SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

ACCREDITATION FOCUSED MIDTERM REPORT

October 2007

Presented to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

**Saddleback College
South Orange County Community College District
28000 Marguerite Pkwy.
Mission Viejo, CA 92692
Richard D. McCullough, Ph.D., President**

CERTIFICATION OF THE MIDTERM REPORT

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Saddleback College

This progress report is in response to recommendations cited in the October 2004, October 2005, and October 2006 visiting team reports and the corresponding January 31, 2005, and January 31, 2006, action letters from the accrediting commission.

We certify that preparation of this report included opportunities for participation by the campus community and that the progress report accurately reflects action taken by Saddleback College in response to the ACCJC recommendations.
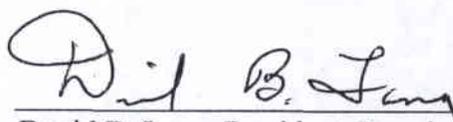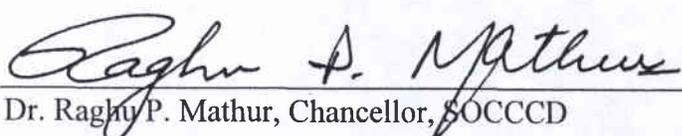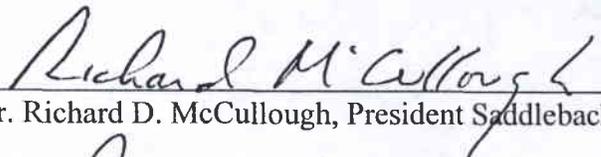
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David B. Lang, President, Board of Trustees   Date

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Dr. Raghu P. Mathur, Chancellor, SOCCCD   Date

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Dr. Richard D. McCullough, President Saddleback College Date
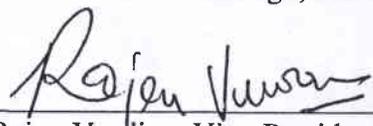
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Dr. Rajen Vurdien, Vice-President of Instruction   Date
            Accreditation Liaison Officer
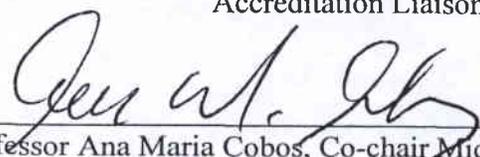
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Professor Ana Maria Cobos, Co-chair Midterm Report   Date
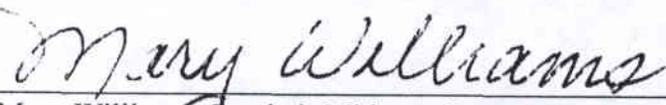
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Mary Williams, Co-chair Midterm Report   Date
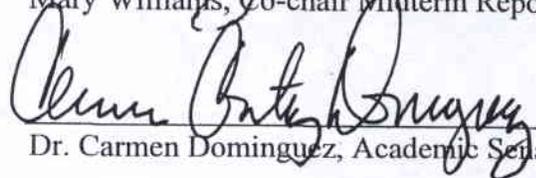
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Dr. Carmen Dominguez, Academic Senate President   Date

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STATEMENT OF REPORT PREPARATION

This Progress Report is submitted in response to the requirement by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges that all colleges submit a mid-term report the third year after evaluation. It also recognizes and responds to the commission's requirement that the college prepare a Focused Mid-term Report, giving special attention to evaluation of progress in four specific areas that were selected for emphasis during the commission's visit to Saddleback College in November, 2006. The report addresses each of the six recommendations made by the ACCJC team that visited Saddleback College in October, 2004. Further, it describes specific actions that been taken or are planned to address the specific recommendations made by the commission in January, 2007, based on the November, 2006 team visit.

The ACCJC team last visited Saddleback College for a full study in October, 2004. The college was notified of the reaffirmation of its accreditation on February 4, 2005, in a letter dated January 31, 2005. The commission report cited six areas of concern and detailed specific areas where improvement was required. Three of these concerns specifically addressed college issues, while the other three addressed the relationship between the college and the district. Further, the college was required to provide a progress report in October, 2005.

The team that visited Saddleback College in October, 2005 noted significant improvement in a number of areas but once again required a progress report and visit in October, 2006. The report from the 2006 visit was released to the college on January 31, 2007. It noted that two areas of concern had been addressed to the commission's satisfaction, but four others needed further review during the required mid-term report. The commission's letter of January 31, 2007, required a Focused Mid-term Report with visit to be conducted in October, 2007.

In April, 2007, responsibility for the Focused Midterm Report was transferred to Professor Randy Anderson and Grants Analyst Mary Williams. Professor Ana Maria Cobos, who prepared the previous three reports, agreed to act as a consultant to the co-chairs. In August, 2007, Professor Randy Anderson resigned from his responsibility upon accepting a new position at another college. Professor Ana Maria Cobos assumed the role of co-chair in August, 2007.

In order to better measure campus climate and provide concrete data for use in preparing this report, the "Employee Voice," a survey originally conducted in preparation for the 2004 self-study, was repeated in May, 2007. In addition, information was gathered from constituency groups through an all-campus meeting sponsored by the Academic Senate (May 2, 2007), through constituency group representation on the Planning and Budget Council, and as part of the draft document review process during the preparation and development of this document. The college community discussed the initial draft during the in-service week activities in August, 2007. On October 11, 2007, 2007, the final

report was posted on the Accreditation web site[1]. A campuswide email announcing its availability was distributed on the same day.

A draft report was presented to the Board of Trustees as an information item at their August 27, 2007, meeting. A revised report was submitted to the Classified Senate (CS) on August 22, 2007, and to the Academic Senate (AS) for its review at the August 29, 2007, meeting. The document was also discussed at Dean's Cabinet on July 25, and September 19, 2007. Suggested revisions were integrated and the final report was submitted to the AS on September 12, 2007, and to the CS on September 12, 2007. The final draft report was submitted to the board at the September 24, 2007, meeting for review and study.

At the August 27, 2007, meeting of the Board of Trustees, the document, *Board of Trustees and Chancellor Response to the November 30, 2006, Progress Visit Report for Saddleback College* was presented and discussed. This was the first time this information was made available to the college community.

On September 13, college classified staff were directed by the chancellor to integrate the Board of Trustees/Chancellor Responses within the Focused Midterm Report. There was no opportunity to correct several errors of fact contained in this document.

The Academic Senate would like to direct the Commission's attention to http://socccd.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2 (Board Agenda Item 7.1) and http://socccd.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=46&meta_id=13308. (SOCCCD Board Agenda Item 7.2), to view the Board discussion on August 27 and September 24, 2007 respectively, regarding this matter. Ultimately, the vote of the Board of Trustees was split, 4 votes in favor to include the responses and 3 votes opposed.

The Saddleback College Academic Senate would like to reassure the members of the Accrediting Commission that the college community agreed upon the process described within the Statement on Report Preparation whereby all drafts of the Focused Midterm Report were reviewed by the college community during spring and fall of 2007. During the fall in-service program in August, 2007, as documented in the Statement on Report Preparation, a preliminary draft of the report was distributed to the College community for review and revision. The Board of Trustees/Chancellor responses did not go through this same process or a similar one that involved all constituencies.

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[1] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/accreditation.html.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Over the past year, Saddleback College has made considerable progress in validating and internalizing the decisions made through the strategic planning process initiated in 2005-2006. Many affirmative steps have been taken to institutionalize planning and link budget allocation and decision making to adopted strategic plans. The college believes that it has fully implemented the commission's recommendations with regard to Recommendation 2. The Board of Trustees, district leadership, and the college administration have also made measurable progress in fulfilling the requirements set forth in Recommendations 4, 5, and 6.

Among the steps taken by the district and college are:

District
- Active implementation of the Educational and Facilities Master Plan;
- Development, in coordination with Saddleback College, of an integrated strategic planning process;
- Establishment of district-wide vision, mission and goals based on shared governance group participation;
- Coordination of district and college research and planning staff, which resulted in more data-based decision making;
- Adoption of the resolution "Implementation of Accreditation Recommendations by the District and Board of Trustees;"
- Participated in technical assistance session followed by sessions with shared governance groups, employee discussion forums, and a special meeting of the Board of Trustees;
- Adopted board policies and administrative regulations ensuring constituent group participation in decision-making processes;
- Continued operation of Board Policy and Administrative Regulations Advisory Council;
- Developed and promoted on-line access to board policies, administrative regulations, and board meeting agendas and minutes to improve employee and community access to district information.

Saddleback College
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) team and process established and implemented;
- Institutional Effectiveness Committee established, assessment hardware and software funded, training programs implemented;
- Strategic planning process developed;
- Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, reviewed, adopted and implemented;
- Distance Education Committee recommended and PBC approved new classified positions based on Interim Strategic Plan;

- Process for annual review of the college mission and vision statements developed and implemented;
- College budget developed using priorities established through Interim Strategic Plan and process;
- Matriculation staffing requests from the Student Success Strategic Planning Committee reviewed by the PBC, followed by a recommendation to the college president, leading to his approval of a hiring authorization made in accordance with Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007;
- The Equipment and Technology Committees reviewed requests and made recommendations for funding using Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007 as a guideline;
- Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, developed and accepted;
- Staff development funding allocated to both classified staff and faculty in accordance with college goals, values, and Interim Strategic Plan;
- Faculty and classified hiring processes reviewed and revised to link hiring and strategic planning.

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Recommendation 1.

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 LA3, LAA);

B. Be institutionalized through college publications and practices (Standards LA.2, LAA)

C. Ensure that the mission guide college planning and decision making (Standard I.AA); and

D. Allow for the implementation of revisions as appropriate to assure continuous improvement of college efforts to accomplish the mission (Standards LA.6, LA.7)

Response: The findings of the ACCJC team that visited the college in November, 2005, were that the college had satisfied the requirements set forth in this area and had institutionalized an annual review of the mission statement. The college again reviewed and reaffirmed its mission statement in spring, 2007, and submitted it to the Board of Trustees. After review by the board, a slightly revised mission statement was approved at the board meeting held on July 23, 2007. The approved mission statement is published in the college catalog[2], appears in the college web site, PBC and other meeting agendas, as well as, serving as the foundation of the SLO and program review forms, and strategic and division planning.

