addressed the recommendation and now complies with the applicable accreditation standard. However, in reviewing the analysis of the previous accreditation team, it was the delay in formal feedback that led to the perception that the process was ineffective.

In the past, the union contract, district procedures, and/or the absence of an evaluation clerk have been cited as causes for untimely evaluations. Part-time faculty is represented by the United Faculty Association and evaluations must thus comply with the contract. The contract addresses the components and the process to prepare the evaluation, but there was nothing apparent in the agreement that would preclude a timely formal feedback. It should be noted that the previous accreditation team was equally concerned about the timeliness as well as the formality of the feedback. The team was unable to determine if the position of the evaluation clerk had been filled that had earlier been identified as a partial solution to the problem.

In conclusion, the college still needs to address the feedback process. This previous recommendation has been partially addressed.

2001 Recommendation #5

Find effective ways to facilitate participation in appropriate staff development activities for more classified staff and part-time faculty.

Email, hard copy, and word of mouth are all used to promote and communicate staff development activities. Since 2004, the Professional Development Committee (PDC) has utilized its web site to provide all professional development documents. The web site also provides a schedule of activities for Professional Development Week (PDW). There are now online professional development offerings available especially for adjunct faculty. Some are

available through 4faculty.org and @one. Many of the PDW activities are offered on an ongoing basis to meet faculty and staff needs. New funding has provided more opportunity for attendance at conferences. Classified staff is encouraged to attend professional development activities.

The college has increased dissemination of staff development opportunities, provided more workshops for adjunct faculty, utilized the professional development website, increased the number of workshops, increased online offerings to provide more flexibility for adjunct faculty and utilize new funding from the state to attend conferences. In general, the college has satisfactorily responded to this recommendation but should continue to provide more opportunities for classified staff.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Cuyamaca College is a public, two-year community college operating under the authority of the State of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the Board of Trustees for the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. Cuyamaca College opened in 1978 as the second college in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District.

2. Mission

The team confirmed that the college developed its mission statement, which was revised and adopted by the Governing Board in Fall 2006. The mission statement defines the college's broad educational purposes, the intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning. These components are further supported by the college's Strategic Plan and its stated core values. Cuyamaca College's mission statement is published in a variety of documents that are available to various college constituencies and the public, including but not limited to the Strategic Plan, the college catalog, the Student Services Master Plan, and the Cuyamaca College website.

3. Governing Board

A five-member Board of Trustees elected by the citizens of San Diego's East County region sets policy and direction and provides leadership for the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. Each Board member serves a term of four years. The Board has two non-voting student members, each representing the two colleges in the district. The team confirmed that the Board makes policy for the district and ensures that the educational mission of the district and the two colleges is implemented.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The team confirmed that the Board of Trustees selects and appoints the president, whose full-time responsibility is to the college. The college president has the authority and responsibility to lead the institution and to administer board policies.

5. Administrative Capacity

The team determined that the college has sufficient adequately prepared and experienced administrative staff to operate the college.

6. Operating Status

The team concluded with no reservation that Cuyamaca College is fully operational with students actively pursuing its degree programs.

7. Degrees

The team found that a majority of students enter Cuyamaca College with the intent of earning a degree, certificate, license, or preparing for transfer to a four-year institution. Additional information confirmed that degrees and certificate programs are defined clearly so that students may complete their educational goals in a timely manner.

8. Educational Programs

Cuyamaca College offers a range of degree and certificate programs, and its programs are consistent with the college mission and provided in a manner conventional to community colleges and consistent with Eligibility Requirements.

9. Academic Credit

The team found that Cuyamaca College awards academic credit in a manner conventional for community colleges and consistent with generally accepted good practices.

10. Student Learning And Achievement

The team reviewed Cuyamaca College student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees and how the college uses assessment results to make improvements.

11. General Education

Cuyamaca College has a clear general education component in its degree programs, and writing and computational skills are reflected in these requirements. Students are introduced to several areas of knowledge, consistent with the practices of California community colleges. General education courses are consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

12. Academic Freedom

The team found no evidence that faculty and staff were restricted or denied opportunities to think, speak, or write regarding issues involving academic values.

13. Faculty

At the time of the accreditation visit, the college had 100 full-time faculty and administrators. The United Faculty (UF) contract states clearly that instructors' responsibilities include the development and review of the curriculum.

14. Student Services

The team reviewed student services provided by Cuyamaca College and found them to be consistent with the needs of the student body and the college mission statement.

15. Admissions

The team found Cuyamaca College admission policies in the college catalog. These policies are consistent with those required of California community colleges.

16. Information And Learning Resources

Cuyamaca College provides access to information and resources to support student learning and enhance the mission of the institution through a variety of Library services and computer labs.

17. Financial Resources

Cuyamaca College has a set of well-defined guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development based upon the mission, values, and goals of the College. Cuyamaca College has retained an adequate financial base to support its programs.

18. Financial Accountability

The team found that Cuyamaca College has undergone external financial audits on an annual basis by a certified public accountant or an appropriate public agency and makes the audits available.

19. Institutional Planning And Evaluation

The team found that the Cuyamaca College planning process is fully integrated at every level and provides ample opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input throughout the entire cycle. This collaborative process results in effective decision-making and fund allocation, creating an environment of respect and innovation.

20. Public Information

Cuyamaca College develops and publishes (via hard copy and web) an annual catalog containing all of the requisite information.

21. Relations With The Accrediting Commission

The self study included a statement, signed by the President of the Board of Trustees and the college President, which assures that the institution adheres to the Eligibility Requirements, Standards, and Policies of the Accrediting Commission.

Accreditation Themes

Dialogue

Cuyamaca College has developed a culture of dialogue and communication that works for the majority of college constituents. There are multiple and varied attempts to keep all employees informed regarding institutional decision-making, activities and matters of institutional quality and improvement. The college provides many opportunities for employees to engage in meaningful dialogue, and the college's integrated planning process further enhances these efforts. Discussion and dialogue occur on a regular basis via the many governance councils and committees, as well as through informal, open office hours offered by the chancellor and the president. In addition, the president's Open Form is offered once each semester, and budget forums are held periodically throughout the academic year.

Communication also occurs through written communications such as the president's monthly board report and updates published by the Innovation and Planning Council, as well as other written documents. The Professional Development Committee organizes workshops and forums for faculty and staff that address a variety of topics including student learning outcomes and student success.

The college has developed a collaborative, participative, respectful culture of communication and dialogue.

Institutional Integrity

The team reviewed sufficient documentation and evidence that demonstrated to the visiting team members that Cuyamaca College represents itself accurately and honestly to its stakeholders. Board policies and established procedures are correctly followed. Publications reviewed by the team were up-to-date and contained relevant information. The college catalog contains accurate information regarding programs and services, as well as policies and procedures and other information important to the external and internal college communities.

The team found a culture based on ethics, honesty, and respect. Students are clearly advised of college expectations and are provided the support necessary to achieve success.

Student Learning Outcomes

The college has achieved great success in developing student learning outcomes at the course and instructional program levels. In 2004 the Academic Senate directed that the Curriculum Committee establish a timeline for incorporating student learning outcomes into all course outlines. This timeline is close to being fulfilled. Beginning in 2005, all new courses were required to include SLOs and linked evaluation measures, and the college has set other timelines with the intent that all courses, programs, and degrees (including distance learning) have student learning outcomes and assessment methods fully developed. The college also organized a student learning outcomes technical review committee as a subcommittee of the Curriculum

Committee. Adequate workshops and training sessions have been scheduled during staff development week.

