EVALUATION REPORT

Saddleback College
28000 Marguerite Parkway
Mission Viejo, California 92692

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission
For Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Saddleback College on October 19 through October 21, 2010

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October 2010

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Summary of the Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Saddleback College

DATE OF VISIT: October 18-21, 2010

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Joan Smith, Interim Chancellor, Yosemite Community College District

A ten member accreditation team visited Saddleback College in mid-October for the purpose of evaluating how well the institution is achieving its stated purposes, analyzing how well the college is meeting the Commission Standards and providing recommendations to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) regarding the status of the college.

Saddleback College began serving students in the fall of 1968. The college is proud to note that on Valentine’s Day in 1967, residents of the rural southern half of Orange County approved the creation of a community college, dubbing it the “Sweetheart of Orange County.” Saddleback College is now a large urban college on a 200 acre campus serving more than 26,000 students each semester. It is part of the South Orange County Community College District with Irvine Valley College.

In preparation for the visit, team members attended an all-day training session on September 8, 2010, conducted by the ACCJC and studied Commission materials prepared for visiting teams. Team members read carefully the college’s self study report, including the recommendations from the 2004 visiting team, and assessed the evidence provided by the college on flash drives and reviewed data on the college’s web site.

Prior to the visit team members completed written evaluations of the self study report and began identifying areas for further investigation and review. On the day before the formal beginning of the visit, Standard IV team members visited the district office and met with the chancellor and vice chancellors. Additionally, the team members spent the afternoon discussing their views of the written report and materials provided by the college, and reviewing evidence and prior reports.

During the visit, the team met with approximately 150 faculty, staff, administrators, all seven members of the Board of Trustees, and the president of the college as well as various administrators both at the college and district. In addition, the team visited (ATEP) Advanced Technology Educational Park, an off-campus site in Tustin that is part of Irvine Valley College; additionally, Saddleback College offers courses at this location. The team also
attended two open meetings to allow for comments from any member of the campus or local community.

Saddleback College staff prepared well for the team’s visit beginning with developing an organized and well-written self study report. The team room was spacious, comfortable, and contained all the information that the team needed to complete their work. Team requests both before and during the visit were quickly met by college faculty and staff. In addition to open forums and one-on-one interviews, the team had numerous opportunities to observe Saddleback College dialogue in action during meetings and feedback about the accreditation process was given freely and candidly in open forums. Both academic and classified senate meetings were scheduled during the team visit to include the team so they could observe the college “dialogue in action.” It is important to note, that team members were greeted with hospitality and candor in every interaction and were provided with open access to all documents, faculty, staff, administrators, and students needed to gather evidence related to the accreditation standards. In sum, the college was well prepared and ready for the team’s visit.

The team prepared for the visit by reviewing the Saddleback College Self Study Report, responses to the previous accreditation team report, college publications, such as catalog and schedule, and online resources as well as evidence provided on a flash drive. The unfilled elements of recommendations of the 1998 and 2004 teams were incorporated in a 2010 recommendation crafted by this visiting team.

Overall, the team perceives the college and its community of faculty, staff, students and administrators to be thoughtful, creative, caring, and very optimistic. Specifically, team members noted the following commendations:

1. The team commends the college for the positive change in campus climate. The team observation of Saddleback College was that of a college and its community of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to be academically and programmatically engaged, creative, and optimistic with respect to their institution. The pride everyone has in the campus connection to the community, the transfer rate, and esprit de corps is notable.

2. The team commends the college for its development of a 20-year facilities needs assessment that includes scheduled maintenance, renovation and new buildings.

3. The team commends the college on the leadership role the academic senate and its committees have taken in championing the development and implementation of student learning outcomes and program reviews.
4. The team commends the college for its efforts in strategic planning and integrating that with the college resource allocation process.

5. The team commends the college faculty and staff who support the Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) to ensure quality online and mediated instruction.

6. The team commends the college for creating and institutionalizing a transfer culture on campus and the Transfer Center staff's commitment to a leadership role in supporting students' success.

**Major Findings and Recommendations of the 2010 Visiting Team**

As a result of the October 2010 visit, the team made eleven recommendations; six district recommendations and five college recommendations:

**District Recommendations:**

1. The teams recommend that the chancellor develop and implement both a strategic short-term and long-term plan that is inclusive of the planning at the colleges and that this planning structure drive the allocation of district resources for the colleges, Advanced Technology Education Park (ATEP), and the district (I.B.4).

2. The teams recommend that the district and the colleges develop and implement a resource allocation model driven by planning that includes all district funds and is open, transparent, inclusive, and that is widely disseminated and reviewed/evaluated periodically for effectiveness (I.A.1., I.B., III.D.1.a., III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.1.d., III.D.2.b., III.D.3., IV.B.3.c).

3. The teams recommend that the college, district administrators, faculty and staff develop a communications process among the entities on key issues of district wide concern including academic calendar, planning, (ATEP) Advanced Technology Education Park, technology and building priorities (Standards IV.A.2., IV.B.3).

4. The teams recommend that the Board of Trustees widely communicate the results of its self evaluation process annually and use this as the basis for improvement (IV.A.5., IV.B.1.g.).

5. The teams recommend that the Board of Trustees develop a clearly defined policy for a code of ethics which must include dealing with violations of the Board's code of ethics (III. A.1.d, IV.B.1.h.).
6. The teams recommend that the district provide a clear delineation of its functional responsibilities, the district level process for decision making and the role of the district in college planning and decision making. The district should perform a regular review of district committees, conduct an assessment of the overall effectiveness of services to the colleges and communicate the results of those reviews (IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.b., IV.B.3.e., and IV.B.3.f).

**College Recommendations:**

1. Although the college and its constituent groups have achieved a collegial working relationship with the current president to address issues with a new optimism, the college does not have this same type of relationship with the district leadership and the Board of Trustees.

   The team recommends elements from both Recommendation 7 of the 1998 Accreditation Team and Recommendation 6, B and C of the 2004 visiting team that the district and Board of Trustees support the work of the college by:

   - **B.** “Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college” (IV.A.1., IV.A.2., IV.B.2., and IV.B.3.); and

   - **C.** “Enhancing the college and district communication structure so that it is clear to everyone who the responsible party is for making decisions and how those decisions are or will be made.” (IV.A.1., IV.A.2., IV.B.1., IV.B.2., and IV.B.3.).

2. The team recommends that the college address the need for both maintenance and new facilities funds and use these funds to address the current safety, accessibility and educational needs of the students (III.B.1.a., III.B.1.b.).

3. The team recommends that the commitment to equity and diversity be demonstrated through multiple means including an updated Student Equity Plan and greater faculty involvement on the Equity and Diversity Committee (I.A., I.A.2.d., II.B.3.d., III.A.4., III.A.4.a.).

4. The team recommends that the faculty have as a component of their evaluation effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes (IIIA.1.c.).
5. The team recommends that a Student Services strategic plan be developed and implemented to address issues including campus accessibility; DSPS separate locations; International Students Office accessibility and visibility; the long wait list for EOPS students; and Information Technology infrastructure, support and training (II.B.3.a., II.B.4.).
Accreditation Evaluation Report for
Saddleback College
October 18-21, 2010

Introduction

Saddleback College, located in the city of Mission Viejo, is the older of the two separately accredited colleges in the South Orange Coast County Community College District (SOCCCD), which also includes Irvine Valley College (IVC), located in the City of Irvine, as well as the new Advanced Technology and Education Park (ATEP), located in the city of Tustin.

When Saddleback College was founded in 1967, south Orange County was a large rural area with a sparse population clustered in quiet, isolated towns and communities. Despite the economic downturn of the early 1990s and the huge impact of the Orange County bankruptcy declaration in 1994, it has recovered and recognizes itself as one of the nation’s most prosperous and dynamic areas, desired by major businesses for its potential as a location for corporate headquarters and by individuals for its scenic location.

The service area of Saddleback College includes the cities and communities of Aliso Viejo, Capistrano Beach, Coto de Caza, Dana Point, Dove Canyon, Emerald Bay, Foothill Ranch, Ladera Ranch, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Las Flores, Mission Viejo, Ranch Santa Margarita, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, and Trabuco Canyon, as well as parts of Lake Forest and Laguna Woods.

Educational levels within the region are quite high, with the numbers steadily increasing over time. The overall high school graduate rate of the service area is 2006 was 93.5 percent, and this is expected to rise to 94.6 percent by 2011. Moreover, approximately 28.9 percent of the population attained at least a bachelor’s degree, an increase of close to 2 percent over 2000. This is expected to increase to 30.3 percent by 2011, according to the college.

Responses to Recommendations of the Previous Evaluation Team

Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the college create a formal process for the regular review of the mission statement. This process should:

A. Use college governance and decision making structures (Standards IA.3, IA.4).
B. Be institutionalized through college publications and practices (Standards IA.2, IA.4).
C. Ensure that the mission guide college planning and decision making (Standard IA.4).
D. Allow for the implementation of revisions as appropriate to assure continuous improvement of college efforts to accomplish the mission (Standards IA.6, IA.7).

Findings from the 2005 progress report led the visiting team to conclude that the college had fully addressed this recommendation. The report states the college “continues to review its mission statement through its governance structure” and that “the mission statement is embedded in and guides its planning and decision-making processes.”

Recent restructuring of the college’s planning groups and implementation of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan and development of the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan provide evidence that the process for regular review of the mission statement has been sustained to the present. The college relies on its college governance structure and process to annually update the mission statement. The mission guides college planning and decision making at the college and program levels.

The college has fully addressed and satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

The college fully develop, implement, and coordinate an integrated college planning and evaluation structure by:

A. Updating the educational master plan annually at the college and department levels and using the master plan for decision making and resource allocation (Standards I.A.4, I.A.6, I.B.4, II.A.2e, and IIA.2f);
B. Refining the focus of institutional research so that research and information are used and integrated systematically in planning, decision making, and program review structures for ongoing institutional improvement (Standards I.A.4, I.A.5, I.A.6, I.A.7, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, II.A.1, and II.A.2);
C. Identifying intended institutional and student learning outcomes, coordinated with the college mission statement, and measuring progress towards accomplishment (Standards
I.A.1, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, and II.A.1);
D. Coordinating program review more thoroughly with the educational master plan, department plans, and decision-making processes (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4);
E. Requiring and implementing program review for all departments, including instructional, student services, and administrative departments (Standards II.A.1, II.A.2, II.B.3, and II.B.4)
F. Linking facilities, technology and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college (standards I.B, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, and III.D.1.d); and,
G. Publishing and widely disseminating the completed planning and evaluation process (Standards I.A.4, I.B).

Since the college’s last comprehensive self study in 2004 the college has made steady progress in addressing this recommendation, with each of the visiting teams noting ongoing achievements. The Focused Midterm Visiting team noted that “the college had updated its Educational and Facilities Master Plan, hired a new Research Specialist dedicated to program review and assessment, made admirable progress in institutionalizing and measuring student learning outcomes, fully implemented a program review process that is linked to planning, provided software support to enhance the review process and increased the means by which it communicates progress made in strategic planning and the work of the PBC to the campus community.” The visit at that time validated that there was “commitment to a planning and decision-making process that was inclusive of all constituent groups.”

Two notes of encouragement were made by the 2007 Focused Midterm Visiting team regarding this recommendation. These were to “continue developing and implementing the process by which facilities, technology and human resources planning is integrated into the overall strategic planning process and to develop a process for program review/administrative effectiveness evaluations and reports for the District-level offices.”

The 2010 team noted that the planning process itself is well described in the Saddleback College Governance and Organization Manual and made available on the college’s planning website. Program review is required every two years for all vocational programs and once every five years for all other instructional programs. Student support and administrative units complete reviews on a five-year cycle. All departments of the college provided annual updates and found them acceptable. A key component of all program reviews is the inclusion and analysis of student learning outcomes or administrative unit outcomes, as appropriate to the area.

Refinements have been made to program review for instructional program, student support and administrative units, and the process is well supported by the Educational Planning and Assessment Committee. Refinements to program review have strengthened the integration of resource allocation with planning and review. Two Strategic Plans have been developed since the last comprehensive visit and annual updates on the goals and strategies of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan were published and made widely available to constituents. Further refinements were made to the 2010-2013
Strategic Plan. The Plan has measurable goals for each of the four strategic directives it outlines, thereby facilitating annual reviews that are data-driven and the team found them acceptable.

*The college has fully addressed and satisfied this recommendation.*

**Recommendation 3**

The College develop and implement student learning outcomes across the college by:

A. Developing measurable learning outcomes for all courses, degrees, certificates, programs and services (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.c, and II.A.2.b)

B. Defining and instituting research, procedures for measuring, assessing, and tracking learning outcomes (Standards I.B.2, I.B.3, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, and II.A.2b); and

C. Creating a staff development program to educate and train all pertinent faculty and staff members in the identification assessment, and evaluation of student learning outcomes (Standards I.B.4, II.A.2.d, III.A.5)

The self study reports that all courses and programs have identified SLOs and that these are linked to SLOs at the institutional level. The hiring of a full-time research specialist dedicated to supporting the assessment of these SLOs is an indication of the college’s commitment to the outcomes assessment process. The creation of the Institute for Teaching and Learning which provides training opportunities throughout the year for faculty on assessment and on methods for improving teaching and learning serves as a further indication of the college’s commitment to support the ongoing assessment of SLOs and to ensure that faculty are equipped with knowledge and skills to adapt pedagogy in response to assessment findings. As a joint venture of the Educational Planning and Assessment Committee, the Basic Skills Initiative, and the Distance and Online Education Committee, the Institute for Teaching and Learning offers faculty workshops and training on a variety of topics, including instructional and course design, teaching strategies, best practices in online teaching, Basic Skills across the curriculum, and the use of assessment tools used on campus.

