

ACCREDITATION EVALUATION REPORT

San Joaquin Delta College

Stockton, California

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team's visit
to San Joaquin Delta College from March 12-14, 2002

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Introduction and Summary

San Joaquin Delta College is a comprehensive community college founded in 1935. It serves a territory of 2,400 square miles, spanning much of San Joaquin County, and portions of Alameda, Calaveras, Sacramento, and Solano Counties as well as Amador County. Situated on 165 acres of land in Stockton, California, the present campus was constructed in the 1970's after a successful bond campaign. In 1999 the College relocated some portable structures from the Stockton campus to a site in Tracy to meet the educational needs of that growing community. Classes are offered at other sites within the District; and, since the last accreditation visit, the College has begun offering Internet courses.

In the fall of 2001, over 19,000 students were registered for classes. Analysis by the College's Office of Planning, Research, and Grants Development indicated that almost half of the growth over the prior year's enrollment had taken place in expanded Internet offerings. San Joaquin Delta's students reflect the diversity of the area's population.

The College's last comprehensive accreditation visit resulted in twelve recommendations. A 1998 Mid-term Report described efforts made by the College to comply with the recommendations of the Accrediting Commission.

Preparations for the current Self Study and accreditation visit began in Fall 2000. Standard committees prepared drafts that were coordinated by a college-wide steering committee. During Fall 2001, standard committees reviewed and edited their standard reports based on e-mail from the campus community and feedback from the steering committee. The most recent President was in his first year during the time the Self Study was written and left shortly before the accreditation visit.

The final draft was approved by the Board in December 2001 and posted on the College's web-site in addition to being published in print form for the purposes of the accreditation visit. At the time of the 2002 accreditation visit, the College was in the process of selecting a new President.

From March 12-14, 2002, a twelve-member accreditation team visited San Joaquin Delta College for the purpose of validating the College's application for reaffirmation of accreditation. During the weeks leading up to the visit, team members reviewed the *Accrediting Commission Handbook for Evaluators*; attended training for team members; and carefully reviewed the College's Self Study, the recommendations of the previous accreditation report, and the 1998 Mid-term report. Prior to arrival on campus, each team member prepared written reactions and questions to be addressed during the visit based on the Self Study and related documents. From the team-generated lists of potential inquiries to be made, over 44 meetings and appointments, as well as a site visit to the Tracy Center, were scheduled.

On the afternoon of the day before the March visit, team members toured the College campus and met to review the Self Study and the schedule for the visit. At this time,

those with primary responsibility for standards met with the team member identified as a secondary standard reviewer. During the three days of the accreditation visit, team members recorded contacts with over 250 faculty, classified staff, and administrators; with 200 students; and with governing board members. The team attended 34 classes, including day and evening classes on the Stockton campus and evening classes at the Tracy Center.

Upon arrival at the College, the team was struck by the beautiful, well-maintained campus. In addition, students who spoke with the team were very positive about their College—both regarding the quality of the educational experience and the support they felt from faculty and staff. Members of the College community expressed support for the institution and were enthusiastic about the roles they play in the dynamic environment of a learning community. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students were committed to the process that resulted in the publication of the College’s Self Study.

The Self Study report would have been stronger if there had been more direction from the steering committee. The chapters of the final document were uneven in their quality and the report did not read like an integrated document. Often the only “evidence” offered was from an opinion poll, and planning agendas lacked specificity. There were plans offered when there had not been analysis to indicate a reason for a plan; conversely there were problems identified but no plan to address them.

The Self Study did adequately address each of the standards and, in particular, addressed each of the previous team’s recommendations in a satisfactory manner, although some of the areas need continued follow-up. After the last visit, the College had been criticized for not attending to the recommendations of previous visiting teams. The 2002 visiting team found that the College has taken the prior recommendations seriously. The self study document was well organized and designed and was, therefore, easy to use as a reference during the visit. Furthermore, the College had done a very good job of communicating to the College community that a visiting team would be on campus, and the team sensed that everyone had been encouraged to discuss all issues with candor.