Cuyamaca College has well-established processes for identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, and the processes are now being applied throughout the college with emphasis on Student Services, which is not as far along as other areas in the college. In addition, the team was concerned that most of the course outlines list numerous objectives reflecting content and skills that are important within the classroom rather than the broader learning outcomes that the students take with them when they leave the course, program, or institution. The team is concerned that course objectives described as student learning outcomes will lead to a difficult assessment by virtue of the sheer number of SLOs involved.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

The Cuyamaca College self study indicates that the college “has a well-defined planning cycle that is comprised of goal setting, resource distribution, implementation, and reevaluation.” The team confirmed that the college’s planning process is comprehensive and fully integrated. The college published its Strategic Plan, 2004-2010, which delineates five key areas of focus based on institutional priorities. Each year the college develops an Annual Implementation Plan which details specific activities with performance milestones. At the end of each year, the Annual Implementation Plan Final Report is published.

The team found that the college’s planning and improvement process is complete and effective, although it would be strengthened by a more regular cycle of evaluating student needs, rather than relying solely on an accreditation survey. Overall, the college employs an exemplary planning cycle comprised of evaluation, goal setting, resource distribution, implementation, and re-evaluation.

Organization

The team confirmed that Cuyamaca College has an organizational structure that is designed to support student learning. The structure defines student learning, and the college provides transitional programs (e.g., basic skills and tutoring services) that support student learning. The planning and research functions of the college provide the means and mechanisms needed to identify student learning outcomes, to evaluate the effectiveness of programs in producing those outcomes, and to make improvements.

With the college experiencing strong growth, it is important that faculty and staff be at a sufficient level to provide the needed services. The Board of Trustees has established an on-going funding source to add new positions, which demonstrates a commitment to providing the organization necessary to meet current and future needs of students.

Institutional Commitments

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Board of Trustees most recently approved Cuyamaca College's mission statement in 2006. The college will review and revise, if necessary, the mission statement on a regular basis as part of its established strategic planning process. The team found that the college provides evidence of commitment to providing high quality education to its students.

Reports of the four standards and related findings, conclusions, and recommendations are as follows:

Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

General Comments

For Standard I, the team reviewed the self study and carefully examined the evidence. The team conducted meetings with members of the college's Standard I committee, members of the President's Cabinet, as well as faculty, staff, and administrators in leadership positions. The team determined that Cuyamaca College is dedicated to fulfilling its mission. The college community reviewed and revised its mission statement in 2006 to better reflect its educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to student learning. The mission serves as the linchpin in its strategic planning process. Strategic planning is participatory and transparent, and drives master planning and budget allocation. The planning process is cyclical and leads to specific institutional improvements.

Findings and Evidence

I.A – Mission

Cuyamaca College has a well defined mission statement that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to student learning. The mission is reviewed and revised as necessary every six years as part of the strategic planning process. The previous mission statement (2002-2006) was common to Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, and the district office. The college revised its mission statement in 2006 as a result of the self study process to better reflect WASC/ACCJC accreditation standards and to better reflect Cuyamaca College's educational purposes, intended student population, and commitment to student learning. The new mission statement was approved in November 2006 by the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Governing Board. The mission statement is published in the college catalog, on the college website, and in various other college publications. It will be reviewed again as part of the next strategic planning cycle beginning in 2011. The mission statement is central to institutional planning and decision making. Strategic planning is built around the college's mission and annual implementation planning is based on specific activities aligned with the strategic plan. Based on the accreditation survey, a large majority of Cuyamaca College's faculty and staff are aware of the college's mission, vision, and values. A majority also agree that the college's planned activities are aligned with its mission, and progress is being made in carrying out these planned activities (Standards I.A.2, I.A.3, I.A.4).

I.B – Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Student learning programs and services are aligned with Cuyamaca College's purposes, character, and student population. The college offers 59 programs leading to the associate degree and 66 programs leading to a certificate. In keeping with the predominant student goal of transfer (declared by 48 percent of students) the college also provides students with the opportunity to complete the University Transfer Studies Degree. The college also has a community education program which offers continuing education noncredit courses and community services courses, workshops, seminars and forums to meet the needs of the community. The ethnic diversity of the college generally reflects the demographics of the communities it serves, although the college may want to consider collecting race and ethnicity data in a way that will allow the institution to better measure the current student population's racial/ethnic make-up (i.e., more accurately measuring Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Native American populations). This has been done to a degree through the academic and student services program review, and changes in academic and student services programs have occurred as a result of the new demographics. However, a more systematic and college-level collection and review of Cuyamaca College's student demographics may more effectively inform the planning of programs and services to address the needs of these emerging populations (Standard I.B.1).

The college has a number of governing councils and committees through which collegial and self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes occurs. A handbook, *Organization & Governance Structures Handbook*, provides information on the charge of committees and councils as well as the times and days each of these meets. Dialogue is also facilitated through open forums, workshops, regular department and division meetings, and newsletters and reports. According to the accreditation survey, a large majority of faculty and a somewhat smaller majority of staff believe they have the opportunity to participate in dialogue with colleagues about how to improve student learning and institutional processes, exercise a substantial voice in establishing college-level procedures, are satisfied with the means of communication at the college, and are satisfied with the opportunities for college staff/faculty to participate in governance. The college has acknowledged plans to investigate the discrepancies between faculty and staff responses in this survey. It may also want to consider measuring faculty, staff and student involvement and satisfaction on a more regular basis (Standard I.B.1).

Through its strategic planning process that involves all constituencies, the college sets and articulates its goals and objectives. A six-year strategic plan (2004-2010) identifies areas of focus with a series of goals and specific activities to be accomplished each year. The Innovation and Planning Council, with input from all planning committees and the Academic Senate, develops an annual implementation plan. This plan sets specific goals each year towards the achievement of the overarching strategic plan. Human, fiscal, technical, and physical resources are allocated in support of these goals. The Innovation and Planning Council receives progress reports and publishes a final report to the college community each year. The final report is evaluated and used to help draft the next year's annual implementation plan. The annual academic and student services master planning process is correlated to the most recent program review and annual department/program plan. It incorporates an annual assessment of the status of the previous years' goals (including those completed, in progress, and not completed) and allows for input into the budgetary process by ranking activities in order of priority. These

planning processes allow for an ongoing cycle of evaluation, review, integrated planning, resources allocation, implementation, and revaluation (Standards I.B.2, I.B.3).

Cuyamaca College has a broad-based planning process that offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies. The main decision-making body of the college, the Innovation and Planning Council, meets bi-monthly, and its membership is representative of all members of the college community. Other planning committees, including the Academic Master Plan, Student Services Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Budget Committee, and Program Review, allow appropriate constituents to participate in the planning process. The Budget Committee works with the President's Cabinet to create a budget plan each year to ensure that the resources necessary to implement the goals of the strategic plan are properly allocated. In times of budget cuts, the college explores strategies to reduce the budget while seeking additional external funding. This broad-based, transparent, and participatory planning process and allocation of resources has led to increased institutional effectiveness (Standard I.B.4).