Three questions from the "Employee Voice, 2007" survey addressed the college mission statement. Sixty-six percent of the 237 administrators, faculty, and staff who completed the survey felt that the college president made decisions that are consistent with the mission of the college. This figure is an eleven percent increase over the 2004 respondents. Moreover, significantly more of the 2007 respondents believe that the college is working to fulfill its vision and mission. Seventy-three percent of the 2007 respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement as opposed to only forty-five percent in 2004. Finally, and most significantly, in 2004 only twenty-two percent of the respondents (Section 4, Q 3) indicated that all constituent groups worked collaboratively to achieve the college vision and mission. That number nearly doubled to forty-three percent in 2007[3].

Evaluation: The Planning and Budget Council publishes the college mission statement on its weekly agenda and encourages other campus groups to follow this practice.

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[2] By the time the revised college mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees, the 2007-2008 college catalog had already gone to press.

[3] Employee Voice Survey Comparison of 2003 to 2007 Data, http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/accreditation.html

College units review their own mission statements regularly and use these as the basis for all planning and decision making. Data from the Employee Voice, 2007 indicate that employee groups are confident that the college uses its mission and vision statement for planning purposes and works collaboratively to achieve these goals.

Recommendation 2.

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

<u>*Response:*</u> Since July, 2004, the college has taken affirmative steps to improve its institutional planning culture. In 2005-2006, the college focused on developing and strengthening the planning and evaluation infrastructure. During the 2006-2007 academic year the college made positive strides in integrating the use of the strategic planning process for decision making through the adoption and implementation of an Interim Strategic Plan and development of a means to link strategic planning to budget allocation. During this period, the college developed a three-year plan that will guide decision making in 2007-2010. Although the planning process establishes three-year targeted goals, these will be critically reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

The Planning and Budget Council (PBC), established in March, 2005 (in response to a Planning Agenda recommendation from the 2004 Accreditation Report), makes recommendations to the college president. The PBC is the main body responsible for coordinating college planning and evaluation. PBC has as its primary goal the development of a strategic planning process that links budget allocation and planning. The charge of the PBC is, "to provide leadership in collegewide planning so that Saddleback College will have a defined mission that will drive budget augmentations to college committees and service areas."[4] In 2006-2007, the PBC allocated more than $3M in expenditures that showed a direct link to planning activities.

The PBC meets weekly and includes representation from all shared governance groups. Meetings are facilitated by the college president, who serves in an *ex officio* capacity. Minutes of PBC meetings are published on its web site and are disseminated widely[5]. Budget decisions tied to planning are also listed on the PBC web site and are communicated to the college community through the shared governance units represented on the PBC. The PBC web site also contains comprehensive information for the college community explaining its structure, the information gathering and decision-making processes used, and documentation of its accomplishments.

In 2005, the college established an Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Office for the purpose of enhancing coordinated planning and evaluation through the implementation of student learning outcomes (SLOs) and administrative unit outcomes (AUOs*),* curriculum update and revision, and the revision of the program review process. The IE Office consists of the Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator, the chairs of Curriculum Committee and Program Review, and a full-time Research Specialist dedicated to outcomes assessment and program review. The data generated by the IE Office establishes direct links between

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[4] PBC Minutes, March 28, 2006; http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc.
[5] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc/.

assessment, program review, and curriculum revision[6].

Following months of study and deliberation by the Academic Senate and PBC, the Saddleback College Strategic Planning Process was adopted on March 13, 2006, and revised on April 26, 2006. During spring, 2006, the PBC established a Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC). After extensive research and deliberation, this group that consisted of the two college vice-presidents, the Academic Senate president, one dean, one classified manager, one classified representative, and the college researcher, recommended that an interim strategic plan be developed to facilitate decision making and resource allocation in 2006-2007. The work of the four planning groups became the Interim Strategic Plan that has been used successfully to guide decision making and budget allocations during the 2006-2007 academic year. The Interim Strategic Plan, 2006 -2007, established four overarching planning groups responsible for devising goals and strategies in four key areas: enrollment management, student success, campus environment, and institutional effectiveness[7].

The four planning groups, with membership determined by the SPSC and appointed through the shared governance process, were given two tasks: develop and implement the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006 -2007, and establish a more comprehensive plan to guide college planning over the 2007-2010 period. PBC also determined that the committees were to focus on developing and recommending to the PBC a means by which facilities, technology, and human resources planning would be tied to the strategic directions identified by the group. Key planning documents were identified for use in internal and external scanning. In particular, the committees were directed to rely heavily on the Saddleback College Educational and Facilities Master Plans, 2006-2010, finalized in 2006. Other tools used included demographic data provided by the Orange County Business Council, college statistical data and demographics, and community-based information including feeder high school data.

Another focus of PBC during 2005 was its review of the core philosophies of the college. The mission, vision, and values statements were adopted in April, 2005, and reviewed and reaffirmed in May, 2006, and May, 2007. As part of an annual process, the mission statement was submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval at the May meeting.

Enrollment Management Committee (EMC)

The mission of the Enrollment Management Committee (EMC) is, "To implement, document, monitor and periodically revise the structure of student enrollment and retention using processes that are flexible, educationally sound, evidence based, and provide guidance to the Planning and Budget Council for a collaborative approach to establishing priorities and determining strategies." The College Marketing, Distance Education, and Scheduling and Facilities committees are sub-committees of Enrollment Management. These groups also develop annual goals and work plans. EMC developed

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[6] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/
[7] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc/

an interim plan with five goals associated with the following strategic direction: "While developing strategies to increase enrollment, the college will renew its commitment to the three missions of a comprehensive community college of providing career and technical education, providing transfer-level courses, and to transition from basic skills classes to college-level courses"[8].

Student Success Planning Group (SSPG)

The mission of the Student Success Planning Group (SSPG) is to, "Encourage, document and support the persistence and retention of Saddleback College students." SSPG established three goals in order to accomplish its mission[9]. The Basic Skills Initiative Task Force will be working closely with SSPG. The Student Services Leadership Council forwards relevant recommendations to the appropriate planning group or to PBC.

Campus Environment Committee (CEC)

The mission and strategic direction of the Campus Environment Committee (CEC) is, "To have safe, clean, and well-maintained facilities." To this end, the CEC established three goals. The Campus Beautification, Safety, and Disaster Preparedness committees are sub-committees of CEC.[10]

Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)

The mission of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) is: "To promote institutional quality through a comprehensive process of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation in alignment with the college's mission and goals." The committee's strategic direction is, "To create a culture of institutional effectiveness based on assessment of outcomes." In 2006-2007, the IEC established four goals to accomplish its mission[11].

The 15 goals established by the four planning groups was the basis of the 2006-2007 Interim Strategic Plan, approved by the PBC and college president on April 25, 2006. Each planning group reported progress toward completion of their goals on a quarterly basis. Final reporting was completed on July 19, 2007, at a PBC retreat. Any goals that had been partially achieved were carried over to the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010 [12].

On April 25, 2006, with the four planning groups well established, interim goals developed, and 2006-2007 activities underway, the PBC directed its energies to the development of the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan. The college president presented both the interim plan and guidelines for development of the three-year plan at the classified and

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[8] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/enrollment_management.html
[9] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/StudentSuccess.html
[10] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/CampusEnvironment.html
[11] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/InstitutionalEffectiveness.html
[12] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc/PDF/07_24_07_PBC_Minutes.pdf

faculty breakfasts, held during the August, 2006, in-service program. All members of the college community were invited to provide input.

Discussions regarding the planning process were held at Academic and Classified Senate meetings, at Deans' Cabinet, and Student Services Leadership Council. The president also discussed the development and implementation of both the interim and three-year plans at each of his monthly President's Chats. Requests for input were extended during the January, 2007, in-service breakfasts for faculty and classified staff.

The strategic planning process developed and approved by the PBC set forth the documents to be used by each planning group. External and internal scans were conducted. The Student Success Planning Group relied heavily on the Transfer, Matriculation, and Equity Plans as well as the EOPS/CARE and DSPS plans. All four groups used the EFMP, accreditation reports, current work on SLOs and AUOs, and program review data. Finally, in order to arrive at commonly agreed goals, the PBC recommended and the college president approved nine strategic directions for the planning groups to use in developing their goals and action plans. Various opportunities for input were made available to the campus community including discussion of the work of the four planning groups at a Student Services retreat held on Friday, June 8, 2007.[13]

Each planning group provided documentation of its progress in developing the three-year strategic plan to PBC on a monthly basis. Final planning group recommendations were submitted to PBC for review, discussion, and acceptance in June, 2007. A decision was made at the June 26, 2007, PBC meeting to submit the proposed goals to an outside consultant for an objective review and recommendations[14].

At a PBC retreat, held on July 19, 2007, the proposed 2007-2010 Strategic Plan was reviewed and consolidated into a single document. Following the strategic plan's review, the PBC decided to address several key themes that were common to all four groups such as funding to upgrade technology and equipment and a revised process to prioritize new classified staff positions. In August, 2007, a process was developed per discussions at the PBC retreat[15] to allow deans and managers to request increases in classified staffing levels in their areas. These requests will be forwarded to the appropriate planning groups for prioritization and then forwarded to the PBC. In fall, 2007, it is anticipated that the PBC will make a recommendation to the president for additional classified positions and/or increased hours for permanent part-time employees. This process will effectively link staffing levels with the planning process[16].

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[13] Student Services retreat agenda.

[14] President McCullough reports in an email message from September 5, 2007 that on two separate occasions a consultant reviewed the planning documents and agreed that the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, was on solid ground.

[15] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc/PDF/July31PBCLeadershipForumMinutes.pdf

[16] This revised process to prioritize new classified positions may be affected by the Friday, August 31st, 2007, announcement by Chancellor Mathur that there would be a partial moratorium on classified staff positions.

The Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, was presented to faculty and staff at the fall, 2007, in-service week breakfasts. The campus community will have an opportunity for input through the shared governance process, which will allow the PBC to consider incorporating any suggested modifications prior to publication and dissemination of the plan to the college community in October or November, 2007.

For several years there has been healthy college-wide discussion about the process of developing goals. College goals and objectives have previously been developed in response to board and district goals and objectives. In spring, 2007, the two colleges suggested an alternative process, believing that college and district goals should be symbiotic and developed collegially. The two Academic Senate presidents met with Chancellor Mathur on two separate occasions in spring, 2006, to voice their objections to the district-developed planning process. In response to these meetings, the chancellor created the District Planning Process Task Force and appointed its membership in summer, 2006 [17]. The task force was originally convened by Interim Vice Chancellor Allan McDougall pending the arrival of Vice Chancellor for Technology and Learning Services, Dr. Andreea Serban, who chairs the task force. A district planning process that integrated with the colleges' processes was submitted to the chancellor on October 9, 2006, reviewed by Chancellor's Cabinet in February, 2007, and subsequently adopted by this group to be implemented in the 2007-2008 planning cycle. Based on the recommendations of the District Planning Process Task Force, the district goals, to be developed, would be revised to be concept- rather than task-oriented.