The College has been emerging from a prior climate filled with dissention and distrust. Although there has been significant progress and there is universal hope for a more collegial and constructive ways of working together, there are still wounds that have not healed. It is unfortunate that the most recent President stayed such a short time. During his brief tenure with the College, doors were opened. The team found guarded hope among all constituencies that the College can continue to build on this improved climate, but it will take the efforts of all groups working with the new President to assure that parties do not revert to the entrenched behaviors familiar to them from the past. Within this overall context there are four interrelated themes that summarize the team’s observations about the College and form the basis for the recommendations.

Planning

In the area of planning, the College has done much since the last team visit. There have been planning retreats and there is a Master Plan which addresses facilities needs. There has also been planning done within the program review process. What is lacking, however, is a strategic plan that provides a long-range institutional focus and guides priority setting—whether for budget priorities, for personnel entitlements, or for needs identified through program review. Communication regarding the plan and the process for setting related priorities is as important as the plan itself. Absent such a plan, it is easy to assume decisions are arbitrary or based on favoritism.

Governance

With the most recent President, the College had begun to improve its governance structures. It is important to continue that effort with the new President and in doing so to make sure that each constituent is mindful of appropriate roles. There is still a great deal of distrust, so individual constituencies tend to hold on to whatever “power” they have rather than to participate objectively in the decision-making process and utilize their power to consult, encourage, and support. As a consequence, everyone feels powerless because the only power they have is veto power.

The Board is taking an important first step in this direction with its plan to use ACCT in a consulting role after the new President is hired to clarify Board and CEO roles and develop an understanding of how they will work together.

Similar review needs to occur throughout the campus. There are lots of committees, but their specific charges are not clear. Furthermore, it is not clear how these committees fit into the final decision-making process.

Building a Culture of Evidence

Like all of our colleges, San Joaquin Delta College needs to develop a “culture of evidence,” a culture that assures that decision-making is evidence based. Much work needs to be done in building understanding of learning outcomes and how they can be demonstrated. This responsibility for utilizing learning outcomes and building a culture of evidence should be shared across the constituencies; it does not reside with one office or one individual.

Climate

Finally, the College needs to be vigilant in furthering the progress made in improving the campus climate. This includes the building of trust and collegiality mentioned above. It also includes following up on what was learned in the self study surveys and reinforced through personal interviews regarding certain groups and their perceptions about the College climate—in particular the classified staff and African-American faculty and staff.

Although the College recognizes areas for improvement, it has certainly addressed and made progress in all areas mentioned in the last accreditation visit. Overall, the team found San Joaquin Delta College to be a very excellent and well-run institution with competent and caring faculty and staff who have a real love for their campus. The specific recommendations listed below are offered to help those individuals make their College even better.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The College should develop and implement plans to increase college-wide sensitivity to the needs of its diverse population, evaluate the perception of bias by some employees on the campus, and review implementation of workplace opportunities to ensure they are equitable for all employees. (Standards 2.6, 7.D1, and 7.D2)
- 3.1 The College needs to proceed under the guidance of the mission statement and with the leadership of its new President, to focus on college-wide strategic goals supported by department, division, and administrative plans. These college-wide goals with measurable objectives and action plans need to be clearly articulated as the basis for priorities in budgeting and other decisions. The process for planning and budgeting needs explicit communication and coordination, clearer charges for the related committees, and expected timelines to meet both longer-range objectives and annual implementation processes. Furthermore, the College should implement the assessment of Institutional Outcome Measures as benchmarks for progress in achieving college-wide goals. (Standards 1.3, 3A.3, 3B.2, 3B.3, 6.2, 9A.1, 9A.2, 9A.3, 9A.4, and 9B.1)
- 4.1 Curriculum review procedures need to be revised in order to expedite the process while still maintaining quality. (Standard 4B.1)
- 4.2 The College needs to understand the importance of the learning outcomes of its students and improve its ability to document them throughout the learning process. (Standard 4B.3)
- 5.1 It is imperative that the College enact a plan to resolve the issue of the counseling department schedules to ensure that the counseling needs of students are being met. (Standards 5.3, 5.6, and 5.10)
- 7.1 As called for in the 1996 Accreditation Evaluation Report recommendation 4-1, the College should ensure that evaluations of staff are conducted at agreed-upon intervals and provide training on evaluation procedures to managers, faculty, and classified staff. (Standards 7.B1 and 7.B2)
- 8.1 A comprehensive strategic plan should be developed with input from all key constituencies, which integrates educational programs and facilities needs for the entire San Joaquin Delta College District including the main campus in Stockton,

