EVALUATION REPORT

SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

28000 Marguerite Parkway
Mission Viejo, California

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Saddleback College on October 12-14, 2004

Raúl Rodríguez, Ph.D., Team Chair

SADDLEBACK COLLEGE
Comprehensive Visit Team Roster

Dr. Raúl Rodríguez (CHAIR)
Superintendent-President
San Joaquin Delta College

Ms. Gillian Murphy (Assistant/Team Member)
Director, Small Business Development Center
San Joaquin Delta College

Ms. KC Boylan
Professor, Speech Communications
Folsom Lake College

Dr. Jose Ortiz
Vice President of Instruction
Laney College

Mr. Anthony Cantu
Dean of Instruction
Fresno City College

Dr. Jim Riggs
President
Columbia College

Dr. Tim Clow
Senior Dean, Research & Planning
Contra Costa College

Mr. Lloyd Rodgers
Vice President, Administrative Services
Sacramento City College

Ms. Janice Ito
Professor, Biology
Leeward Community College

Ms. Evia Moore
Director of Library Services
San Joaquin Delta College

ACCREDITATION EVALUATION REPORT FOR SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

Evaluation Site Visit
October 12-14, 2004

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

A team of ten individuals visited Saddleback College from October 12-14, 2004 for the purpose of evaluating the institution's application to reaffirm its accreditation status. Saddleback College is one of two colleges in the South Orange Community College District, the other college being Irvine Valley College. The district office and the board room, where trustees hold their monthly meetings, are both located on the Saddleback College campus in Mission Viejo.

The team spent considerable time prior to the visit reviewing the self study report and other college documents. At the first team meeting on October 11, the team began its evaluation of Saddleback College in regard to the evidence presented by the college that it meets the 2004 accreditation standards. The team completed its review on October 14, 2004 with a closing session report of findings to the college.

In reviewing the report from the 1998 accreditation visit, the college response to the report, the most recent self study, as well as other evidence, the current team found that the college did not adequately respond to four of the seven recommendations of the 1998 visiting team. Responding to previous accreditation recommendations is a serious issue that should have been given a higher priority by the college and the district (as several of the recommendations concerned district issues). It must be noted that the college did make efforts to respond to the previous recommendations. Unfortunately, the responses they made were not sufficient. As a result, these four previous recommendations have been incorporated into the list of recommendations compiled by the 2004 team.

The team formed two additional recommendations to the college and found several areas for commendation.

Commendations to the College

Saddleback College is a wonderful college in many respects. There appears to be a campus-wide commitment to students. The teaching that the team witnessed at the college was generally outstanding and reflects the strong values and dedication of the faculty. The support services provided by the classified staff also exemplify a praiseworthy commitment to students. With the recent selection of a new president, there appears to be a growing, although still somewhat restrained, sense of optimism and hope for the future. In short, there are many areas in which the college deserves recognition for its efforts. The team made particular note of the strengths listed below and it commends the college for:

<u>Maintaining an attractive and welcoming campus environment</u>. The campus is generally attractive and the physical setting of the college is impressive. More significantly, the faculty, staff, and administration at Saddleback College are to be commended for their dedication to students.

<u>Maintaining student-centeredness while achieving progress in technology</u>. The team recognizes the college's outstanding web site that is highly accessible to students. Moreover, the collaborative process that was used to develop the web site and its contents is a model of student-centeredness.

<u>Developing an effective work order system</u>. The maintenance department of the college has developed an online work order system that appears to work extremely well and that provides for a rapid response time to requests.

<u>Fostering strong student leadership</u>. The college possesses an extraordinary group of student leaders. College staff members have helped to promote leadership opportunities for students. The Associated Student Government should also be recognized for its commitment to cultural awareness and diversity.

<u>Selecting the new president</u>. The chancellor and the trustees should be applauded for their selection of the new President of Saddleback College. His hiring is cause for optimism because of his deep devotion to the college, his care and concern for students and staff, and his strong commitment to making critical improvements to the college.

Recommendations

There are many challenges facing Saddleback College and the South Orange Community College District. As the team sifted through the evidence and learned more about the college and the district, several themes began to emerge that characterize these various challenges. In the view of the team, there are three major themes that emerged from the analysis of the self study report and the assessment of the evidence gathered and reviewed during the visit: (1) Evaluation, planning, and improvement, (2) Student learning outcomes, and (3) Dialogue, communication, and climate.

Theme one relates to the requirement in the accreditation standards for the college to engage in ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement efforts to provide better service to students. Typically, these efforts center on a comprehensive institutional planning process of some type. Although there is an educational master plan for Saddleback College, it does not appear to be used in any significant fashion to guide college decisions. Likewise, although there is a program review process, participation in this process is voluntary for academic programs and does not appear to guide instructional, student services, or administrative decision making. The college and district have developed a fine array of demographic and performance data. However, it does not appear that this information has been incorporated in any meaningful manner into an ongoing and systematic cycle of analysis, planning, resource distribution, implementation and re-evaluation.

The team found that the college had made little progress in developing student learning outcomes at any level of the organization, which is the second theme. The self study contains a number of references to progress that had been made in this area. Unfortunately, when the team attempted to verify these assertions, the evidence was lacking. There is a handful of individuals on the faculty who are making exciting advancements in their courses on student learning outcomes. The work of these individuals represents only isolated cases; the general faculty, the faculty senate, the curriculum committee, and the instructional managers have made meager progress in the area of student learning outcomes. Additionally, there was no evidence of a campus wide dialogue or any formal action plan to address this critical issue.

The third theme has to do with campus wide dialogue, communication, and climate. The 1998 team noted a climate of "hostility, mistrust, cynicism, and despair" at Saddleback College. The 2004 team found that little had changed in regard to these negative indicators. In fact, the team is adding "fear" to this list as team members interviewed several individuals at the college who were reluctant to speak to the team because they feared retaliation against them. It must be noted that these negative indicators primarily relate to college/district politics. To a limited extent, there appears to be a dichotomy where the preoccupation with governance and decision making issues does not necessarily carry over to affect the quality of classroom interactions or the delivery of support services to students. In fact, college faculty and staff members were generally positive about working with students and proud of the high transfer rate and other specific areas where the college excels.

Nonetheless, the major concern of the team is that this negative climate has been in evidence for such a long period of time that it appears to be taking a toll in some respects (such as in the lack of development of student learning outcomes and the lack of progress in integrated planning and research) because there are few signs that it is improving. From the mid-eighties through the early nineties, the college enjoyed a period of stability and relative harmony that it has not enjoyed since. During that period of stability, the college developed a reputation for innovation and excellence. It is apparent that the reputation of both the college and the district has suffered significantly as a result of the pervasive governance and climate issues that continue to plague this district.

Mistrust lies at the center of these issues, and the widespread lack of trust makes it difficult for the major stakeholders to communicate clearly with one another. A lack of trust is also evident in the decision making process. The team found that many faculty, staff, and administrators perceive that the board still has a tendency to make arbitrary decisions and to micro-manage college operations. The board seems afraid of being labeled as a "rubber stamp board," and the perception exists that members sometimes make decisions with the goal of demonstrating their power rather than making a good decision for the college and the community. The difficult financial predicament in which the district lost its basic aid status in prior years has had a lingering effect that goes beyond financial concerns. All of these issues and others have contributed to the ongoing negative climate and the inability to develop healthy and clear communication. They have also hampered the ability of the college and the district to develop and implement a coherent planning process, to make decisions that are well understood and supported by all college constituencies, and to nurture

an in-depth, college wide dialogue on critical educational issues such as student learning outcomes, the most effective use of institutional research, and other such items.

The three themes just described are noted in the following headings along with the pertinent recommendations for improvement listed below them.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

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, I.A.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); and
   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).

2. The team recommends, consistent with recommendation one of the 1998 visiting team, that 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 IA.4, IA.6, IB.4, IIA.2.e, and IIA.2.f);
   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 IA.4, IA.5, IA.6, IA.7, IB.3, IB.4, IB.6, IIA.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 IA.1, IB.1, IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1);
   D. Coordinating program review more thoroughly with the educational master plan, department plans, and decision-making processes (Standards IB.1, IB.4,);
   E. Requiring and implementing program review for *all* departments, including instructional, student services, and administrative departments (Standards IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4);
   F. Linking facilities, technology, and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college (Standards IB, IIIA.6, III.B.2.b, IIIC.2, and IIID.1.d); and
   G. Publishing and widely disseminating the completed planning and evaluation process (Standards IA.4, IB).

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 IIIA1, IIIA.3).

<u>Student Learning Outcomes</u>

3. The team recommends that 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 IB.1, IB.2, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b) ;
   B. Defining and instituting research procedures for measuring, assessing, and tracking learning outcomes (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b); 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 IB.4, IIA.2.d, IIIA.5).

<u>Dialogue, Communication, and Climate</u>

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 and scope 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.1, 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); and
   D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).

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 (Standards IA.3, IB.1);
   B. Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.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 (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.3).

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INTRODUCTION

Saddleback College, the founding college in the South Orange Community College District, is a comprehensive community college offering a wide range of courses, programs, and services. The 200 acre main campus of Saddleback College is augmented by approximately forty locations throughout its service area where classes are offered. None of these forty locations are of substantial enrollment to qualify for status as an educational center. Saddleback College serves the residents of the following communities: Aliso Viejo, Capistrano Beach, Coto de Caza, Dana Point, Dove Canyon, Emerald Bay, Foothill Ranch, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Las Flores, Mission Viejo, Portola Hills, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, and South Laguna. In addition, the college operates an Emeritus Institute that enjoys an enrollment of more than 10,000 senior citizens.