Based on this document, meetings were held on February 27, 2007, and April 18, 2007, to formulate district goals. Leaders from both colleges and the district attended the meetings that resulted in the development of eleven goals that were submitted to the board of trustees and approved in May, 2007[18].

Evaluation: Significant progress has been made since the PBC was created in fall, 2004, and began its work in spring, 2005. At that time, the college had no plan to guide decision making or link these decisions to budgetary allocations. By establishing the Strategic Planning Task Force and assigning it the charge of developing a one-year Interim Strategic Plan for 2006-2007, the PBC shifted college decision making toward a model that linked planning and research with resource allocation. As the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, was implemented and the three-year Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, developed and approved, another critically important component was put in place to integrate college planning and evaluation to strengthen the college's institutional effectiveness. With the revisions to district planning suggested by the District Planning Process Task Force, faculty perceives that their concerns about faculty involvement have been addressed. While only one-third of the faculty and staff expressed satisfaction with the amount of opportunity they had to participate in college-wide planning in 2004, that figure has now increased to more than fifty-three percent based on results of the

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[17] See also response to Recommendation 2.A below.
[18] http://www.socccd.org/about_mission.html

Employee Voice, 2007 survey[19].

A.   *Updating the educational master plan annually at the college and department levels and using the master plan for decision making and resource allocation (Standards I.A.4, IA.6, I.B.4, II.A.2.e, and II.A.2.f);*

Response: In early spring, 2006, the Academic Senate presidents met with Chancellor Mathur to request integration of the college planning process with that of the district. In response to their request, the chancellor created the District Planning Process Task Force. The chancellor announced the composition of this task force in summer, 2006[20].

Saddleback College's Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, was developed by its four planning groups. This plan is to be updated yearly to provide flexibility while still ensuring that long-range planning is the basis of all decision-making and resource allocation at the college.

The strategic planning process was developed during spring, 2006. Prior to its approval by PBC and the college president, the planning process was presented to the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate, Deans' Cabinet, the Student Services Leadership Council, and the Enrollment Management and Institutional Effectiveness Committees. The strategic planning process was presented to the college community during fall, 2006, and spring, 2007, in-service weeks. Efforts were made by the PBC, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and the four planning groups, to integrate as many members of the college community as possible into the development of the three-year strategic plan. Discussions were routinely held at meetings of the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Deans Cabinet, and Student Services Leadership Council. When appropriate, subject matter experts were consulted and college and community demographics were analyzed. All college committees, divisions, and departments had the opportunity to provide input into the process through formal strategic planning committees and public forums.

The strategic planning process relies on numerous college planning documents including SLO, Academic Unit Outcomes (AUOs), and department-level program reviews. An external scan, an internal scan, the Equity, Transfer and Matriculation Plans, among others, as well as the state-mandated Educational and Facilities Master Plan, finalized in March 2006, were consulted. Each of these documents is available for review by the college community on the college web site. Whereas in the past the college community believed that the Saddleback College Educational and Facilities Master Plan was rarely used, the departments, divisions, and strategic planning groups have learned to rely on the EFMP as they created the planning process.

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[19] Employee Voice Survey Comparison of 2003 to 2007 Data, http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/accreditation.html.

[20] May 26, 2006, Chancellor Mathur email announcing the creation of the District Planning Process Task Force.

During a recent redesign of the SOCCCD district web site the five-year Educational and Facilities Master Plan was placed on-line for easy access[21]. In addition, hard copies were secured and widely disseminated to district and college leadership. This key decision-making and resource allocation document has played a key role in the development of the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, and was used by PBC as they implemented the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007. Furthermore, the PBC, college divisions, and the four college planning groups will annually review the five-year Educational and Facilities Master Plan as part of the annual planning cycle.

Several significant changes were made to established college practices during 2006-2007 that demonstrate that the EFMP is a living document that is being used as the basis for overall college planning. One recent example is the Faculty Hiring Prioritization Committee process, which was modified through an agreement reached by this committee and PBC, and approved by the college president to ensure that funding allocated to a division for faculty positions that become vacant remains with the division for faculty replacement[22]. Also, the college Equipment Committee and the Technology Committee requested and received direction from the PBC that will lead to development of a policy that allows the committee to tie the allocation of funding for new equipment or technology to program reviews. The PBC will be working with the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate, and other shared governance groups to recommend revisions to additional college practices that will result in linking all new expenditures to the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010.

In spring, 2007, the college completed a comprehensive student survey to measure student satisfaction. Preliminary results of this survey were presented at the June, 2007, Student Services retreat and during fall 2007 in-service. This survey will be widely used to drive decision making and improve services to students.

Evaluation: The college has made great strides in building a foundation for linking planning with decision making and resource allocation with the creation and approval of the strategic planning process, the adoption and implementation of the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, and the development of the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010. The college governance groups are ensuring that all committees and programs on campus use the strategic plan as the basis for their decision-making processes.

B. **_Refining the focus of institutional research so that research and information are used and integrated systematically in planning, decision making, and program review structures for ongoing institutional improvement (Standards I.A.4, I.A.5, I.A.6, I.A.7, I.B.3, I.B.4, IB.6, II.A.1, and II.A.2);_**

Response: Research is the basis of our strategic planning model, which relies on data from external and internal scans. Other planning documents used in the strategic

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[21] http://www.socccd.org/about_masterplan.html
[22] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc/PDF/05_08_07_PBC_Minutes.pdf

planning process, such as the Student Equity Plan, completed program reviews, and the Facilities and Educational Master Plan, are also based on institutional research. The PBC also recommends and makes decisions about institutional research needs. Furthermore, the four planning groups that comprise the strategic planning process: Enrollment Management, Student Success, Campus Environment, and Institutional Effectiveness, have developed their respective research agendas as have the Deans' Cabinet and the Student Services Leadership Council.

During 2006-2007, a comprehensive student survey was professionally developed and administered. Survey results were presented to the college community at a flex-week in-service presentation in August, 2007. The results will be published for review by the entire college community in fall, 2007. This data will allow the planning groups to complete the final two columns of the SLO/AUO forms and enable the college to better plan for the future. The survey will be administered again in 2008, and thereafter every two years, until a new survey is developed, possibly in 2014.

To provide data for the 2004 Accreditation report, an employee survey, Employee Voice 2003, was developed and administered. This survey measured faculty, administrator, and staff satisfaction with college and district governance and administration. In order to adequately measure current perceptions, the PBC recommended and the college president approved repeating the survey in May, 2007.

The college recognizes the importance of research in institutional evaluation and improvement and has, therefore, allocated resources to strengthen the Research and Planning Office. The additional funds, requested through the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, recommended by the PBC, and approved by the president, were used to hire a research specialist and purchase assessment software and hardware. The new research specialist spends the majority of her time focused on the statistical data necessary to prepare accurate and informative program reviews, and to develop effective SLOs and AUOs. This new staff member has also freed up the Research Analyst to support other college-wide research needs. This second position in the research office was an essential component that allowed the college to provide the required support to measure institutional effectiveness. The college Research Analyst works closely with the district Director of Research and Planning to ensure that the college has current, reliable, and valid data. Together with the district, the Research and Planning Office is developing a set of annual reports to support college decisions[23].

In accordance with the Institutional Effectiveness Committee's recommendation and the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, the PBC recommended and the president approved the purchase of PAR Score and the Scantron materials to support the creation and analysis of surveys. In August, 2006, funding to purchase the Scantron software and hardware was approved by the Board of Trustees at a cost of $130,000. The system was purchased to provide to the entire campus a systematic data collection and analysis tool for SLO/AUO and program review. At the end of August, 2006, Class Climate (survey creation and

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[23] The Office of Planning and Research has its own internal research planning calendar.

data collection software), ParSystems testing software, and a specialized scanner designed to be used with the Scantron software systems, were purchased.

Two in-service presentations were conducted during fall in-service 2007 to highlight each piece of software and its capacity to collect data for SLO/AUOs and program reviews. Training for faculty who attended the workshop will follow. The research office will continue to offer training throughout the year and work with the divisions to facilitate more usage of these data collection systems.

In September, 2006, the college's Innovation and Technology Center worked with Scantron to facilitate the implementation of the networked systems. Considerable time and energy was spent in the installation of a dedicated server and establishment of nine assessment stations, one for each division at the college and one in the Research and Planning Office. Each station has a dedicated CPU, monitor, and scanner. Full-day training sessions for each system were conducted in October, and November, 2006. These sessions included the college researchers, faculty and staff representatives from the divisions, and members of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

After the training and installation of the Scantron systems, the college researchers spent most of spring 2007 testing and training faculty and staff on the systems. The Sign Language, Automotive, Library, Real Estate, Transfer Center, Counseling and Child Development programs developed surveys using Class Climate. Approximately 15-20 existing surveys using other software will be migrated to Class Climate. To date, faculty and staff from four divisions on campus have been trained in ParSystems and approximately 20 user accounts are active. The Nursing, Speech, Spanish, English, and Reading programs are currently using scannable test forms for their SLO assessments.

Two college-wide surveys were developed using Class Climate. Approximately 3,600 surveys were created and scanned with the new system to collect information from VTEA (Vocational Technical Education Act) classes. The second large assessment was a college-wide student survey that distributed over 5,000 surveys to randomly selected classes.

Evaluation: The college has taken concrete steps towards the systematic integration of planning, decision making, and assessment for ongoing institutional improvement. The college recognizes that research is a central component in this venture and resources are being allocated to the research and planning office to enhance its ability to support institutional effectiveness.

To date, 100 percent of the 69 instructional programs have completed SLOs up to column three of the college's five column model. Fifty-two percent of the programs have completed all five columns and are working on the next cycle of their SLOs. Fifty-three percent of the 32 administrative and student support units have completed AUOs up to column three of the five column model. Twenty-two percent of these units have completed all five columns. The IE office is in the process of developing strategies to

assist the remaining programs and units as they work to complete all five columns of their SLOs[24].