The college uses assessment results from the District Research Office as well as internally generated data and program reviews to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies. The data are regularly disseminated throughout the college and to the community in a variety of ways and is used in college, program, and department planning and decision making. The college primarily relies on committees to self-assess their own internal planning processes and make modifications based on these assessments. It acknowledges that an integrated review conducted at the institutional level would strengthen the effectiveness of the planning and resource allocation processes (Standards I.B.5, I.B.6).

Cuyamaca College assesses its instructional programs through annual master planning and a five-year program review cycle. Student development and services also participate in a master planning process and a program review on a five-year cycle. These processes and reviews are data driven, requiring both quantitative and qualitative analysis for each program. The college plans to continue this effort by designing a formal evaluation system to assess whether decisions based on varying institutional planning and approval processes have positively impacted institutional effectiveness and learning outcomes (Standard I.B.7).

Conclusions

Cuyamaca College is dedicated to its mission statement and acts purposefully to achieve its stated goals and objectives. The college should be commended on developing a participatory governance planning process that encourages broad participation from all campus constituents. The planning process is fully integrated at every level and provides ample opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input throughout the entire cycle. This collaborative process results in effective decision-making and fund allocation, creating an environment of respect and innovation. Planning is at a sustainable, continuous, quality, and improvement level. The College meets the standard.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the college complete the process of identifying Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees, SLOs for student services, and other areas of the college and develop and implement methods for assessing student achievement of those outcomes. The assessment results should be used to guide improvement (Standards I.B.1, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.f, II.A.3.a-c, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.1.c).

Recommendation 2: The team recommends that the college complete the program review process for all student services and other areas of the college. The college should provide evidence that the program review process evaluates the achievement of student learning outcomes along with other assessments that yield quantitative and qualitative data for analysis, and use the results of these evaluations as the basis of improvement (Standards I.B., II.A.1.a, II.B.1, II B.4).

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Services

General Comments

In general, Standard II of the self study was well written, complete, and well organized. Each sub-standard was answered in a logical manner, leading to a clear picture of the college as it relates to meeting Standard II at this time. The self study describes the college's successful practices and progress towards meeting Standard II.

Student demographics and student achievement data were included in a reasonable format for the reader. A thorough discussion of educational programs and delivery modalities was presented along with appropriate supporting documentation sent to the site visit team, i.e., a catalog and class schedule that, together, yielded a clear picture of college offerings.

Cuyamaca College faculty and staff are proud of the program review process, which is overseen by the Instructional Program Review Committee. The faculty survey indicates that 76.6 percent believe there are clearly identified program review processes for evaluating educational programs. All academic programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle.

The college considers the use of research and analysis in the assessment of student needs and effectiveness of programs. The self study reflects that the college depends on data collected through several sources, including the district's external environmental scan, internal data gathered relative to the student body, and reports generated from the student services and academic program review processes. However, the self study also indicates that a "perception gap" exists between faculty and staff as to the extent to which decision-making is-related to data. Faculty feel more strongly than staff that data influence decision-making. Based on the analysis of data, recommendations for improvement of student achievement and learning are linked to the master planning objectives that may call for appropriate change in curriculum, pedagogy, methods of delivery, and other interventions as appropriate.

There is a comprehensive student learning outcome process. The college began to integrate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in relation to established course objectives into the curriculum both at the course and program level in 2004. There is a goal to complete that process within a four-year timeline. Simultaneously, there is a commitment to identifying how an outcome will be measured, with an emphasis on class assignments as a primary means of evaluating SLOs.

The assessment activities related to SLOs are becoming a focus of the college this fall. The college established an SLO coordinator position to support this effort. A SLO steering committee will become permanent, and the college is committed to continue providing the training for faculty in the assessment of student learning outcomes. Progress has been made over the last four years, and a plan to reach full implementation of SLOs and assessment is evident.

The report indicates that resources are adequate but limited in the support of the educational mission, especially in terms of a need for more full-time faculty. The college states it relies heavily on part-time faculty for instruction and counseling and has "a large issue" with the ratio

of full-time to part-time faculty. The funding provided to the college does not meet all the needs to support the college 2004-2010 Strategic Plan, but is sufficient to meet its basic expenditure requirements.

In addressing the accreditation themes, specifically the theme of dialogue, the college states that an “ongoing, collegial and self reflective dialogue is the cornerstone of Cuyamaca’s participatory culture.” There are numerous venues for dialogue to take place, and data on student success help to identify strategies and objectives of programs in areas across the college. Dialogue has influenced and shaped processes, such as ways to address retention and persistence issues. Workshops are planned to enhance dialogue that is intended to impact institutional assessment and improvement in many areas of student success.

Findings and Evidence

II.A – Instructional Programs

Cuyamaca College has, in recent years, experienced growth in its student population, particularly in the number of more “traditional” students. The influx of these students has changed the mission of the college to become more oriented to transfer, and student need and demand seem to be foremost in the plans that the college develops. The college is to be commended for the development of 19 degrees and 31 certificates since 2001, reflective of its focus on the changing demographics of the student population.

The college offers programs, degrees, and certificates to meet the needs of a diverse student population to include international students. There is a variety of associate degree programs listed in the college catalog. The college has 32 major programs leading to 56 associate degrees and 46 certificates. All degree programs require a minimum of 18 units of coursework specific to the major and include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core (Standard II.A.4).

The curriculum provides a comprehensive offering that meets the needs of transfer; vocational and career education; general education; basic skills in math, English, reading, and English as a Second Language; and continuing education and community services. The college serves the entire district through “Community Learning” by providing courses in a variety of areas. The noncredit program offers courses in 26 areas of interest as noted on page 205 of the college catalog. Community Learning offers a “Professional Development Academy” that strives to meet the training needs of businesses in San Diego and Imperial counties. This is reflected in the Community Learning schedule of classes (Standards II.A.1.a, A.6.a, A.6.c).

The college relies on demographic data, six-year environmental scans, and various annual surveys and reports prepared by the District Research Office to assist in the assessment of current programs and provide direction for new program growth and development. The college may consider requesting that the District Office of Institutional Research provide a “treatment study” to examine the efficacy of a teaching method, a new program, prerequisite, and other similar questions.

In the surveys conducted for the self study, 79.9 percent of faculty respondents and 48.1 percent of the staff respondents feel that institutional planning decisions are driven by research data. In

all, 77.1 percent of respondents on the faculty survey and 56.3 percent on the staff survey feel the resources from the research office provide them with needed information. As noted in the narrative for Standard I, there is a significant discrepancy between faculty and staff responses in the survey, and a more regular means of gauging involvement and satisfaction is needed rather than depending solely on a survey conducted every five or six years as part of the accreditation reaffirmation process.

Classes are scheduled to serve the diverse needs of the students. The college schedules traditional on-campus courses, approximately 85 course sections online, and approximately 60 course sections offered via the “blended” or “hybrid” format. Classes are scheduled full-term, short-term, and on Saturdays. Appropriate courses are offered open-entry/open-exit. Intersession and summer sessions are offered. Study abroad also provides a unique opportunity for students (Standards II.1.b, II.2.d).

Cuyamaca College serves one of the largest Chaldean populations in the United States and several small Indian reservations. Programs have been created, such as the ESL, Arabic, Kumeyaay, and Aramaic language programs, to meet the needs of this and other unique constituents.