The college has made considerable progress in the assessment and utilization of student learning outcomes since 2005 and has determined that its programs and services are almost at the proficiency level. It appears that adequate resources in terms of the EPA chair and the research specialist as well as the Campus Climate and ParScore web-based tools to support the assessment process have been dedicated to SLO assessment at the college. The coordination of SLO development, assessment, and reporting is primarily the work of the department chair or a designee. As assessment results accumulate at the course and program levels, the college is faced with the need to determine how to more efficiently and effectively track and report on the ongoing progress of student learning outcomes assessment.
The Educational Planning and Assessment Committee supports the completion of instructional, student support and administrative unit review by providing orientation, guidance and direction for completing the process in a standardized and systematic way. The EPA has produced the *SLO/AUO Handbook: A Guide to A Guide to the Writing, Assessing, and Reporting of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) at Saddleback College* which was revised and updated January 2010. This guide provides clear instructions on the requirements established by the college for assessing at all levels. For example, each course must have a minimum of three to five SLOs, and at least one SLO per course is to be assessed each year. Course-level SLOs and assessment results are currently captured in CurricUNET and program-level assessment data is posted on the Educational Planning and Assessment website.

The EPA Chair explained to the team that the college has discovered that CurricUNET does not meet its needs in capturing assessment results and plans for improvement. Further, it does not support the monitoring of all course SLO assessment and use of results for improvement. The college is currently exploring TracDat as a potential a web-based solution to capture and report on SLOs at multiple levels.

The team observed that the college has not established a clear definition of a “program” for purposes of student learning outcomes assessment. The EPA Chair explained that departments have been allowed to define programs as they see fit for their own areas. In some cases, what faculty has identified as program-level SLOs are actually course-level SLOs for a specific course within the program. Of greater concern to the team, is that the college’s approach toward program-level SLOs has not fully accommodated the assessment of student learning that is intended upon completion of certificates and degrees. The college is aware of the need to reconsider its approach to program-level SLO assessment, and this was demonstrated by a presentation developed by the EPA in August 2010 entitled “Rethinking Program SLOs” and through conversations the team had with the EPA Chair, the team determined that Saddleback College is on the proficiency level of the student learning outcomes Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness. The team encourages the college to continue its efforts to clearly determine what it means by program-level student learning and to ensure that student learning at the certificate and degree level is identified and assessed and that all parties concerned at Saddleback College are defining programs in the same manner (II.A.2.i).

Furthermore, in order to ensure that the college reaches a level of proficiency in the assessment of student learning outcomes, it will need to find ways to demonstrate that students are aware of the goals and purposes of the courses and programs in which they are enrolled. Currently the college seems to rely solely on the inclusion of SLOs on course syllabi to promote student awareness of those SLOs and on the posting of program SLOs on some program websites (IIA.6).
It is stated on page three of the SLO/AUO Handbook that the use of assessment results is meant to stimulate discussion and direct activities that can improve instructional delivery and support systems on campus.” It further states, “Results will not be used as the basis of evaluation or disciplinary action for individual faculty members. However, as part of the regular professional duties of faculty, instructors are expected to participate in the SLO process.” The college will need to reconcile this approach with the accreditation standard which states that “faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes” (III.A.1.c).

In summation, under the leadership of the Academic Senate and its committees, and supported by administration with increased resources for research and faculty reassigned time for SLO implementation, coordination and training, the college has worked diligently and thoughtfully to develop measureable learning outcomes for programs and services, defined and instituted research procedures to support SLO activities, and created and implemented a professional development program to train all pertinent faculty and staff to implement SLO requirements. In developing and implementing these processes, the college has created an ongoing evaluation process to continue to refine them as needed. The college has appropriately addressed this recommendation and with its continued work is positioned well to achieve the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating the Institutional Effectiveness—Part III: Student Learning Outcomes by 2012.

The college has met this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

The team recommends, consistent with recommendation two of the 1998 team, that the board of trustees review and revise the “Employment Procedures for Executive Positions” so that it conforms to accepted best practices. Specifically, this process should be fair, equitable, and provide for meaningful constituency input. Once revised, the implementation of these procedures should be delegated to the chancellor and the college presidents, and the direct involvement of the board should be limited to the appointment of the chancellor (Standards III.A.1, III.A.3).

Since Saddleback College’s Focused Mid-Term Report of October 2007, the Focused Mid-Term Visit Report dated November 29, 2007, reviewed documented improvement with special emphases in four recommendations. Included in the recommendations were Standards III.A.6. and III.C.2.: Linking facilities, technology, and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college and; Standards III.A.1. and III.A.3.: The Board of Trustees review and revise the “Employment Procedures for Executive Positions” so that it conforms to accepted best practices. Specifically, this
process should be fair, equitable and provide for meaningful constituency input. Once revised, the implementation of these procedures should be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and the direct involvement of the Board should be limited to the Chancellor.

The findings of the Focused Mid-Term Visit were that the college addressed all of the four areas of recommendations to their satisfaction. On January 31, 2008, ACCJC accepted the Focused Mid-Term Report with the requirement that the college complete a Progress Report by October 15, 2008. The Progress Report had to demonstrate Saddleback’s resolution of one additional recommendation, which included Standard III. A.5.: Creating a staff development program to educate and train all pertinent faculty and staff members in the identification, assessment and evaluation of student learning outcomes. The October 15, 2008 Saddleback Progress Report described the staff development program put in place to address training of all pertinent faculty and staff members in identifying, assessing and evaluating student learning outcomes.

In review of the current 2010 Accreditation Self-Study Report, Standard III.A.6. states in its descriptive summary that the college’s 2010-2013 Strategic Plan and the Strategic Planning Groups are planning to integrate human resource planning in their strategies and recommendations to the Consultation Council. Specifically, these plans will attempt to establish concrete links to budgeting, thereby increasing their usefulness in planning and/or evaluating human resource needs. Efforts to establish concrete links from planning and/or evaluating human resource needs to budgeting currently exists.

Standards III A.1 and III A.3 are specific in providing evidence of personnel qualifications, policies and procedures through Standard Three Resources: References, Works Cited, Links. Hiring processes stated in the Accreditation Self-Study were corroborated in interviews and the team found them acceptable.

*The college has met this recommendation.*

**Recommendation 5**

The team recommends, consistent with recommendation four of the 1998 visiting team, that the board of trustees cease its involvement in college and district operations and delegate all non-policy issues, including policy implementation, at the district level to the chancellor and at the college level to the president. To achieve this end, the board of trustees, district leadership, and college leadership are encouraged to:

A. Define their respective roles in decision making and clearly delineate the areas of responsibility for each constituent group (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).
B. Identify the roles and scope of authority of district and college committees in the decision making process (Standards IB.1, IVA., and IVA.2).
C. Involve all constituent groups in a meaningful and collaborative manner in the decision-making process (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).
D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).

Saddleback College has worked towards building a climate of trust, respect and openness as shown in its ability to build and sustain the collaborative governance structure. Consistent participation has not yet been fully achieved. The college publicizes the roles and responsibilities of each constituent group via the district and college websites. The college utilizes multiple venues, forums, and electronic means to provide information as to delineate responsible parties for decision making as well as an explanation as how decisions are made.

The board passed Board Policy 2010, Delegation of Authority to the College President, in January 2009, which designates the President as the Chief Executive Officer of the college, granting the position of final authority at the college level for institutional governance. This was of particular importance to Saddleback College in reference to this recommendation. Significant advances have been made in providing means to promote and encourage effective participation of all constituent groups in the decision making processes at the college level; however, interviews with the college community indicated that this has yet to be demonstrated with consistency at the district level. The college noted that there is a disconnect that exists between the college and the district with respect to participatory decision making processes. The team found the college’s progress in this area to be acceptable but the district has areas that need to be addressed (see district recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 6).

This recommendation has not been completely satisfied.

Recommendation 6

The team recommends, consistent with recommendation seven of the 1998 visiting team, that representatives of all formally recognized constituent groups (trustees, chancellor, presidents, other administrators and managers, faculty senates and unions, classified senates and unions, and students) come together and take measures to reduce the hostility, cynicism, despair, and fear that continue to plague the college by:

A. Developing a positive and in depth dialogue on essential issues (e.g., evaluation, planning and research, student learning outcomes, decision making roles and responsibilities, etc.) that will ultimately lead to strengthening student learning and success at the college (Standard IA.3, IB.1).
B. Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IVA., IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.3).
C. Enhancing the college and district communication structure so that it is clear to everyone who the responsible party is for making decisions and how those decisions are or will be made (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.3).

The Accreditation Focused Visit Midterm Report of the 2007 visiting team concluded that: “In the last three years the college and the district have made great strides in responding to the recommendations of the visiting teams...(The team) commends the college for the evident progress that has occurred, including a palpable change for the better. The team is concerned that a fairly high degree of mistrust and finger pointing...still exists on all sides when it concerns relations with the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor. (The Board of Trustees and the Chancellor are making considerable efforts to communicate better, to follow process and to respect the boundaries of constituent roles and responsibilities. The (visiting) team acknowledges that all of the formally recognized groups listed in the recommendation are responsible for this improvement.”

Saddleback College has been dealing with this accreditation recommendation since 1998 and it was recommended again in the 2004 team visit recommendation. However, as noted above in the midterm report visit, there are still issues that need to be dealt with regarding this recommendation. The college community, district administration, and the Board of Trustees have addressed many of these concerns. Policies have been jointly developed, district-college-board roles and responsibilities have improved definitions and clarifications and much of the delineation was taken from legal authorities (codes) and the area and scope of responsibility for district-college-board is clearer. A primary focus of the district and college constituency groups and administration has been the definition of the role of each constituent group. Two-way communication is between the district and the college is better, but is in need of improvement. The flow of communication from college to district is much better than the communication flow from the district to the college. Across the district and college committees, councils and cabinets have been formed to address issues that affect daily operations. The definition of these formations is organized and includes purpose, membership, meeting schedule, agenda items, actions and recommendations. Adopted board policies also provide a model for all constituent groups to use when participating in decision making processes.

Saddleback College and the district office have worked towards building a climate of trust, respect, and openness as shown in its ability to build and sustain the collaborative governance structure. Consistent participation has not yet been achieved. It was expressed in many interviews that a lack of trust with respect to the district still remains and reports of autocratic decision making at the district is common. It is important to note, that the reverse
is true at the college, where planning and participatory governance practices are practiced, understood and appreciated by all constituent groups.

The college included district representation and a trustee member for the preparation and writing of the 2010 self study. Collaboration in developing the College Institutional Effectiveness Report was provided as an example of how the constituent groups have improved communication and participation on essential issues. Saddleback College established the Institutional Effectiveness Strategic Planning group as one of the four strategic planning groups which has been well received by the college community.

The college has emphasized improving communication and promoting a dialogue about institutional effectiveness. The college has continued to make progress in this area and has worked with the district to identify strategies to improve college and district communications. The college-district communication was readily apparent and has improved with increased activities in more open communications. The college president has fostered a collegial and dialogue rich environment with the faculty, staff and administration, and there was a demonstrated commitment to student learning and student success on the part of Saddleback College. However, the lack of effective communication between the district and the college is expressed quite openly at the college. It was noted by college constituent groups that until the district fully embraces improving communication with the college that there will continue to be a lack of confidence and trust with the district office and its support of Saddleback College.

The 2010 Self Study asserts that all recommendations have been met and provided evidence via the establishment of councils, committees, formulation of cabinets with agendas, meeting schedules, operating agreements, and recommendations. For example: the establishment or participation of the Planning and Budget Council (PBC), and the Consultation Council (CC), as the main recommending committees to the president. These committees fall in line with the direction of the college’s 2010-2013 Strategic Plan. The college has done much to satisfy this recommendation from 2004; however, a disconnect with the district office regarding decision making still exists. The college would be better served if the district recognized that inclusive decision making processes with the appropriate college constituent groups occurred on a regular basis. Survey data indicated that when asked if the college community is encouraged by their colleagues to provide input, the satisfaction level is high. However, when asked by team members whether their input is considered during the decision-making process, satisfaction responses were fairly low. The self study make the assertion that the college should be vigilant in assessing the effectiveness of communication but does not operationally define how this will be accomplished through planning agendas.

This recommendation has not been completely satisfied.
Eligibility Requirements

1. **Authority**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College has authority to operate as a degree granting institution due to continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC), an institutional accreditation body recognized by the Commission of Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. The college is also authorized by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. The degree-granting authority is stipulated on page 1 of the 2009-2010 Saddleback College Catalog.

2. **Mission**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College’s Mission Statement is clearly defined and consistent with the mission of the California Community Colleges and clearly defines its commitment to achieving student learning. The Mission Statement is posted on the college’s web site and published in various documents, such as the college catalog and the strategic plan. The college reviews the Mission Statement annually, revises as needed, and presents it to the South Orange Coast Community College District (SOCCCD) governing board for final approval.

3. **Governing Board**: A seven member Board of Trustees governs the SOCCCD. The Trustees are elected at-large to four year terms by the voters of South Orange County, and the terms are scattered to provide continuity. Board members reside in the area that they represent. A student trustee, elected by students of both Saddleback and Irvine Valley College, serves a one year advisory term of office. The Chancellor of the SOCCCD serves as the Secretary to the Board. The Board holds monthly meetings, which are open to the public. Notices of scheduled meetings and the agendas are widely posted in advance, and all meetings are videotaped and available for viewing on the district web site.

4. **Chief Executive Officer**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College has a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose primary responsibility is to the institution.

5. **Administrative Capacity**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College has an administrative staff that supports the necessary services for an institution of its size, mission, and purpose.

6. **Operating Status**: Students are enrolled in a variety of courses, and programs that lead to associate degrees, certificates of achievement, occupational skills awards, and transfer to four year institutions.
7. **Degrees:** The majority of the college’s offerings are in programs that lead to degrees, as described in the college catalog and on the college web site. Most of the students are enrolled in these programs. Degree opportunities and transfer courses are clearly identified in the college catalog and on the college web site.

8. **Educational Programs:** The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College’s principle degrees are congruent with its mission, are based on recognized higher education fields of study and are sufficient in content and length.