C.   Identifying intended institutional student learning outcomes, coordinated with the college mission statement, and measuring progress towards accomplishment (Standards I.A.1, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, II.A.1);

Response: The SLO Implementation Plan, launched in summer 2005, requires that all instructional programs identify and assess student learning outcomes (SLOs). Similarly, every student support and administrative service unit must complete Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs).

The SLO Implementation Plan, which includes program review, begins with the college mission statement, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of programs or administrative units in fulfilling the college mission, and concludes with a discussion of steps that have been taken to improve programs and services including future efforts. The purpose of the SLO Implementation Plan is to link the unit's mission statement, intended outcomes, and assessment, with ongoing improvement[25].

The college mission statement reads, "Our mission:

> To provide access to learning opportunities that promote student success; to foster intellectual growth and individual expression; and to support a dynamic and diverse environment of innovation and collegiality.

The college mission statement is placed on all PBC meeting agendas and meeting minutes as a reminder that drives the decisions made by PBC and the college president. As planned, the PBC reviewed the mission statement and approved its continued use in 2007-2008 without change. The mission statement was submitted to the Board of Trustees in May, 2007, but the board chose to delete the words "character development" from the college mission statement at its July, 2007 meeting.[26]

Evaluation: The college has made significant progress in institutionalizing outcomes assessment. One of the key changes that has taken place as a result of the SLO Implementation Plan, is the recognition of the importance of having a mission statement and using it as a decision making and action guide. Many members of the college community were actively involved in the reevaluation of the college's mission statement and in creation of their program/unit's mission statement.

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[24] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/

[25] See response to Recommendation 3 that describes in depth the SLO Implementation Plan.

[26] For a discussion of this issue, please see Recommendation 5 below.

D. *Coordinating program review more thoroughly with the educational master plan, department plans, and decision-making processes (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4);*

<u>*Response:*</u> In August, 2005, the college implemented a new, simplified, and integrated program review process for instructional programs. A similar plan for services and administrative units was recommended by the PBC and approved by the college president in September, 2005, with input from the Student Services Leadership Council and other instructional support units[27].

Under the process, program review will be conducted every two years for vocational programs and every five years for all other programs and units. At its May 15, 2007, meeting the PBC and president decided to not require a full program review for vocational programs every two years when an abbreviated program review will comply with Title V requirements. Therefore, vocational programs will now have to do a full program review only when required to do so by law. The data for program review includes: 1) an organization chart; 2) a five-year staffing profile; 3) SLO and AUO assessment forms for the previous years; and 4) data sets on enrollment and success indicators created by the college research analyst for the previous three to five years[28]. As each needs assessment is created through the program review process it will serve as a tool to establish the basis for planning within departments and within the college as a whole. Program reviews are one of the key documents used in the strategic planning process. The PBC is still in the process of finalizing how program review will be used in the strategic planning and budget allocation processes.

Needs assessment plans will also be included in the justification of all requests such as hiring and funding. Since 2006, the college requires that an executive summary of the completed program review be formally presented during a PBC meeting. These presentations guide the decision-making process by ensuring that PBC members are cognizant of all programs on campus so they may evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, and have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenter. During 2006-2007, eighteen program reviews were presented to PBC during the regularly scheduled PBC meetings. The PBC is still discussing how much supporting documentation should be provided and developing a referral mechanism that will provide information that will allow relevant campus committees to prioritize the needs of the various presenters.

Program review is linked with curriculum revision. Each program is required by the state to review and revise its course offerings every two years for vocational programs and every five years for all other programs through the technical review process. In each cycle, programs will undergo program review the year before they are due for curriculum technical review so that the data and assessment used in program review will be the basis

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[27] Saddleback College Program Review Handbook for Instructional Programs, 2006-2007 and the Saddleback College Program Review Handbook for Student Support and Administrative Services, 2006-2007, http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/.
[28] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/

for curriculum revisions. All completed program reviews are available to the entire college community in the IE web site and office[29]. A schedule of the SLO assessment (yearly), program review (every two or five years), and curriculum technical review (every two or five years) cycles is regularly updated and can also be found on the IE web site.

The SLO Implementation Team includes the Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator, the Program Review chair, the Curriculum chair, and the Research Specialist. This team has primary responsibility for ensuring that the programs and units complete each phase of the cycle in a timely manner. In addition, college committees have a key role to play in implementing the needs assessments generated by program review. The use of needs assessments produced by program reviews, while envisioned, has not yet been written into the procedures of college committees. This was begun during 2006-2007 academic year and will continue as the college revises various committee procedures in alignment with the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010. Program review data was used to justify three new faculty positions that were approved in 2007. Previously completed program reviews for Matriculation and Counseling resulted in the decision to hire additional classified staff. All future technology and equipment requests must be documented through a completed program review, although no program will be penalized if it has not yet been required to complete the process[30].

Since December 12, 2004, there have been 9.4 FTE new classified positions funded from the general fund and 11 new classified positions funded from categorical budgets. Several years ago, the classified hiring process was revised to place decision making for replacement hiring of classified staff at the division level. If a division chooses to replace a departing employee's position they may do so.

New classified position requests were periodically submitted to a committee composed of a cross-section of shared governance representatives, with fifty percent of the members being appointed by the Classified Senate and classified union. The new policy recently developed by the PBC and approved by the president will centralize these decisions in the strategic planning groups and the PBC. New positions will be prioritized using the Strategic Plan 2007-2010 as the fundamental guide.

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[29] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/

[30] According to the Equipment Committee Chair, "The College Equipment committee is using the information provided on the PBC and IE website to determine if the program review is complete. It is noted on the spreadsheet for equipment requests given to the College Equipment Committee to consider the items submitted of those Departments who have completed their review. Clarification on the weight of program review on the recommendations of the committee was requested from the PBC. The PBC referred the 7 questions back to the committee for suggestions for weighting. When we (the Committee) meet on Sept. 6, we will consider the PBC's response to our requests for clarification." The chair of the Technology Committee is also working to incorporate program review data into the technology request form.

On August 31, 2007, Chancellor Mathur announced a hiring freeze for all new classified positions in order to bring the district into compliance with the fifty percent rule. President McCullough discussed the matter with the chancellor and reports that all new categorical grant-funded, and instructional aide positions will go forward. Only other new positions will be scrutinized but that the outlook for hiring classified staff is good.

Evaluation: Though program review has been recently revitalized, it is expected that the new coordinated plan will be more successful in improving institutional effectiveness, primarily because of its link to strategic planning. Additional work remains to be done to fully integrate the work of the planning groups with program review and the budget allocation process. While the classified staff is somewhat concerned that their voice in recommending new positions to reduce existing workloads will be diminished, it is too early to tell how the new process will be received by the college as a whole. In addition, Chancellor Mathur's announcement on August 31, 2007 that there would be a partial moratorium on classified staff positions, may mean a delay for implementation of staffing recommendations from program reviews.

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

*Response***:** The IE Office created a schedule for all programs and administrative units for the completion of SLO and AUO assessment on a yearly basis, program review on a two or five-year cycle, and curriculum on a two or five-year cycle.

The SLO Implementation Team secured funding for two years with the hope of securing one additional year to allow for the institutionalization of this new process. The 2006-2007 academic year was the second year of funding. This funding provides some reassigned time for the members of the implementation team. Once the plan becomes fully institutionalized, the IE Coordinator, the Program Review Chair and the Curriculum Chair, in conjunction with the College Research Analyst and Research Specialist, will be responsible for ensuring that all programs and units continue adhering to the schedule. Funding for the third year of the SLO Implementation Plan is yet to be determined pending the identification of the faculty members who will assume the SLO Implementation Plan leadership positions.

The reassigned time/stipend issue discussed in detail under Recommendation 5 below may adversely affect the continuation of the effective processes that have been developed. For a variety of reasons, most of the SLO Implementation Team did not continue in their functions when instruction resumed in fall, 2007. The college finds itself in a transitional period and is in urgent need of qualified, committed faculty who are willing to continue the processes put in place by their colleagues over the past two years. As the fall semester progresses with no one stepping forward it is becoming clear that there will not be a team to continue work on the SLO Implementation Plan.

Evaluation: Measurable progress has been made though it is still early to assess the

success of the streamlined program review process and its integration into strategic planning until one complete cycle of program reviews are completed. With the approval of the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, and as the college begins its implementation, the college community is ready to assess the effectiveness of the program review process based on the baseline assessments that the SLO, AUO, and program reviews provide.

F.   *Linking facilities, technology, and human resources plans into the overall comprehensive planning and evaluation structure of the college (Standards I.B, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, and III.D.1.d;*

Response: As mentioned above, the college has taken several important steps to enhance its institutional effectiveness by revising its planning and decision-making structure and devising a strategic planning process that will guide all decision making and budget allocations.

The PBC and the college president have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that college wide planning is integrated, comprehensive, and that the strategic plan is implemented. The success of this process is exemplified by the funding that has been allocated to goals set forth in the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007. By allocating funds in this way, the PBC and the college president have taken an important step in ensuring the linkage between planning and resource allocation. The result is that college committees are now implementing the recommendations of a centralized body comprised of all constituent groups at the college.

Two new planning groups were created to implement the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, and work on the development of Strategic Plan, 2007-2010. The Campus Environment Committee combined several prior committees for the purpose of implementing comprehensive planning for facilities and safety issues at the college. This committee recommended a facilities improvement plan in compliance with the college's strategic plan. The Campus Environment Committee membership consists of all college governance units and is chaired by the college's Director of Facilities.

The need to take the college's largest classroom building off-line for mold remediation and reconstruction during 2006-2007 required that the Campus Environment Committee focus most of its energy on the coordination of this major project that involved moving personnel and equipment to swing space constructed for that purpose. The swing space, termed "The Village," is located on lower campus. The college requested and received funds from basic aid in the amount of $18M. The move took place between fall 2006 and spring 2007. By consolidating decision making, communication, and coordination of the project under the Campus Environment Committee, the college was better able to focus on the project and all its needs and thus made certain that small details were not missed.

The Student Success Planning Group (SSPG), chaired by the Vice President of Student Services, is the second new planning body created to implement the Interim Strategic Plan and develop the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010. Like all planning groups, this body consists of representatives from all governance units. The SSPG, with input from the

Matriculation Committee and the Student Services Leadership Council (SSLC), utilized the various student services plans to develop strategic planning goals.   Because the SSPG knows that student success is an institutional responsibility and function, membership and input was requested from across the college. SSPG is differentiated from the SSLC, which is comprised of administrators, department heads, and key employees in Student Services.