Background

The district was originally named the Saddleback Community College District in 1967 when the college and the district were created simultaneously to serve the southern portion of Orange County. Classes opened in fall of 1968 and former Governor Ronald Reagan presided over the dedication ceremony of Saddleback College on Tuesday, October 15, 1968.

The college and the district have undergone a number of organizational and name changes over the years. As a response to population growth, Saddleback College opened a satellite campus in 1979 in the community of Irvine, which was then called the North Campus. The North Campus emerged from center status to be designated as a full campus in the early eighties. This new status created a single college district with two campus sites with the title of the CEO changing from Superintendent/President to Chancellor. Around 1983, the North Campus became known as Saddleback College North and the original Saddleback College main campus became Saddleback College South. It wasn't until 1985 that the Board of Trustees created the current multi-college district structure. The name of Saddleback College North was changed to Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College South reverted back to its original designation as Saddleback College. In 1997, the board revised the name of the district to reflect the area served by the district.

The district is continuing to expand with the acquisition of a parcel of land at the site of the former Tustin Marine Air Corps Station in Tustin. This site is approximately sixty eight acres and is intended for the development of training programs for students that are linked with local industry. The name of this incipient operation is the Advanced Technology Education Park (ATEP). The scheduled opening date for ATEP is fall of 2005 with a 15,000 square foot facility. There are three main program areas that will be featured when ATEP opens: a laser optics program, a model making and rapid prototype program, and a Homeland

Security program. Future development of the site will hinge on collaborations and partnerships with other educational organizations, governmental entities, as well as business and industry.

Saddleback Accreditation

A team of ten individuals visited Saddleback College from October 12-14, 2004 for the purpose of evaluating the institution's application to reaffirm its accreditation status. Saddleback College is one of two colleges in the South Orange Community College District, the other college being Irvine Valley College. The district office is located on the Saddleback College campus in Mission Viejo.   At present, the district office is located in the college library. A new building is under construction on the Saddleback campus that will house both the Health Sciences program and the district office. A state-of-the-art board room will also be located in the same structure.

The team spent considerable time prior to the visit reviewing the self study report and other college documents. At the first team meeting on October 11, the team began its evaluation of Saddleback College in regard to the evidence presented by the college that it meets the 2004 accreditation standards. College staff responded well to the team in fulfilling pre-visit requests and making logistical arrangements for the visit. This spirit of responsiveness and cooperation persisted throughout the team's visit.

The campus visit began with a pleasant breakfast at which college faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees welcomed the team. The reception of the team across the campus was both positive and warm. The team room was comfortable, and it contained a well-organized collection of support documents for the team to review. The team had wide access to all facilities and members of the college community as well as to selected individuals from the district office. The team completed its review on October 14, 2004 with a closing session report of findings to the college.

The college completed its self study report in a timely manner. The self study, however, is not well written across all standards, and the document as a whole did not read like an integrated manuscript. Standard IIC., the standard on Library and Learning Support Services, is the most thorough and well written section of the entire self study document. The tone of the self study is somewhat downcast, and it appears to be dominated by the perspective of the faculty. Nevertheless, the self study is accurate in most regards although the team did find a few claims and assertions that were not supported by the evidence.

The least satisfying part of the self study is the planning agenda items. There are simply too many (i.e., 139) of them and a number of these items are just vague statements or assertions. Without clearer delineation of the planning agenda items and greater specificity as to the assignment of responsibility and a timeframe for completion of them, it is difficult to make the leap of faith that a majority of these planning agenda items as stated would ever be completed. The new president has made an effort to begin to address this deficiency by organizing a task force that reviewed the planning agenda items and prioritized them to determine a plan of action.

Commendations to the College

Saddleback College is a wonderful college in many respects. There appears to be a campus-wide commitment to students. The teaching that the team witnessed at the college was generally outstanding and reflects the strong values and dedication of the faculty. The support services provided by the classified staff also exemplify a praiseworthy commitment to students. With the recent selection of a new president, there appears to be a growing, albeit restrained, sense of optimism and hope for the future. In short, there are many areas in which the college deserves recognition for its efforts. The team made particular note of the strengths listed below and it commends the college for:

1. Maintaining an attractive and welcoming campus environment. The campus is generally attractive and the physical setting of the college is impressive. More significantly, the faculty, staff, and administration at Saddleback College are to be commended for their dedication to students.

2. Maintaining student-centeredness while achieving progress in technology. The team recognizes the college's outstanding web site that is highly accessible to students. Moreover, the collaborative process that was used to develop the web site and its contents is a model of student-centeredness.

3. Developing an effective work order system. The maintenance department of the college has developed an online work order system that appears to work extremely well and that provides for a rapid response time to requests.

4. Fostering strong student leadership. The college possesses an extraordinary group of student leaders. College staff members have helped to promote leadership opportunities for students. The Associated Student Government should also be recognized for their commitment to cultural awareness and diversity.

5. Selecting the new president. The Chancellor and the Trustees should be applauded for their selection of the new President of Saddleback College. His hiring is cause for optimism because of his deep devotion to the college, his care and concern for students and staff, and his strong commitment to making critical improvements to the college.

Recommendations

There are many challenges facing Saddleback College and the South Orange Community College District. As the team sifted through the evidence and learned more about the college and the district, several themes began to emerge that characterize these various challenges. In the view of the team, there are three major themes that emerged from the analysis of the self study report and the assessment of the evidence gathered and reviewed during the visit. In conjunction with these three themes, there are four recommendations from the previous accreditation visit that are incorporated into the recommendations of the 2004 team due to inadequate progress by the college and/or the district.

The three themes are noted in the following headings. The specific recommendations listed below are intended as a guide to further improvement and growth for Saddleback College.

o   Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

The accreditation standards require the college to engage in ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement efforts to provide better service to students. The college continues to lag in several areas of planning even though planning has been a major issue in the last two accreditation reports. Although there is an educational master plan, it does not appear to be used in any significant fashion to guide college decisions. Likewise, although there is a program review process that is not voluntary, there is a schedule for all departments that has been agreed to by the academic senate, participation in this process is not consistent across all academic programs. There are a number of planning areas that have not received attention, such as human resources. The college and district have developed a fine array of demographic and performance data. However, it does not appear that this information has been incorporated in any meaningful manner into an ongoing and systematic cycle of analysis, planning, resource distribution, implementation and re-evaluation. None of the current planning activities of the college are informed by or clearly linked back to the college mission statement. For these reasons:

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); and
    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).

2. The team recommends, consistent with recommendation one of the of the 1998 visiting team, that 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 IA.4, IA.6, IB.4, IIA.2.e, and IIA.2.f);
    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 IA.4, IA.5, IA.6, IA.7, IB.3, IB.4, IB.6, IIA.1., and IIA.2);
    C. Identifying intended institutional and student learning outcomes, coordinated with the college mission statement, and measuring progress towards accomplishment (Standards IA.1, IB.1, IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1);
    D. Coordinating program review more thoroughly with the educational master plan, department plans, and decision-making processes (Standards IB.1, IB.4,);

E. Requiring and implementing program review for *all* departments, including instructional, student services, and administrative departments (Standards IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4);

F. Linking facilities, technology, and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college (Standards IB, IIIA.6, IIIB.2.b, IIIC.2, and IIID.1.d); and

G. Publishing and widely disseminating the completed planning and evaluation process (Standards IA.4, IB).

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 IIIA1, IIIA.3).

o Student Learning Outcomes

The team found that the college had made little progress in developing student learning outcomes at any level of the organization. The self study contains a number of references to progress that had been made in this area. Unfortunately, when the team attempted to verify these assertions, the evidence was lacking. There is a handful of individuals on the faculty who are making exciting advancements in their courses on student learning outcomes. Again, these seem to be isolated cases; the general faculty, the faculty senate, the curriculum committee, and the instructional managers have made meager progress in the area of student learning outcomes. Additionally, there was no evidence of a campus wide dialogue or formal actions to address this critical issue.

For the reasons listed above:

3. The team recommends that 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 IB.1, IB.2, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b) ;
    B. Defining and instituting research procedures for measuring, assessing, and tracking learning outcomes (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b); 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 IB.4, IIA.2.d, IIIA.5).

o Dialogue, Communication, and Climate

The third theme has to do with campus wide dialogue, communication, and climate. The 1998 team noted a climate of "hostility, mistrust, cynicism, and despair" at Saddleback College. The 2004 team found that little had changed in regard to these negative indicators.

In fact, the team is adding "fear" to this list as team members interviewed several individuals at the college who were reluctant to speak to the team because they feared retaliation against them. It must be noted that these negative indicators primarily relate to college/district politics. For the most part, there appears to be a dichotomy where the preoccupation with governance and decision making issues does not normally carry over to affect the quality of classroom interactions or the delivery of support services to students. In fact, college faculty and staff members were generally positive about working with students and proud of the high transfer rate and other specific areas where the college excels.

The major concern of the team is that the negative climate has been in evidence for such a long period that it has to be taking a toll in some respects because there are few signs that it is improving. From the mid-eighties through the early nineties, the college enjoyed a period of stability that it has not enjoyed since. During that period of stability, the college developed a reputation for innovation and excellence. It is apparent that the reputation of both the college and the district has suffered significantly as a result of the pervasive governance and climate issues.

There is a serious communication gap between people at the college and people at the district office. This communication gap contributes to an ongoing dissatisfaction with various processes and the quality of certain products or outcomes as a result of these processes. Even though there is a list detailing the delegation of responsibilities between the college and the district, it is not always reflective of what actually happens in practice. The lack of a sufficient delegation of responsibilities is just one factor in the communication problems between the college and the district. College personnel often point the finger at the district office when things don't work out well, and the opposite occurs just as frequently. More effort must be put into better communication and better coordination between the college and the district.