the Tracy Learning Center, the proposed Mountain House Center, and other centers and sites. The plan should build in contingencies for short and long-term demographic trends and shifts, anticipate and balance needs at the main campus with needs at regional centers and outlying sites, maximize the use of distance education strategies, project expansion and investment in centers and sites as needed, and consider development of collaborative agreements with neighboring college districts to help address educational needs in outlying areas. (Standards 8A.1 and 8A.5)

- 10.1 In matters pertaining to policy development, planning, and resource allocation, the College needs to develop a broad consensus about the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board, the President, the vice presidents, and the various governance committees. (Standards 10A.3, 10B.1, 10B.2, 10B.4, 10B.5, 10B.6, 10B.8, 10B.9, and 10B.10)

Responses to Recommendations of the Previous Team

Recommendation 1-1 (now Standard 3)

The College should continue its efforts to develop an institutional planning process that guides and integrates functional, operational, and unit plans, uses institutional effectiveness and outcome information, and effectively guides resource allocation and annual budgeting.

Recommendation 1-2 (now Standard 3)

The College should develop a systematic and regular program review process for educational programs, student services, and administrative services that uses standard quantifiable program evaluation indicators emphasizing information on student learning and program outcomes and results.

These recommendations have been partially met. San Joaquin Delta College has made a significant effort to address the previous recommendations to better integrate operational planning and budgeting and to use information from evaluation to guide resource allocation. The previously separate Planning and Budget Committees have been merged into one committee. The new Committee has developed a Costing, Resource Review, and Prioritization Process, the goal of which is to drive decision-making about proposals for new funding. A comprehensive program review process appears to be working well except regarding budget implications. A relatively new Master Plan has been put in place. The Plan is oriented more toward facilities and distance education, but it does not serve as a basis for reaching improvement goals (e.g., better retention, higher transfers, direct measures of specific student learning). The strategic improvement planning that is needed would include a means of allocating effort, attention, and resources to innovations in order to reach progressive goals. The College acknowledges the need to update the Master Plan and to orient its decision-making process to long range planning and budgeting. Apparently, the College is awaiting the development of a strategic planning document to address this gap.

While the program review process has identified standardized indicators that are useful, and has detailed program review data, it is vital that the College also considers direct measures of student learning and follow-up studies for program completers.

Recommendation 1-3 (Now Standard 2)

The College has not responded effectively and satisfactorily to a substantial proportion of the previous team's recommendations. This calls into question the College's integrity regarding its relationship with the Accrediting Commission. The College should make the strongest efforts to immediately and substantially respond to the recommendations of the present visiting team.

Concerted effort has been made to address the previous recommendations. As mentioned above, San Joaquin Delta College has developed a comprehensive Master Plan and a standardized program review process. It has created a joint Planning and Budget Committee and a shared governance task force to review and recommend shared governance procedures. The College has adopted new policies for curriculum approval that allow for greater shared governance and a larger role for faculty in the decision-making process. It has incorporated student evaluations in the faculty evaluation process through a new collective bargaining agreement. The College has clarified the use of math

assessment tests for placement of students in math courses, infused capital outlay money to significantly improve its library holdings, and delineated the roles of the Academic Senate and the faculty union. Although some changes are still in progress, it is clear that the College took the recommendation of the previous visiting team seriously and has taken significant steps toward overall improvement.

Recommendation 2-1 (Now Standard 4)

Employ strategies for change that will enable more successful decision-making through shared governance, particularly in the curriculum review process.

Responding to the recommendation of the previous team, Curriculum Committee membership has been expanded to include an academic dean, bringing the number of administrators on the committee to three. The committee is composed of the Academic Senate First Vice President, the Vice President for Instruction and Information Services, one dean of instruction, the designated college articulation officer, one student, and six faculty members (two from vocational education, two from general education, one librarian, and one counselor, with no more than one faculty member from any division). The Executive Secretary is the Academic Senate First Vice President. The addition of the administrative position is consistent with the recommendation of the 1996 report.