9. **Academic Credit:** The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College awards academic credits based on generally accepted practices in degree granting institutions of higher education.

10. **Student Learning and Achievement:** The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College defines and publishes the programs of study leading to an associate degree, certificate, and program of study leading to transfer. Student learning and achievement is validated through the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) process at Saddleback College. At the course and institutional levels, college faculty have integrated SLOs into the curriculum process using CurricUNET, its curriculum management system. The SLOs are a part of the official course outline. Assessments of course-level SLOs are completed annually, and the assessment results are input into CurricUNET, where they are linked to Institutional SLOs. At the program level, SLOs are completed on an annual basis, and the Program Review process includes a strong emphasis on SLO assessment. Overseen by the Educational Planning Assessment (EPA) Committee, all programs and courses have established learning outcomes and assessment plans.

11. **General Education:** The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College defines and publishes specific requirements for incorporating into its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry.

12. **Academic Freedom:** The college’s academic freedom policy is set forth in Board Policy 6120, which demonstrates the college’s commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Academic freedom includes protection for the teacher to teach and for the student to learn without correction, censorship, or other forms of interference.

13. **Faculty:** According to Spring 2010 figures, Saddleback College has a core of 239 qualified full time faculty members, as well as 621 part time faculty members. The
visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College employs full time faculty that is sufficient in size and experience to support the college's educational programs. Faculty members are qualified to conduct the institution's programs and meet State mandated minimum requirements.

14. **Student Services**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College provides appropriate student services and develops programs consistent with supporting student learning and development within the context of a California community college, the mission of the college, and the nature of the student population. Under the leadership of the new Vice President of Student Services, it is encouraged that particular attention be given to overall planning in student services, AUO (Administrative Unit Outcomes) assessment, campus accessibility issues, and technology infrastructure support for student services programs. At a time of major statewide cuts to categorical programs, all categorical program personnel reported that the college was dedicated to student support services and evidenced this support by providing needed backfill to categorical programs in 2009-2010.

15. **Admissions**: Consistent with the college and state mission and California regulations, Saddleback College maintains an open admission policy and process.

16. **Information and Learning Resources**: The visiting team confirmed that Saddleback College provides specific, long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs regardless of where they are or in what format.

17. **Financial Resources**: The college and district demonstrate an adequate funding base and financial reserves to support student learning programs and services.

18. **Financial Accountability**: The visiting team examined external audits available for the college and the district and verified that these audits resulted in no material findings.

19. **Institutional Planning and Evaluation**: The college has developed a strategic planning/program review process and makes transparent (public) the results of both student success/achievement measures and budget decisions made linked to this model. However, district planning is not transparent, nor is it linked to the college planning processes in practice. The college is aware of this breakdown and is committed in working with the district to fully integrate all planning processes.
20. **Public Information**: The Saddleback College catalog contains all of the requisite information and is available to the public in print and online.

21. **Relations with the Accrediting Commission**: The self study assures that the college adheres to the Accrediting Commission’s eligibility requirements, standards, and policies.
Evaluation by Standard of the College Using ACCJC Standards and Making Team Recommendations

Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

General Observations

The mission statement for Saddleback College defines the institution’s broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to student learning and success. The development of the mission statement involves input from key constituents and underwent significant revision in 2009. As part of the college’s new Strategic Planning Process, the mission statement is reviewed annually, with the most recent review having taken place in May 2010. The mission statement is published in numerous documents and made widely available through the college’s website. The 2010 site visit confirmed that it is posted in many physical locations on campus. The mission statement is central to institutional planning and decision-making at the institutional level as well as at the program and department levels where the linkage of all goals to the mission statement must be demonstrated as part of program review. This was confirmed through examination of the program review templates used for instructional programs and administrative units as well as from the team’s check of completed program reviews posted on the EPA website.

The college is commended for the tremendous progress it has made since the previous comprehensive self study in developing and implementing a systematic evaluation and planning process that demonstrates its purpose to produce student learning, to measure that learning, and to make changes designed to improve learning. The planning and evaluation process also provides for evidenced-based assessment of key processes and services and deliberate efforts at improving these. The institution has, through its Strategic Planning Process and program and administrative review, provided mechanisms for allocating resources to effectively support student learning and service and program improvements.

The new planning process resulted with the hiring of the new president in the development of the Strategic Plan for 2007-10. An evaluation of the planning process and plan resulted in changes to improve the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan. These changes were focused on more closely linking resource allocations to the mission, vision, strategic directions, goal, strategies, and program and administrative reviews; increasing participation in the planning process; and on developing a Strategic Plan that is more focused and that has measureable outcomes that are more easily measured and tracked.

At the time of the comprehensive self study, it appears that the college has reached a level of proficiency with its planning and review processes and, as it continues its thoughtful and
deliberate efforts at process refinements, is well positioned toward achieving sustainable continuous quality improvement.

Findings and Evidence

Standard I.A.: Institutional Mission

As documented in the Saddleback College Governance and Organization Manual, the college provides a regular formal process for the annual review of the mission statement. The first step in the college’s Strategic Planning Process involves review and revision of the mission statement. In January of each year, the Consultation Council solicits input from their constituent groups. The four Strategic Planning Groups (Educational Development, Student Affairs, Operational Support and Resources and College Advancement) are charged to conduct a review of the mission statement. The Consultation Council then considers input from these groups and recommends a final version to the college President in April (I.A.1., I.A.3.).

The Educational Planning and Assessment (EPA) Committee is the body charged with ensuring alignment of course, program and institutional-level student learning outcomes with the mission statement. In accordance with the Consultation Council and under the direction of the Academic Senate, the EPA supports the completion of instructional, student support and administrative unit review by providing orientation, guidance and direction for completing the process in a standardized and systematic way. The template used for the review of all units of the college requires a narrative describing the program’s or department’s linkage to the college’s mission, vision and strategic directions (I.A.1.).

The Office of Planning, Research and Grants provides data in the form of external and internal scans that inform the development of the college’s mission statement and its strategic directions. External scanning documents include the Orange County Workforce Indicators Report, the IPEDS report, the 2009 Community Awareness Benchmark Survey as well as state and national labor market data. All of these reports are available on the Strategic Planning website. Recent internal scanning efforts have been significant and include an employee survey that is disaggregated by employee type, a student survey, and a student gap survey (I.A., I.A.4.).

Input into the development of the mission statement is not limited to the Strategic Planning Groups. Dialogue about the mission statement and its relevance to student learning has also taken place in the Educational Planning and Assessment Committee, in the Academic Senate, in the Classified Senate and Management Leadership Team, and in the dean’s Cabinet (I.A.3.).

The college’s mission guides the college planning and decision making at the level of the institution as evidenced by the college’s strategic plan and annual updates. Strategic directions and the subsequent goals developed from these are reviewed by the appropriate strategic planning groups to ensure alignment with the mission. Further alignment of the mission statement occurs at the program level through the program review process. One of
the major objectives of program review, as stated in the *Program Review Handbook for Instructional Programs*, is to “state program goals and align future goals with the college’s mission, vision, and directions.” The first section of each program review is to address the linkage between the mission of the program to the college’s mission, vision, and strategic directions. The current mission statement is included as an appendix in the Handbook to facilitate documentation of that linkage (I.A.1.).

The visiting team confirmed that the current mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees, as evidenced by minutes from the June 28, 2010 Meeting of the Board of Trustees. The mission statement itself is published widely in a variety of college documents including the catalog, on the college website, in the student and faculty handbooks, in handbooks developed to support program review and student learning outcomes assessment, as well as in the program reviews for instructional programs, student support and administrative unit reviews. All agendas of the Consultation Council include the mission statement. Further display of the mission statement is provided in numerous physical spaces of the college, including all division offices, in the library, in the Student Services Center, in lecture halls, and in some classrooms (I.A.2.).

**Conclusions**

Revisions to the mission statement are made as part of the newly established Strategic Planning process and are based on input from a variety of sources, most notably updates to the Strategic Plan, internal and external scans, and program review from instructional programs, student support and administrative units. The institution uses a well-documented, ongoing process for evaluating itself with respect to strategic planning. The institution is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning. (I.A.3.).

*The college has partially met this standard.*

**Recommendations**

District Recommendation 2: The teams recommend that the district and the colleges develop and implement a resource allocation model driven by planning that includes all district funds and is open, transparent, inclusive, and that is widely disseminated and reviewed/evaluated periodically for effectiveness (I.A.1., I.B., III.D.1.a., III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.1.d., III.D.2.b., III.D.3., IV.B.3.c).

College Recommendation 3: The team recommends that the commitment to equity and diversity be demonstrated through multiple means including an updated Student Equity Plan and greater faculty involvement on the Equity and Diversity Committee (I.A., I.A.2.d., II.B.3.d., III.A.4., III.A.4.a.).
Standard I.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

In 2009, the college restructured the planning groups that had developed the 2006-2007 Interim Strategic Plan and the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan. The current planning process is clearly diagrammed and described in the document “Saddleback College Strategic Planning Process” which was recommended by the Consultation Council in June 2009, revised in July 2009 and corrected in May 2010. Although strategic plans are for three years, assessment and review of the strategic plan occurs annually, and this is shown on pages 28 - 30 of the Saddleback College Governance and Organization Manual where the college’s planning cycle is outlined for each year.

The college’s four main strategic planning groups provided input into the development of the goals and outcomes of the college’s 2007-2010 Strategic Plan. Specific examples of contributions from each governance group are provided in the self study and serve as evidence that the college engages in collegial dialogue about ongoing improvement of student learning and institutional processes (I.B.1.). Updates to this plan resulted in the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan which provides well-articulated goals with stated measurable outcomes that enable the college to determine on an annual basis the degree to which each goal has been met (I.B.1., I.B.2.).

Further opportunities for broad participation in the college’s continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness are provided through program review which is established and taking place for instructional, student support and administrative units of the college (I.B.1). Each unit conducting its review must establish in the first section of the review the unit’s alignment with the college mission statement and the strategic goals, thereby extending and reinforcing dialogue and understanding of the college goals at the program and unit levels (I.B.2). As stated in the Program Review Handbook for Instructional Programs, “Program Review (PR) is a key component in appraising institutional effectiveness at Saddleback College, along with Administrative Unit Reviews (AUR), Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment, Administrative Unit Outcomes (AOU) assessment, and curriculum revision.” This integration of student learning outcomes assessment and curricular revision into the program review process is further evidence that the college’s evaluation of institutional effectiveness is focused on the improvement of student learning. Responses to the college’s Employee Survey implemented in 2009 and cited in the self study indicate a high level of agreement among college faculty and staff that the institution is indeed supporting student learning and making evidence-based decisions and changes that lead to improvements in student learning. Meetings with faculty who were directly involved in or led recent program reviews confirmed that faculty found the process to be “motivating,” that it facilitated increased focus on student needs, and that, in some cases, led to positive changes in curriculum and certificate offerings (I.B.1., I.B.2., and I.B.3.).

All completed program reviews are available from the EPA website. A random sampling of reviews currently available from the website demonstrates that while most programs are up to date, there are some program reviews that are past due based on the cycle that the college
has established for itself. At the time of the evaluation visit, summaries showing the status of all program and administrative unit reviews were available from the EPA website.

Ample evidence such as in the college’s planning documents demonstrates that the college utilizes quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate progress in achieving its stated goals. The 2009 Annual Update to the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan has an evidence-based reporting structure. Program reviews require the use of data, and the completed reviews made available on the EPA website demonstrate that data is widely used to inform this level of the process for evaluating institutional effectiveness (I.B.3.).

One of the major objectives of program review, as stated in the Program Review Handbook for Instructional Programs, is to “collect and analyze data on key performance indicators, student learning outcomes, program activities, and accomplishments.” One of the required appendices of instructional program reviews includes data sets for the previous two or five years, depending on the program’s cycle. These data sets are produced for all programs at the end of each semester by the College Research Specialist and sent to the division deans and department chairs. The data includes important information about students enrolled in the program such as demographic information, educational goal, course retention and success rates, course GPA distribution, as well as certificate and degree completions. Program faculty provides data on student learning outcomes as collected at the course and program levels.

Program reviews for student support and administrative units are also informed by data. One of the stated objectives for the reviews of these units is to “collect and analyze data on key performance indicators, administrative unit outcomes, unit activities, and accomplishments.” There are five subsections of the review, each of which is to “include a narrative self-assessment based on the supporting data.” The College Research Specialist serves as the resource from which units can obtain the necessary data used in the process of review. Standard data sets are available for all programs, and special requests for specific data and analyses are sometimes made to the Research Specialist.

The major resource from which data is generated is the college’s data warehouse, inFORM, which has a reporting module specifically designed to support program review. This tool was developed and maintained by the District Office of Research and Planning with input from college researchers. A vast array of additional data sets and reports can be generated using inFORM, which has been made available to division deans and department chairs, to support enrollment management, scheduling, and monitoring of student retention and success at multiple levels. Access to the data warehouse was provided to the visiting team who confirmed its ease of use, extensive and ongoing development of reporting modules and generation of data relevant to decision making and monitoring of quality and efficiency (I.B.5.).
Program reviews that the team reviewed inform strategic planning and resource allocation decisions through their submittal to the Consultation Council. The Strategic Planning Process section of the 2010-2011 Saddleback College Governance and Organization Manual states that program reviews and administrative unit reviews are included in the list of planning documents utilized in the development of each strategic plan (I.B.3. and I.B.4.).

The last step of the Strategic Planning Process requires the Planning and Budget Steering Committee to

- review resources and make recommendations for the college budget based on principles and practices set forth in the College Budget Development Manual and in alignment with the Strategic Plan,
- notify the college community of funding appropriations and direction for expenditures in accordance with the Strategic Plan,
- Monitor budget and resources to ensure success of the strategic planning process, and
- Complete an Annual Review of the Strategic Plan in the spring of each year, and make suggestions to the CC for reprioritizing of goals and strategies.