Mistrust lies at the center of these issues. This widespread lack of trust makes it difficult for the major stakeholders to communicate clearly with one another. A lack of trust is also evident in the decision making process. The team found that many faculty, staff, and administrators perceive that the board still has a tendency to make arbitrary decisions and to micro-manage college operations. The board seems afraid of being labeled as a "rubber stamp board" and the perception exists that members sometimes make decisions with the goal of demonstrating their power rather than making a good decision for the college and the community. The difficult financial predicament in which the district lost its basic aid status in prior years has had a lingering effect that goes beyond financial concerns. All of these issues and others have contributed to the ongoing negative climate and the inability to develop healthy and clear communications. They have also hampered the ability of the college and the district to develop and implement a coherent planning process, to make decisions that are well understood and supported by all college constituencies, and to nurture an in-depth, collegewide dialogue on critical educational issues such as student learning outcomes, the most effective use of institutional research, and other such items.

All of these issues and others have contributed to the ongoing negative climate and the inability to develop healthy and clear communications. They have also hampered the ability

of the college and the district to develop and implement a coherent planning process, to make decisions that are well understood and that are supported by all college constituencies, and to nurture an in-depth college wide dialogue on critical educational issues, such as student learning outcomes. In response to these findings:

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 and scope 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.1, 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); and
    D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).

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 (Standards IA.3, IB.1);
    B. Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.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 (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.3).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Authority

Saddleback College operates under public law of the State of California and is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

2. Mission

The team verified that the college reviewed its mission statement in 2003. Prior to that, the board approved the college mission statement in 2000. It is not clear that there is a well defined process for the regular review of the college mission statement.

3. Governing Board

The South Orange Community College District Board of Trustees is a seven-member body elected at large by the registered voters within the district service boundaries. Trustees are elected to staggered four-year terms and elections are held every two years.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The Board of Trustees appointed a new college president on June 24, 2004 who fully meets the requirements of the position.

5. Administrative Capacity

The college has adequate administrative staff with the appropriate preparation and experience to support the mission and purpose.

6. Operational Status

Saddleback College is fully operational in all respects with students actively pursuing degree programs.

7. Degrees

Saddleback College has robust enrollments in its degree programs as the largest segment of the student body cite their goal as desiring to complete a B.A. after first obtaining their A.A. degree from the college.

8. Educational Programs

Saddleback College offers a broad range of two-year A.A. and A.S. degree programs that are congruent with the stated mission of the college.

9. Academic Credit

The college uses generally accepted practices for awarding credit and lists such information in its catalog and on its web site.

10. Student Learning and Achievement

Saddleback College barely meets this requirement. There are objectives listed for most courses, but the review of these materials by the team determined that most of these objectives were not stated in terms of measurable student learning outcomes with clearly stated methods of assessment.

11. General Education

The team verified that Saddleback College complies with the requirement in general education with the caveat that its comprehensive learning outcomes are not yet well defined.

12. Academic Freedom

Saddleback College has an appropriate board policy that defines academic freedom. The team found no evidence that academic freedom was inhibited in any way for either faculty or students.

13. Faculty

The team verified that Saddleback College has a highly qualified faculty that is of sufficient size to support the educational programs offered by the college.

14. Student Services

Appropriate support services are available to students at Saddleback College.

15. Admissions

The admissions requirements of Saddleback College are clearly stated in the catalog and on the college web site. These requirements are reflective of the college mission.

16. Information and Learning Resources

The team verified that Saddleback College possesses appropriate information and learning resources that are provided to students.

17. Financial Resources

The college has sufficient financial resources to adequately support its programs and services as well as to assure financial stability.

18. Financial Accountability

The team verified that the college undergoes a regular audit that is available for public scrutiny and that follows accepted practices of accounting.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

The college has engaged in several different planning efforts and does publish student achievement information although there is minimal assessment of student learning other than the traditional grade structure.

20. Public Information

The college provides appropriate public information including a catalog, schedule of classes, and comprehensive web site.

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The college has maintained positive relations with the Accrediting Commission.

RESPONSES TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE 1998 EVALUATION TEAM

1. **The District and college should work together to design, implement, and support an institutional research program and a comprehensive planning process. The goals of this program and process should include, but not necessarily be limited to, environmental scanning, future planning for education programs, services, staff, and facilities, and assessment of effectiveness. It also should be coordinated with the budgeting and allocation of resources process.**

The team finds that the college has failed to fully address this recommendation.

It appears that several planning processes have been initiated at different times at the college and also through the district. The coordination between these efforts has not been consistent or thorough. Plans that are in place, such as the educational master plan, don't appear to be used to inform decision making or to shape future goals. Additionally, there has not been sufficient follow through to fully implement a comprehensive and integrated planning process or an institutional research program that informs planning and decision making.

There is evidence that the college has partially responded to this recommendation. While some areas on campus are involved in planning processes, it is not yet clear how the district research office will support planning efforts at the college level or how college planning efforts will be coordinated with district planning efforts. According to the college administration, the goals and objectives of the district have been incorporated into the college planning process. The college also has plans to hire a permanent researcher to assist the college in both planning and research. The assessment of the effectiveness of the planning effort has yet to be addressed.

2. **The Board of Trustees should review and revise the recently adopted "Employment Procedure 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 Procedures implementation should be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board's direct involvement should be limited to the appointment of the Chancellor.**

The team finds that the college has failed to meet this recommendation.

The college response in the self-study did nothing more than quote from the midterm report. The midterm report indicates that the board has not exercised the option of interviewing finalists for executive positions that would sit in closed session. Instead, it has accepted the campus' recommendation for two vice presidents without interviewing the finalists. This was also noted in the progress report visit in 1999. Although board practice follows accepted best practices in recent administrative hiring, board policy has not changed. The intent of this recommendation to revise the existing procedure with constituent input has not been met.

3. **The District should adopt, implement, and distribute the recently developed Budget Development Guidelines and through the college should take strong measures to generate apportionment through FTES growth and enrollment management.**

The team finds that the college has adequately addressed this recommendation.

The district has adopted the budget development guidelines and put them into practice. An enrollment management plan has been developed at Saddleback College and there has been an initial effort to implement this plan.

4. **The Board of Trustees must begin immediately to delegate all non policy issues to the Chief Executive Officer, his team, and the established governance decision-making processes. The Board of Trustees must show visible evidence, through word and deed, to the college and community of its commitment to cease involvement in direct management of the College and the District.**

The team finds that the college has failed to adequately address this recommendation.

Since the visit of the 1998 team, there have been some changes in the composition of the board. By most accounts, the incidents of individual board members getting involved in college operational issues have decreased since 1998. At the same time, the team found evidence that this type of micro-management has not disappeared and does continue to occur. Even though the frequency has diminished, the fact that it occurs at all is not a laudable practice. The authority of the board is vested in the entire board as a policy-making body and is not vested in individual board members to direct or otherwise interfere in college operations. It appears that some board members do not recognize the difference between policy formulation and policy direction, which is the province of the board, and policy implementation, which is the responsibility of the chancellor and the executive leadership. When the board engages in micro-managing behavior, it erodes trust, demoralizes administrators and constituent groups, tarnishes the reputation of the college and the district, and contributes greatly to the negative morale and perception of disempowerment that exists across the district.

5. **The team strongly recommends that the Board of Trustees immediately seek qualified outside assistance to guide it through a process of regular, honest self-evaluation, training in successful trusteeship, and identification of strategies to improve its performance and its communication and relationships with all college constituencies.**

This recommendation has been partially addressed.

Aside from the incidents of micro management referenced above, the board appears to be working more cohesively than they were at the time of the last team visit. The board has had several retreats that were facilitated by knowledgeable professionals. However, there may

still be a need for the board to engage in training to occasionally review the principles of trusteeship and to develop strategies to improve board performance.

6. **The District and College leadership need to work together collaboratively to assess the current college administrative structure, determine a feasible plan, and then move to fill all appropriate positions on a permanent basis as soon as possible. The Board of Trustees' role in this process should be limited to setting the overall budget parameters, the performance outcomes it expects, and ensuring that all processes are conducted consistent with good practice.**

The college has made adequate progress on this recommendation.

The college has made progress in this area by funding assistant dean positions in some divisions of the college. There still appear to be inequities, as described in the Deans' Workload Study, which have not yet been addressed.

7. **Representatives of all the formally recognized constituent groups (trustees, Chief Executive Officer, administrators, faculty senates and union, classified senates and union, and student government) must come together soon. Their task should be to determine how they will reduce the hostility, mistrust, cynicism and despair that plague the institution currently. The team feels strongly that all players need to cease their negativism and focus on constructive steps toward building a new future.**

The team finds that the college and the district have not adequately addressed this recommendation.

The business of the college and of the district continues to get done on a daily basis. However, governance relations and some aspects of college-district relations are still strained and even dysfunctional. The resultant cloud of negativism has a dampening effect that impedes any potential to have meaningful dialogue on critical issues that need attention, e.g., student learning outcomes, integrated planning and research, etc. It is imperative that all parties begin anew and try again to rebuild trust, to sustain a positive environment, and to establish more harmonious working relationships.

STA NDARD I
INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

General Comments

The mission statement for Saddleback College was reviewed in 2003 by representatives from all campus constituencies. The mission statement is published in the college catalog and stated on the college web site. Saddleback College's mission statement commits itself to providing access to learning opportunities that promote student success; fostering intellectual growth, individual expression, and character development; and to support a dynamic environment of innovation and collegiality.