Cuyamaca College has a program review process that serves the college well. Instructional programs are reviewed by the Instructional Program Review Committee every five years. Vocational programs are on a biannual cycle of program review. The faculty survey indicated that 77.5 percent of the respondents feel that the program review process is effective in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of individual programs of the college. Program reviews are incorporated into the department/college Academic Master Plan and, along with the Student Services Master Plan, feed into the Annual Implementation Plan of the college. The Annual Implementation Plan strives to align with the college Strategic Plan 2004-2010. District research and data are available for the program review process and are considered in the planning recommendations of the Academic Master Plan and, ultimately, college planning and budget decisions. Instructional departments update their respective Academic Master Plans on an annual basis (Standards II.1.a, II.2.e).

The curriculum process also serves the college well. There is a well functioning Instructional Council and Curriculum Committee. Training for approval of courses is done annually to include new rules and regulations. Online or blended course approval has a separate review process to ensure online course effectiveness. There are 14 citizen advisory committees that support and advise the vocational education programs to ensure current curriculum content and appropriate student learning outcomes. The curriculum process is supported by the Technical Review Subcommittee, and there is appropriate clerical support. The Academic Master Plan Committee, the Instructional Program Review Committee, and the Curriculum Committee, all predominantly composed of faculty, oversee the program review process and the subsequent curriculum processes that include competency levels and student learning outcomes (Standard II.2.c, II.2.e, II.5).

The college has seen substantial growth in its distance learning offerings in recent years. During the fall semester of 2007, the college is offering approximately 85 fully online sections of courses and an additional 60 blended or hybrid sections, about 10 percent of its total number of sections. Student demand has driven the increased number of offerings. Enrollment patterns

indicate that the distance education courses fill quickly. However, the college has limited the number of offerings due to a desire to maintain a balance between traditional courses and online delivery. A substantive change report submitted to the Accrediting Commission in December 2005 indicated that the college has almost 50 percent of the offerings needed to complete three certificate programs and two associate degree programs online.

The distance learning program is currently overseen by the Online Teaching and Learning Committee. Day-to-day operations of the distance education program are currently assigned to one of the college's deans, and the college is in the process of hiring an instructional designer to work with faculty. The Online Teaching and Learning Committee, begun by faculty with an interest in teaching via distance education, has been instrumental in encouraging other faculty to try distance learning delivery, particularly through the initial step of offering a hybrid or blended section (a combination of face-to-face and online instruction). Proposals for new offerings must first gain department chair approval and then separate approval from the Curriculum Committee, a process similar to the one used for traditional classes.

The Online Teaching and Learning Committee, through research on best practices, developed a handbook for online instruction available in print and on the college website. This same subcommittee sponsors a staff development workshop every semester addressing effective teaching and learning within an online mode of instruction. A course entitled "Developing an Online Course" is taught every spring semester and is open to all faculty. The team found that this committee plays a significant role in developing online course guidelines and criteria. The committee recommends faculty training and qualifications to teach online and also recommends technology guidelines for the delivery of online instruction. The committee serves to provide quality control for online teaching and learning.

General Education requirements include comprehensive student learning outcomes. The SLOs for general education are printed in the catalog on page 57. Through the major areas of knowledge and general education courses, student learning supports critical thinking, promotes diversity, and prepares students for the complex personal, social and political and environmental issues of the modern world. A minimum of six course-level outcomes from at least three areas of knowledge are incorporated into all Cuyamaca College courses (Standards II.3.a, II.3.b, II.3.c).

Through the efforts of its Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee, the college has made progress in the development of course level student learning outcomes (SLOs), with the goal that all existing courses will have SLOs by 2008. According to the faculty survey, "86.7% of the respondents believe that faculty routinely incorporate SLOs into their courses." Evaluation and assessment measures are directly linked to SLOs. There is an emphasis for faculty to develop an assessment method "simultaneously" when writing a course level student learning outcome. The faculty plan to include course level SLOs in the course syllabus for students. All course outlines beginning 2007-2008 must include SLOs and assessment methods for those outcomes. The college plans to establish a permanent SLO Committee in 2007-2008 to institutionalize the college's commitment to SLOs. This committee would also support the effort to maintain a regular and systematic cycle of evaluation. Program and degree level SLOs are to be completed by 2010 (Standards II.2.e, II.2.f, II.2.h, II.2.i).

Regular staff development training for faculty is available to assist with the development of SLOs. A Faculty Handbook for Identifying and Measuring Student Learning Outcomes is also

available. The college has initiated dialogue to implement systematic assessment activities as evidenced by numerous discussions in committees such as the Instructional Council and Curriculum Committee, General Education and Academic Policies Committee, and at the department level.

The team noted that course outlines do not demonstrate a clear understanding of the distinction between objectives and learning outcomes. As stated on page 9 of Cuyamaca's *Instructional Faculty Handbook*, "SLOs represent overarching products of the course" and "Outcomes express higher level thinking skills that integrate the content and activities." Most of the course outlines list numerous objectives reflecting content and skills that are important within the classroom rather than the broader learning outcomes that the students take with them when they leave the course, program, or institution. The team is concerned that course objectives described as student learning outcomes will lead to a difficult assessment by virtue of the sheer number of SLOs involved.

The Faculty Handbook is a key resource related to academic freedom and professionally accepted views per Board Policy 4030, which guides faculty regardless of method of instruction. The Academic Senate adopted the American Association of University Professors document, *Faculty Ethics: Expanding the AAUP Ethics Statement*, in agreement to exercise high ethics in the teaching-learning process.

There is a clear expectation that students maintain academic honesty and adhere to a student code of conduct. Statements of such are included in the Student Orientation Handbook and the Student Discipline Procedures Manual, as well as in the college's catalog. Faculty and staff also have expected codes of conduct as provided in the published "Code of Ethics" located in many classrooms, the college catalog, college schedule of classes, and many offices (Standard II.A.7.a, II.A.7.b, II.A.7.c).

II.B – Student Support Services

Cuyamaca College's self-study reflects a high concern for students as they move through their educational experience in terms of student access, progress, learning, and success. The Student Success Committee oversees all aspects of matriculation services, discusses ways to improve student success, and provides advice to the Dean of Counseling and Matriculation. This has led to such activities as follow-up communication to students by letter, student early alert notices, and on-going counseling presentations to students in the classroom. A Title III grant (2004-2009) seeks to increase first-year student retention, provides for the development of a "Student Survival Guide," and promotes online counseling via the "Ask a Counselor" web site. Learning communities were also supported by the Title III grant to improve student retention and success.

Qualitative and quantitative data are analyzed regularly to make decisions regarding the delivery of support services. Since the last accreditation site visit, the student population has become younger and more transfer-oriented. To meet this need, courses have been added, including Mass Communication, Argumentation, Microbiology, Kumeyaay, Ethnobotany, and Introduction to Social Work. The class schedule clearly lays out the articulation of Cuyamaca College courses with the California State University and University of California systems, and two pages are dedicated to San Diego State University, the primary transfer institution for Cuyamaca College students. It also arranges the CSU General Education courses offerings into a Monday-Wednesday, Tuesday-Thursday, and daily grid pattern for ease of student planning (Standard II.B.1).