Evaluation: PBC and administrative analysis of the results of the implementation of the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, demonstrates that planning was linked to budget allocation. While the development of a strategic plan is the first step in linking planning with decision making, it is recognized that the important work of implementing the strategic plan and revising current resource allocations, such as equipment, technology, facilities, and staffing, will continue to be of primary importance through 2010. The IE Office and the PBC will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the new planning structure.

G.   *Publishing and widely disseminating the completed planning and evaluation process (Standards I.A.4, I.B).*

Response: The college president has made improving communication a top priority. The PBC meets weekly, Deans' Cabinet and Student Services Leadership Council meet bimonthly. The Academic and Classified Senates meet bimonthly. All representatives provide reports to and seek input from their respective units or constituencies. In addition, the college president has instituted monthly President's Chats[31] and a once-a-month Leadership Forum. The Vice President for Instruction meets with the instructional deans weekly to disseminate PBC minutes and to review/update division goals. The Vice President for Student Services has established a Student Services Leadership Council that enables her to meet regularly with key employees. In turn, divisions and departments meet regularly to disseminate information and create unit plans. During these meetings, the unit mission statement and goals are regularly reviewed. Progress reports are due mid-year and annually. In addition to these regular meetings where college information and decisions are discussed, made, and announced, the president's office disseminates broadcast email updates on a regular basis. The Gaucho Gazette[32], an electronic newsletter published by the Office of Marketing and Public Relations, has done much to improve communication campus-wide.

The IE Office is responsible for disseminating the results of SLO and AUO assessment and program review. The IE web site contains reports for SLO and AUO and completed program reviews[33]. All programs reviews are submitted to the IE Office in conjunction with an open and formal presentation to the PBC and all interested parties.

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[31] President McCullough held his "President's Chat" sessions in September and October, 2006. Two were held in February, one in March, April, and June 2007. During these informal Q&A sessions, 20-40 faculty and staff are in attendance.
[32] http://www.saddleback.edu/news/
[33] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/ie/

In-service week always includes presentations and training opportunities about the planning and evaluation process. Over the past two years, these presentations have focused on outcomes assessment, program review, and strategic planning. In fall, 2006, the Interim Strategic Plan was presented and in fall, 2007, the president discussed the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010, during the faculty and classified breakfasts.

A prime example of improved communication in 2006-2007 were the regular updates provided to the campus community about the closure of the BGS building, the construction of The Village, and the move of all classrooms and offices during the winter break. What could have been a chaotic transition, with a much feared loss of students, ended up going very smoothly and having little or no negative impact on student enrollment. All campus constituencies were involved with the communication and planning process.

Evaluation: Communication has improved at the college through the PBC, the Leadership Forum, President's Chats, The Gaucho Gazette, and the various email communications from the President's Office. Sixty-seven percent of those who responded to the Employee Voice, 2007, survey indicated that they receive timely communication on critical information affecting their job. Every member of the institution is beginning to take personal responsibility for communicating important decisions and participating actively in their department, unit, or college-wide planning as evidenced by the completion of the numerous planning activities that have been characterized by active participation by all segments of the college community.

Recommendation 3:

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

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

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

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

Response: The ACCJC representatives that visited Saddleback College in November, 2005, found that considerable progress had been made to achieve the goal of developing measurable learning outcomes for programs and services. This was accomplished through the establishment of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Implementation Plan and the formation of the SLO Task Force. The plan linked SLO's with program review and curriculum revision. The college is currently focusing on assessments at the program level and is developing strategies to move into SLO development and review at the course and institutional levels.

Evaluation: Saddleback College has made a commitment to the continuation of the SLO Implementation Plan on an on-going basis. Funding in the form of reassigned time was secured for the first two years of the plan and the request for year-three funding is yet to be determined because the faculty members who will assume the leadership positions for the SLO Implementation Plan have not yet been identified. There is concern about the need to transition new faculty into the Institutional Effectiveness team due to the decision of several key participants to not continue in their previous role. College leadership remains hopeful that others who have completed training will step forward to fill these vital positions even though no one has done so through September, 2007.

Recommendation 4.

The Board of Trustees review and revise the "Employment Procedures for Executive Positions" so that it conforms to accepted best practices. Specifically, this process should be fair, equitable, and provide for meaningful constituency input. Once revised, the implementation of these procedures should be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and the direct involvement of the Board should be limited to the appointment of the Chancellor (Standards III.A.1, III.A.3).

Response: The Progress Report Visit Findings of November 3, 2005, stated that the Board of Trustees had not acted in good faith to address this recommendation. The district and the Board of Trustees have taken action to address this finding. They have developed board policies and administrative regulations that are in compliance with models that establish best practices.

In 2006, the chancellor convened the Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council (BPARAC), comprised of members from all constituency groups. The BPARAC, which meets bi-monthly, was established to review existing board policies and recommend proposed board policies and administrative regulations. Over the past year, this committee has undertaken review of several policies concerning employment procedures.

In spring, 2006, the council addressed Board Policy 4011.6[34]. The revised policy defines the employment procedures for the hiring of the chancellor. The policy complies with best practices as recommended by the accrediting commission and was approved by the Board or Trustees in July, 2006. Board Policy 4011, approved by the Board of Trustees on November 20, 2006, establishes policy for the hiring of administrators and managers, and excludes the board from the process until final approval of the appointment of the candidate is required[35]. Several administrators and managers were hired during the 2007 spring semester. Representatives who served on the various hiring committees report that the new policy seems to be working well. Board Policy 4011.3, Hiring Policy for Classified Staff, was approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 25, 2007, Board meeting[36].

Evaluation: The processes defined by Board Policies 4011, 4011.3, and 4011.6 are fair, comply with best practices, and provide for effective constituency input and debate.

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[34] Board Policy 4011.6, Employment Procedures for Chancellor.
[35] Board Policy 4011, Employment Procedures for Administrators and Managers.
[36] Board Policy 4011.3, Hiring Policy for Classified Staff.

Recommendation 5.

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:

<u>*Response:*</u> Since 2005, the college and district have made progress in collaborating on significant policy matters. The technical assistance process that the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, college administration, all bargaining units, student leadership, the District and the Board of Trustees engaged in with the Community College League of California and the State Academic Senate on February 13 and April 24, 2006, has mitigated some of the tension between the board and the constituent groups.

The Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council (BPARAC) developed Board Policy 2100.2, Role and Scope of Authority of the Academic Senates, and revised Board Policy 4056, Classified Employees Participation in Decision Making[37]. These were submitted to the Board of Trustees for ratification, and were approved on August 27, 2005, and December 11, 2006, respectively.

A number of other controversial board policies such as BP1311, Civic Center and Other Facilities Use; BP 1600, Public Communications; BP 4420, Enrollment Fee Reimbursement for Employees; and BP 6140, and its accompanying administrative regulation on college speakers, were debated, edited, revised, and eventually approved. Despite occasional frustration, the BPARAC functions collegially and effectively and has done a great deal of quality work. To date, the council has been very productive and, under the leadership of the Deputy Chancellor Gary Poertner, has forged a positive atmosphere that has resulted in numerous board policies being revised, recommended to the chancellor, and approved by the Board of Trustees.

A continuing issue of concern to the college constituency is what often appears to be the board's intrusion in routine college business. When asked whether the Board of Trustees, the district and the college are mutually supporting yet independent and self-governing units, forty-seven percent of those responding to the Employee Voice, 2007, survey either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Commonly cited examples of the board becoming involved in college business are the rejection of college institutional memberships, the rejection of certain study abroad programs, and the recent decision to omit "character development" from the college mission statement.

At the May, 2007, meeting, the trustees questioned how the college addresses character development, causing the agenda item to be tabled and deferred to a subsequent meeting. The college responded to questions from the trustees by presenting a number of examples

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[37] Board Policy 2100.2, Role and Scope of Authority of the Academic Senates, and Board Policy 4056, Classified Employees Participation in Decision Making.

demonstrating ways that "character development" is supported at the college. The trustees rejected the examples and, as a result, the board agenda item was pulled from the June 25, 2007, Board of Trustees meeting. In order to obtain passage, the college mission statement was revised without collegial consultation, and was approved by the Board at its July, 2007, meeting following the elimination of the "character development" reference.

While much progress has been made, it is clear that tensions remain between Saddleback College faculty and staff and district leadership. There is much concern among Academic Senate leadership about the tendency of the chancellor to become involved in routine college decisions. An example of this was a request by Academic Senate officers for additional reassigned time and/or increased stipends for those willing to assume leadership positions, which was recommended for approval by the PBC and approved by the college president. College funding sources had been identified, yet the recommendations were, in part, vetoed by the chancellor. Although the Academic Senate had requested substantially more reassigned time, the college president recommended and the chancellor approved a fifty percent increase in LHEs, from 24 to 36 to be used at the Academic Senate's discretion. The chancellor approved both requests for 2006-2007. Both the college president and the chancellor believe that additional increase in reassigned time should be part of the Faculty Association contract and not decided as a separate college issue each year, a concept that is opposed by the Academic Senate and the Faculty Association. Summer stipend hours were also increased by forty-five percent in 2007.

Because many faculty members believe that the requirement that shared governance participation take place over and above a full teaching load is a quality of life issue, there has been a significant reduction in the number of faculty willing to participate in college leadership. Indeed, for the second year in a row, the Academic Senate has no president-elect, and several of the SLO/AUO coordinators have decided to step down even though individuals who are willing to replace them have not been identified.

A decision by Senate leadership to take their concerns directly to the Board of Trustees led to public recriminations and finger pointing. This is widely regarded as another example of the district making decisions for the college. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the animosity that has characterized college-district relations will end as long as fundamental disagreements such as this one continue.

Another area of concern is that the perception that the Board of Trustees continues to focus on issues of importance to one or more individual members that are not ranked highly on college or EFMP priority lists. Examples of this are continuing discussions about security cameras on campus and the desire of several of the trustees to build stadiums on the two campuses using basic aid funding. Various members of the board have expressed a belief that basic aid funding is for their use as representatives of the taxpayers. While the board has established a process for requesting basic aid funds, and they are reminded of that process when such requests are brought before the entire board, such requests continue to be made. The examples cited above are still under

consideration.