The Self Study identifies the process that was developed to respond to the recommendations of the previous team. A number of those interviewed, however, reported that the process is too cumbersome and takes at least two semesters to complete. Therefore, further attention to this recommendation is needed.

Recommendation 2-2 (Now Standard 4)

Review off-campus instructional agreements for congruence with the college's mission and priorities. Integrate those agreements with college processes and college oversight.

In a collegewide study prompted by the recommendation of the previous visiting team, all instructional contracts were reviewed by College leaders to ensure that all relevant requirements were met and that the programs advanced College goals. Through interviews with directors, deans, and other administrative staff the team learned that instructional contract agreements are reviewed and approved by administrative staff and reviewed by the Academic Senate, and that the day-to-day oversight of instructional agreements is the responsibility of the appropriate manager. When curriculum reforms are required as a part of the instructional contract (often in the area of vocational education), the faculty and Academic Senate play a key role in oversight of the changes. In order to avoid over-reliance on instructional contracts, the President and Board of Trustees have directed that no more than five percent of the College's operating revenue be derived from instructional contract agreements.

Recommendation 3-1 (Now Standard 5)

That student services and instructional staff implement a process that ensures input of counselors in the assessment program and recognizes their role as facilitators of student decision-making in course placement recommendations, career and transfer goals.

San Joaquin Delta College has responded to this recommendation by providing several opportunities for the counseling staff to participate in the assessment and placement process. Previous concerns had not been so much about the process itself as with the lack of participation by counselors in the process. Four members of the counseling staff and the Director of Guidance and Counseling now serve on the Assessment Advisory Committee. Also included on the Committee are faculty from reading, math and English. The Dean of Planning, Research, and Grants Development is working with the Committee to assess the effectiveness of the multiple measures assessment process. The Counseling Department has instituted the Assessment Counseling Express (ACE) process, which consists of orientation sessions scheduled in conjunction with assessment. The department also has initiated Student Education Plan workshops, which were designed by the counseling staff and provide students information on their selected major course of study. In addition, the department has hired a full-time transfer counselor to emphasize the importance of transfer. The classified manager who oversees the Transfer Center reports to the Director of Guidance and Counseling.

Recommendation 4-1 (Now Standard 7)

In light of suggestions made by the previous team, the college should, as expeditiously as possible, undertake revision of all aspects of personnel evaluation. In particular, staff should devise mechanisms to ensure that personnel evaluations at all levels occur regularly, and that faculty evaluations routinely include student input. And that improvement plans be monitored for follow-up.

Recommendation 4-2 (Now Standard 7)

The College should undertake a new study similar to the 1993 "Attitudes on Staff Participation and the Acceptance of Women and Minorities at Delta College" to determine if perceptions have changed and to target specific staff development activities which address issues affecting these groups.

The previous team made two recommendations. The recommendation to revise all aspects of personnel evaluations has been only partially addressed. Faculty and administrative evaluations have been developed and implemented in response to the previous recommendation. Classified staff entitlement (approval for new staff positions) and evaluation processes, however, do not seem to be broadly understood and are reported to be inconsistently practiced. The recommendation for a new study to assess campus attitudes toward participation of women and minorities at San Joaquin Delta College has been responded to in a satisfactory manner. A biennial survey of faculty and staff is planned and a first survey was done in preparation for the Self Study. However, issues surrounding campus climate persist. Follow-up activity responding to the concerns raised in the survey is essential.

Recommendation 5-1 (Now Standard 6)

As was recommended by the prior accreditation team, the College should provide up-to-date library materials to support the curriculum and student learning.

The College has responded to this recommendation by allocating significantly increased funding to support, maintain, and improve its information and learning resources and has made a commitment to substantially increase the existing book budget. The increased funding has enhanced the quality and variety of library services, which now include catalog services over the Internet and online databases, available on and off-campus.