Students' academic needs are identified primarily through the matriculation process. The college participated in a statewide matriculation survey that indicated that students who participated in all components of the matriculation process succeed at higher rates than those who do not (Standard II.B.1, II.B.3.c).

Student Services recently adopted the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) standards to assist them in identifying SLOs. A timeline was established so that all twelve student services programs would have a thorough and comprehensive review over the course of a four-year cycle. In spring 2006, EOPS, Health & Wellness, and Athletics were reviewed according to the CAS standards. Forty percent of the functional areas completed identifying their SLOs in spring 2007 and the other areas will soon follow (Standards II.B.1, II.B.3.c, II.B.4).

Student Services completed a Student Development and Services Master Plan in Spring 2005. This plan is integrated with the college's planning process. Since that time, advancement has been made in staffing to support student services. A new counselor and Cal Works Specialist were added. Also, vacant positions were filled to include a Dean of Counseling and Matriculation, an EOPS counselor, an Associate Dean of Special Funded Programs, Admissions and Records Specialists, and a Health Services Supervisor. These positions were added or filled after the survey for the self study that indicated only 51 percent of the faculty felt the college provided sufficient human resources to support its educational programs. Improvement has recently been made to provide key services to students (Standard II.B.3.a).

The college catalog is available in hard copy and on the college web site. All of the requisite information is available in the catalog except for a statement on Academic Freedom. All of the requirements for admissions, student fees and degree, certificates, graduation and transfer are included. Every degree includes in the description career opportunities for those seeking a degree in that discipline. All necessary and major policies affecting students are clearly presented on pages 32 to 48 except for Sexual Harassment. The locations or publications where all policies may be found are clearly laid out in the Catalog on page 40. In surveys, 88.1 percent of the students and 98 percent of the faculty claim the annual catalog and other external publications provide accurate information (Standards II.B.1, II.B.2.a, II.B.2.b, II.B.2.c., II.B.2.d, II.B.3.a).

The college has an active Associated Students of Cuyamaca College (ASCC) that provides a myriad of activities. Through participation in clubs, students develop leadership skills and develop valuable career and personal contacts. The Student Affairs Office maintains a Free Speech board in two locations to allow students the opportunity to post their opinions and viewpoints on a variety of subjects. Nearly 77 percent of students indicate that the college fosters an environment of ethical behavior while 90 percent of faculty and 60 percent of staff respondents responded in like manner (Standard II.B.3.b).

Counselors keep abreast of changes that affect students through weekly meetings and conference attendance. Efforts are made to ensure the same level of currency among adjunct counselors through a training program provided twice a year. A training manual was developed and is used, and new adjunct counselors are also required to spend two weeks job shadowing prior to beginning the advising function. Minutes of all counselor meetings are published weekly, and

important information is kept in “Adjunct Binders” that adjunct counselors are expected to review (Standard II B.3.c).

Evaluations of the counseling department are conducted through the official program review process every 5-6 years, and annual assessment occurs through a department master plan update. Activities that are not completed are reviewed for relevancy and continued into the next year’s department master plan if still applicable. Full-time and adjunct counselors are evaluated on a regular basis according to the faculty contract. Classified staff training occurs on a regular basis as well (Standards II.B.3.c, II.B.4).

The college demonstrates its support and commitment to diversity in several ways. The counseling department offers a course, PDC 124, “Lifelong Success,” in which the appreciation of diversity is a key component. The ASCC regularly sponsors college hours and other activities that help students learn about and appreciate diversity. The DSP&S office sponsors a variety of activities to increase the understanding and appreciation of disabilities including a week in October designated as “Disability Awareness Week” (Standard II.B.3.d).

The Student Success Committee, in conjunction with academic departments and the Dean of Counseling & Matriculation, routinely review the District’s assessment instruments. The Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Academic Services regularly validates assessment instruments. The most recent validation of the APS for English placement occurred in spring 2007 (Standard II B.3.e).

In order to assure confidentiality of student files, A&R staff signs a confidentiality statement. In addition, training on confidentiality occurs on a regular basis in all student services’ offices (Standard II B.3.f).

II.C – Library and Learning Support Services

Although the budget allocation for the library collection is now \$30,500, nearly half of the present collection has a copyright date of 1980 or older. The library department chair just completed the first program review for the library. The self study indicates that 71.9 percent of the students surveyed and 74.7 percent of the faculty agree that the library collection is adequate to meet the needs of educational programs. The collection is strengthened by the access students have to appropriate electronic resources (Standard II.C.1.a).

Students have access to a network account and a personalized email account. The Computer Labs located in several areas of the college are open to provide students with computers and access to software for course related assignments (Standard II.C.1.a).

Instructional Media Services (IMS), located in the Library Resource Center, has two full-time staff assigned, an Instructional Media Coordinator, and an Instructional Media Services Technician. This provides the college with the maintenance and update of “smart classrooms,” and training is provided as requested (Standard II.C.1.a).

Improvement in tutoring services has increased since the 2004 Accreditation Midterm Report. However, funding remains an issue as the budget is only 45 percent of what it was in 2003. Grants have supported the Tutoring Center over the past several years, but those will soon be ending, and resources will be needed to maintain the efforts made and the successful gains to

improve tutoring services for students. The student survey related to tutoring indicates there is still room for improvement since only 60.0 percent of the students agreed that assistance in the tutoring labs helped them with their educational needs (Standard II.C.2).

A critical support for online learning is the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) that provides technical support to faculty. The center has 12 workstations with specialized software programs to support the training of faculty and staff. The TLC maintains a Help Desk six days per week for students enrolled in online courses. The self study cites the services of the TLC as evidence of the college's commitment to the improvement of the student learning process and support of the mission of the college (Standard II.C.1.a).

The college incorporates information competency into the curriculum of all general education courses. Upon completion of the general education necessary for an associate degree, students should be able to "identify information resources, apply appropriate tools to acquire information, formulate a search strategy, evaluate acquired information, and recognize alternative information sources," according to page 277 of the self study. Librarians offer a one-unit course titled "Research Methods in an Online World." When new courses are created, instructors must fill out a "Library Resources and Information Competency Support for Course Additions." The librarians worked with individual instructors to create a web site designed to help students find the information they need for a specific assignment. Librarians regularly provide course-specific workshops on research methods and have extensive assistance for students on the Library web page.

The librarians also work to make library materials (books, articles and web sites) and electronic data bases available to all faculty and students on site at the college, and at off-site locations and from home. Equipment and book collections are secured with a low incident of theft. However, one security gate is in need of replacement. Cuyamaca College has interlibrary loan service agreements with Grossmont College and San Diego State University (Standards II.C.b, II.C.c, II.C.d, II.C.1.e).

The Library has just completed its first-ever program review, which identifies its student learning outcomes. The Library has yet to develop methods of assessment for its identified student learning outcomes (Standard II.C.2).

Conclusions

Cuyamaca College has a planning process that involves all constituencies, and needs are identified through the academic and student services master planning process. The college seeks to provide a link between its planning processes, decision making, and resource allocations through its annual planning documents. These documents are tied to the college Strategic Plan. There are Institutional Overarching Planning Agendas in the self study document that assist this process. The Annual Implementation Plan supports the activities to be accomplished as reflected in the six-year Strategic Master Plan (a long range planning document). The college demonstrates a planning process that provides sustainable continuous quality improvement.