Annual updates completed as part of program and administrative unit reviews detail the specific human, service, research, technical, equipment, facilities, and marketing and outreach needs of departments. These need assessment updates are submitted to the Educational Planning and Assessment Committee chair who posts them on the EPA website. The updates are required inclusions for all resource allocation and competitive funding requests. A funding rubric has been developed to assist committees in making resource allocation recommendations to the Planning and Budget Steering Committee. One of the criteria included in the rubric is the impact of the request on improving student success. The college has been most deliberate and effective in integrating planning and resource allocation, but meetings with college staff revealed that there has been concern that some allocation decisions overlooked specific critical compliance or safety needs. These concerns have led to modifications in the process for making resource allocation recommendations. In addition, the college is researching tools that will support the automatic generation of reports from the multitude of needs assessments submitted by departments and units (I.B.4., I.B.6.).

The college utilizes a variety of means to communicate matters of quality assurance to constituencies. The Strategic Planning and Educational Planning and Assessment websites contain data collected from student and employee surveys, local, state and national data on workforce development as related to college programs and services, and student learning outcomes assessment data. The four major Strategic Planning groups maintain websites which also make available numerous planning documents. The Educational Planning and Assessment website provides access to program reviews (I.B.3., I.B.5.).
Other means of communication on institutional quality include presentations to college groups in meetings. Program reviews are presented to the Consultation Council upon completion. Presentations concerning quality are made to the Board of Trustees often as part of the President’s Report. The college’s Public Information Officer also communicates to the college and community about program and service quality and accomplishments. Some divisions publish and distribute reports that highlight noteworthy achievements of students, programs and faculty within their areas.

For the past three years, an annual evaluation cycle at the institutional level culminates in the production and dissemination of the Institutional Effectiveness Annual Report (IEAR). Members of the evaluation team observed a meeting of the Academic Senate where data on student placement levels in Math and English were used as context to a discussion on Basic Skills. The college is encouraged to continue to utilize evidence to inform significant discussions about student need and to monitor its progress in meeting those needs and in improving the effectiveness of its programs and services in supporting student success (I.B.3., I.B.5.).

The self study provides a timeline of ongoing improvements that have been made to the process of evaluation, planning, resource allocation and reevaluation since 2005. Over time, an expansion in the use of data characterizes the process and is evidenced by the hiring of a research analyst in 2005 and a research specialist in 2006 to provide dedicated support to the assessment of SLOs and AUOs, as well as the implementation of software to support the collection of outcomes data. Handbooks were developed in 2005 to support all units of the college in conducting program review, and the EPA modified these to improve the process. The integration of resource allocations and program review has become stronger over the past three years so that allocations for technology and equipment are now required by program review. Examples of how the process of program review has led to improvement in instructional programs, administrative services and library services are provided in the self study. The example that the team reviewed focused on student learning and student success.

The Institute for Teaching and Learning was established to support outcomes assessment and teaching excellence. The college has developed two Strategic Plans since 2005, and the current Strategic Plan was intentionally modified based primarily on evaluation of the plan and recommendations made by the Planning and Budget Steering Committee. The college has been most deliberate in its efforts to continually evaluate and refine its processes of planning and resource allocation (I.B.6., I.B.7.).

While the college has been very effective in developing, implementing and refining its planning, review and resource allocation process since its last comprehensive visit, less progress has been made by the district in integrating its planning processes with that of the college. In fall 2006, the college Academic Senate Presidents requested creation of a District Planning Process Task Force to define an approach that would integrate college and district planning processes. Although districtwide goals for 2009-10 were developed, the visiting team found only a chronicle of activities intended to ensure input from constituent groups from both colleges, but the process was not evaluated for effectiveness nor refined for the development of the 2010-11 district goals. Further, the team could find no evidence that
progress in achieving these goals was measured or monitored. Most importantly, the linkage between the district goals and college strategic goals is not clear, and evidence is lacking that these goals have informed the allocation of resources.

Conclusions

While the college is in compliance with all subsections with respect to I.A. the district does not support the college efforts.

While the college is in compliance with all subsections with respect to I.B. the district does not support the college efforts.

The college has partially met this standard.

Commendation

Commendation 4: The team commends the college for its efforts in strategic planning and integrating that with the college resource allocation process.

Recommendations

District Recommendation 1: The teams recommend that the chancellor develop and implement both a strategic short-term and long-term plan that is inclusive of the planning at the colleges and that this planning structure drive the allocation of district resources for the colleges, Advanced Technology Education Park (ATEP), and the district (I.B.4).

District Recommendation 2: The teams recommend that the district and the colleges develop and implement a resource allocation model driven by planning that includes all district funds and is open, transparent, inclusive, and that is widely disseminated and reviewed/evaluated periodically for effectiveness (I.A.1., I.B., III.D.1.a., III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.1.d., III.D.2.b., III.D.3., IV.B.3.c).

Standard II Student Learning Programs and Services

Standard II.A.: Instructional Programs

General Observations

In keeping with its mission, the college offers 293 credit degree and certificate programs in a wide range of academic and career technical areas, taught by faculty with the appropriate discipline expertise. In addition, the college offers an array of non-credit community education courses, as well as an Emeritus Institute for seniors. Since 2005, the college has significantly increased its distance education offerings, such that 12% of its current credit course sections are now online. The increased offerings have developed over time to
accommodate student demand and to provide access which might not otherwise be available due to facility limitations.

The college has in place robust curriculum and program review processes to help ensure quality offerings. Course and program offerings conform to accreditation standards regarding general education, focused areas of study, vocational competencies, providing information to students about programs and transfer policies, and academic integrity and responsibilities. The college does not offer curriculum in foreign locations. SLO development and implementation processes are well underway at the course, program, and institutional levels and is at various states for individual degree and certificate programs. The college has clearly worked hard to put in place the necessary resources to support faculty and staff in completing their work. Faculty demonstrate pride in their leadership of curriculum, SLO, and program review processes. Saddleback students achieve at a high level and the college has an exemplary record of student transfers.

Findings and Evidence

A review of the college catalog, website, sample course outlines and syllabi, program reviews, and interviews with faculty, staff, and administration confirms that the college has appropriate curriculum in place to deliver the courses required to allow students to meet a wide variety of education goals including general education, developmental and pre-collegiate (basic skills) preparation, transfer to 4-year institutions, and degree, certificate, and occupational skills awards in keeping with the college mission. The courses are taught by faculty qualified in their respective disciplines. In addition, the non-credit courses offered by the Emeritus Institute adhere to the same curriculum and faculty preparation standards as the credit curriculum. The team noted that the college has an unusually large number of degrees and certificates, but the college is keeping pace with required 2-year (vocational programs) and 5-year (academic programs) curriculum reviews and revisions and has in place processes including program review that ensure programs remain current and relevant. The Curriculum Committee co-chairs stated that the college will be reviewing and likely decreasing the number of Associate of Science degrees for those disciplines that are more suited for Associate of Arts degrees per state regulations and where Associate of Arts degrees are already in place. In addition, program reviews including advisory board input are leading to revisions of current certificates as needed, including consolidation of certificates and addition of certificates where warranted. Curriculum Committee faculty and support staff members engage in regular training. The college annually sends a team of faculty and staff to the California Community Colleges Academic Senate’s Curriculum Institute. Thus, the college has in place high quality curriculum and the processes to ensure regular review and improvement as needed. College data regarding high student course success and retention rates, as well as excellent transfer rates, further demonstrate the high quality of the instructional offerings (II.A.1., II.A.1.a., II.A.2., II.A.c.).
All course sections offered in a non-traditional modality use the same curriculum outlines and SLOs as sections offered in a traditional modality. In addition, courses must be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and approved for each modality in which they are offered. To administratively support this increase, the college is in the process of requesting a new administrative position for online education and learning resources. Online faculty and those wishing to teach online have access to professional development opportunities in the state-of-the-art Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) provided by the Institute for Teaching and Learning. Courses must be approved for offering in an online modality by the Curriculum Committee before they can be offered. Likewise, faculty must have demonstrated competency teaching in an online modality before they are assigned their first online class. The college regularly monitors the success and retention of online students compared to traditional students and uses the results to further improve teaching strategies and support services for online students. Through the Commission’s substantive change proposal process, the college has received approval for its current online programs. Academic support for online students has been enhanced through the addition of a new distance learning librarian and the creation of an online tutoring option within the Learning Assistance Program (II.A.1., II.A.1.b., II.A.2.d.).

A review of the college catalog, sample course outlines and syllabi, program reviews and interviews with the Educational Planning and Assessment coordinator and various discipline faculty confirm that the college has developed SLOs for courses, programs, and the institution. Course SLOs are maintained in the CurricuNet system that is available to full-time faculty and are provided in nearly all course syllabi. SLOs for individual degrees and certificates are in various stages of development and the college has begun training faculty on how to identify and assess degree and certificate SLOs. Degree and certificate SLOs are not currently provided in the print catalog or in online department descriptions of degrees and certificate programs. The college needs to complete this work and determine a way that students and potential students can easily access information on degree and certificate SLOs in order to fully meet the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for: Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part III: Student Learning Outcomes by 2012. The team confirms the college is aware of this need and has in place the processes to meet the deadline (II.A.1.c).

The college takes seriously its commitment to high quality developmental and pre-collegiate courses and programs. This commitment has been enhanced through use of California Basic Skills Initiative funding to develop a 5-year action plan for faculty training and professional development: in basic skills and course development across the disciplines, the development of the Alegbra2Go online program to supplement math students’ learning, and the Freshman Academy to provide further support for entering freshman who need additional preparation before taking college level courses. The college has also inaugurated an intersegmental council with basic skills faculty from the college and local high schools (II.A.2.).
The college has made a major revision of its program review process over the past three years to match the requirements to Commission standards to assess programs' quality by currency, relevancy, student success data, achievement of student learning outcomes, and program advisory recommendations where appropriate. Further, program review results are consistently used to prioritize college resource allocations based on identified program needs. Team reviews of completed program review documents and interviews with faculty completing those reviews indicate that instructional program reviews are generating intended dialogue regarding program improvement and leading to actions to implement the improvements. The review process needs to be refined to ensure that all individual degree and certificates are evaluated (II.A.2.b., II.A.2.b., II.A.2.f.).

College faculty, through the leadership of the Academic Senate and its committees, have taken the leadership role in ensuring high quality curriculum; SLO development, assessment, analyses, and the use of the analyses to inform course/program improvement; and the implementation of the enhanced program review process. The Academic Senate's efforts have been notable in asserting its appropriate role in leading the college's work to address Standard IIA. This work has been strongly supported by administration through the allocation of additional resources to strengthen research capacity, and provide faculty reassigned time to coordinate and provide professional development for SLO and program review activities (II.A.2.a., II.A.2.b., II.A.2. 3., II.A.2.f.).

The college makes limited use of course/program exams to place students through matriculation and in the nursing program and ensures validation of their effectiveness and minimizes test biases. The college awards credit based on student achievement in courses that is consistent with generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education. It also awards its degrees and certificates based on achievement of a program's required courses, which have SLOs (II.A.2.g., II.A.2.h., II.A.2.i.).

The college has a general education component required for all academic and vocational degree programs based on a philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The general education has comprehensive learning outcomes as documented in the institutional outcomes in the areas of effective communication, intellectual and practical skills, community/global consciousness and responsibility, and breadth of subject area knowledge. Following extensive dialogue about what would best help students as they transition to the world of work and become good citizens of their communities, the college has recently revised its multicultural requirement to focus on the multiple cultures within the United States, indicating an ongoing desire to adjust curriculum and graduation requirements to best meet current needs of students and the community (II.A.3.a., II.A.3.b., II.A.3.c.).

Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies as required by their majors. Advisory boards help inform the types of competencies needed for specific programs (II.A.5.).
Through its college catalog, website, and syllabi the college ensures students and prospective students have clear and accurate information about courses and programs. As noted earlier, the college needs to add degree and certificate SLOs to the catalog and other publications so that they are readily available to students. The college has in place clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies and processes to help students to complete programs if they are eliminated. The college has identified in its own planning agenda items a need to develop a Board Policy to directly address this issue and the team encourages the college and district to act upon this item (II.A.4., II.A.5., II.A.6.a., II.A.6.b., II.A.6.c.).

The college has in place clear policies and procedures to assure academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, and follows Board policies on academic freedom and responsibility, and student academic honesty. The college does not advocate specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. The college does not offer curriculum or programs in foreign locations (II.A.7., II.A.8.).

Overall, the college amply demonstrates its commitment to effective development and management of a curriculum notable for its breadth and for the variety of degrees and certificates offered. Students are prepared, with high quality instruction, for further education through transfer, and/or for entry into the work force. The college has made commendable progress in indentifying and assessing SLO’s at the course level, and in linking those outcomes to program and institutional levels. Evaluation and refinement of the curriculum is an ongoing process, engaging broad based participation by members of the college community through a comprehensive committee structure overseen by the Academic Senate and several constituent committees. The curriculum, offered in multiple forms and modalities, is designed to be flexible in meeting student needs, while also maintaining standards of academic rigor and relevance.

Conclusions

The college currently meets all of Standard II.A. with the exception of the additional work needed to complete SLO activities for all degrees and certificates. The college is on track to complete this work and to achieve the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part III: Student Learning Outcomes by 2012.

*The college has met this standard.*

Commendation

Commendation 3: The team commends the college on the leadership role the academic senate and its committees have taken in championing the development and implementation of student learning outcomes and program reviews.
Commendation 5: The team commends the college faculty and staff who support the Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) to ensure quality online and mediated instruction.

Recommendations

None

Standard II.B.: Student Support Services

General Observations

The college and district have recently undergone several changes in administrative personnel, including the Acting Chancellor and Vice President of Student Services. Faculty and staff members enjoy working at the college yet some report feeling overworked at times and are unaware of a current plan on how to improve the quality of their programs and services.