Recommendation 6-1 (Now Standard 8)

The College should develop a process to follow-up on the concerns expressed about safety, identify specific problem areas, and develop a plan to resolve concerns.

The 1996 team identified Stockton campus safety as a significant concern. The 1998 Mid-term report indicated substantial progress toward addressing safety issues. Campus crime statistics reported in the Self Study show that the campus is relatively safe and that the issue had more to do with staff perceptions than safety itself. The survey taken for this accreditation Self Study showed that efforts to improve the sense of security have had a positive impact. Efforts to improve safety have continued: staff training, upgraded lighting both on the campus and in adjacent parking lots, and improved visibility in hallways and grounds. In addition, budget allocations for the next fiscal year will provide for video cameras to be installed in the parking lots, maximizing security in these areas.

Recommendation 8-1 (Now Standard 10)

A concerted effort should be undertaken to establish the sense of community, teamwork, and trust which led to the great success of the institution. Therefore, the entire design and implementation of shared governance should be revisited with a timeline to establish an effective and broad based process which satisfies the requirements and spirit of AB 1725.

Recommendation 8-2 (Now Standard 10)

The team encourages the various college segments, including the president, administration, faculty, staff and the board, to abandon their confrontational culture and explore ways of increasing their effectiveness and collegiality.

Both the Mid-term report and the Self Study point out that there has been a significant improvement in the collegiality and general climate at the College since the last accreditation visit in 1996. This reported change in climate was mentioned in meetings with the Interim President, administrators, faculty, staff, and members of the Board of Trustees. The team confirmed that there has been a definite improvement in collegiality, a lessening of the confrontational culture, and an increase in participation in committees. The recent President was credited with initiating this change at the College. The basic intent of the recommendations of the previous team was met. However, as discussed elsewhere in the report, the College has only just begun to fully develop the culture change and address the major participatory governance issues. The efforts by all constituents are an excellent beginning. Much work remains to be accomplished.

Standard One **Institutional Mission**

Observations

San Joaquin Delta College's mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees in 1989 and revised in 1999 to include a reference to the economic needs of the community. The College's mission statement reflects the mission assigned to the community colleges by the State (in Education Code 66010.4(a)), identifying lower division arts and sciences and vocational education as the primary mission. Remedial instruction, ESL, support services, and certain adult non-credit programs are identified as essential and important. In addition, it endorses other ways the College serves the educational, cultural, and economic needs of the community as long as they are compatible with the primary mission.

The mission statement appears in the schedule of classes published each semester. It also is featured in the College catalog and the student handbook.

The Self Study reports that the development of the Master Plan began with an analysis of the mission statement and that programs and course offerings are examined for their relationship to the core purposes identified in the Master Plan.

Conclusions

The College has met the standards established by the Commission with regard to its mission statement. The current Master Plan indicates that the mission statement will be reviewed every two years and is scheduled for its next review during the current semester (Spring 2002). Apparently, it had not been reviewed for ten years prior to the revision of 1999, so a regularly scheduled review is appropriate.

The College disseminates its mission statement appropriately and interviews confirmed that the statement was used in planning and decision-making as discussed in the Self Study. The College indicated its intent to include the mission statement in a more prominent location on the College Web site, which would further awareness of the mission among the greater College community. (It currently can be found in the student handbook posted on the Web site.)

Recommendation

None

Standard Two **Institutional Integrity**

Observations

The College catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook, and individual program brochures are the primary means of describing San Joaquin Delta College's educational purposes, degrees, curricular offerings, educational resources, course offerings, student fees, other financial obligations, student financial aid, fee refund policies, requirements for admission and for achievement of degrees, academic calendar, and information regarding program length, as well as the names of administrators, faculty, and governing board members. The College Information and Facilities Office coordinates all press inquiries related to the College and oversees the accuracy of its own as well as other publications made available to the public.

The College's commitment to supporting and safeguarding academic freedom is expressed in Board policy. The full text of the policy is detailed and unambiguous in its support of academic freedom for faculty and students. It is published in full in the schedule of classes. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct are clearly defined in Board policy. Possible sanctions include a failing grade on the assignment, failure of the course if the occurrence takes place after the drop date, or suspension from the College. The policy is made available to students in the College catalog, in a brochure published by the Student Services Office, and in some of the course information sheets produced by instructors. Although the language in the standard mentions clear expectations for faculty and students, the Self Study addresses only students.