Implementation of student learning outcomes linked to institutional effectiveness is new to this college. Many faculty and administrators are aware of the need to link research with program review and planning and then begin the dialogue to develop student learning outcomes at the course, program and degree levels. However, the previous planning efforts intended to support student learning, assessment and improvement have all begun with good intentions but nonetheless always seem to fade away over time. The college has a problem with follow through when it comes to planning and evaluation. It has not demonstrated the ability to implement and evaluate planning a process that consistently uses research information for the purpose of improving programs, services, student outcomes, or other institutional performance measures.

Findings and Evidence

IA Mission
While the mission statement was reviewed prior to accreditation, there is no evidence that a formal process for the regular review of the college mission statement has been established through the institution's governance and decision-making processes (Standard IA.3).

Interviews with faculty, staff and administrators, as well as the satisfaction surveys, confirm that there is little awareness of the college's mission and how it impacts planning efforts. In spite of the overall lack of awareness, there are limited attempts across the college to link program review processes and the facilities master plan to the college mission. Documented links between the mission and institutional goals and planning are also missing (Standards IA.1, IA.2, and IA.4).

Overall planning has not been sufficiently clarified so that this connection between planning and the mission can be established. An important part of establishing this link is the research function that is still in the process of formation. Until planning and research are coupled together the college will be unable to effectively evaluate how all areas of the college align with its purpose, character and its student population (Standards IA.1., IA.4).

Several strategic planning efforts that seem to address parts of the mission have been started sporadically across the college, but there is no unifying set of criteria or guidelines governing

all of the organizational planning efforts so that those efforts may be evaluated and improved. The development of fact-based approaches to decision-making and planning processes needs to be implemented to promote sustainable outcome-based planning efforts (Standard IA.4).

IB Improving Institutional Effectiveness
Though some faculty and administrators have begun to explore the role of student learning outcomes in a fledgling effort to assess college effectiveness, there is no evidence of a sustained, formal dialogue about student learning outcomes. The college has not yet created institutional opportunities to discuss the role of learning outcomes in college planning and program review beyond sporadic professional development activities, individual department efforts, and the curriculum review process. To date, the dialogue about learning outcomes has been limited to only a small number of faculty and administrators participating in professional development activities focused on student learning outcomes (Standard IB.1).

While some evidence exists that the college is beginning a dialogue about learning outcomes, much remains to be developed to make this an institutionalized part of college efforts to sustain continuous improvement. The development of student learning outcomes related to the course program and degree levels appear to be in the early developmental phase. However, a comprehensive assessment strategy that would assist in the evaluation of learning outcomes is missing from the planning process, most likely due to the changing status of the research component (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IB.4).

While a formal student services learning outcome model has not been developed, the team has noted that dialogue among the various units has started to take place focusing on the services provided to students and their impact on student success, retention and persistence. The institution has made several attempts to establish clear institutional effectiveness goals in its planning strategies. The goals defined objectives that were measurable. However, with a research component that has not been fully institutionalized, the effort has stalled. Further, the Academic Senate has approved a program review process and several academic and student service units have completed this process.   The lack of a clear planning cycle that is data driven has contributed to confusion as to what the process is supposed to accomplish and how members of the college community are supposed to participate (Standards IB.6, IB.7).

The link between planning and resource allocation continues to be problematic, and there is no plan to demonstrate how one is connected to the other.   It is unclear how the college will link its goals to those of the district. The current practice is for college requests to go through the chancellor to the board. Typically, these resource allocation requests are for one-time funding and cover items such as debt payments, technology purchases, and funds for facilities renovation. It is not clear how these requests are linked to the college strategic planning process.

In an effort to improve college wide understanding of the planning process and increase college involvement, a new task force has been created by the president. This task force has three main goal strategies: to improve communication regarding institutional effectiveness, to

develop an enrollment management plan, and to create an institutional planning process. It should be mentioned that students are included in this goal setting strategy along with members of the management, faculty and staff components. As this task force is just beginning its work, the results of this work remain to be seen.

Once again, until the research function is defined the college will not be able to develop assessment strategies that can evaluate whether any planning processes succeed. There is also no clear plan for distributing assessment outcome results to members of the college community to improve understanding of the process.

Conclusions

Responses to the survey statement, "the college is working toward fulfilling its vision and mission," as quoted in the self study indicated that 17 percent of full-time employees disagreed and 36 percent had no opinion on this statement. Further, the self study states that due to the lack of familiarity with the mission statement the college will develop a plan to broaden awareness of what the mission means to the college, yet the college has done little to begin this process. Until there is broad-based recognition across the campus community of the central role of the mission to institutional planning efforts, the college will be unable to establish student learning programs and services aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population (Standards IA, IB).

The process for reviewing and revising the college mission statement must engage all constituent groups. Moreover, as the college moves forward to create formal processes for program planning and review, for learning outcome identification and implementation, and for resource allocation, all constituent groups must highlight the role of the college mission in planning and decision making. The college must also develop processes to facilitate the integration of the mission into all institutional planning efforts, decision making and resource allocations (Standards IA, IB).

Sporadic training sessions on learning outcomes were provided by the annual staff development flex week activity. The college needs to develop an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes (Standards IB.1, IB.6, and IB.7).

The research function of the college needs to be established so that it can support the data requirements connected with the planning cycle, program review and student learning outcome processes (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IB.5, IB.6, and IB.7).

The college needs to develop and set into place goals that improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated mission. These goals need to be measurable so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed (Standard IB.2).

The college needs to assess progress toward achieving its stated goals and make decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation

(Standards IB.5, IB.6, and IB.7). The planning process needs to be broad-based, involve all constituencies, allocate necessary resources, and lead to improvement of institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.4).

The college needs to communicate the planning process and its documented assessment results to the college-wide constituency groups. The college needs to develop a plan for reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle, including institutional and other research efforts (Standard IB.6, IB.7).

Recommendations

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); and
    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).

Refer to Recommendations 2 in Standard II.

Refer to Recommendation 3 in Standard II.

STANDARD II
STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

General Comments

Saddleback College is a comprehensive community college that is highly regarded by its faculty, students, and staff. Its instructional programs reflect quality and clearly meet the educational needs of students and the workforce development needs of the community. Courses are offered at various locations in the service area, as well as on-line.

The college offers a variety of student services and programs that provide students with support in achieving their educational goals. The college assures access to these services by allowing for drop-in and scheduled appointments as well as by creating opportunities for accessing information online.

The library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the instructional programs. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently.

All faculty, staff, and administrators appear to be both enthusiastic about their work with students and committed to providing quality service. Students express particular satisfaction with course availability and the expertise of the faculty. Student support services and library facilities received high marks for their access, customer service, and resources.

Findings and Evidence

IIA. Instructional Programs
The institution's degree and general education requirements have a sound, explicit philosophical statement of purpose endorsed by the faculty. The variety of programs offered give students many options to choose from. Administratively, the academic divisions appear well-balanced, although there is some concern about the workload of the deans. The evidence that teaching and learning is taking place at the college is confirmed by classroom visits which witnessed student enthusiasm for critical discourse and engaged classroom participation (Standards IIA.2.c, IIA.2.d).

The team did find that the college's previously established unit dedicated to research and planning, the Office of Research, Planning, and Grants (ORPG), established in 1999, lost its personnel through resignations, and some of the functions previously performed by this office have been relocated to the District Office. The college does have an interim research analyst and there are plans to hire a permanent person into this position. Nevertheless, despite the extensive data available through the district data warehouse function, the district and the college lack a clear vision of a coherent research and planning agenda (Standard IIA.1.a).

The work accomplished by the ORPG, i.e., Strategic Directions 2000, College Goals Action Plan, and the Enrollment Management Plan, are documents residing on the proverbial shelf instead of being vital documents that are guiding college actions. The Enrollment Management Plan was created in spring 2003, but it is a "plan to make a plan" and nothing has been done since then. Administrators, faculty, and staff have expressed frustration about the college's inability to consistently execute a successful research and planning effort (Standard IIA.1.a).

The college continues to generate data that is collected at the district's data warehouse and made available through the web-based portal, MySite. The availability of data for administrative and pedagogical research is extensive and user friendly. However, it is not known how data is being used outside of the normal state reporting functions (Standard IIA.2.f). The district's Leadership Information System (LIS) is extraordinarily detailed and accessible to all administrators. This system was created by the district information technology staff. However, once again, it is not clear that there is any systematic use of this information to inform and guide decision making, assessment, and improvement efforts.

The team could not affirm a fully functioning instructional program review process (Standard IIA.2.e). The student services area has completed reviews of all but one department. However, only one academic department completed a program review during fall 2004. Others have embarked on the process but appear to need additional technical support before finishing their work. The program review initiative appears to be conducted separate to the college's planning framework. The academic senate and the college administration have been unable to engage in a planning dialogue that identifies program review as a fundamental element to the overall planning scheme (Standard IIA.2.f). Just having a program review schedule is not an adequate program review process. Without a mechanism for using program review as the impetus for program improvement or for student success activities, the program review process is just an exercise in compliance. Despite the prearranged schedule for completion, the team has little confidence that program review will be accomplished college wide in a meaningful manner. A major part of the reason for this lack of confidence is that a number of faculty members take the position that it is very difficult to work on program reviews without reassigned time and they are not willing to do it without such considerations. If this work does not get done, the college will be in violation of the standards.