The overall responses to the standard in the self study are thorough. After meeting with college personnel, it appears that the college’s student support services are strong, particularly with regards to transfer, associated student leadership development, veterans support, and matriculation services. However, challenges for Student Services exist with regards to overall planning, student learning outcomes (administrative unit outcomes) assessment, campus accessibility, information technology infrastructure, support and training, EOPS wait list, and the International Students program accessibility and visibility.

At a time of major statewide cuts to categorical programs, all categorical program personnel reported that the college was dedicated to student support services and evidenced this support by providing needed backfill to categorical programs in 2009-2010.

Findings and Evidence

The college produces a clear and well organized catalog, schedule of classes, and student handbook. Policies affecting students are clearly stated in both print publications and college web pages. One concern is whether the faces of the students on the front cover of the 2010-2011 catalog accurately reflect the diversity of its population (II.B.2.a., II.B.2.b., II.B.2.c., II.B.2.d., II.B.3.d.).

The Associated Student Government (ASG) is committed to strong leadership and support for student issues on campus. In particular, ASG takes an active role in supporting and enhancing student understanding and appreciation of diversity. Furthermore, ASG supports an equitable approach to managing a large student budget in collaboration with several divisions on campus (II.B.3.b., II.B.3.d.).
The Counseling Division has many dedicated counselors and staff members who have served the college for many years. Services are provided in many formats including E-Advise, MAP, drop-in/walk-in services, counseling appointments, orientations, Early Birds, and workshops. Matriculation services and Transfer Center services are well equipped to meet student needs. With the advent of many online tools, support and training for faculty and staff are critical needs. In addition, with many categorical budget cuts impacting Counseling services, strategic planning for how to serve a growing student population with the existing faculty and staff members is important. There is also a need to improve the student to counselor ratio on campus (II.B.1., II.B.3.c.).

Admissions and Records has undergone some changes in recent years including remodeling of the reception area, adding student self-help kiosks, and moving from paper to more paperless processing. In addition some challenges include Student Information System (SIS) issues, and the introduction of Direct Lending, year-round Pell grants, the new on-line scholarship program, and Higher One (II.B.3.e.).

Student records are maintained securely and confidentially with appropriate back up of all necessary files and records. The college contracts with a shredding company to properly destroy confidential documents on site (II.B.3.f.).

Student Services departments currently are engaged in writing Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs) for their respective programs and services. Submission and completion of these AUOs are not consistent across all departments in Student Services according to their own planning cycle, resulting in some departments not submitting AUOs in a timely manner. Furthermore, a significant challenge is that department personnel need a plan and necessary data in order to effectively assess AUOs. The Student Services programs will need infrastructure and support from Information Technology to meet these goals (II.B.4.).

Prior to the Vice President of Student Service's arrival three months ago, the college hired Brain Trust, a consulting group, to conduct an assessment of Student Services. This report contains many useful recommendations for Student Services to consider and it appears that Student Services would benefit from this overall implementation (II.B.1., II.B.3., II.B.4.).

Many of Saddleback's most vulnerable student populations have challenges which need to be addressed on the Saddleback campus:

Accessibility: There are approximately 1,900 Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) students at the college, and DSPS services are divided into three locations on campus: two at the Student Services Center (SSC) building and one in "the Village" (portables located on the lower campus used while other facilities are under renovation such
as the Library). While the topography of the campus poses a challenge for many students, DSPS students are particularly disadvantaged. The main DSPS office is located on the first floor of the SSC, Learning/Disability testing occurs on the second floor of the SSC, and alternative media is housed in the Village. After completing intake and assessment, DSPS students may be referred for further DSPS services in the Village. There are no wheelchair accessible carts or other accessible transportation options for these students. Offering DSPS programs and services at two distant locations hinders students who are not only physically challenged but also those who may have Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and/or other challenges (II.B.1., II.B.3.a.).

International Students Visibility and Accessibility: International Students programs and services are currently housed in a one-office location beyond the Admissions and Records staff break/lunch room. Students must enter the main Admissions and Records office and be escorted behind the staff only area and through the break room to the International Students office. There is currently no space for a reception area, private meetings, and literature/publications (II.B.1., II.B.3.a.).

EOPS long wait list: There were 502 reported EOPS students in the 2009-2010 academic year. In addition, there are approximately 500 students on the waiting list for EOPS this year. Students on the wait list are accepted based on eligibility criteria and as current EOPS students exit the program. There is concern that a high percentage of potential EOPS students are not being served at Saddleback College (II.B.1., II.B.3.a.).

Information Technology Infrastructure, support, and training:

There are some technology issues that need to be addressed in Student Services. The homegrown My Academic Plan (MAP) online tool, created by the district, is only being used consistently by EOPS personnel. There were inconsistencies in staff's reported use of and support for MAP. Some college personnel reported that the tool falls short of meeting their needs for assisting in developing accurate educational plans, particularly with regard to unit calculations. Also, while MAP is linked to ASSIST, there is insufficient Information Technology support for managing the database of courses taken by students from colleges not articulated with Saddleback via ASSIST, such as out of state colleges. Further, MAP does not work well in assisting undecided students, and it appears that personnel lack sufficient training for using MAP effectively with all students. For instance, MAP is too slow for counselors to build online academic plans with students during a regular 30 minute counseling appointment. MAP has great potential for helping counselors work with students in developing, modifying, and confirming educational plans in order to meet their educational goals (II.B.4.).
The Student Information System (SIS) is the homegrown Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system created by the district. While it has potential to be a useful tool, there is difficulty getting needed data. There have been three different systems for reporting bugs, change requests, and glitches. Some staff members report that IT is slow to respond to their requests. Additionally SIS, until fully functional, does not provide access to the data necessary for assessment of AUOs (I.I.B.1., I.I.B.4.).

Conclusions

Overall, the Student Services programs and services are tailored to meet student needs at Saddleback College. Particular strengths include transfer, associated student leadership development, veterans support, and matriculation services. Under the leadership of the new Vice President of Student Services, it is encouraged that particular attention be given to overall planning; AUO assessment; campus accessibility issues; information technology infrastructure, support and training; EOPS wait list; and the International Students program accessibility and visibility. The college is on track and is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning by 2012.

The college has met this standard.

Commendation

Commendation 6: The team commends the college for creating and institutionalizing a transfer culture on campus and the Transfer Center staff’s commitment to a leadership role in supporting students’ success.

Recommendation

College Recommendation 3: The team recommends that the commitment to equity and diversity be demonstrated through multiple means including an updated Student Equity Plan and greater faculty involvement on the Equity and Diversity Committee (I.A., I.A.2.d., II.B.3.d., III.A.4., III.A.4.a.).

College Recommendation 4: The team recommends that a Student Services strategic plan be developed and implemented to address issues including campus accessibility; DSPS separate locations; International Students Office accessibility and visibility; the long wait list for EOPS students; and Information Technology infrastructure, support and training (II.B.3.a., II.B.4.).
Standard II.C.: Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

The college has in place library and learning support services designed to support students and faculty in their courses and programs. The faculty and staff in the area are actively involved in college processes in instruction and student services programs and are proud of the contribution their services make to college’s record of student achievement and transfer. The services’ providers have also worked hard to stay current and innovative in a rapidly changing technology environment while still focusing on direct student contact, both in person and through electronic means.

Findings and Evidence

At the time of the visit the college’s library and learning support services were temporarily relocated to portable facilities during the major renovation of its permanent facility. In preparation for the relocation which necessitated storing some of the collection in the warehouse, the librarians undertook a comprehensive review of the library collections and discarded 40 percent of print and non-print materials. Since 2003 the college has enhanced both its print and electronic collections due to careful tracking of student use and increased funding for collections. Library faculty and support staff have the appropriate qualifications for their positions and in consultation with discipline faculty select and maintain the educational materials and equipment to support student learning in support of the college’s mission. The library has intentionally tracked student use of materials and preferred methods of accessing materials both on and off campus. The library also receives technical support for instructional technology from the college IT staff. The instruction librarian coordinates the library’s information competency program and some credit courses and workshops are available to students. To better support students in the growing online program, a distance learning librarian was hired. Additional support staff have been added since 2004 to improve student access to library services. However, additional positions would be welcomed. The library has in place reliable processes and agreements to access resources from other institutions, such that the college has adequate print and electronics to meet student needs. Library faculty and staff have been actively involved in planning the renovation of the library and have plans in place to make optimum use of the facility (II.C.1., II.C.1.a., II.C.1.b., II.C.1.c., II.C.1.d., II.C.1.3.).

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) provides students with peer tutoring in all academic subjects, tutor training and various workshops. Services include one-on-one, small group, drop-in, and in-class tutoring sessions. The LAP is well used by students, tracking over 50,000 tutoring hours each year. Other well-established learning support services include the Reading Lab, Language Lab, Writing Center, and English Department. The Collegewide
Spring 2008 Survey results confirmed that the library and learning support services are well used and valued by students. In addition to their own student use data, the library and learning support services use data from the Office of Planning, Research and Grants and program review activities to review and improve their services (II.C.1.c., II.C.2.).

Conclusions

The college currently meets Standard IIC and is positioned to greatly enhance access to library and learning support services when the newly renovated library facility reopens in fall 2011. The faculty and staff are eagerly looking forward to a wonderful student centered facility for its strong programs. The college is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning by 2012.

*The college has met this standard.*

Recommendations

None

Standard III Resources

**Standard III.A.: Human Resources**

General Observations

The overall quality of Standard III.A. is coherent and supported by appropriate documentation with the college citing Title 5 regulations and its own Board policies in meeting qualifications for full-time faculty, classified employees, academic administrators and classified managers. Hiring processes for full-time faculty, classified staff, part-time faculty and administrators and managers are documented and corroborated through interviews. The evaluation process flow for classified managers and academic administrators is in electronic format from beginning to end, including electronic signatures due to recent changes. The evaluations are electronically stored. Evaluations for faculty and classified staff are in the process of becoming electronically managed and stored. The attitude of the Assistant Director of Human Resources with whom I met was precise and prescriptive based on Board policies related to all employment including Equal Employment Opportunity. Procedures for hiring full-time faculty, classified staff, administrators and managers are now codified in Board Policy 4011 for administrators and managers; 4011.1 for full-time faculty and; 4011.3 for classified staff.

According to HR, the more recent stipulation of EEO representatives on Saddleback College hiring committees is that they are human resources district employees who are knowledgeable in Equal Employment Opportunities law and Board Policy. Though this
stipulation, which is established in Board Policy, is about three years old, the college in their self evaluation of Standard III.A.3. does not reflect the change. This may be a communication issue.

Findings and Evidence

The college follows comprehensive hiring practices that are established by the South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD). The hiring practices cover all personnel, job requirements and qualifications, and are directly linked to specific institutional needs (III.A.1.).

It has in place detailed hiring processes for full-time faculty in accordance with Board Policy 4011.1 established through the Program Reviews of instructional divisions and analyses of supporting data, i.e., FTES, enrollment trends of divisions or departments; goals and objectives in the college strategic plan; classified staff hiring tied to Strategic Planning; part-time faculty which requires interviews as well as minimum qualifications being met; and administrators and managers. There is an attempt by the Office of Human Resources to reduce delays in the hiring process by the use of an online portal, MySite and the newly implemented HR Wiki 2.0.

The process for hiring faculty is exactly what the Accreditation Self Study states. Faculty hire faculty. The majority of the faculty hiring committee is faculty. Deans facilitate the decisions of the faculty. The staff hiring process for replacement positions follows the prioritization format, which goes to the Consultation Committee, then on to the President and finally to HR. New staff positions begin with the Program Review process (III.A.1.a.).

The evaluation process for tenured faculty, probationary faculty and classified staff is detailed with much less said about the evaluation processes for PT, campus security officers and administrators; however, what is stated is accurate.

Electronic visits for evaluation of online instruction by full-time tenured faculty, probationary faculty and part-time faculty is administered through a process where the faculty sits down with the evaluator in front of a computer and shows them how they teach their course online. The General Education Committee has developed “pointers,” not guidelines, to look for in evaluating an online course.

In the self evaluation of Standard III.A.1.b., it is stated that classified staff and faculty evaluations are more quantitative and do not include goal setting for effectiveness or improvement in performance. In trying to understand what that meant, team members were informed by the academic senate president that faculty and staff are evaluated on a 1-5 scale of teaching measures. The evaluation does not look at student success or retention quantitatively. Goals may be part of the evaluation; however, improvement in performance is not a required part of the evaluation. Evaluation guidelines are developed by the faculty
bargaining unit in conjunction with the district negotiating team. According to the academic senate president, the planning agenda for this Standard goes beyond the scope of the college. Only the faculty bargaining unit can do what the planning agenda says the college will do, which is that the college will develop clear tenure review guidelines for conducting faculty evaluations. This should be changed in the college’s planning agenda (III.A.1.b.).

The standard states that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated Student Learning Outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. The college’s descriptive summary states that faculty are evaluated on their compliance with this responsibility as part of their faculty evaluation process. In addition to this, the college’s self evaluation states that the college has proactively addressed faculty members’ participation in SLO development and assessment by making it a part of the evaluation for all faculty. As evidence of this, the Academic Employee Master Agreement, 2007-2010, Article XVII, Section II, p. 41 and the Faculty Evaluation Form are cited. However, there are no references in either of the citations that address faculty compliance with SLO responsibility as part of the faculty evaluation process (III.A.1.c.).

Each employee group has a code of ethics. The Board of Trustees has a code of ethics for its own members through Board Policy 1400, but it does not address dealing with Board behavior that is unethical. The Board needs to revise the policy to be in compliance with the standard (III.A.1.d.).

The Board of Trustees has committed to hiring full-time faculty above the faculty obligation number (FON) required by the State Chancellor’s Office. According to the academic senate president, FON is always exceeded. The former chancellor did a tremendous amount of hiring. Though more faculty are needed to effectively sustain programs and SLO workloads, it is recognized by the new president of the college that faculty hiring means that facilities’ support has to be there, i.e. office space to accommodate additional faculty. The length of service for faculty, classified staff and managers reflects stability (III.A.2.).