In September, 2007, Chancellor Mathur instructed the college president that he wishes to review the college equipment and technology committees' recommendations after they have been approved by the PBC. Some classified and faculty members of the committees perceive this to be an intrusion by the chancellor in what is a college process that has worked well over the years. President McCullough has discussed the matter with the chancellor and reports that the chancellor is simply interested in being aware of the college's technology and equipment approvals so that he can be prepared in case board members have questions.

Evaluation: Progress has been made to create effective mechanisms for participatory governance (e.g., the Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council) though some important questions remain regarding the role of college governance groups in district governance and that of the district and its relationship with the college[38]. Several questions in the Employee Voice, 2007, survey addressed these concerns. Despite their efforts to incorporate shared governance into decision making, only twenty-two percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that the chancellor allows the college president to implement decisions according to college processes and procedures. Similar results were reflected when the question asked whether the chancellor incorporates the shared governance process into budget decisions (sixteen percent agreed or strongly agreed) or whether the Board of Trustees effectively uses the shared governance process to make district-wide decisions (thirteen percent agreed or strongly agreed).[39]

Although each of these responses reflects stronger agreement than the 2003 survey, it is clear that the college community still perceives the Board of Trustees and the chancellor with mistrust. It is likely that the perceptions of the rank and file employee may not have adjusted to the reality of the situation. It does appear, however, that when there are nine steps forward and one step back, the negative action is the one that is observed and internalized by the college community. Overcoming this sense of concern about district actions will improve only as a result of transparent and sincere communication between the parties.

College governance leaders remain hopeful that the District Planning Process Task Force and Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council will continue to function in a mutually respectful way that will help to develop a relationship of trust between the college, the district, and the Board of Trustees. A framework to assume future challenges will be in place once the parties achieve some level of agreement to this basic question*.*

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[38] See discussion of district planning process under response to Recommendation 2 above.

[39] Employee Voice Survey Comparison of 2003 to 2007 Data, http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/accreditation.html.

A. Define their respective roles in decision making and clearly delineate the areas and scope of responsibility for each constituent group (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2);

Response: The purpose of participation in the Technical Assistance process was to clarify and define the roles of the constituency groups in college/district governance. As described above, the Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council has worked with the documents the governance groups developed that define their roles and responsibilities to create a new board policy, BP 2100.2. The Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council, a shared governance group, has worked well under the leadership of Deputy Chancellor Gary Poertner.

In July, 2006, the district hired Dr. Andreea Serban, in the new position of Vice Chancellor of Technology and Learning Services. The vice chancellor works closely with Deputy Chancellor Gary Poertner and Robert King, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, on the Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council.

Board Policy 107 defines the development and revision of board policies and clearly delineates the role of constituent groups in the process. BP and AR 107 were approved in April, 2006. AR 107 provides for the establishment of a district committee with representation from all constituent groups. BP 107 and AR 107 replace AR 102 which *excluded* participation by the constituent groups in the development of board policies and administrative regulations. This is a very positive and welcome development.[40]

Evaluation: Steps have been taken to clarify the respective roles of each constituent group. The shared governance groups (Academic Senate, Classified Senate, CSEA, the SOCCCD Faculty Association, and the Police Officers Association) have worked to clarify their role in decision making. The board approved Board Policy 107 and with its accompanying administrative regulation the parties are now in a position to move forward with approval of other significant board policies and issues.

B. Identify the roles and scope of authority of district and college committees in the decision-making process (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2);

Response: The college president and the PBC created a flow chart and narrative that define the relations between the various college committees and the PBC. The PBC web site contains minutes of all meetings and other important planning documents including the links to all of the four planning groups associated with the Strategic Plan, 2007-2010[41]. The Academic Senate maintains a web page of all college and senate committees with mission statements, membership, meeting times, etc.[42]

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[40] Board Policy 107, Board Policy and Administrative Regulation, and Administrative Regulation 107, Development of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation.
[41] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc
[42] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/collegecommittees.html

The District Decision-Making Chart is an effort to clarify roles and scope of authority of district committees. It lists all district committees and the constituency groups that participate in them. This document was created by the chancellor with input from the Chancellor's Cabinet.[43]

Another positive effort is the chancellor's creation of the Board Policy and Administrative Regulation Advisory Council that has been working successfully to revise and create new policies that clarify roles and scope of authority of the college and district's constituent groups. The college vice presidents meet weekly with Dr. Andreea Serban, Vice Chancellor for Technology and Learning Services, in an effort to enhance communication. The college presidents also meet weekly with Deputy Chancellor Gary Poertner.

Evaluation: Though noteworthy efforts have been made regarding this recommendation, it is too soon to judge how the new District Decision-Making Chart and other efforts will serve to strengthen and/or clarify the decision-making process. College staff is hopeful that the chancellor will continue to take steps to strengthen college autonomy in planning and that the vice chancellor of technology and learning services will be empowered to address these concerns through the District Planning Task Force.

C. Involve all constituent groups in a meaningful and collaborative manner in the decision-making process (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2, and,

Response: With respect to how the college involves its constituent groups in decision making, please see Recommendation 2 above.

Progress has been made to involve more college representatives in district decision making. For the Classified Senate leadership, however, this issue remains a concern. While state law requires the classified collective bargaining representative to be given responsibility for selecting the first classified representative to shared governance committees, the district has decided to limit classified representation on some committees either to one classified staff member or to one additional representative. The result is that the voice of the Classified Senates is eliminated. For example, the recently revised BP 4011 establishes that the bargaining unit has one representative, and the combined Classified Senates have only one additional representative, while the two Academic Senates are each afforded one representative.

The most important examples of productive collaboration between the college and district are the Faculty Hiring Policy, the creation of BP 107 and AR 107, and BP 4011.6, Employment Procedures for Chancellor. These examples have provided valuable opportunities for meaningful and collaborative participation by all constituency groups.

From April through early June, 2006, the Saddleback College Academic Senate (AS) completed a statewide survey of reassigned time allotted to officers of other academic

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[43] SOCCCD Level Decision Making chart, June 28, 2006.

senates. Of the 105 colleges to which the electronic survey was sent, 78 colleges replied. Results indicated that other colleges within Orange County and colleges of comparable size were allocated greater amounts of reassigned time than Saddleback College received. Based on the data collected and evaluated, the AS recommended that 45 LHEs (lecture hour equivalents) be provided to the leadership of the AS in order for the officers to work efficiently and effectively.

Using the results of a statewide survey to the academic senates about the amount of reassigned time for its officers, the Saddleback College Academic Senate presented its findings to, and made a recommendation to the PBC. The PBC accepted the recommendation and the college president endorsed it. The college president made his recommendation to the chancellor and the AS president made a presentation to the Board of Trustees and chancellor. Charts, graphs, and a written report were provided. At that time, the Senate had 30 LHEs, just 3 more than the 1995 number of 27, despite a growing college, the addition of ATEP, and an increased number of committee requirements at the local and state senate levels. The chancellor and board granted six additional LHEs per semester for fall 2006 and spring 2007. This was fewer than the 45 LHEs that senate leadership requested based on its needs and supported by the survey. Funds were available in the college budget to support this request.

This issue became more difficult in the spring and summer of 2007. After consultation with the AS, the senate president advised the college president that 28 OSH would be needed to accomplish the work of the senate during the summer. The item to approve these levels of compensation was submitted to the board but the item was pulled from the agenda. The stipend allocation was returned to the previous summer's allocations and compensation for some AS leaders remains unclear.

Evaluation: In order for faculty and staff to participate in a meaningful manner in the college and district decision-making process, they must have sufficient time away from their teaching duties. Faculty leaders must also have faith that their time is effectively spent in meaningful work. Since reassigned time was significantly reduced 10 years ago, faculty willingness to step forward and participate in college and district leadership has been a serious challenge[44]. Numerous faculty feel that after teaching a full load, little or no energy remains to dedicate to committees whose work may not result in concrete outcomes. Academic Senate leaders are hopeful that the recent increase of reassigned time for faculty leaders will be restored. When coupled with the positive changes in constituency participation in district governance, it is hoped that the result will be greater interest among the faculty to assume leadership positions.

D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2).

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[44] Though the reassigned time allocation for the Academic Senate was increased, the Senate has been unable to identify a candidate to run for president-elect in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. Furthermore, no one has stepped forward to assume the leadership positions for the SLO Implementation Plan and the Flex Program Coordinator.

Response: The PBC revised and is using the Saddleback College 2006 Governance/Decision Making Process chart and Governance/Planning Chart and Narrative. This chart defines how college committees provide input to the PBC. This chart has been distributed to the constituency groups, appears in the Faculty Handbook, 2007-2008, and was distributed to the college community during the January, 2007, in-service. The chart is also available on the PBC web site.[45] The Academic Senate has revised its web site and the college committee structure is a prominent feature of the site.[46]

Evaluation: Progress has been made to document and publicize the roles and responsibilities of the constituent groups. Although it is too early to assess the long-term effectiveness of these efforts, the college was successful in developing and approving the strategic planning process, the Interim Strategic Plan, 2006-2007, and the three-year Strategic Plan, 2007-2010. These planning tools leave the college well positioned to make budgeting decisions that are integrated with existing and future plans[47].

District/Board of Trustees Response to Recommendation 5: We are pleased that the visiting team found many instances of good progress at the college, as it related to the board and district administration, including the following:

- Administrative Regulation 107 was adopted April 13, 2006 which allows constituent group participation in the decision–making processes; and two Technical Assistance visits on February 13, 2006 and April 24, 2006 were conducted to assist the board, administration, faculty and staff in responding to governance recommendations.
- The Board Policy and Administration Regulation Advisory Council was created by Chancellor Mathur in January, 2006 which has improved collegial decision-making.
- Board Policy 2100.2: Role and Scope of Authority of the Academic Senates was adopted on September 25, 2006[48] and, subsequently since the progress report visit was made, Board Policy 4056: Classified Employees Participation in Decision Making was adopted on December 11, 2006[49]

While board involvement in day to day operations is sometimes a source of friction in most organizations with an elected board, SOCCCD trustees have made concerted efforts to respond to the team's recommendations, as noted below:

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[45] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/pbc.
[46] http://www.saddleback.edu/gov/senate/collegecommittees.html
[47] See the evaluation under Recommendation 5.B above.
[48] Board Policy 2100.2, Role and Scope of Authority of the Academic Senates.
[49] Board Policy 4056, Classified Employees Participation in Decision Making.