Student Services has made progress since the last selfstudy in program review. They enhanced the program review model, and within the next two years, all functional areas within student services should complete the new enhanced program review process. The college program

review process in student services and academic programs reflects a process that yields sustainable continuous quality improvement.

The college is to be commended for filling vacancies in student services in order to continue to provide a full complement of support services to students. It has also addressed the needs of a growing Chaldean and Latino population by hiring bilingual counselors speaking Arabic and Spanish, respectively

At this time, the college is well underway to produce student learning outcomes for general education and at the course level. Student Services is also well underway in producing learning outcomes appropriate to the various functional areas. There is evidence that assessment efforts are underway. The evidence available and interviews with faculty and instructional administrators confirmed the college is currently in the developmental stage of SLOs. The college meets this standard.

Recommendations

See Recommendations 1 and 2 in Standard I.

Recommendation 3: The team recommends that the college and the district ensure that the number of full-time faculty and staff is adequate to support the instructional needs and student support services to improve student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution (Standard II.C 1.a, III.A.2).

Standard III Resources

General Comments

The team was impressed with the level of dedication and pride in Cuyamaca College demonstrated by the faculty, staff, students, and administrators . Through the years there have been shortages in human, physical, and financial resources, yet the college appears to remain relatively stable. This accomplishment is attributable to the college placing its priorities on student learning and integrated planning that is constantly updated. The collaborative and comprehensive way that the college plans is especially evident in the facilities master plan. The plan was developed several years ago and is regularly reviewed, but no significant changes have been made. This reflects how comprehensive the original plan is, and, of equal importance, the newly constructed facilities are attractive, functional, and meet the intended needs.

With the passage of Proposition R and State Proposition ID, the college had the resources to complete the construction of the Student Center, the Communications Arts Building, and the Science and Technology Mall. Funds were also available to resurface the track, expand parking, and enhance the bus stop. These facilities are attractive and functional and will allow the college to expand and create instructional programs and improve the level of services available to students.

The college is very advanced in technology and is organized in its planning to procure hardware and software. The college identifies the need for computers and, with support from the district, a bid process is used. The new Science and Technology Mall has all computer workstations equipped, and all classrooms are mediated.

The college receives most of its funding through a district budget allocation model based primarily on FTES generation. Cuyamaca accounts for approximately 30 percent of the district FTES both in total FTES and nonresident FTES. In 2004-2005, total unrestricted general fund income *for the district* was approximately \$79 million, a relatively low amount considering the size of the district. The total unrestricted general fund income for the district in the 2007-2008 adopted budget has increased to \$95.6 million, of which approximately \$28.2 million is allocated to Cuyamaca College. Adjustments are applied to both colleges, including but not limited to assessment for district-wide items (e.g., contribution to the 5 percent reserve mandated by the governing board), assessment for district services, additional funds for accreditation, and funding for additional faculty and staff. In addition, each college and district maintains balances from the previous year. For Cuyamaca College, there was also a small college allocation of \$607,490. The 2007-2008 total net allocation for the college is approximately \$27 million.

This is a critical year for the district. The district must reach an FTES base level of 18,049 to avoid a reduction of State funding of \$2.2 million.

Findings and Evidence

III.A – Human Resources

Because the college has not been able to hire the desired number of faculty and staff, the college has not been able to fully develop existing programs and grow as many new programs and services as planned. The shortfall of faculty and staff has also negatively impacted continuity of some of the operations, achievement of college goals, and adequate participation on governance committees and task forces (Standard III.A.2).

The college, with support from the district, appears to have all the appropriate procedures as required in Standard III.A.1.a – e in place and documented including hiring procedures and evaluations. There is a written code of ethics which is regularly publicized. There is also periodic district-wide review of these procedures (Standards III.A.1.a, III.A.1.b, III.A.1.c, III.A.1.d, III.A.3.a, III.A.3.b).

The 2001 accreditation team recommended, “The college and district should ensure that formal evaluation of part-time faculty be completed in a timely manner, with consideration for maintaining appropriate protections for faculty and students as embedded in current practices.” While the college and the district appear to have implemented this recommendation when taken literally, it’s uncertain whether the college and district completely addressed the findings that led to this recommendations. The primary reason for labeling the former process as generally “ineffective,” was because of the *delay in formal feedback*. Both the timeliness and the formality of the feedback were the issues, and it was not readily apparent that they have been adequately addressed. (Standard III.A.1.b.)

The college has incorporated diversity awareness into its Annual Implementation Plan and is in alignment with one of the district diversity goals. The college has made several attempts to promote diversity in the hiring process, conducted workshops, and sent faculty to a course on learner-centered classroom environment to better serve high-risk students. The accreditation survey reflects the success of these efforts. Despite the commendable efforts, it was not evident that the college has been successful in achieving the district goal ensuring that faculty and staff reflect the demographics of the community service area. The team also recognizes that there have been very few hiring opportunities over the past several years (Standards III.A.4.a, III.A.4.b.).

In examining the accreditation survey, there is a lower level of agreement and a larger number of neutral responses by the staff. It appears many feel that they do not have an opportunity to participate in decision making (Standard III.A.4.c).

The college has made attempts to increase the amount of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. Based on the accreditation survey, a relatively high percentage of the faculty are satisfied with the professional development opportunities. The staff satisfaction rate is significantly lower (Standards III.A.5.a, III.A.5.b).

III.B – Physical Resources

Facilities planning is fully integrated with institutional planning. The college master plan 2000 serves as the primary planning document incorporating educational and facilities planning

directions through 2015 when the college forecasts an enrollment of 15,000 students. The Facilities Master Planning Council meetings are held monthly with membership representative of all college constituents. The Facilities Committee regularly reviews the facilities master plan and, to the college's credit, there has been no significant change reflecting the fact that the original plan was comprehensive and had wide support from the college community (Standards III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b).

The campus is attractive and well-maintained, and the college should be commended on how the new buildings blend with the surrounding environment. The new buildings reflect new technology and innovation, yet do not detract from the "rural" features of the landscape (Standard III.B.1.b).

It appears through reviewing documents and visiting facilities during the visit, the facilities are safe, secure and provide an environment conducive to learning (Standards III.B.1.a, III.B.1.b).

III.C – Technology Resources

Cuyamaca College does have a technology plan that is used in the decision-making process and integrated with other plans such as the facilities master plan and budgeting. The new Science and Technology Mall was pre-wired with fiber, has 10 computer labs, smart classrooms, and most importantly, has a computer at each and every station where one was intended. In addition, not all computer classrooms were designed alike but instead were designed based on the specific curriculum. The college also provides on-line classes and also has a dedicated counselor to provide on-line counseling (Standards III.C.1.b, III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d, III.C.2).

The college has plans which are regularly reviewed for the maintenance and replacement of equipment and infrastructure. The college currently uses and continues to explore supplemental funding sources to meet technology needs (Standard III.C.1.c).

Comments from staff at the college and the district confirm that the working relationship between the respective Information Services staffs is very positive. They work collaboratively and their managers should be commended for their effort to work as a team (Standard III.C.1.a).