In the self evaluation it is stated that the EEO representative should be retrained yearly to ensure consistency in the application of new policies and procedures and any new legislation that may impact the hiring process. It is suggested that this actionable item move to the planning agenda. In an interview the Assistant Director of HR stated that EEO representatives are HR employees who participate in all phases of each hiring committee including recruitment and screening. Board policies 4011, 4011.1 and 4011.3 are prescriptive in hiring faculty, classified staff, administrators and managers with EEO representation on hiring committees, which are always HR employees. Even still, it is suggested that HR employees serving as EEO representatives be trained annually (III.A.3.).
The Board Policies and Administrative Regulations (BPAR) Council maintains a systematic and periodic review of all college policies to ensure that the policies are legally current and follow Title 5 regulations. BPAR meets regularly to review existing policies and regulations as well as to review the need to develop and implement new policies. Updates are disseminated districtwide and posted in the Documents Section of the MySite portal and HR Wiki 2.0 (III.A.3.a.).

Employee data are in electronic form and managed by strict security. Hard copy employee files are maintained in fireproof file cabinets in the Office of Human Resources. Medical records are maintained in secure cabinets separate from personnel files, which are located only in the Office of Human Resources (III.A.3.b.).

Board policies and administrative regulations foster equity and promote diversity on the college campus. These policies and regulations are addressed in the college’s statement of values, the Student Equity Plan, the Staff Development Plan and Associate Student Government programs. However, the Student Equity Plan is over five years old, dated May 2005. On the approved list of faculty to sit on committees from the Saddleback College Academic Senate, there is only one faculty member on the Equity and Diversity Committee. For the committee to be effective, there needs to be broad faculty participation in this committee.

The Cross Cultural Studies program has three courses listed in the 2010-2011 Catalog with two additional special topics courses. In the fall semester 2010 Schedule of Classes, one course, Multicultural Identities in the United States, is offered. Cross Cultural Studies is managed by the Cross Cultural Studies Committee, a standing committee of faculty senate (III.A.4.).

The district has an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer who is also Director of Human Resources. It is the responsibility of the EEO Officer to provide sexual harassment and diversity training and to assist in the investigation of employee complaints of discrimination (III.A.4.a).

In an interview with the Assistant Director of HR it was confirmed that the district maintains online EEO data that analyzes the college’s employment equity record using self-reported information from employment applications. The EEO report analyzes who is invited for an interview and who is hired by ethnicity and gender in each position category. Focused recruitment is used, if necessary, along with a broader advertisement plan to increase the numbers of underrepresented applicants (III.A.4.b.).

Recommendation 6 of the Focused Mid-Term Report of October 2007 is readdressed in the 2010 Accreditation Self-Study in the Standard III A.4.c descriptive summary and self evaluation. It is stated in the self evaluation that SOCCCD’s Board Policies and Administrative Regulations, and Saddleback’s shared governance model work
collaboratively to uphold institutional equality and integrity for faculty, staff, administrators and students (III.A.4.c).

The college provides a wide variety of professional development opportunities for faculty. The Conference Budget/Expenditure Report in 2009-2010 showed total collegewide funding for professional development at $443,147, which is a strong level of funding. In an interview with the classified senate president, it was stated that beginning about four years ago at the request of the academic senate president, $35,000 is taken off the top of academic professional monies to fund classified employees’ professional growth workshops. Academic administrators have modest budgets for professional development. The college president and vice presidents also have professional development funds available for their use (III.A.5., III.A.5.a.).

The self evaluation states that the college should improve the return rate of professional development evaluation instruments; otherwise, the results of the evaluations cannot be used as a basis for improvement. The planning agenda addresses the return rate shortfall. It states that the college will work with faculty and classified staff development committees to ensure that evaluations are completed and the findings are reviewed with the goal of improving staff development activities (III.A.5.b.).

Through its 2010-2013 Strategic Plan and Strategic Planning Groups, integration of human resources planning and its link to budgeting are part of the college’s current efforts and directions to systematically assess the effective use of human resources, and to use the results of the assessment as the basis of improvement (III.A.6.).

Conclusions

In the descriptive summary of Standard III.A.2., it states that it is generally recognized campus wide that more FT faculty are needed to effectively carry out the work of the college, especially as faculty now have the additional duty of documenting SLO data and the decisions that are made based on the assessment results. There is a commitment of the Board of Trustees as well to hire FT faculty above the “faculty obligation number” (FON) requirement. At its September 2009 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved, budget permitting, the hiring request for ten new tenure track faculty positions for the college in the 2010-2011 academic year.

The quality of the college represented in Standard III A, Human Resources, is good. The quality of the college’s technology resources represented in Standard III C is impressive. In both Standards the institution meets accreditation standards.

The team commends the college faculty and staff who support the Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) to ensure quality online and mediated instruction.
The college is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning by 2012.

*The college has not met this standard.*

**Recommendation**

**District Recommendation 5:** The teams recommend that the Board of Trustees develop a clearly defined policy for a code of ethics which must include dealing with violations of the Board’s code of ethics (III. A.1.d, IV.B.1.h.).

**College Recommendation 3:** The team recommends that the commitment to equity and diversity be demonstrated through multiple means including an updated Student Equity Plan and greater faculty involvement on the Equity and Diversity Committee (I.A., I.A.2.d., II.B.3.d., III.A.4., III.A.4.a.).

**College Recommendation 4:** The team recommends that the faculty have as a component of their evaluation effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes (III.A.1.c.).

**Standard III.B.: Physical Resources**

**General Observations**

There were two plans created in 2006: the 2006 Educational Resource Plan developed by Maas Company and the Facilities Master Plan created by gkkworks. These plans are updates to the 2001 Educational and Facilities Master Plans and are currently being updated in the 5 year cycle. The new plans will be completed in 2011 by gkkworks. The self study refers to the Maas plan as the Educational and Facilities Master Plan.

**Findings and Evidence**

Saddleback College has noted in the 2006 Facilities Master Plan that it has unfunded scheduled maintenance needs and a shortfall of square footage to meet the projected growth for 2010. In addition, the college has two buildings that are “sliding down the hill”, the MSE and TAS buildings. Both buildings have cracks and water seepage problems. The district has taken the responsibility for monitoring the buildings and determining that they are safe to occupy. The MSE building renovation was on the list of needs identified by the college in 2001; it was moved down in the priorities to the 2011-2015 timeframe in the 2006 report. The MAS building renovation appears as the third priority in 2006, but the renovation has not begun as of 2010. The college is attempting to obtain state funds for a new science building, but funding has not been and continues to not be available until the passage of a state bond.
While the college intends to work with the district in obtaining additional Basic Aid funds, the college also needs to work on obtaining additional funds through other means (III.B.1.a).

Through the use of the risk management activities, including assessment and training, and the software and equipment purchased that allow the college to manage emergency notifications and operations, the college keeps the campus safe in the event of an emergency. There are adequate maintenance and custodial staff to keep the college clean and working well. A tour of the campus facilities showed clean and neat grounds, restrooms and hallways. Sufficient equipment and technology funds are provided to keep the equipment needs of facilities up to date (III.B.1.b.).

The college has a significant accessibility issue. The route between the upper and lower campuses identified on the college map for disabled students has a portion of the route that is at a grade greater than 5%, which presents considerable safety concerns for a student in a wheelchair. Fixing this problem has not risen to a level of urgency until now; equipment requests for a cart for the transportation of disabled students and evacuation chairs for certain multi-story buildings were not granted. There are plans to revise the resource allocation processes to account for fire and life safety equipment needs (III.B.1.b.).

The college has significant planning documents that show that the college uses instructional needs to develop the facilities plans, including planning for both new and replacement equipment and buildings. The facilities master plans are updated on a 5 year cycle along with the educational master plans. The college is actively addressing sustainability in its upgrades and new buildings. The college’s long-range plans need to be incorporated into a district long-range facilities plan (III.B.2.a.).

The Facilities Department does annual program reviews, and the college regularly assesses the use of its physical resources with the resulting outcome being the list of projects for which the college is requesting Basic Aid funds. The facilities master plans are used to prioritize the actual projects to be completed and are revised as needed during the 5 year cycle; however, the district allocation of Basic Aid funds is not always tied to the prioritized lists prepared by the colleges (III.B.2.b.).

**Conclusions**

The college has done tremendous work on its planning processes, and this work is reflected in the physical resources standards as well in all of the other standards. The college has a well documented, ongoing process for evaluating itself in all areas of operation, analyzing and publishing the results, and planning and implementing improvements. The college is at the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning by 2012.

*The college has met this standard.*
Commendation

Commendation 2: The team commends the college for its development of a 20-year facilities needs assessment that includes scheduled maintenance, renovation and new buildings.

Recommendation

College Recommendation 2: The team recommends that the college address the need for both maintenance and new facilities funds and use these funds to address the current safety, accessibility and educational needs of the students (III.B.1.a., III.B.1.b.).

Standard III.C.: Technology Resources

General Observations

The overall quality of Standard III.C. clearly and consistently reflects the advanced technology resources of Saddleback College whose funding resources exceeded $1m for every fiscal year from 2004-2009 including $2.5m in 06/07 and $2.m in 07/08 (Figure 3.1 Technology Funding, FY 2004-2005 to FY 2008-2009, p.268, Accreditation Self Study). The Director of the Innovation and Technology Center confirmed funding amounts in Figure 3.1 and stated that in FY 2009-2010, there was no money for technology refresh, but the college is back on target this year, FY 2010-2011, with funding at $1m from the general fund. Guidelines for faculty PC refresh and academic and instructional computing facilities stated in Standard III.C. were confirmed by the IT Director.

In a visit to the new Center of Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE), CIDDE facilities and operations described in the Self Study were confirmed. The Center is well equipped with a 25-seat computer lab for faculty training in online instruction, two sound proof booths for digital audio and video recording, video transfer and editing stations and a sizeable document scanning area. There are three full-time staff trainers who work with faculty in instructional design and distance education. The lead trainer began her career in Information Technology in the private and public sectors and is highly experienced in technology services and resources. CIDDE is viewed as a technology crown jewel because of their new professional support services, facilities, and state-of-the-art hardware and software applications for developing online instruction.

Findings and Evidence

Saddleback College reports in the self evaluation that the current process for evaluating technology needs is working well for the college. All constituent groups at the college are represented, and the annual technology request process allows for input from every college employee. The College has been fortunate to receive Basic Aid funding from the district, directed specifically at refreshing technology.
In the most recent Employee Survey, 70% of respondents reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that the college allocates technology resources in a manner that supports and enhances the institution (III.C.1.).

In a visit to the new Center of Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE), CIDDE facilities and operations described in the Self Study were confirmed as described with a 25-seat computer lab for faculty training in online instruction, two sound proof booths for digital audio and video recording, video transfer and editing stations and a sizeable document scanning area.

The college supports over 2,000 desktop computers campus wide covering all operational areas, including labs, computer classrooms, student services areas, the library, faculty, administration and staff offices and areas.

Sixty-six percent of respondents on a recent Employee Survey reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that the college commits sufficient resources to facilitate reliable online education technology (III.C.1.a.).

The Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) provides faculty and staff access to technology training through classes given throughout the year. CIDDE’s week-long Tech Expo held each summer allows faculty to update their skills on the latest versions of software, pick up new tips and pursue distance education.

For student use, curriculum specific labs have increased each academic division’s ability to provide specialized computer labs and software. Currently, 1,091 computers exist on the Saddleback campus specifically for student use. In addition to this, Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) High Tech Center uses the most current hardware technologies, and the Interdisciplinary Computer Center housed in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) has trained staff members available to assist beginning student computer users (III.C.1.b.).

The process used by the technology committee to solicit input from divisions, departments, Student Services and work units across campus to formulate a Technology Master Plan is an essential part of the college’s budget planning (III.C.1.c.).

In its self evaluation, the college reports that students as well as faculty and staff have opportunities to provide input on the quality of campus technology, and their input is considered when purchases and upgrades are made.

The Innovation and Technology Center (ITC) reports to the Office of Instruction. ITC is in excellent shape with servers, wireless access across campus and an excellent technology infrastructure based on a state-of-the-art network system. Data back-up for campus IT, which
is located in the library provides nightly back-up. A second back-up system, the doc server, can be used by any faculty or staff employee requesting to have a file on the doc server.

Recent technology upgrades include the college’s internet connection, the district’s email system, expansion of the college’s wireless network from two locations to the entire campus, the phone system and the data network (III.C.1.d.).

**Conclusions**

Saddleback College meets the standard. The College’s Strategic Planning Process in conjunction with Program Reviews and in consultation with the Technology Committee makes technology decisions based on college needs. Surveys are distributed each year to students and their results are used to guide future technology decisions. The rate of return for student responses used to guide future technology decisions was low in 2009-2010 with 200 student respondents out of 5,000 fully online students. This was viewed by the Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education (CIDDE) as an aberration because of a link problem. In 2007 and 2008 the return rate for the surveys was close to 10%. The college is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning (III.C.2.).

*The college has met this standard.*

**Recommendations**

None

**Standard III.D.: Financial Resources**

**General Observations**

The district has a principle to limit funded FTES targets for the colleges at the level set by the state SB361 funding formula as if the colleges were receiving state funds. The district does not use one-time funds to augment the number of classes offered to meet community demand, nor to address waiting lists for student services such as exist in EOPS. While the district takes great pride in its sound financial management, this may be at the expense of meeting student needs. The Board of Trustees has a budgeting principle to not use Basic Aid funds for any ongoing expenses, including salaries, yet the district is using the Basic Aid funds for ongoing operations at the ATEP center. The allocation of some of those funds will be ended in June, 2011, when the responsibility for day-to-day operations transfers to Irvine Valley College, but the allocations for facility maintenance for the larger parcel will continue. IVC will only be assuming responsibility for the 1.5 acre site that is currently in use, and not the full 68 acres.
The team commends the college for its efforts in strategic planning and integrating that with the college resource allocation process.