- The board adopted a resolution "Implementation of Accreditation Recommendations by the District and Board of Trustees" in March 27, 2006[50] <u>and</u> "Strategies for Enhancement of Effectiveness of Board Agendas and Meetings" in January 16, 2007[51].
- The board has publicly stated its opposition to micromanagement.[52]
- In the course of monthly board meetings, trustees do point out to each other when they perceive members may be engaging in micromanagement.
- In direct response to input from faculty, staff and students, changes were made to the administrative regulation regarding speaker approval (January 4, 2007)[53] and the trustees adopted changes to study abroad programs (December 11, 2006)[54].
- At the April 24, 2006 meeting the board discussed the issue of trustee professional development and its importance in effective governance which eventually was reflected in board policy BP109, Board Education, adopted on August 27, 2007[55].

There are some areas that the district board and administration would like to clarify in order to put our progress in perspective. It should be acknowledged that board members are "invited" to micromanage by some of the faculty who, on occasion, at the same time have also expressed concerns about board micromanagement. The board rightly tries to resist these invitations, but the fact that these employees complain of micromanagement at other time should not be lost in the discussion. Rather than contacting board members directly, these faculty members should work with the administration to resolve issues of concern. If administration is not first given an opportunity to address issues, it remains a challenge for the board to cease involvement in college operations. The chancellor continues to work with faculty to refer these issues to him instead of inviting board micromanagement, and he works with the college presidents to address issues of concern as appropriate.

In addition, it should be noted that, at times, charges of "micromanagement" are brought by some faculty when they merely disagree with policy decisions or actions and points of view of the chancellor and the board. For example, the progress report mentions the denial of approval for membership in the American Library Association. Memberships are subject to board approval for two reasons. First, they involve an expenditure of public funds. This is a matter within the discretion of the board. Elected trustees have a right and an obligation to raise issues of spending, whether independently or at the urging of taxpayers, faculty and staff. Second, the elected board members are responsible to the

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[50] Board Resolution "Implementation of Accreditation Recommendations by the District and Board of Trustees, March 27, 2006.

[51] "Strategies for Enhancement of Effectiveness of Board Agendas and Meetings," adopted by the Board of Trustees, January 16, 2007.

[52] See Reference 50

[53] Administrative Regulation 6140, College Speakers, revised January 4, 2007

[54] Agenda Item 24, Board of Trustees Meeting, December 11, 2006. SOCCCD: Study Abroad Program, Liability Insurance Level.

[55] Agenda Item, Board of Trustees Meeting, April 24, 2006, Board Member Professional Development. Board Policy 109, Board Education, Revised August 27, 2007.

community, as to what private organization the colleges will support with their membership.

It is beyond question that the community's representatives can and should be satisfied that the mission, goals and agenda of any organization to which the colleges belong are consistent with community values. While any member of the district community may disagree with the board's decision as to that consistency, the decision legally resides with the board. The commission's criticism and evident conclusion to the contrary is inherently inappropriate.

Trustees represent students on behalf of their elected constituency. The board of trustees, as a publicly elected and independent body, must consider many factors in its decisions. It is important to understand that when items are presented to the board, it may approve, or not approve, or seek additional information as needed. It is fundamentally inappropriate for faculty and staff to expect that any given board of trustees must always approve all faculty and staff recommendations without question. In the college's Midterm Report in August 2007, an area of concern is raised that the board focuses on issues of importance that are not ranked highly on the college or master plan priority lists. The report further states that some board members have expressed that funding is for their use as representatives of the taxpayers, no matter the priority of the campus or constituents. The board has a responsibility to share its vision in the college planning processes. Board members are elected to be involved and responsive to the community and current events, not merely to sit at a monthly meeting and favorably vote on all faculty and administrative recommendations.

The progress visit reports mention negative feedback regarding an amendment to the March 26, 2006 resolution titled "Implementation of Accreditation Recommendations by the District and Board of Trustees." The statement, as amended, reads "Whereas, the Board and District are committed to clarifying the respective leadership roles and scopes of authority of College and District constituent groups and governance committees in meaningful, collegial decision making processes, thereby avoiding macromanagement by constituent groups."

This was an important distinction to the board, which was in direct response to the academic senates' initial description of their roles and responsibilities as reviewed during the Technical Assistance visit. The Saddleback College report stated that, "The team did not find any compelling evidence to support this contention" (of macromanagement) but, in fact, no evidence was sought from the board who could provide it. The academic senates had a broader view of their role[56], until corrected by facilitator Dr. Diane Woodruff[57], now the interim chancellor of the California Community Colleges System.

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[56] Academic Senate view of Summary View of Academic Senate Roles and Responsibilities during Technical Assistance process.
[57] Dr. Diane Woodruff's view of Summary of Academic Senate Roles and Responsibilities during Technical Assistance process.

Some perceptions were presented in the progress reports without evidence or opportunity for other points of view. The visiting teams for Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College who met with the board refused, despite a request from the board president, to provide context for some of the statements made. Instead, the board was forced to respond to vague questions in a public meeting with the press in attendance. We believe this to be an unfair part of the process employed by the visiting team.

While there was an opportunity for faculty and staff to share their feedback with the visiting teams in a confidential manner, that information was not shared in an open and meaningful way with the board. The lack of two-way communication seems antithetical to the process of establishing an institutional dialog with a focus on students. The Saddleback report states that the board is censoring points of view. That is simply not the case and there were no examples provided to illuminate this statement.

It is of concern that there were no trustees on the visiting teams, to add a balance and perspective to the points of view. The Saddleback report even took on a tone of lecturing to the board about how it should behave, with no temperance or understanding of the individual differences that trustees bring in approaching their sworn duties. A trustee representative could have made sure that the visiting teams were reminded that it is not unusual for the faculty to be more liberal in its points of view and board members more reflective of the community and region. Disagreements between the board and the college communities are not "censoring," as it appears to have been implied by the visiting team. Under the Education Code, the trustees have the right to take action on policy, financial and other items that, at times, may be contrary to the recommendation of the administration or the wishes of faculty.

Recommendation 6.

The Board of Trustees, chancellor, presidents, administrators, managers, faculty senates and unions, classified senates and unions, and students take measures to bring all constituent groups together to enable the campus to work toward:

<u>*Response:*</u> Most of the "climate" issues in this recommendation are a direct result of tensions between the board and district with the college.

The college has been successful in taking key steps to improve college climate. Noteworthy are the President's Chats, The Gaucho Gazette (college electronic newsletter),[58] and the president's regular communications with college staff[59]. The creation of the PBC has streamlined and linked decision making more closely with budget planning. In addition, in response to concerns that the streamlined PBC eliminated a valuable communication and input venue, the Leadership Forum was created in June, 2005, to fill the need for disseminating information. The Leadership Forum is a college-wide monthly meeting for information sharing and discussion to ensure that all groups are well informed about important college activities such as planning, college budget issues, and outreach.

On August 1, 2006, the chancellor wrote a memo to the Academic Senate presidents outlining the "responses to accreditation team recommendations pertaining to the district."[60] This document outlines various examples of activities directly related to the accrediting commission recommendations such as the board's discussion and special meetings on the subject of accreditation, including the technical assistance process[61].

In conjunction with these positive strategies, the district has been pursuing numerous communication efforts to try to ease board/district-college tensions. These attempts include formal and informal meetings (e.g., the chancellor's Q&A with college faculty and staff and his visits to division meetings; special board meetings dedicated to accreditation, and scheduled Board Forums held at both campuses; the Director of Marketing, Government, and Community Relations regularly disseminates highlights of board meetings and other important announcements, a DVD of board meetings is made available through the college library; as well as faculty and staff social events.

A number of social events have been held to increase the collegial relationships between administration, faculty and staff. The college has hosted three holiday season parties and a fall in-service welcome for college and district staff.

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[58] http://www.saddleback.edu/news/index.html

[59] See notebook of Saddleback College communications from the President's Office.

[60] August 1, 2006 memo to the Academic Senate presidents from Chancellor Mathur.

[61] See Appendix A, The Board of Trustees and Chancellor Response to the November 30, 2006 Progress Visit Report for Saddleback College.

*Evaluation***:** Although notable progress regarding "climate" issues is being made at the college level, some tensions remain at the board/district-college level. The college community remains optimistic and will continue to welcome initiatives to create a more collegial climate.

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 I.A.3, IB.1);*

Response: In an effort to improve communication within the college and between the college and the district, the college president has instituted informal, monthly, "President's Chats" (usually held monthly since November, 2004) that are widely publicized and open to all faculty, staff, and students. Attendance has ranged from 20 to 40 members of the faculty and staff. Topics of discussion include BGS updates, institutional effectiveness, proposed new construction, additional renovations, and strategic planning among other issues.

With respect to district and Board of Trustees efforts to improve communication with the college community, the chancellor meets with faculty and staff of each division once per semester or has college-wide meetings to discuss issues of interest. The Board of Trustees held special board meetings to focus on the accreditation recommendations. The district also has sponsored faculty and staff social events[62].

Evaluation: The college emphasis on improving communication and promoting a dialog about institutional effectiveness, plus the lengthy list of accomplishments for 2006-2007[63], demonstrate that the college continues to make progress in this area as it continues to work with the district to identify strategies to improve college—district communication further.

B. *Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, A.2.a, A.2.b, A.3, A.5, IV.B.1, IV.B.2, and IV.B.3); and,*

Response: The perception remains among some faculty and classified staff that the governance style of the board and district discourages college administrators from taking risks to solve difficult problems and yet several noteworthy improvements have taken place within the last year.

College leadership has empowered the college deans by ensuring that they are represented in all major strategic planning groups. The past year has been unusual in that no contract negotiations were underway, providing a sense or rest and comfort that has been long absent. However, when the Board's proposal for the 2007-2010 faculty

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[62] SOCCCD Communication Strategies, November 2005-August 2006.
[63] Saddleback College Accomplishments, 2006-2007.

contract was released in January, it was considered by many to be regressive. Much frustration was expressed at the subsequent Board meeting, which seemed to be met with some surprise from various trustees who were quick to attempt to reassure the faculty that this was not their intent.

Evaluation: These positive changes are welcomed by the college community though it is still early to evaluate whether these changes will result in long-term improvements in administrative stability and empowerment.

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 IV.A.1, IV.A.2, A.2.a, A.2.b, A.3, A.5, IV.B.1, IV.B.2, and IV.B.3).*

Response: At the college level much has been accomplished to improve and clarify decision making and affirmative communication steps have been taken. See also recommendations 1, 2, and 3, and 5.