Through Board policy, the College affirms the values of equal opportunity, non-discrimination, cultural diversity, and the desire to establish a work force that reflects the diversity of the population served by the College. The College has clearly defined policies in place covering discrimination, sexual harassment, and assault complaints. The College encourages diversity and respect for individual differences by promoting clubs and activities to inform students and the campus community of the variety and importance of the cultures that make up the community.

The Self Study acknowledges that the College had failed to respond adequately to past recommendations from the Commission. It has taken a number of steps to address concerns raised by past visiting teams. College representatives have regularly attended workshops at the California Assessment Institute in order to stay abreast of Accrediting Commission standards and policies. Several members of the Accreditation Steering Committee have participated in training sessions hosted by Commission staff members.

While it is commendable that the College athletic program is nationally respected, as mentioned in the Self Study, this fact did not adequately address whether the institution demonstrates honesty and integrity in its athletic program. Interviews during the visit indicated that student athletes are provided academic assistance by an athletics

coordinator and an athletics counselor. The athletics counselor monitors student-athlete performance in courses and helps maintain academic eligibility and meet transfer requirements. College representatives asserted that the athletics program complies with high professional standards.

College policies call for regular review of institutional policies and practices. The College's Policies and Procedures Committee conducts weekly meetings to review policy proposals, collect comments from the various senates, and make recommendations to the President's Council. Although regular review of policies takes place at the College, members of the visiting team were told that some proposed policy revisions have languished in the Committee for years. As a way to streamline the process, the College plans to use the Community College League of California templates as a starting point for revising outdated policies.

Conclusions

The College's level of compliance with the Commission has improved significantly since the last accreditation cycle. The Self Study process was inclusive and benefited from the participation of members of all campus groups.

The information provided in the College catalog, schedule of classes, student handbook, and individual program brochures is clear, accurate, and consistent. There is some concern that information provided in the College catalog is not always immediately updated to include new course offerings. The College recognizes the concern and is working on correcting it. It is noteworthy that in a Higher Education Consortium of Central California (HECCC) survey, 71 percent of the students thought enrollment and registration information was timely and easy to use. Only five percent ranked this item as poor. In addition, nearly 80 percent rated the "quality and usefulness of materials received" as good or excellent.

Although the College has made great strides in hiring a more diverse work force, there appears to be a lingering issue of fairness and equity for African-American members of the College's faculty and staff. A campus climate survey indicated that only a small number of African-Americans believe that the atmosphere of the College supports ethnic minorities in management, supervisory, or faculty positions. These statistics were mirrored by individual interviews with members of the African-American Employees Association. African American respondents gave a very low rating to the question asking whether "the atmosphere of the college welcomes" them. Moreover, the rating was lower than in the previous study. This perception was reinforced by the African-American faculty and staff who met with the visiting team. While they are proud of their role in providing College services and programs, they expressed concern for lack of sensitivity to minority perspectives and gave a number of examples of possible arbitrariness in decision-making.

In responding to Standard 2.3 (Faculty and other college staff distinguish between personal conviction and proven conclusions and present relevant data fairly and

objectively to students and others), the Self Study indicates: “As novices in their field of study, students would be the least likely to be able to recognize it when an instructor presents opinion as fact.” In spite of this apparently condescending attitude, the Self Study refers to the Board policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility to affirm that the College is committed to presenting relevant data fairly and objectively. From what is asserted in the Self Study, it appears that student or peer evaluation is the method by which faculty compliance with this part of the standard is ensured. The College may want to consider changing its evaluation instruments to more directly determine whether faculty members distinguish between personal conviction and proven conclusions and present relevant data fairly and objectively to students and others. For example, students could be asked, as part of their evaluations of faculty, whether information was presented objectively.