III.D – Financial Resources

Budget plans are closely coordinated with other plans such as the Strategic Plan 2004-2010, the Annual Implementation Plan, Academic Master Plan, and the Student Services Master Plan. Over the years, the state allocation to the district has been limited; that in turn limits the allocation to the college. On the one hand, the limited financial resources has not allowed Cuyamaca to implement as many of its plans as the college would like to. On the other hand, because of the excellent planning effort, the college knows where it wants to devote resources and does not need to waste time and energy developing plans after the allocation has been determined (Standard III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b).

The primary source for income is the unrestricted general fund allocation from the district based on FTES generation. For Cuyamaca College, this amounts to approximately 30 percent of the total district allocation. From this allocation, the college must cover expenses such as salaries and benefits, district-wide expenses such as the mandated 5 percent reserve, and district services, which includes the salaries and benefits of district personnel. Whereas the general fund allocation is based on FTES, there is other income that is based on other factors; for example, the

revenue from Proposition R was divided between the two colleges based on square footage. The allocation amounts as well as the method are published in the district tentative and adopted budgets (Standards III.D.1.d, III.D.2.b, III. D.2.c).

The district does earmark funds for long term liabilities and is now setting aside funds for retiree benefits (Standard III.C.1.c).

The district also has an external auditing firm that conducts audits annually, and there were no major findings of discrepancies reported (Standards III.D.2.a, III.D.2.e).

Reported in the executive summary of 2005/2006, internal audits included recommendations for a written plan for ASCC spending with guidelines for cash advances and the need to review receipts to ensure spending was in line with the guidelines. Another recommendation was related to procedures for the use of procurement cards. The team was not able to verify the college's statement that it had implemented the procedures for the use of procurement cards. (Standards III.D.2.d, III.D.2.e).

In a current report, Cuyamaca College had a headcount enrollment increase of 12.3 percent fall 2007, and based on year-to-date actuals and projections for the spring, the college is expected to increase FTES by 8.09 percent and thus would meet its 2007-2008 target (Standard III.D.2.c).

Conclusions

Although there are plans to add faculty and staff in the immediate future, it appears that more human and financial resources will be required to meet student needs generated by growth and program expansion. The number of vacancies that still appear on the organization charts and the construction of new facilities necessitate additional staffing.

Recognizing that the part-time faculty evaluation process is included in the contract, there are limitations on what can be done to improve the timeliness. In past responses, it was pointed out that contributing to the poor timeliness of feedback was the absence of an evaluation clerk. The team was not able to determine if this continues to be a cause of the problem.

The college has not been able to make significant changes to the faculty and staff reflecting the demographics of the college's service area. The college and the district are aware of the issue, and the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources chairs a newly created district-wide diversity task force.

The college has a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan that incorporates input from all the constituents. As new facilities are planned and built, faculty, staff, and administration ensure that each facility meets the specified requirements. Although the college informally reviews the detail of a newly constructed building, it may want to consider a formal "debriefing" to ensure it identifies all the positive and negative aspects of a project which might be useful to consider for new projects.

Cuyamaca College appears to make good use of technology should be commended for accomplishments considering the limited general fund resources. With the support of the

district, the college provides e-mail service to all students and provides online services such as on-line counseling.

The accreditation survey results indicated there was general satisfaction with technology at Cuyamaca College.

The college does an excellent job in promoting dialogue and participatory governance. The college budget committee meets regularly and reviews budget distribution, reviews requests for additional funding, and makes recommendations to the Innovation and Planning Council, which in turn advises the college president.

The 2007-2008 unrestricted general fund allocation to Cuyamaca, coupled with the special allocation by the governing board for faculty and staff, should allow the college to accomplish more of its annual implementation plan goals.

With the college receiving additional funds to add faculty and staff, the addition of new facilities and, most importantly, the energy and dedication of the faculty, staff and administration, the college should be in relatively good position to continue to grow in FTES production.

Because of the circumstances influencing the visitation, there is no conclusion as to whether the college implemented the recommendations of the 2005/2006 internal audit. However, if they have not been addressed, the college needs to implement the recommendations of the 2005/2006 audits or have justification for not doing so (Standards III.D.2.d, III.D.2.e).

During the visitation, wild fires devastated many of the communities surrounding the Cuyamaca College. The college itself was a FEMA recovery center. The college will need to carefully observe what impact this catastrophe has on its spring enrollment to determine if the campus needs to make an adjustment to its current plan of allocating resources (Standards III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b).

Cuyamaca College meets this standard.

Recommendations

See recommendations 1 and 2 in Standard I.

See recommendation 3 in Standard II.

Recommendation 4: The team recommends that the college improve communication with classified staff by engaging in dialogue that contributes to increased participation in planning and decision making. This dialogue must include formal and informal communication links leading to equally accessible information and contributions by classified staff to plans and decisions leading institutional change and improvement (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4, III.A.4, IV.A.1, IV.A.3).

STANDARD IV Leadership and Governance

General Comments

Standard IV deals with leadership and governance at all levels of the college and district. It has two main components: decision-making roles and processes, and board and administrative organization. This section of the self study for Cuyamaca College describes the consultation process in which all constituencies of the college play a role in the decision-making processes of the college. In fact, the campus community prides itself on the extensive amount of dialogue that takes place among all groups regarding issues and concerns on which a consensus is needed or desired. The processes are outlined for gathering input from various campus constituencies regarding the development of such items as planning and evaluation documents. The key decision-making council at the college, the Innovation and Planning Council, is a group composed of representatives from key committees and includes faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District has as a part of its responsibility to advocate and support the two colleges within the district. The governing board maintains its authority and responsibility for all district policies, and the board creates and adopts a mission statement for the district and approves the mission statements for the two campuses. The district has policies that empower members of the college community to work together for the good of the institution. The principal body for the development of recommendations at the district level is the District Executive Council, which includes representatives from Cuyamaca College.

The portions of the self study document about the college itself are described in more detail, including the duties and responsibilities of the College President, than those addressing the functions of the district. Given the nature of a multi-college district, college employees likely have limited contact with district representatives outside of the meetings of various district-level decision-making and recommending committees. Recent attempts to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the district offices are described in the self study.

Findings and Evidence

IV.A – Decision-Making Roles and Processes

Through its twenty-four committees and six councils, the college provides a wide range of opportunities for the campus community to be involved in both decision-making and in dialogue about the programs and services it offers to students. The depth and variety of committees and councils are described in the self study and in the governance handbook, *Organizational and Governance Structures*. The handbook also includes a variety of organizational charts that describe the connections between the various campus entities and the areas of responsibilities for campus administrators. Based upon surveys taken for the self study and discussions with representatives from various constituency groups, particularly faculty and classified staff, the team feels that the college has created an environment that encourages discussion and dialogue and empowers all members of the college community to participate fully and take initiative in improving practices in which they are involved. The Strategic Plan serves as a guide for decision-making for the college, and its six-year timeline provides the campus with a clear

direction for the upcoming years. Through its regular updates of the various master plans and through its rigorous program review process, the college maintains the involvement of people at all levels of the college and regularly evaluates the success of its decision-making processes. As a part of a multi-campus district, Cuyamaca College also has faculty, staff, administrative, and student participation in several district committees, all of which are described in the *District Governance Structure and District Committee Structure* handbooks (Standards IV.A, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5).