In spite of an opening day presentation several years ago by Dr. William Piland on student learning outcomes, the college's Curriculum Committee has only recently become aware of the concept of student learning outcomes and how it relates to student achievement (Standard IIA.2.a). Course outlines have not been updated to include student learning outcomes. According to the Curriculum Committee chair, approximately 10-15% of courses identify student learning outcomes. When the team looked at the evidence, i.e., the course outlines, there was insufficient evidence to verify that assertion (Standard IIA.2.a). There is also scant evidence of widespread dialogue among faculty related to the use of student learning outcomes in the curriculum, be it at program or course levels (Standard IIA.2.i). The administration is aware of this situation and is planning to continue sending faculty and

administrators to student learning outcome workshops and to hold more in-service sessions on campus.

The Curriculum Committee has instituted a requirement for having student learning outcomes included in all new course proposals, but the evidence shows that the faculty is not familiar with a working definition of the concept. The term is used in course outlines, but its application to the learning process, its assessment, and its application to continuous improvement have not occurred (Standard IIA.2.b). A few faculty members are knowledgeable about student learning outcomes, but the majority of them do not comprehend the concept or else they misunderstand what it is. The sample of officially approved course outlines given to the team listed course objectives, but the methods of evaluation were not properly described. The examples of course syllabi that are given to students do not include course objectives and goals and do not state how student achievement will be evaluated (Standard IIA.6). It is clear that there is no college culture which acknowledges the importance of or the need for specifying student learning outcomes for each course (Standard IIA.1.c). Furthermore, there is no evidence indicating that the institution validates the effectiveness of student learning (Standard IIA.2.g). The college faculty and administration express recognition that there is a need for a broad based dialogue about student learning outcomes and student achievement. Yet, as noted previously, the team did not encounter any evidence that such dialogue is taking place or that there were any firm plans in place for fostering such a dialogue.

The self study does not indicate the existence of or evaluation of any department or program examinations. The team found that standardized placement tests and program completion tests are used in some areas, but there was no evidence that they had been validated (Standard IIA.2.g).

The faculty has oversight of the curriculum approval process. The Curriculum Committee assists faculty in developing course proposals and continues to monitor the depth, breadth, and rigor of the academic programs (Standard IIA.3). Nonetheless, faculty is still of the traditional mindset that student success is measured by course completions, grades, and attendance data. The research literature on student learning, however, indicates the need for direct assessment of student skills, knowledge, and abilities if program or course improvements are to take place for the purpose of enhancing student learning.

There is also a concern about the proliferation of distance education courses and their quality control. The district's Distance Education Plan calls for a conscious expansion of on-line courses as an enrollment growth mechanism. The Saddleback College faculty, however, is reluctant to continue expansion of the program and want to be included in the discussion and decision making process. The college has created a distance education task force to address the mandate to expand and to identify best practices that assure student success.

College activities are presented as being driven by student needs. At the same time, the faculty, the distance education committee, and the Emeritus Institute seem to determine what courses are to be offered and what modes of instruction are to be used without using any actual data on student needs (Standard IIA.1.a).

IIB. Student Support Services

Saddleback College has comprehensive student support resources available on the primary campus and assures the quality of those services and their relationship to the mission of the institution. Students who are enrolled in the Emeritus program or other off campus sites, however, must access student services online or travel to the main campus. While the continuing education focus of the Emeritus student population eliminates the need for many of the student services, the Emeritus students do take advantage of the college health services on campus (Standards IIB.1, IIB.3.a).

In addition to the campus services, the college provides students with clear, accurate information about the college and its services through a variety of publications. The college catalog, student handbook and college webpage all offer information regarding general college information, graduation and transfer requirements, major policies affecting students, and support services (Standards IIB.2.a, IIB.2.b, IIB.2.c, and IIB.2.d).

Students are provided with additional college and educational planning information through interaction with the counseling faculty. The counseling office offers a comprehensive three hour orientation and assessment session for all first-year students prior to their enrolling in classes. This face-to-face process is required for all students who have declared transfer or degree or certificate completion as an educational goal (Standards IIB.3.a, IIB.3.c).

All constituent groups in student services have opportunities to engage in regular and ongoing dialogue through department and area meetings, constituent group interactions, and faculty and staff retreats. The student services council, which has representatives from all of the student support programs, meets monthly to discuss individual program goals and resource requests (Standard IIB.4). Other groups also meet regularly to discuss operational and program goals. An example can be found in the counseling department, which meets weekly to discuss current practices and future issues.

Many of the student services programs are coordinated by counseling faculty who serve as both counselors and program coordinators. The Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) coordinator receives 50% of her load as coordinator and 50% as counseling faculty. The Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S) has a 100% coordinator. By contract, counselors also teach student success courses in addition to their counseling load. Counseling faculty workload is high, with the counselor to student ratio 1: 2185. In spite of the challenges posed by a high student to counselor ratio and heavy workload, counselors remain focused on student needs and have carried that focus into their planning efforts (Standard IIB.3.c.).

Though the student satisfaction survey revealed that students were generally satisfied with academic counseling and advising, many students expressed concern with the difficulty in making appointments. To address the concerns of the students, the counseling department has made significant progress in the use of technology to meet the needs of students. Counseling services has implemented an online E-Advising program that provides students with access to counseling faculty via email in order to answer frequently asked questions in a

timely manner (Standard IIB.3.c.). The counseling department is currently exploring the development of additional online opportunities to assist students in creating education plans. The student services area has begun a process of program review in order to assure the quality of its services. With one exception, programs in student services have completed a cycle of program review that helped them identify operational goals and objectives intended to meet the needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment (Standard IIB.4).

While DSP&S has undergone external evaluation of its services resulting in a technical assistance report, the program has yet to develop a college-driven program review consistent with process followed by other student service programs. Overall, the program review efforts have led to the establishment of goals and objectives for several areas within student services. Yet, there is no evidence of an ongoing dialogue focused on the relationship between program goals and student learning outcomes. Furthermore, faculty, staff and administrators admitted that student services had not moved forward in identifying student learning outcomes or consistent achievement data specific to student services programs (Standard IIB.4).

The college is working to develop plans for validating the effectiveness of placement tests. However, the efforts have been delayed by a lack of research assistance (Standard IIB.3.e).

Board policy and college practice assure the confidentiality of student records. Students have access to their records via MySite, a college developed internet-based information management system (Standard IIB.3.f). The institution provides a learning environment rich with opportunities for student development and leadership, and students involved in college governance are an example of the college's success. Members of the Associated Student Government (ASG) actively work with faculty, staff, and administration to represent students' interests at all levels of college decision making. Operating without the support of a permanent advisor, the ASG seeks information from a variety of sources, meeting regularly with instructional deans, administrative personnel, faculty, and classified staff. The ASG participation in college governance committees represents a coordinated student effort to engage the college community in ongoing dialogue, and their sponsorship of a comprehensive array of college activities and student services reveals a commitment to social and cultural diversity.

IIC. Library and Learning Support Services
The library and other learning support services are designed to support the college's programs of instruction, and the students it serves.

The quality of the library's collection of print and non-print materials is adequate in quantity, but not as current as it might be due to a lack of sufficient funding. The 1998 self study criticized the library for having a collection that was out of date to support the current research needs of students. An effort has been made to bring the collection current. In 2001, the college allocated one-time funds of $150,000 for new acquisitions. At today's prices, a one time $150,000 allocation will not alleviate the problem. Thus, adequate funds need to be allocated on an ongoing basis to keep the collection current. In addition, Saddleback College

students and staff have access to the college's online collection of subscription databases and e-books (Standard IIC.1).

The librarians use the standard tools in the profession for selection of materials. Librarians encourage recommendations from faculty, students, staff, and community members. Faculty is encouraged and do participate in the process of materials selection to support student learning. Ten percent of each year's book budget is set aside for faculty requests. Librarians serve as liaisons to instructional divisions to enhance the acquisition of library materials to support instruction (Standard IIC.1.a).

There is evidence in course syllabi, library workshops and information on the library's Web site that the institution acts purposefully to teach information competency. The institution, however, has not assessed the student learning outcomes in information retrieval/use. The expectation is that this evaluation will happen as soon as the institution hires an instructional librarian. This position is expected to be filled in the near future (Standard IIC.1.b).

Students and college personnel have adequate access to the library and other learning support services regardless of their location or means of delivery. Reference librarians are on duty to assist all patrons with their research and personal information needs whenever the library is open (Standard II.C.1.c). There are some concerns related to security issues in the building because district offices and services are currently located in the library and occasionally persons are in the library when it is closed because they have access to the building. However, the district office will be moving out of the library as soon as the new building on campus is completed. At that time the library will be remodeled and security will be enhanced (Standard IIC.1.d).

The Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College libraries have informal agreements to serve each other's students. They share a district wide online catalog that displays resources for both institutions. The current arrangement between the two college libraries meets the needs of students and faculty (Standard IIC.1.e).

The institution states in its self study that there is not any systematic evaluation of services at this time. The library is conducting a program review this semester and it is expected that this study will provide an opportunity to improve internal evaluation processes (Standard II.C.2.).

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP), the college's tutorial services in all academic subjects, has a mechanism for getting student feedback and faculty input on quality. The LAP conducts surveys regularly. The "Learning Assistance Program Accountability Report" published by the office of research, planning and grants verifies that surveys have been completed. However, the document is dated 2001. A visit to the LAP office provided evidence that records on student use and student feedback are in fact available (Standard IIC.2.).

Conclusions

Program and curriculum planning, research, and the focus on student outcomes and success are presently disconnected activities on campus. The crucial nature of these activities requires a unified approach. The college lacks an understanding of research and planning and the gap created by this lack of understanding is seriously hampering the progress of the college in a number of areas (Standard IIA.1.a). Program review requires more serious attention from the faculty and administration to implement program improvements and to comply with the standards (Standard IIA.2.e). The task forces assembled by the president are intended to address these issues.