Recommendation

- 2.1 The College should develop and implement plans to increase college-wide sensitivity to the needs of its diverse population, evaluate the perception of bias by some employees on the campus, and review implementation of workplace opportunities to ensure they are equitable for all employees. (Standards 2.6, 7.D1, and 7.D2)

Standard Three **Institutional Effectiveness**

Observations

Overall, the Self Study accurately portrays the College's research, planning, and evaluation status. The College has an Office of Planning, Research, and Grants Development to support its research and evaluation efforts. The office is staffed with a Dean, secretary, and programmer. Its agenda is extensive and based on the College's growing reliance on data and research to support good decision-making. The College has purchased a data warehouse product that will be able to fill some of the gaps in data needed for College and program planning and evaluation. Currently, the office does not have the staff needed to complete implementation of the data warehouse. The Dean of this area is very involved in leading and supporting College efforts to use data and analytical studies, especially in its program reviews but also in its planning and its evaluation (such as Partnership for Excellence reports). College institutional effectiveness processes similarly will rely on data resources and analytical studies.

At the time of the Mid-term report, the College described a planning and budgeting process in alignment with its new Educational Master Plan, written primarily by a consultant. The process called for the development of an organizational strategy leading to institutional goals and, along with program reviews at the departmental level, to program improvements. Soon after the Mid-term report, a new President came on board. He too acknowledged the need for a more strategic plan that would link the Educational Master Plan to operational issues identified through program reviews and budget requests. Several changes in personnel, including that President and the chief planning officer, has left the College still in transition and without that link.

In the meantime, the program review process was greatly strengthened to incorporate standard data and other elements based on a comprehensive protocol. Most instructional and several student services program reviews have been completed, as has one administrative program review. With the demand that program reviews be completed before budgeting requests are considered, this departmentally based planning came to drive and predominate the annual budget allocation process. Any allusion to more long-range planning appears to be in the hands of the vice presidents and not necessarily part of the articulated rationale for priorities. Only the lower level of evaluation through program review, with its departmental recommendations, is in the awareness of most College community members. Action plans for improvements and advancements are not included in the program review process. In fact, in the absence of a strategic plan, an updated budgeting process diagram, which did not mention planning, was circulated just a few months ago by the recent President. Partnership for Excellence, capital outlay, VATEA, and other related processes appear to be separate from the planning and budgeting process. They are treated as funding-driven enterprises (i.e., what can a department get from this or that source) rather than planning-driven enterprises (i.e., what is most needed at the College and what sources are available to support it).

Many excellent program reviews appear to have been done and, when asked directly, people espoused the purpose of them related to program improvement. Interviews validated the concern expressed in several standard reports that program review recommendations did not result in receiving budgeted positions or other requests. No one could provide the criteria used for prioritization. A few referred to vice presidents using the general concepts of the Education Master Plan or an occasional question in committee that referred to it. Most acknowledged that the process did not rely on planning explicitly nor were strategic goals available to assist in this.

The College has identified a set of effectiveness indicators and plans to assess them later this spring. The majority of the College's effort currently is devoted to program review as an evaluation process using student outcome data.

Conclusions

The Office of Research, Planning, and Grants Development at San Joaquin Delta College is small for such an ambitious research, planning, and grant agenda. The agenda will need to be prioritized to support strategic directions. The office could accomplish a great deal of the research agenda, however, with appropriate tools such as implementation of the data warehouse. The plan to implement a data warehouse appears to be in some jeopardy due to decreased funding. Such a tool would greatly increase the capacity of the College to plan and evaluate more effectively, and would save costs in the future. On-going, direct college-wide access to data is not only useful for a wide variety of planning and evaluation tasks, but such access could also replace the current time-consuming practice of processing individual requests for information.

The College has made major improvements in its program review process and is clearly doing them on a routine basis, at least in the instructional and student services areas. (More attention is needed to the administrative ones.) Recommendations made and validated through the process are useful in identifying program directions and areas that need to be strengthened. Whether the reviews are useful for producing significant improvements in College and department objectives, especially those that require no additional resources, remains to be seen and should be monitored as the main component of the evaluation of the program review process. Tying program review directly to budget in the absence of strategic goals and objectives appears to reinforce departmental "silos" and an expectation that "wish lists" should drive funding rather than an understanding of College priorities doing so. The College will also want to consider direct measures of student learning in its next round of program reviews. San Joaquin Delta College has several individuals with some familiarity or interest in this type of process who could assist in developing appropriate assessment strategies.