The college has an Academic Senate that provides leadership in making recommendations regarding student learning, particularly through its Curriculum, General Education, and Academic Policies and Procedures Committees and through the participation of its members in the Program Review Committee. The senate has been effective in setting a timeline for the completion of the development stage of student learning outcomes across the campus and has begun the work also of establishing guidelines for the development of methods of assessing those outcomes. The Academic Senate has set the publication of the 2008-2009 college catalog as the deadline for inclusion of student learning outcomes and methods of assessment in all courses, whether new or revised (Standard IV.A.2.b).

The results of the campus employee survey for accreditation indicate that the classified employees of the college either feel disassociated from the decision-making process or perhaps are unaware of the campus processes. In its self-study, the college has expressed a desire to survey classified staff members further to determine the reasons for the apparent sense of dissatisfaction or neutrality felt by members of the classified staff. The governance and decision-making processes should also continue to be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the college plans that are updated on an annual basis, such as the Strategic Plan, the Academic and Student Services Master Plans, and the Annual Implementation Plan, are successfully linked to each other (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, IV.A, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5).

The college had a consistent record of honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies, including the Accrediting Commission. The college submitted a midterm report to the Commission in 2004 and a progress report in 2005. It has also notified the Commission regarding a potential need to file a substantive change report involving the potential for offering complete certificate and degree programs through distance learning. The college developed a fair and comprehensive self study in anticipation of its site visit, involving many members of the campus community in the completion of this document and the collection of the accompanying evidence (Standard IV.A.4).

IV.B – Board and Administrative Organization

Cuyamaca College is a part of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, which is overseen by a five-member, publicly elected Board of Trustees. Board policies grant ultimate responsibility for the district's programs and services to the board, and the board oversees the selection of the chancellor through a policy requiring the development of a hiring process when a vacancy occurs. The board has, since 2001, undergone a comprehensive review of numerous board policies through the use of the Community College League of California's Policy and Procedure Service. One of the most recent policies to be updated outlines the board's code of ethics/standards of practice, including a description of the actions to be taken in the event of a violation of the code of ethics. The district has in place most of the policies and procedures recommended by ACCJC standards, and those and other policies are available through the

district website (Standards IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.c, IV.B.1.d, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.h, IV.B.1.j).

Board members participated in workshops relating to the accreditation standards at statewide trustee meetings, and representatives of the Accrediting Commission have conducted workshops and presentations in the district on the standards. The previous president of the board served on the writing team for Standard IV, and members received periodic updates on the self study processes at both campuses in the district while they were underway. The final draft of the self study document was approved by the board and signed by its president. Additionally, trustees participated in campus meetings and at a special meeting of the board held in conjunction with the team visit (Standard IV.B.1.i).

Although the board has adopted a policy regarding its self-evaluation, no administrative procedures accompany this policy to ensure that the board consistently and regularly evaluates itself and uses that information for improvement. Based upon the self study and interviews with trustees, the team concludes that the board has evaluated itself sporadically and informally in recent years. Likewise, the board has a policy that advocates ongoing development activities for members, including orientations for new trustees. However, the board has yet to develop a set of procedures to ensure a consistent, ongoing board development program. While the board has policies regarding the selection of the chancellor and for evaluating the chancellor, no similar policies exist for selecting and evaluating the college presidents. The chancellor currently evaluates the presidents on an annual basis using an instrument designed for all members of Chancellor's Cabinet, and the process for hiring college presidents is developed on an ad hoc basis when a vacancy occurs (Standards IV.B.1.f, IV.B.1.g).

The college president is given appropriate authority to lead at the college level, and she has a number of administrators who are delegated specific areas of responsibility on campus. Through the various planning, budgeting, and governance committees and councils, particularly the Innovation and Planning Council, she works with administrators, faculty, classified staff, and students to ensure that the college follows its stated mission and provides appropriate programs and services for its students. She was instrumental, for example, in the development of the college's strategic plan, and she oversees the widespread distribution of data and explanations of processes to the campus community for use in discussions and decision making. The college president is very involved in the community served by Cuyamaca College and is active in several statewide organizations. She has been particularly active in a consortium including other community colleges and universities in the area. Surveys conducted for the self study and interviews with campus personnel indicate widespread satisfaction with the president's performance of her duties and responsibilities (Standards IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.b, IV.B.2.c, IV.B.2.d, IV.B.2.e, IV.B.3.e).

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District offices provide services related to human resources, fiscal affairs, and information technology, including research. Distribution of state funds is on the basis of full-time equivalent students, with Grossmont receiving 70 percent and Cuyamaca receiving 30 percent. Through the district's "economy of scale factor," Cuyamaca receives an additional allocation (totaling about \$600,000 for the current fiscal year) as the smaller college in the district. The allocation of funding has led to disagreement among the two colleges and district officials. The survey conducted for the self study indicates that faculty and staff members feel that the distribution formula is fair but that the college does not

receive sufficient funding to achieve its goals, particularly those included in its strategic plan (Standards IV.B.3.c, IV.B.3.d).

The delineation of responsibilities between the district and the college is only somewhat clear to the campus community. The self study includes a chart outlining many district and college functions described in Standard IV, developed through participation of representatives of both colleges' self study committees and a representative of the district offices. The self-study also includes a description of "District and College Functions and Organizational Relationships." The percentages of faculty and staff expressing satisfaction with the services provided by the district are smaller than for other questions asked in the survey conducted for the self study. The campus community seems more familiar and comfortable with processes at the college level, and campus interviews and the self study planning agenda indicate a desire for greater clarity of the board and district processes, especially in terms of the evaluation of district-wide administrators (Standards IV.B.3, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.f, IV.B.3.g).

Conclusions

The college meets the standards that address leadership and governance at the college level, including those pertaining to the college president. Structures are clearly in place for the development and implementation of plans and processes, and the roles of the various members of the campus constituencies are outlined in various documents. The self study survey revealed widespread agreement that the campus structures are successful. The college should, however, attempt to determine the causes of the levels of dissatisfaction or neutrality expressed in the accreditation self study survey by classified staff members and should develop or refine methods for increasing the inclusion and participation of classified employees in the decision-making and dialogue of the campus.

The district meets many of the standards relating to its functions, but the college could benefit from greater clarity about the ways in which decisions are made and subsequently communicated to the rest of the district community. Dialogue at the district level and throughout the district does not appear to be as widespread and effective as at the college level.

The district fails to meet the standards fully in several areas involving the Board of Trustees, particularly in the area of policy development. Although the trustees appear to have begun addressing some of the areas that are deficient through a review of existing district policy, they need to develop process and procedures that relate to the board's self-evaluation and to new trustee orientation and continuing board development. The board also needs to develop and adopt policies and procedures regarding the selection of and evaluation of the college presidents to match those involving the chancellor's selection and evaluation.

Recommendations

Recommendation 5: The team recommends that the college, chancellor, and district develop and implement strategies for the improvement of dialogue among the various entities in the district, leading to improved relationships and collaboration among and between the colleges and the district (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2).

Recommendation 6: The team recommends that the district, using appropriate consultation, develop and implement policies and procedures that lead to effective leadership and governance throughout the district. Specifically, the Board of Trustees must

- establish and implement a formal process for consistent and regular self-evaluation for inclusion in its policies and by-laws (Standard IV.B.1.g).
- establish and implement formal policies and procedures for the selection of and regular evaluation of the college president (Standard IV.B.1.j).