The college needs a broad based dialogue about student learning outcomes, student achievement, and assessment as applied to program improvement (Standards IIA.1.b, IIA.1.c, and IIA.2.a.). Though the college has begun to address the role of student learning outcomes in curriculum development, the dialogue has not moved beyond the limited scope of that committee. Inconsistent approaches to program planning and review reflect a lack of consensus on the meaning of student learning outcomes and their importance to college planning, assessment and improvement efforts. While many student service programs use student achievement data to assess program effectiveness, the college has yet to identify measurable student-learning outcomes related to student services (Standard IIB.4.).

The program review process is not functioning effectively. Although several departments and student service units have completed the process, there have not been enough departments or service units that have been through the review to evaluate whether improvements that were made were effective. The college needs to develop a plan for evaluation of its program review process particularly focusing on how instructional programs, student support services, library and other learning support services are taking the results of the program review and using those results to make improvements (Standards IIA.1.a, IIA.2.a, IIA.2.e, and IIA.2.f).

The student services area has made some progress in using student achievement data, student surveys, and faculty and staff input to evaluate student services program goals and objectives. However, the uncertainty surrounding future research responsibilities leaves the current planning efforts in question (Standards IIB.3, IIB.4).

The program review efforts in student services have created an atmosphere of self-reflection that has sparked dialogue within the programs and across the student services areas. Unfortunately, program review has not moved markedly past the stage of self-reflection. Although the reviews contain data evaluating the services, there is no indication that the reviews are used for improvement of those services (Standards IIB.3, IIB.4).

The college should be commended for promoting student leadership opportunities through a strong Associated Student Government. Unfortunately, when students have stepped forward into leadership positions, the college has been inconsistent in providing the proper resources to support this program. The student government is currently without a permanent advisor and struggled to obtain designated office and meeting space. Such deficiencies should be addressed in a timely fashion. Additionally, the college should encourage student leaders to

seek supplemental training in leadership through college sponsored events as well as externally sponsored activities (Standard IIB.3.b).

The institution has not evaluated its teaching effectiveness, provided evidence that library services contribute to student learning outcomes, nor set goals for improvement in the area of information competency (Standard IIC.2).

Recommendations

2. The team recommends, consistent with recommendation one of the 1998 visiting team, that 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 IA.4, IA.6, IB.4, IIA.2.e, and IIA.2.f);
   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 IA.4, IA.5, IA.6, IA.7, IB.3, IB.4, IB.6, IIA.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 IA.1, IB.1, IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1);
   D. Coordinating program review more thoroughly with the educational master plan, department plans, and decision-making processes (Standards IB.1, IB.4,);
   E. Requiring and implementing program review for *all* departments, including instructional, student services, and administrative departments (Standards IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4);
   F. Linking facilities, technology, and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college (Standards IB, IIIA.6, III.B.2.b, IIIC.2, and IIID.1.d); and
   G. Publishing and widely disseminating the completed planning and evaluation process (Standards IA.4, IB).

3. The team recommends that 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 IB.1, IB.2, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b) ;
   B. Defining and instituting research procedures for measuring, assessing, and tracking learning outcomes (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a, and IIA.2.b); 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 IB.4, IIA.2.d, IIIA.5).

General Comments

The college has policies and procedures in place that guide the selection, evaluation, and hiring of college employees. There are some controversial issues in regard to faculty and administrative hiring processes that are still being worked out.

The quality of the physical facilities of the college varies across the campus according to the age of the facility, the frequency of use, and the level of preventive maintenance and repair. Although the physical setting of the college is spectacular, the team was disappointed in the level of care exhibited for the campus environment. Team members found dirty stairwells, unkempt areas, and severely worn classrooms and facilities in the sciences and other areas. The student services building is one of the nicest facilities on campus, and it provides a pleasing environment for students.

The South Orange Community College District has earned the reputation as a leader in technology. The campus computer resources were impressive in some areas and appeared to be more than adequate to support a broad array of campus operations. Responsibilities for technology resources and support services are divided between the district office and the college. District and college information technology (IT) staff members meet annually to determine technological needs for the district.

The college is in the enviable position of being located in a region with a strong property tax base. The basic aid status of the district provides more revenue than what would normally be provided to the district through state apportionment. The district and the board should be commended for following the program based funding guidelines in their budget allocations to the colleges. The board policy in regard to the surplus basic aid funds is a sound approach that allows the district to maintain a healthy reserve while allowing the financial flexibility to address some of the most pressing maintenance, modernization, and construction needs of the college.

Findings and Evidence

IIIA Human Resources
The hiring process for all staff is outlined in board policies (Standard IIIA.1). A new policy for the hiring of faculty was passed by the board of trustees in 2003. The adoption of this policy has been a point of contention between the faculty and the board. Because of litigation that resulted in a court order, the board authorized a task force to develop a new hiring process for faculty that included faculty representatives as joint partners in its development. Upon completion of the new process, there are still some points of contention in the hiring of faculty. One of these points is the step following the interviews. The hiring committees are no longer allowed to rank candidates nor are they permitted to know the names of candidates being forwarded for interviews with the college president and vice

president of instruction. At the time the self study was written, the faculty leadership was still seeking additional legal remedies.

The college has processes in place to identify and prioritize faculty and classified positions. The faculty hiring committee uses a standardized form and works with departments, programs and divisions in identifying and prioritizing positions. Classified leadership follows a similar process in its identification and prioritization of classified positions. The faculty hiring process includes developing the hiring criteria for each position with input from the discipline faculty. The criteria for classified positions are standardized in job descriptions. Classification studies are conducted to review and update the various classifications. Once these studies are completed, job classifications and descriptions are developed by a consultant and approved by the bargaining unit and the college president. The process for hiring administrators is outlined in BP 4011 (Standard IIIA.1).

There is no formal process for the hiring of adjunct faculty. It varies from division to division and department to department.

The process for the evaluation of faculty and classified staff, including criteria and timelines, are negotiated by the appropriate bargaining unit. Tenure track, full-time faculty are evaluated once every year for the first four years. Tenured faculty are evaluated once every three years. Probationary classified staff are evaluated twice: during the sixth and eleventh months of service. Thereafter, they are evaluated every two years. The evaluation process for administrators is outlined in BP 4090 and includes the criteria to be used and the timeline (Standard IIIA.1.b).

Adjunct faculty are evaluated during their first semester of teaching and then once every four semesters. The criteria for the evaluation of adjunct faculty are the same as that for full-time faculty.

There is no evidence that the evaluation process for faculty and staff includes criteria directly relating to measuring student learning outcomes (Standard IIIA.1.c).

Only the Board of Trustees and faculty have a written code of ethics. That for faculty was approved by the academic senate in 1998. The Board approved BP 1400 which addresses a code of ethics for trustees (Standard IIIA.1.d).

Staffing has not kept pace with growth or vacancies due to resignation or retirement. In 2002-2003, the college did not meet its full-time faculty obligation. There were 15 faculty hired during 2003-2004 to help it meet its faculty obligation. Twenty-nine full-time faculty positions have been approved for the current year hiring cycle (Standard IIIA.2).

Classified positions are not replaced on a regular basis. Furthermore, classified hiring positions were frozen in May 2004 with an estimated 36 positions affected.

The number of divisions was reduced from ten to eight during an administrative reorganization in 1997. A Dean's Workload Survey and an Instructional Workload and

Support Study have been conducted; however, the results have not been widely distributed and there is no evidence that they have been used to support the hiring of additional administrative staff or classified support staff.

District personnel policies are readily available for review. These policies are adhered to and have been developed to ensure fairness and equity in hiring and evaluating staff. All personnel records are housed at the office of human resources, and employees have access to their individual records. They are secured and confidential (Standards IIIA.3.a, IIIA.3.b).

The district has a policy on Equal Employment Opportunity, and the college identifies itself as an equal opportunity institution. The office of human resources provides training for all screening committees to ensure equity and fairness in the hiring process. A non-voting equal employment officer is a member of all hiring committees. The college has provided training on sexual harassment, discrimination, and ADA regulations (Standards IIIA.4.a, IIIA.4.b, and IIIA.4.c).

Positions are widely advertised in a variety of media in order to recruit a pool as diverse as possible for available positions. These recruitment efforts are not assessed to determine their effectiveness in attracting and hiring a diverse staff.

Through interviews, the team found that there is positive interaction among employees on the campus. Faculty and staff feel that they are supported by administration. However, on the part of a few individuals there was also a sense of intimidation by and fear of retaliation from the district for speaking out about the problems on campus and within the district. One individual who was interviewed was so upset that he was visibly shaking and indicated that he was afraid of losing his job if he spoke out. Although the great majority of individuals on campus do not appear to share this sentiment, the fact that the team discovered this attitude in several interviews with prominent staff was disturbing.

Saddleback College provides staff development activities for faculty and staff. Although these activities are evaluated by participants, the results are not systematically analyzed and used for institutional improvement (Standards IIIA.5.a, IIIA.5.b). Although there are different processes to identify and prioritize staff positions, they are not linked to an overall planning process (Standard IIIA.6).

IIIB Physical Resources
The college's geographical location presents a series of challenges relating to physical layout which have been addressed in a building master plan completed in June, 2001. The terrain presents access and maintenance issues that would not be present in a flat location. The college has responded with resource deployment in the areas of grounds, custodial services, police services as well as the trades. The maintenance and operations workflow uses modern technology. There is a keen awareness of cost/benefit analysis in managing the physical plant. Safety programs are well documented and appreciated by the college community. The future look of the college is outlined in the building master plan and additional resources will be needed in this area (Standards IIIB.1.a, IIIB.1.b).