Findings and Evidence

Saddleback College relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning. All of the planning documents are linked to the college’s mission and values, including the financial planning documents (III.D.1.).

Saddleback College integrates its financial planning with its institutional planning at the college level. The college added both a position, Director of Planning Research and Grants, and processes in 2009 to address the need to integrate budget and strategic planning. Based on the minutes from the Planning and Budget Steering Committee (PBSC), the process is still in flux, and timelines and forms are still being developed for the upcoming budget year’s processes. According to the Director of Fiscal Services, the Resource Allocation Request Forms are going through the shared governance process in the Planning and Budget Steering Committee (PBSC) and will be released by the end of October for the 2010/11 requests and in January for the 2011/12 requests, and the process will be annually thereafter.

The process used in the past for allocating Basic Aid funding at the district included a prioritization of needs for one-time funds at the college level. This list of needs, along with the lists from IVC and ATEP, was brought forward to a committee consisting of the presidents, vice chancellors and chancellor. The chancellor determined what to recommend to the Board of Trustees for approval. This process is in abeyance with the turnover in administration at the district office, and no allocations have been made for the 10/11 fiscal year. The Acting Chancellor and Acting Vice Chancellor, Business Services, are working on developing a new process, but the process isn’t being developed in a shared governance venue. The previous process did not reflect any long-term planning for Basic Aid funds, nor any link between the allocation of Basic Aid funds and district or college priorities. The Director of Fiscal Services is optimistic that with the current momentum, long term planning for Basic Aid funds is going to occur; however, the District Director of Fiscal Services indicated that she believes that there will be sufficient Basic Aid funds to meet all of the facilities needs over the next twenty years and no additional planning is needed. In addition to there being no long-term plan for the use of Basic Aid funds, there has been no assessment as to whether the use of the funds has been effective. There has been no evaluation of the over $100 million in allocated, but unspent, Basic Aid funds as to whether the allocations should now be revisited. While the college has a strategic planning process, the district has no districtwide strategic plan or planning process that is integrated with the college (III.D.1.a., III.D.3.).

Saddleback College uses a realistic assessment of financial resources and expenditures when developing financial projections. The district and college revenue projections are either
based on the state funding formula (the minimum available funding) or the prior year’s actual revenues for non-FTES-related funding. The projections are reasonable and err on the side of being conservative (III.D.1.b.).

Saddleback College has identified and planned for the payment of liabilities and future obligations. The Board’s guiding principles included in the budget development guidelines include not incurring debt without identifying an ongoing source of revenue to cover the debt. The 2010-11 Budget Development Guidelines include a listing of all multi-year contracts for inclusion in the budget. In addition the district has fully funded its OPEB liability, something few colleges can boast. The college does recognize the long-term needs of its facilities and is striving to obtain funding for those needs. The college develops two-year budget projections annually; however the district does not prepare any multi-year budget projections (III.D.1.c.).

Saddleback College has clearly defined its guidelines for budget development at the college level, although not at the district level. The college’s planning processes are well documented and open to all. It should be noted that neither the Planning and Budgeting Steering Committee nor the Educational Planning and Assessment Committee have students appointed to them. In addition, the survey notes that while the majority of employees agreed that they had input into the prioritization of needs at the college level, 42% of them did not feel they had an understanding of the processes at the district level (III.D.1.d.).

Saddleback College is not audited independently. The district’s accounting system has appropriate control mechanisms. The district’s audits have generally been with few findings; the findings that have been noted have been corrected. The budgets and the audits accurately reflect the revenues and expenditures of the district and colleges. Financial information about the college is readily available, and the employee survey indicates that employees feel that they are informed in a timely manner of significant college issues. The college presents a financial status report to the Board monthly (III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b.).

Both the college and the district maintain healthy reserves and ending balances. Over $100 million of Basic Aid funds have been allocated but not spent, resulting in significant cash balances. The district does interfund borrowing (transferring funds from the capital projects fund to the general fund) as needed for cash flow. The conservative budgeting practices make for substantial cash balances. Due to the substantial cash balances, the district has not felt the need to prepare cash flow projections (III.D.2.c.).

The district uses the accounting system, along with appropriate policies and procedures to maintain effective internal controls over programs such as financial aid, grants, foundations and auxiliaries. Both the student body and the foundation use the same district accounting system and must follow all district purchasing and accounting procedures, providing appropriate access to internal controls (III.D.2.d.).
The board has designated who in the district needs to sign conflict of interest statements, as has the foundation. The college exercises some oversight over auxiliary enterprises and the student body funds along with district personnel. The oversight for the student body government as well as bookstore, cafeteria and vending contracts is provided by the Director of Student Development. The Director of Fiscal Services has no responsibility for those funds or contracts. Given the amount of funding involved, the additional oversight from the Director of Fiscal Services might be useful. The college and district have appropriate procedures and policies in place to ensure that contracts are awarded consistent with board policy (III.D.2.e., III.D.2.f).

While the college financial management processes are regularly evaluated and the annual audit provides an audit of the outcomes, and there are administrative unit program reviews at the college fiscal office, there is no evidence that administrative unit program reviews are performed at the district fiscal office to evaluate the district processes and systems for financial management. The district received results from a survey of college perceptions of district services, including the fact that 42% of employees did not feel that they understood the district allocation processes. In the fiscal office, while the results were discussed, no changes were made (III.D.2.g.).

Conclusions

The college’s integration of planning and resource allocation should look really complete and functioning in a few years. That planning now needs to be integrated into the districtwide planning and resource allocation processes. The college is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning. However, there is minimal linkage between plans and a resource allocation process between the district and the college which places the district on the awareness level of the rubric.

The college has not met Standard III.D.

Commendation

Commendation 4: The team commends the college for its efforts in strategic planning and integrating that with the college resource allocation process.

Recommendations

District Recommendation 2: The teams recommend that the district and the colleges develop and implement a resource allocation model driven by planning that includes all district funds and is open, transparent, inclusive, and that is widely disseminated and reviewed/evaluated periodically for effectiveness (I.A.1., I.B., III.D.1.a., III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.1.d., III.D.2.b., III.D.3., IV.B.3.c).
Standard IV Leadership and Governance

IV.A.: Decision Making Roles and Processes

General Observations

The college articulates that processes and procedures have been established to increase the participation of staff, students and faculty in college decision making. The college has established the Strategic Planning Group, Planning and Budget Steering Committee and Consultation Council in which key constituency groups are represented and participate in college decision making. The college has increased the ability of faculty to work in key leadership roles. In addition, the college is working more closely with the Academic Senate and Classified Senate on decision making outcomes related to academic and professional matters. The Associated Student Government participates and students are represented at all levels (IV.A.1.).

The college’s self study asserts that the Consultation Council is the “cornerstone” of the governance structure for the college. The self study describes a number of changes in the institution’s governance and decision making process. The changes resulted in the development and implementation of the institution’s 2010-2013 Strategic Plan. This planning document has improved the college’s governance and decision making process; the result is a Board Policy and Administrative Regulation which direct and contribute to increased opportunities for faculty to participate in the decision-making process (IV.5.).

The Board has adopted a policy (Board Policy 2101) delegating authority for running the college to the president. The college hired a new president in 2008 and he worked to establish “collegial” dialogue with the campus, put together a group that restructured and reviewed the College Strategic Plan and established a larger more inclusive membership to the Consultation Council (CC). Under shared governance the president is the chair of the CC and the council serves as the primary recommending body to the college president. The president has worked to set a collegial process of values, goals and priorities for the institution and the challenge is whether he has the support and resources to fully implement them (IVB.2.).

There is evidence of ongoing dialogue between and among constituency groups, including the governing board. Since the last comprehensive report there is evidence of college wide participation and involvement in the continuous improvement process. The college has made a concerted effort to improve the campus climate. The previously indentified issues of hostility, cynicism, despair, and fear were not observed at the college level during the site visit. The administration has restored trust through the development of open communications, transparency in operations, and broader involvement of all employees in the institutional planning process. It appears that a healthy campus climate exists that supports collegiality among all constituency groups (IV.A.2.).
Past issues with board micromanagement with respect to training and technical assistance has improved. The board has developed a systematic plan for review, update, and development of new policies as required. However, the district office has not developed a strategic plan or strategies to address the facilities and resource needs of the college (IV.A.3.).

The college’s self study, team observations, constituency interviews, and evidentiary documents, demonstrates that the institution recognizes the importance of effective leadership in the achievement of its student learning mission. There has been a new emphasis placed on participatory practices and the leadership structure has been redesigned to provide a solid foundation for Saddleback College’s continuous improvement processes.

In sum, the college president has fostered a collegial and dialogue rich environment with the faculty, staff, and administration, and there is a demonstrated commitment to student learning and student success.

Findings and Evidence

The Self Study indicates that the college has addressed aspects of the standard by establishing procedures for the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate and the Management Leadership Team to select representatives to serve on campus committees and decision making bodies. They are responsible to carry input from their constituencies to those decision-making bodies (IV.A.1.).

The college has increased reassigned time and stipends to expand the ability of faculty to serve in key leadership roles and the executive administration of the college work closely with the Academic Senate when making decisions on academic and professional matters. The Self Study is not particularly clear on how managers and administrators review issues of significance/importance, as stated on page 302 of the Self Study.

Survey data indicates that there are varying levels of employee satisfaction regarding opportunities for input on improving programs and services. When asked if they are encouraged by their colleagues to provide such input, the satisfaction level is high. However, when asked by team members whether their input is considered during the decision making process, satisfaction responses were low. There was a much higher positive response rate among administrators and managers than among faculty and staff. The Self Study makes the statement that the college should be vigilant in assessing the effectiveness of communication but does not operationally define how this will be accomplished through any planning agendas (IV.A.1.).

The Planning Agenda for this Standard does indicate that the college is aware of the need to facilitate constituency group participation in the planning, and policy making process. This is a long standing issue that first appears in the 1998 and 2004 report. Progress was noted in each of the progress reports. The District Board of Trustees adopted Board Policy 2100 in
1995 and it has been reviewed most recently in 2004. The policy clearly states that the Board relies upon faculty for student learning and services. Using the term "relies primarily upon" the policy specifically outlines those areas and functions relating to student learning and services that the faculty have primary purview. Curriculum, establishment of degree and certificate requirements, and educational program development are directly related to this standard. Consensus is cited as the primary decision making style of the college. The identified constituency groups identified in the Self Study include; Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and the Associated Student Government. Collaboration and discussion exist and are utilized at multiple levels within the college to facilitate both collegewide communication and access to participative processes related to organizational planning and improved effectiveness. The restructured Consultation Council and associated advisory groups all exist within a governance framework that produces productive and collegial dialogue and a climate of inclusion and empowerment. These leadership and decision-making structures are evaluated for effectiveness through accountability and effective discussions noted in founding bylaws and in their group agendas and minutes. Student involvement is formally acknowledged and encouraged in the Saddleback College governance structure, and participation has appreciably increased despite the schedule challenges and life obligations of the student population (IV.A.1., IV.A.3.).

Written policies on participation in decision-making processes are well-established, and are reviewed and updated as needed. These policies are available in written form and via the college website, these participatory guidelines also clearly define the substantive roles of faculty, classified employees, students, and administrators in institutional policies and practices related to their areas of responsibility. Reliance on faculty input and voice for recommendations with respect to student learning is evident in board policy, composition of governance bodies (IV.A.2., IV.A.2.a., IV.A.2.b.).

Conclusions

Saddleback College has made significant improvements in its communication processes for informing all college constituencies of participatory governance opportunities. This was the focus of a prior recommendation and the college’s proactive approach and use of multidimensional strategies to reach diverse college groups and external communities is to be commended. In addition, the college has identified the continued communication of information regarding changes in board policy as a planning agenda item in its self study report. Although Saddleback College meets this standard the district does not as evidenced by this recommendation being noted by the 1998, 2004, and 2010 visiting accreditation teams (IV.A.3.) (see district recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 and college recommendation 1).

The college has not met Standard IV.A.
IV.B.: Board and Administrative Organizations

New policies and procedures have been added which address the responsibilities of the district, administrative regulations which identify the responsibilities of the Chancellor, and a policy delegating authority to the Chancellor. The Chancellor is responsible for organizing sub-committees and ad-hoc committees. Policies are easily accessible on the website (IV.B.3.a.).

Surveys were conducted, which showed that district-college function delineation was not clear among staff – roughly a third thought it was. There were questions raised as to the district’s adherence to delineation. A discussion or analysis of the district-college delineation of functions has not yet been facilitated. A function map outlining college and district functional responsibilities, who is primary, secondary or shared was prepared September 27, 2010 (IV.B.3.a.).

The role and scope of ATEP (Advanced Technology and Education Park) is a discussion topic. The extent of the use of district services and college administration was not clarified. A Substantive Change Proposal was submitted to ACCJC in 2010 regarding Distance and Online Education; then again for ATEP in February 2010; and then an addendum for ATEP in April-2010. The request prompted ACCJC to request re-submittal to address student services and financial aid at ATEP. A re-submittal with Irvine Valley College as lead college administration and a more limited set of offerings for Saddleback was submitted in October 2010 (IV.B.3.a.).

A description of district services by department was developed, and a survey of district services was conducted. The description is presented in a user-friendly clear format. Although there were many responses where the results of the survey were not understood, these district attempts at self assessment and awareness are good first steps toward providing effective services to support the college (IV.B.3.b.).

The district has an allocation formula for distributing funds to each college. It is additionally benefitted by receiving additional funds as a “Basic Aid” district. Basic aid dollars are distributed for “one-time” projects. Projects are prioritized by the Chancellor. There is disagreement between the college and district as to how the distribution of basic aid is decided – specifically with respect to addressing college operational needs. How priorities are re-evaluated by the district, after receiving college input is unclear, given the documented unmet needs of the college. The definition of “one-time” projects is also controversial with respect to the Advanced Technology Education Park (ATEP). One-time could mean all aspects of ATEP over an indefinite time period; or it could mean a one-time investment in ATEP. The college views ATEP as a misuse of basic aid monies when using the latter.
definition, at the expense of the district not filling unmet college facilities and infrastructure needs (IV.B.3.c.).