At the college-district level positive steps have been taken. During 2006-2007, the chancellor attended division meetings to meet with faculty and staff and discuss issues of interest. The Board of Trustees held several special board meetings or forums to focus on issues of concern including accreditation. All these sessions were open to faculty and staff who were invited to ask questions, express concerns, or simply provide opinions[64].

Yet, examples of unresolved questions between the college and district remain. Faculty at both colleges have noted that Board Forums are scheduled at the convenience of board members without regard for other planned activities. For example, a recent Board Forum was scheduled for the first Monday of finals week when very few faculty or students could take the time to participate.

Evaluation: During 2005-2007, the college has been working diligently to improve communication. In response to 2006 and 2007 flex activities, anecdotal evidence indicates that these efforts yielded positive results and there is a feeling that we are re-building our institutional esprit de corps, though admittedly more work remains to be done by every member of the college community.

With respect to college-district communication, a level of improvement is apparent though more time is needed to overcome the years of distrust that have characterized college-district relations since 1997. While some faculty and classified staff are eager to move forward, these strongly-held feelings sometimes affect the interpretation of board and/or district actions and clearly affect morale. Careful attention to sincere and open communication should help to minimize such instances.

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[64] Chancellor Mathur's August 1, 2006 memo to the Academic Senate Presidents and SOCCCD Communication Strategies, November 2005-August 2006.

In summary, the numerous improvements at the college level coupled with the cautious optimism of better board/district-college relations leave the college well positioned to make continuous and responsible changes that affect both the quality of college programs and services in a climate of cooperation and shared purpose among the faculty, staff, and administration.

District/Board of Trustees Response to Recommendation 6: Improvements in the climate at the district and college levels have been observed. The chancellor has initiated meetings with college employees. Avenues of communication between constituent groups and the district administration include monthly chancellor's cabinet and docket meetings. The district administration collaborates with the college shared governance groups

The November 2006 accreditation team report overstated alleged instances of behavior by individual trustees, such as publicly criticizing employees. The report failed to put that criticism in context. Trustees respond at public board meetings--to take the examples discussed by the visiting team--only when there have been long-standing problems that go unaddressed or to respond to false, misleading, or erroneous misstatements made by employees to the public. This is well within the proper role of the trustees. They owe the public an honest presentation of the facts and they cannot address employee behavior problems in secret without facing the micromanagement charge.

The report also neglects to mention negative, disrespectful and unprofessional faculty behavior off camera. At the March, 2006 board meeting, faculty leadership left during the chancellor's comments, and during many meetings faculty leadership talk out loud to each other when trustees and the chancellor are speaking on board agenda items. In addition, faculty leaders routinely talk out loud to each other during the chancellor's docket and cabinet meetings when other committee members are speaking. In the past, some faculty leaders have filed complaints with the State Chancellor's Office and have gone to the media, instead of working with the chancellor and the board of trustees with the intention to seek resolution of issues in positive, constructive and professional ways.

There are many examples of efforts by the board and chancellor to reinforce a positive environment, some of which are listed below:
- At most board meetings, the board presents formal resolutions to recognize students, faculty, staff and community members as reported in the attached board highlights[65].

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[65]Board Meeting Highlights:
May 21, 2007, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/May21-07highlights.htm;
April 23, 2007, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Apr23-07highlights.htm;
March 26, 2007, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Mar26-07highlights.htm;
November 20, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Nov20-06highlights.htm;
October 30, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Oct30-06highlights.htm;

- At almost every board meeting, individual trustees and the chancellor give oral reports and mention the accomplishments of faculty and staff, and thank them for their hard work.
- An electronic board meeting update, sent to all employees the day after board meetings, displays photos and text about such recognitions[66].
- Since July 23, 2007, board meetings are available for viewing on demand on the district website (http://socccd.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2). Employees and the public can view board meetings in their entirety, or easily go to discussion of a specific agenda item. The full agendas and minutes are also readily available.
- Trustees regularly attend college events to demonstrate their support.
- A board discussion forum, open to all employees, was held to get input from constituent groups on May 14, 2007 and another forum was scheduled for September 24, 2007 on the Saddleback College campus.
- A public meeting, facilitated by the board president, was held on April 23, 2007 during which progress on accreditation teams' recommendations was the sole topic of discussion between the board and all constituent groups.
- The chancellor initiated manager and administrator of the year awards in 2006, which involved soliciting nominations from all employees. Annual recognition continues for outstanding faculty members and classified staff.
- Faculty presentations are being included in board meetings, most recently on the topics of distance education (March 26, 2007) and curriculum development (April 23, 2007). More are planned in the coming months. These presentations were well received by the board.
- The chancellor's opening session during flex-week each semester provides employee recognition opportunities and features well-known speakers, entertainment and refreshments for all faculty and staff.

The college's Midterm Report in August 2007 continues to refer to the 2005-06 planning process while also acknowledging the positive progress made with the 2007-08 process. The Report states that the colleges believed the district goals should be in support of college goals, not vice versa. Months of valuable time from the college's planning were lost because faculty leadership instead spent time in meetings complaining about the process. They refused to accept the chancellor's invitation to work collegially so that the district goals could be better integrated within those being established individually by the colleges. The final result is that, with the input from faculty, staff, administrators, the chancellor's cabinet, and the chancellor's executive council, the process was revised and positively resulted in the adopted, inclusive approach for 2007-08.

September 25, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Sept25-06highlights.htm;
August 14, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Aug14-06highlights.htm;
April 24, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/Apr24-06highlights.htm;
May 22, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/May22-06highlights.htm;
July 24, 2006, http://www.socccd.org/board/highlights/July24-06highlights.htm.
[66] See Board Meeting Highlights referenced in previous documentation.

There was broad participation in establishing the 2007-08 district wide mission, vision and goals through a series of meetings which were well attended by all constituent groups. Two work sessions (February 27, 2007 and April 18, 2007) were dedicated to discussion and clarification that district wide goals were to serve as a broad planning framework for the colleges and district services. Together we developed a vision, mission and goals (which received board approval on June 25, 2007) that were broad in nature and complement college planning efforts.

The issue of staffing levels and workload was raised in regards to classified staff. A presentation by Deputy Chancellor Poertner to the board in May, 2007 revealed that SOCCCD, compared to other California community college districts, is in the high range of ratios of classified staff to support instructional programs (Source: State Chancellor's Office Management Information System)[67].

The issues of workload and release time were raised for faculty, too. Overall, faculty release time is up from 2% to 2.4% of the college's instructional budget. Academic senate officers release time is up 50% in 2006-07 over the 2005-06 academic year. Through conferences and professional networks, the board and administration have learned over many years that the issue of release time is a common lament amongst faculty members at the community college level.

Release time is a contractual issue in the SOCCCD. Our faculty contract, entitled the Academic Employee Master Agreement, states: "Reassigned time may be recommended by the College President and approved by the Chancellor"[68]. It should be noted that the faculty association has not chosen to take up the issue of additional release time in its current round of negotiations with the district. Because reassigned time has financial ramifications, it falls within the responsibility of the district and as stated in the Budget Development Guidelines, "…the Deputy Chancellor shall monitor the college budgets to ensure there are no negative balances"[69].

The chancellor is perceived to engage in micromanagement and inappropriate involvement in day-to-day operations of the college. The lack of examples to support this statement should demonstrate the chancellor's point that it is not happening. It should be pointed out that the chancellor, college presidents and district executives work collaboratively and as a team to provide leadership within the district. The board of trustees expects from the chancellor that, overall, the district is managed well in all aspects, including financial matters and in the area of faculty and staff accountability.

The Saddleback College report acknowledges that, "It is difficult for the team, as outsiders, to fully assess the cause of the climate issues in the district." This is

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[67]Board Presentation, "Cost of Employee Benefits and Staffing Comparison," May 21, 2007.
[68]Academic Employee Master Agreement, page 29, Article XV, Workload, Section D.1, Reassigned Time.
[69]Budget Development Guidelines, as published in the 2006-2007 Final Budget, page 3.

particularly true when the visiting team does not ask for evidence, examples or other points of view. Simply reporting perceptions rather than facts perpetuates the negative environment that the team is making an effort to illuminate and does not allow for a well-rounded, balanced and comprehensive view of the colleges.

There were some acknowledgements of progress and balance in the visiting team's report that are notable, as mentioned below:

- "It is not unusual in a multi-college district to have tension between the desire for autonomy at the colleges and the need for accountability or oversight by the district."
- "The district has negotiated generous contracts with the bargaining units such that they are among the best paid in the state. The list of positive district actions could go on. The point is that the district has shared resources with the college and is supporting the college in an appropriate manner."
- "The chancellor, to a certain extent, appears to be a lightning rod for much of the blame for strained relations. However, after seeing first hand and sharing anecdotal evidence about the actions of constituent leadership, especially the faculty leadership, the constituent groups must own up to their part in causing and sustaining a negative environment. It is almost as if there is a culture of conflict that is relished by some parties in the district, not for any great principle, but for the sport and enjoyment of conflict itself."

The board and district administration take exception to the statement in the report: "While there is sufficient blame to go around to all parties for contributing to the climate described in this recommendation, it remains for the board to show the way in moving the district and colleges to a better place." The visiting team seems to not have fully understood the legitimate role of elected public officials. It is the responsibility of everyone as professionals, educators and elected representatives to be respectful of each other and tolerant of individual differences.

Although there is an inclusive review process, the college Self-Study and Progress Reports are authored primarily by one or two academic senate-appointed faculty members who are leading the charge in airing criticisms and gripes in a judgmental fashion. Unfortunately, some of this negativity has been echoed in the visiting team reports. Is it the purpose of the Accrediting Commission and its Standards to allow airing of perceived faults, to rebuke and hold accountable the trustees and district administration? Publicly elected trustees delegate responsibility to the chancellor, and one of their roles together is to hold faculty, administrators and staff accountable. The use of the accreditation process to reverse this role leads to confusion and lack of collegiality. It is our understanding that the accreditation process is designed to strengthen dialog in a positive and professional educational environment and improve processes to enhance student learning and success.

For the good of the college, it is critical that the Saddleback College faculty leadership recognize the progress made and make the effort to be professional and constructive in working with the chancellor and the board. The board of trustees and district

administration remain committed to making progress in the areas detailed by the visiting team. It is in everyone's best interest to work collaboratively, based on mutual trust and respect, to fulfill our vision to create an environment of excellence that best serves our students and the community.