The college provides safe and sufficient resources in support of its programs and services. Safety programs are documented and available to students and staff. Examples of these are Student Right to Know (Cleary Act), Blood Borne Pathogen Plan, Ergonomic Manual, and hazardous materials identification and handling procedures. Information to students about their safety is documented. Police Services employs a comprehensive operations manual outlining safety and security provisions at the college (Standards IIIB.1, III.B.1.a). College facilities planning processes result in an annual update of the state required Five Year Education and Facilities Master Plan and in the development of priority lists for facility renovation and major maintenance projects. To accomplish these plans, the college utilizes a shared process which includes a college based budget committee, President's Council and the District Resource Allocation Committee (DRAC) (Standards IIIB.1, IIIB.2).

The college has employed a consulting firm to analyze, through engineering studies, each of its buildings physical condition. Through analysis of the current condition of a building's initial construction and utility infrastructure, a facilities condition index (FCI) is computed for each building comparing the cost of modernization/repair with the cost of a newly constructed building of the same assignable square footage. The use of these indices will assist the college in determine priorities for new and/or renovated facilities (Standard IIIB.2).

The college's capacity load ratio, a significant variable in seeking community college capital outlay monies derived from state wide bond issues, is not at a level that puts the college at a competitive advantage in seeking state funds. As a result, most funding for college facilities development will come from basic aid funding, which is the district's local property tax revenue. By board policy, basic aid funds are allocated, in part, to college building projects with the remainder going to other one-time funding items (Standard IIIB.1.a, IIIB.2).

Since the state capital outlay budget for community college construction now considers modernization (vs. new construction) projects for funding, the college will seek commitments of basic aid to improve the competitive position of modernization projects submitted to the state as part of the college's annual update of the district's five year educational and facilities master plan (Standard IIIB.2).

IIIC Technology Resources
The college website is reviewed at least annually and updated. Student input is solicited and incorporated into these updates (Standard IIIC.1).

A student portal, MySite, was developed and is maintained and updated by district IT staff. A broad based committee, including student focus groups, assisted in the planning and development of the site. Through MySite, students access student class schedules, online courses, college financial transactions, schedule of classes, and general announcements. Each section of the portal allows for student feedback. Feedback is reviewed daily and may be a basis for website updates. Many faculty members have individual websites residing in MySite. Course syllabi are posted on these sites and, at the faculty person's request, can be linked to the online schedule of classes. Knowledge Base, a feature of MySite, has a series of frequently asked questions (FAQs) organized by topic areas. The FAQs are updated based on feedback received from students.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the college's technology in meeting its range of needs is relatively informal, apart from the feedback features on the website. A technician is assigned to each campus laboratory. His/her responsibility is to communicate with the faculty using that laboratory to identify needs and or concerns. Equipment age is a key factor currently in determining priority when making technology purchases.

The instructional program offers a variety of technological options in distance education courses including TV, radio, and the internet. The district hosts Blackboard, the online platform selected for online courses. However, all training on the use of Blackboard is provided at the college level (Standard IIIC.1.a).

The Innovation and Technology Center (ITC) responsibilities include providing service to approximately 2,000 campus computers, website development along with associated maintenance and updates, online course development and delivery, evaluation and acquisition of campus hardware and software, and training for faculty and staff (Standard IIIC.1.b).

Training for faculty, classified staff, and administrators on new and existing software and hardware is conducted regularly at the ITC. An online schedule of training classes is available on the college website. The ITC staff members are also available to work individually with faculty and staff.

The ITC staff developed an online survey to determine the technology training needs of faculty and staff. The survey is administered twice a year. In addition, the staff is in the process of developing an online evaluation system to be completed at the end of each training session.

Students needing assistance on the use of technology are referred to the library. The library staff feel that they provide this service by default and that they have not been allocated adequate resources to compensate for this extra service.

The goal of a three-year upgrade cycle for campus computers has been difficult to maintain due to fiscal constraints. Although no policy exists to ensure the infrastructure is reasonably up-to-date, a recent $1.4 million infusion by the board of trustees will allow staff to replace approximately one third of all campus computers in 2004-05. Staff is hopeful this level of funding will continue in subsequent years to allow for ongoing upgrading of hardware and software (Standard IIIC.1.c).

To ensure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty, the district and the two colleges are working together to implement a new network and phone system. Installation should be completed in early 2005. Board policy dictates all systems be password protected (Standard IIIC.1.d).

A data warehouse is housed at the district. Direct access to the total body of information is limited. Reports and research based on the available data are provided by the district research director and the college research analyst. A considerable amount of data is

available to administrators via the Leadership Information System (Standard IIIC.2).

IIID Financial Resources
The college manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources is providing a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial stability (Standard III.D).

The college receives the most significant part of its continuing revenue from program based funding formulas, which are part of the state's annual community college budget. The college also participates in the district's basic aid revenue surplus that is derived from local property tax revenues (Standards IIID.1.b, IIID.1.c).

By board policy, basic aid is for one time only expenditures. Portions of the basic aid receipts are utilized to retire past debt (certificate of participation), fund actuarially determined employee retirement benefits, major maintenance and alterations projects as well as new building construction. Basic aid also ensures that the district is able to maintain a 6.5% reserve against projected unrestricted revenue (Standard III.D).

The college budget committee, college facilities committee, and technology committee develop priority lists for needs. The college works through the district resource allocation committee (DRAC) on resource allocation issues. Information about these processes and results are communicated through DRAC and college based committee minutes as well as the district budget development guidelines (Standards IIID.1.b, IIID.1.c, IIID.1.d, and IIID.2).

The college financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and makes available dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making. College and district based budget documents showing revenue and expense history and projections are published and shared with college constituencies. External audit reports validate the information in these documents (Standards III.D2.a, IIID.2.b, and IIID.2.c).

The college regularly evaluates financial management processes and makes significant uses of technology to develop accurate and timely management information reports. The college is effective in its oversight of finances, financial aid programs, externally funded projects as well as contractual relationships and foundation activities. Internal and external audits demonstrate the integrity of financial management practices (Standards III D.2.d, IIID.2.e, IIID.2.f, and IIID.2.g).

Conclusions

The major gaps in this standard relate to planning. There are processes in place that address most of the components of this standard, but they are not fully integrated into an overall institutional process that systematically assesses human resource needs (Standard IIIA.1).

There is evidence that the college meets several of the standards relating to human resources. There are hiring processes in place that have resulted in a highly qualified, professional staff that provide invaluable service to the college's programs and their service to students

(Standard IIIA.1.a). Of concern, however, is the disagreement between the faculty and the district over the hiring guidelines for faculty and for executive positions that does not appear to be near being resolved. There are established evaluation processes for all employee groups. However, there is evidence that evaluations are not always timely nor systematically and consistently conducted (Standard IIIA.1.b). Statements of a code of ethics have been developed and approved for faculty and the board of trustees (Standard IIIA.1.d). There is no evidence that a statement will be developed for other employee groups, although it is included in the planning agenda for this standard.

The college hired 15 new faculty members for the 2004-2005 academic year and 29 positions have been approved for the next hiring cycle. This should assist the college in meeting it full-time faculty obligation. Classified staff positions have been reduced. This action has had an impact on the workload of some classified staff. In spite of a workload study for deans, there is no indication that additional administrators will be hired (Standard IIIA.2). The organization is sensitive to staffing issues and perceptions of the "lack of staff" resources. While staffing formulas, particularly in the classified area, are being sought, there is recognition of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of achieving such formulas. In the interim, discussions are taking place within and outside the established processes for addressing this wide perception of staffing shortages.

The district has policies that address equal employment opportunity and provides in-service training to ensure that the hiring process is fair and equitable (Standard IIIA.3.a). Confidential personnel records are secured and employees have access to their individual personnel files (Standard IIIA.3.b). Although the district makes efforts to recruit as diverse a pool as possible by advertising in a variety of media, it does not systematically assess the effectiveness of these efforts (Standard IIIA.4.b). Other than required in-service activities that address issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and ADA compliance, there is scant evidence that the college has institutionalized a program for on-going support to meet the needs of its diverse employees (Standard IIIA.4.a). Faculty, staff, administration and students are positive in their relationships with each other. Unfortunately, there is a strong feeling of mistrust and a perception that there is a climate of fear and intimidation on the campus largely due to its relationship with the district. This has had a negative effect on the overall morale on campus (Standard IIIA.4.c.).

There is evidence that faculty and staff participate in staff development activities in spite of the reduction in funding from the state. This has been made possible because of an allocation from the general fund to support staff development (Standard IIIA.5.a).

Three areas in which the standards have not been met and which present challenges to the college are related to planning, specifically in the human resources area:

1. Although there is prioritization of both faculty and classified positions, there is no evidence of how this prioritization is linked to an overall planning process (Standard IIIA.6). This is readily acknowledged in the self-study. In spite of the different planning documents that exist, their usefulness in planning and/or evaluating human resource needs is limited (self study, p. 151). The college must develop a human resources plan

that is fully integrated into an overall institutional plan and forms the basis for institutional improvement.

2. As the college develops its planning agenda and processes, it will need to systematically assess its staff development program so that it is evaluated for its effectiveness in overall institutional improvement (Standard IIIA.5.b.)

3. The current faculty evaluation process does not include criteria that directly assess the effectiveness of achieving learning outcomes in the classroom (Standard IIIA.1.c). Faculty evaluation is certainly a bargaining issue; however, this should not preclude a dialogue on how this standard might be met.

The college manages its financial resources in a responsible manner. Management information reports are timely and useful to those who make decisions and recommendations in financial matters. There is an appropriate degree of competition for resources within and between the colleges and the district office. While there is some disagreement over the use of basic aid as well as "who gets what," more communication about these matters will help to alleviate invidious comparisons of "who got what." The college administration recognizes the inherent difficulty of communication about the source and use of funds. Greater efforts need to be made to demonstrate that the two colleges have different needs and that the needs of both colleges are being met with basic aid funds.