Internal controls, routine audits and adequately performing fiscal software are in place which has produced good financial reports for the past six years (IV.B.3.d.).

New policies have been added regarding delegation of authority to the College President and relation of the College President and Chancellor (IV.B.3.e.).

Several committees with district and college participation have been established, board agenda and additional information is available online, board meeting highlights are regularly and timely distributed, and board meetings are televised and video streamed. Trustee forums and special meetings have been added recently and are open to the public. District staff and a board member have been included specific college accreditation teams. Input from all constituency groups is provided during board agenda review and draft. The liaison role and function of the district, between the board and college, is enhanced by the bringing of all groups together for board agenda review (IV.B.3.f.).

Surveys regarding district services were conducted recently and the results were compiled and reviewed by the district. The surveys are a good first step at assessing district services with respect to how effective they are in supporting the college. A next round of surveys could follow, that could go one step farther by addressing the effectiveness of district systems and processes as viewed by the college to include recommendations and suggestions from the college, at addressing gaps in service, identifying future needs, and noting exemplary service. This type of information would be useful to the district and as an opportunity for the college to provide input with a goal of increasing collaboration, continuous improvement and enhancing two-way communication (IV.B.3.g.).

Findings and Evidence

Standard IV B was cited in the 2004 Evaluation Report and was the source of a Commission Recommendation. It was also noted that it was a recommendation of the 1998 visiting team. Specifically, it was recommended that the Board of Trustees cease their involvement in college and district operations and delegate all non-policy issues...to the chancellor and at the college level to the president. The recommendation offered four specific actions that would bring the college into compliance. This recommendation remained in the 2005 and 2006 visiting team Progress Report. The 2008 Focused Midterm Visit Report concluded that the standard had been met noting that the SOCCCD Board of Trustees had made significant strides in addressing the recommendation and the Commission letter of February 2008 removes the recommendation. The 2010 Self Study Report describes board policies, internal review processes, and a CEO selection process that suggests continued compliance with the standard.
Attempts have been made to identify delineation of roles and responsibilities through board policy, administrative regulations, and surveys. Invitations to participate were also extended, however it was not clear if staff was fully engaged. The efforts are a first step in the right direction (IV.B.3.a.).

With respect to district/college collaboration, it has improved. Dialogue has started which marks the beginning of creating bridges. For example, district staff and trustees served on accreditation committees, which was an important breakthrough. There is more direct communication. From college staff there was an acknowledgement that information is provided given the several different avenues, such as use of the web site (IV.B.3.a.).

A districtwide survey was conducted and feedback collected, but the results have not fully been assessed. In some areas more than others, feedback has been provided, such in district Human Resources. For example, The HR vice chancellor used some of the feedback to assist in developing a presentation for a state-wide conference titled “Opening Up our Kimono - Transparency through Continuous Improvement,” using responses gathered from the district’s survey of services (IV.B.3.a.).

With regard to specific major district/college joint projects such as ATEP, the input from college and participatory governance groups through the chancellor to the board was disconnected. The college provided examples of how they communicated their concerns about ATEP, whereby going through proper channels the information was not considered or addressed by the chancellor. The ATEP approach was that it was a district project, that classes would be offered at the ATEP location or the district would lose the property. Saddleback views the ATEP site as a district drain on funds that could be used for more pressing college needs. In summary, the ATEP is a district site, not a college site because it did not have buy-in from the college. The ATEP Advisory Committee has met one time in the last 8 months (IV.B.3.a.).

The district and board are committed to make the ATEP a success. Innovative plans such as partnering with 4-year universities, local industry, commercial developments that will provide revenue, etc., does not appear to have buy-in from the college and has not gone through the participatory governance processes (IV.B.3.a.).

The ATEP was reorganized recently and Saddleback College’s participation will be less than originally anticipated by offering only one program, the Digital Rapid Technology Program. However, Saddleback could be a part of ATEP in the long run, because of its potential benefits with regard to partnerships, industry proximity, and Saddleback College’s large involvement in Career Tech Ed programs (IV.B.3.a.).

The district does not have a districtwide strategic plan or facilities plan, and the decisions of the district regarding the overall plans of the college are indicative of this (IV.B.3.a.).
The district is still in the process of developing and utilizing Administrative Unit Reviews (AURs) with the use of qualitative and quantitative data. Program effectiveness has not been evaluated, although leadership groups are named as responsible parties for program review, dialogue about the results and their linkage to institutional planning and processes is not evident. Planning, decision-making processes and participatory government participation are in the initial stages of development because of the lack of on-going evaluation and communication (IV.B.3.a.).

Attempts are being made to describe district services through the creation of an extensive outline of departments and primary roles and responsibilities and to collect data through surveys. This is the first step that the district can expand on, again to strengthen the trust level with the college (IV.B.3.b.).

A districtwide survey was conducted and feedback collected. Results have not fully been assessed. In some areas more than others, feedback has been provided. In Human Resources, for example, the HR vice chancellor used some of the feedback to assist in developing a presentation for state-wide HR conferences titled “Opening Up our Kimono – Transparency through Continuous Improvement.” The impetus for this presentation was the evaluation of results gathered from the district’s HR survey of services. The confusion in HR services identified in the survey turned into a helpful discussion. With regard to the Information Technology survey, the results have not been used. IT at the district is innovative and trailblazing; however, evidence through interviews suggests that the IT department develops new processes but does not maintain them or provide a foundation for the rest of the college to fully utilize what is developed. In summary, results of district surveys cannot be determined for effectiveness if they are not assessed or analyzed (IV.B.3.b.).

The district’s allocation formula is consistent with SB 361. Because SOCCCD is a Basic Aid district, their revenue exceeds the amount that would have been received through SB 361, therefore a surplus is typically created. The surplus ranges between $35-50 million per year. The Board’s policy is to use basic aid funds for one-time purposes and not ongoing programs. The use and distribution of these funds follows the following process: the college submits a list of projects to the college president, the college president meets with the chancellor; in turn, the chancellor prioritizes this list with other requests for funding and presents a final list of projects for the Board to approve. No criteria are given as to how projects are ranked by the Chancellor and no justification is provided as to the distribution of Basic Aid dollars for these one-time expenditures. If the Chancellor desires, he/she can choose any project on the list regardless of the order of importance or priority as ranked by the college. The Board receives the Basic Aid request as a recommendation from the Chancellor (IV.B.3.c.).
Decisions regarding ATEP monies are typically made 1-2 times each year. This year (2010), no Basic Aid dollars were distributed. The reason provided by the district was because the district is in transition with an acting Chancellor. The college has identified a hole in this process with regard to how the use of funds is decided and prioritized. There is no discussion, no established criteria, and no input from participatory groups on these decisions. For the most part, these funds are used for one-time facilities and equipment; yet, there are unmet needs at the college that have been ignored. The lack of an adhered to district process for resource distribution does not address college and student needs as evidenced by the college’s unmet need and current situation whereby basic aid funds are still sitting unused. The lack of a process for distribution of basic aid funds does not support the effective operations of the college (IV.B.3.c.).

It is unclear how basic aid priorities are determined. Regardless, the college has developed a 20-year capital and scheduled maintenance needs assessment to serve as an informational resource to the district that will help quantify the extent of the funding gap for unmet college needs (IV.B.3.c.).

The district is very fiscally conservative and effectively controls its expenditures. It has maintained positive ending financial balances for several years, does not incur any debt, can predict and forecast basic aid revenues with certainty and can do so three years in advance fairly well. The board takes pride in its efforts to be fiscally frugal and to have the ability to provide financial resources to its colleges for needed facilities, equipment and infrastructure by utilizing basic aid dollars and not having to go to the voters to pass a bond or incur debt (IV.B.3.d.).

Policies provide the college president and the chancellor authority to run their respective operations. The college runs its institution without interference. This is even more evident with the current Acting Chancellor. The college president is more autonomous. However, administrative needs are not fully met. As reported by administrators interviewed by the team, the college has one of the lowest administrator-to-student ratios among all California community colleges. This situation has existed for at least two years without support from the district or board to rectify it. The college hopes that its message will be heard as it has assembled evidence to identify its low rank among community colleges in this area, and has developed plans to fill necessary administrative positions which are ‘key’ to the colleges’ progress and support to the board’s desire to be an innovative, cutting-edge district (IV.B.3.e.).

The board, colleges and district are all more inclusive in their planning processes with greater information provided on the web, increased participation in committees and the inclusion of board and district representatives on accreditation standard writing teams. Coupled with the introduction of district services surveys, the district has been more inclusive in coordinating with the college (IV.B.3.f.).
Many committees have been created which include participation from constituency group representatives. The classified senate, academic senate and students are invited to participate on committees (IV.B.3.f).

The Docket committee is a districtwide committee with constituency group representatives that meets monthly, two weeks prior to the board meeting, with a meeting schedule set a year in advance, to review and discuss Board of Trustees agenda items. The committee receives an outline of the board items and discusses what is on the outline. However, typically attachments are not included in this review; therefore, items may appear on the board agenda that are not discussed at the Docket (IV.B.3.f).

The Board Policy and Administrative Regulation (BPAR) Advisory Committee is also a districtwide committee constituency group representation, where policies are recommended and addressed prior to going to the Board for adoption. All policies are scheduled for review at least every three years as part of a review cycle. Policy change requests first go to the Vice Chancellor of Business Services (chair), who determines the priority of the requested change, then to the BPAR (who meet twice per month) and review, comment, and make any necessary changes prior to sending to the Chancellor, who has the last say before submitting to the Board for adoption. The Board will use three readings to allow for questions and further revisions if necessary. If additional revisions are required, then it goes back to the BPAR committee and the process continues as stated (IV.B.3.f).

Conclusions

The information and opportunities to participate for constituency groups and the colleges exist in many forms. However, the effectiveness of the participants to impact decisions is not evident with respect to delineation of district functional responsibilities, decision making processes, and the role of district planning in relation to college planning. Requests for basic aid dollars ranked by the college are submitted to the district without a clear understanding of how projects are recommended by the Chancellor to the Board for funding. A strategic plan and facilities assessment was initiated by the college recently, which should feed into a district strategic plan and facilities plan, but neither plan exists at the district level. The delineation of functional responsibilities such as these is lacking (IV.B.3.f).

The district reported its results in a fragmented way. For example, the Human Resources department analyzed comments from the survey and used the feedback to redirect its efforts to correct some Human Resources processes and reassess their services and how they were provided. It prompted them to acknowledge that change was needed to run more effectively. They acknowledge that they are not there yet; however, they intend to collect more data, form a problem solving team, and address some areas of concern immediately. Other departments have responded more slowly to the surveys and will need to follow Human Resources lead to engage the college more, address identified concerns, and develop
processes that ensure the colleges that they are being heard and responded to. Incremental change would show progress. The college will view the district or board as being of assistance to the college in meeting its educational needs, when the colleges’ concerns and suggestions are fully considered when making decisions at the district level (IV.B.3.g.).

In summation, the district lacks a comprehensive planning structure that serves the planning needs of the college. The lack of an inclusive resource allocation model from the district hampers the college’s ability to plan its maintenance and facilities planning. The college has a well documented, ongoing process for evaluating itself in all areas of operation, analyzing itself, and publicizing the results and planning and implementing improvements. However, this is not the case with respect to the district office. The college is on the proficiency level of the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning. The district is on the awareness level of the rubric. (IV.B.1., IV.B.1.a., IV.B.1.b., IV.B.1.c., IV.B.3., IV.B.3.c., IV.B.3.d., IV.B.3.f.)

**The college has not met Standard IV.B.**

**Commendation**

**Commendation 1:** The team commends the college for the positive change in campus climate. The team observation of Saddleback College was that of a college and its community of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to be academically and programmatically engaged, creative, and optimistic with respect to their institution. The pride everyone has in the campus connection to the community, the transfer rate, and esprit de corps is notable.

**Recommendations**

**District Recommendation 2:** The teams recommend that the district and the colleges develop and implement a resource allocation model driven by planning that includes all district funds and is open, transparent, inclusive, and that is widely disseminated and reviewed/evaluated periodically for effectiveness (I.A.1., I.B., III.D.1.a., III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.1.d., III.D.2.b., III.D.3., IV.B.3.e).

**District Recommendation 3:** The teams recommend that the college, district administrators, faculty and staff develop a communications process among the entities on key issues of district wide concern including academic calendar, planning, (ATEP) Advanced Technology Education Park, technology and building priorities (Standards IV.A.2., IV.B.3).

**District Recommendation 4:** The teams recommend that the Board of Trustees widely communicate the results of its self evaluation process annually and use this as the basis for improvement (IV.A.5., IV.B.1.g.).
District Recommendation 5: The teams recommend that the Board of Trustees develop a clearly defined policy for a code of ethics which must include dealing with violations of the Board’s code of ethics (III. A.1.d, IV.B.1.h.).

District Recommendation 6: The teams recommend that the district provide a clear delineation of its functional responsibilities, the district level process for decision making and the role of the district in college planning and decision making. The district should perform a regular review of district committees, conduct an assessment of the overall effectiveness of services to the colleges and communicate the results of those reviews (IV. B.3.a, IV.B.3.b., IV.B.3.e., and IV.B.3.f.).

College Recommendation 1: Although the college and its constituent groups have achieved a collegial working relationship with the current president to address issues with a new optimism, the college does not have this same type of relationship with the district leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The team recommends elements from both Recommendation 7 of the 1998 Accreditation Team and Recommendation 6, B and C of the 2004 visiting team that the district and Board of Trustees support the work of the college by:

B. “Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college” (IV.A.1., IV.A.2., IV.B.2., and IV.B.3.); and

C. “Enhancing the college and district communication structure so that it is clear to everyone who the responsible party is for making decisions and how those decisions are or will be made.” (IV.A.1., IV.A.2., IV.B.1., IV.B.2., and IV.B.3.).