The team found that the college was in compliance with Standard IIIB Physical Resources and Standard IIIC Technology Resources.

Recommendations

4. The team recommends, consistent with the recommendation 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 IIIA1, IIIA.3).

Refer to Recommendation 2 in Standard II.

General Comments

The self study provides a description, appraisal and planning agendas for most of the accreditation standard components within Standard IV. The overall tone of Standard IV of the self study was negative, and it points to several deficiencies that exist at the college regarding compliance with many of the Standard IV accreditation components. Many of the issues raised in the self study report were confirmed by the visiting team. It is clear that the college, the district chancellor and district staff, as well as the board of trustees, must commit to and work closely to address the many issues and problems within Standard IV and bring the college into compliance with the letter and intent of the standards.

Standard IV has approximately 30 separate planning agenda items. Most of the planning agendas state that an action is to take place (i.e., the college will establish..., and the college leadership will work with...). However, the planning agendas are absent any specificity on processes necessary to accomplish the various items. Fortunately, under the leadership of the college president, efforts are already underway to prioritize and categorize the planning agendas and committees have been set up to address the most pressing and critical planning agenda items.

The responses, evidence cited, and conclusions for many of the standards within Standard IV relied almost exclusively on a faculty and staff survey that was conducted as part of the accreditation process. Almost everyone at the college verified that the self study section on Standard IV accurately reflects the situation and did not exaggerate the problems, especially those associated with the working climate at the college. It is clear that the negativity that surfaced in the EV 2003 survey and reflected throughout Standard IV was not just isolated to a few disgruntled employees but reflects the actual work environment at the college. The climate of distrust between the college and district remains a major problem.

Findings and Evidence

Standard IVA. Decision-Making Roles and Processes
Many, but not all, staff reported that the working environment at the college has improved since the last accreditation visit. Several individuals indicated that the climate at the college has improved in large part due to the new president. With the appointment of a new president, vice president for instruction, and vice president for student services there is some optimism that, at least at the college level, the environment for empowerment will continue to improve. There are a number of committees and councils at the college which are part of the decision-making structure and have clearly defined roles, most notably are the president's council, classified senate, academic senate, and student council (Standard IVA.2.a).

Systematic college-wide participation in decision-making and planning has been stifled because of the loss of a college-based researcher as well as confusion over how the district

planning efforts and the college planning efforts fit together (Standard IVA.1). Several concerns were expressed about the lack of support for faculty reassigned time in order to participate on committees. The board of trustees has set a limit on the amount of reassigned time that can be issued to the faculty, which the faculty feel is not adequate for them to fully participate in the decision-making process. There is a marked difference between the perceptions of the faculty, administration and support staff regarding the empowerment they have at the college level (which was found to be acceptable) and at the district level (which was consistently cited as a major problem) (Standards IVA.1, IVA.1.a).

There are several communication problems between the college and district. These communication problems were given as one of the primary reasons for the low morale and negative atmosphere on campus and for the lack of college participation in institutional governance (Standard IVA.1 and Standard IVA.2). There is also a lack of processes and practices to allow the College to participate in decision-making at the district level. (Standard IVA.2) There is a perception that the board of trustees does not adequately rely on the professional recommendations of the college, especially the academic senate (Standards IVA.2.a, IVA.2.b). In addition, it was noted that the lack of acceptance of the academic senate recommendations and the exclusion or limitation of faculty representation on key councils has created a great deal of hostility and distrust toward the chancellor and the board of trustees (Standard IVA.1). Examples of policies and administrative regulations where the academic senate disagreed with the board of trustees or believed they were not adequately consulted included: *Speech and Advocacy* (Administrative Regulation 8000), *Eligibility for Admissions* (BP 5604); *Duties and Responsibilities of the Faculty* (BP 4309); Electronic *Communication* (AR 4000.2); and *Board Policy Review and Revision* (AR 102). There was also a great deal of disagreement over a faculty hiring policy (BP 4011 & 4011.1).

The chancellor believes he has actively solicited and fully considers input from the academic senate and from other constituent groups. He also believes he has made a strong effort to support the colleges through the allocation of additional resources. The chancellor appears to be making an effort to address some of the problems of communication and management style for which he has been heavily criticized. Similarly, members of the board of trustees stated that they have encouraged input from college leaders including faculty and classified staff.

IVB Board and Administrative Organization
The board of trustees has a comprehensive set of policies and administrative regulations that are in compliance with Standard IVB.1., including policies which are consistent with supporting the mission of the college (Standard IVB.1.b). The board of trustees publishes a board policy manual and accompanying administrative regulations (Standard IVB.1.d). Board members stated that they accept ultimate responsibility for the educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity of the college district (Standard IVB.1.c). However, individual board members have taken this responsibility beyond policy making and have, at times, been inappropriately involved in college operations (Standard IVB.1.j).
Board members indicated that they possess and follow a code of ethics. They stated that compliance with their code of ethics is achieved through self-regulation (Standard IVB.1.h). The board of trustees evaluates and updates the policy manual every three years (Standard

IVB.1.e). The district invites college shared governance groups to review and comment on the policy and administrative regulation revisions. However, the college staff and faculty believe they are not given adequate time to evaluate the revisions and that their input is not valued in this area. The board of trustees has been informed and involved in the process of accreditation (Standard IVB.1.) and through their board president's signature on the "Certification of the Institutional Self Study Report" indicated that the college's self study reflected the nature and substance of the institution.

There is a great deal of optimism regarding the college president. He has been a long-time faculty member and served in a number of administrative positions at the college before becoming the president in the summer of 2004. There is a shared belief that he will be able to move the college beyond many of the communication and governance problems that have plagued it in the past and that he will establish a working environment that will support student learning. There is also a recognition of the limitation of authority of the president.

The college is divided into an instructional division and a student services division, with each having vice presidents which report to the president. In addition, the president oversees the business manager, plant operations manager, and police director. The president works with several constituency and administrative groups and councils at the college (Standard IVB.2). The staff and faculty believe that the administrative functions under the control of the president are beginning to work well and that the faculty and staff have input into administrative decisions at the college level. However, a commonly shared perception that the workload for support staff, faculty and administrative staff is overwhelming is causing burnout and desperation at the college. This was especially noted at the mid-manager (division dean) level. Several staff, faculty and administrative positions have not been filled, forcing other employees to increase their workload in order to support the functions of the college. There is a widely held belief that the president and all the other staff are working extremely hard to provide the best learning experience under less than optimal conditions.

There is a delineation of operational responsibilities and functions between the college and the district (Standard IVB.3.a). There are several meetings each month between representatives of the district office and the colleges. This includes the district management council and the district resources council and the chancellor's cabinet. In addition, the deputy chancellor meets regularly with the college presidents and the vice chancellor meets regularly with the vice presidents. While there is a clear delineation of responsibility and formalized meetings, there is a widely held perception at the college that the chancellor micro-manages and gets too involved in the operations of the college (Standard IV4.B.3.e). There was also evidence that individual board members have been and continue to be involved in the operations of the college well beyond their role of setting policy (Standard IVB.1.j).

Conclusions

The last accreditation visit resulted in the college being placed on a "warning" status by the commission. This was based on issues and problems between the college and the district. These include the problems with research functions and planning processes, as well as the

need to improve the overall college administrative structure and stability. Subsequently, the college has hired new administrators. This has resulted in an increased sense of stability in the college administration structure. Nevertheless, research and planning efforts have been confused and hampered at the college level by the district's efforts to initiate a new "district" planning process and by centralizing the research function at the district office and away from the college.

The previous team's recommendation regarding the board's inappropriate involvement in college and district administrative functions has not been adequately addressed. In addition, there has not been adequate progress and appropriate procedures put into place to deal with the 'hostility, mistrust, cynicism and despair that plague[d]" the college in 1998. While the administrative structure has been improved, the evidence cited from the faculty and staff survey (EV 2003) casts doubt on whether this improvement has had any positive impact on the relationship between the college and district offices.

While hiring a new president is a good first step in improving the working environment, there remains a pervasive problem of mistrust, cynicism, hostility, and fear between the college and the district. Whether true or not, the perception in the minds of many Saddleback employees that the district micro-manages the college and a similar belief that Irvine Valley College receives preferential treatment by the district both contribute to the sometimes strained relations between the colleges, the district and the board of trustees.

The college, district chancellor, and board of trustees must work together to develop clear and consistent policies and procedures that permit and encourage input from faculty and staff constituent groups. The board of trustees must ensure that there is a clearly defined role in institutional governance at the district level so that faculty and others are able to exercise a substantial voice in areas of their responsibility and expertise (Standard IVA.2.b). Specifically, the board is encouraged to involve, though a well articulated and clear procedure, all constituent groups in the development of resource allocation plans including for the use of the basic aid funds. The trustees and chancellor must bear the responsibility for effectively communicating the reasons for not accepting recommendations from the faculty senate and other representative groups on key policies.

Too much energy and focus is being diverted away from supporting and providing high quality instructional programs and services for students because of wide-spread communication problems, the lack of clearly defined procedures for decision making, and the habit of not following existing procedures. The college, with the full commitment of the district chancellor and the board of trustees, must take immediate actions in order to meet all of the components of Standard IV.

Recommendations

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 and scope 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.1, 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); and

D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards IB.1, IVA.1, and IVA.2).

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 (Standards IA.3, IB.1);

B. Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.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 (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVB.1, IVB.2, and IVB.3).