The College has plans in its Self Study to initiate several improvements in its planning including increasing awareness of the process, providing strategic planning information to the campus, ensuring that the process is driven by and highest priority is given to issues addressed in the strategic planning process, updating the Educational Master Plan, and developing tools to assist with benchmarking progress toward goals. Interviewees

indicated that it was understood that the Planning and Budgeting Committee and/or the Dean of Planning, Research, and Grants Development were the ones to spearhead these efforts. These plans are on target and should proceed under the direction of the new President, especially the strategic planning process.

The identified College effectiveness indicators, consistently monitored, will assist the College in documenting its achievements and in identifying additional areas for priority focus. The College may wish to incorporate direct measures of general education into its college effectiveness indicators, since these are required of all degrees and transfers and address the mission of the institution at its core.

Recommendation

- 3.1 The College needs to proceed under the guidance of the mission statement and with the leadership of its new President, to focus on college-wide strategic goals supported by department, division, and administrative plans. These college-wide goals with measurable objectives and action plans need to be clearly articulated as the basis for priorities in budgeting and other decisions. The process for planning and budgeting needs explicit communication and coordination, clearer charges for the related committees, and expected timelines to meet both longer-range objectives and annual implementation processes. Furthermore, the College should implement the assessment of Institutional Outcome Measures as benchmarks for progress in achieving college-wide goals. (1.3, 3A.3, 3B.2, 3B.3, 6.2, 9A.1, 9A.2, 9A.3, 9A.4, and 9B.1)

Standard Four **Educational Programs**

Observations

San Joaquin Delta College offers a comprehensive array of instructional programs consistent with its mission. Its many occupational certificate programs respond to the education and training needs of the area, and its lower division transfer programs appear to be well articulated with baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. The associate degree pattern, including general education options, majors, and areas of concentration, is sound. Supportive instructional services such as English as a Second Language (ESL), Basic Skills Preparation, EOPS, PUENTE, and CalWORKS are in tune with the changing educational needs of the students. Almost without exception the students and faculty encountered by the team noted the high quality of the instructional programs. In particular, several students lauded the advising they received through the re-entry office and other support services.

The institution is conscientious in its course review and approval processes, including its review of distance education courses. There were many complaints, however, about the length of time it takes curriculum to get approved. Several faculty members claimed that a minimum of two semesters and up to three semesters pass from the time a course is proposed until it can be offered.

The College community is concerned about how well prepared its entering students are for college level work. The Self Study reported on a change of policy eliminating the requirement for matriculating students to take a prescribed English course after completing six units of coursework. The team verified that this is a continuing concern at the College and that many faculty members believe that there should be a parallel requirement for a math course as well.

Standard 4B.3 requires that students completing degree and certificate programs demonstrate achievement of identified learning outcomes. Several faculty members said they measured success by final course grades and that the College uses completion rates as an indicator of success. There was genuine interest but some confusion as to what learner outcomes really are and how they can be demonstrated.

San Joaquin Delta addresses policies and statements on Principles of Good Practice in Distance Education through a rigorous curriculum development process that ensures congruence with the College's mission. Faculty members are provided with training, workshop, and 24-hour professional assistance opportunities in support of distance education.

The College is involved in an aggressive program review process. Every program that was contacted had either just completed or was in the process of completing program review. The Self Study states that "fiscal data has been absent from a number of program review reports because of staff shortages in the Business Services Office." Several

faculty and staff members identified the lack of consistent information as a major source of frustration.

Conclusions

It is clear that the College has a strong instructional program and has addressed the recommendations of the previous accreditation report. Students, faculty, and staff express pride in the educational environment. Interviews with instructional administrators validated the assertion that Principles of Good Practice in Distance Education are being followed.

There is widespread belief that the curriculum review and approval process could be streamlined and made more effective.

Like other colleges, San Joaquin Delta needs to develop more effective ways to document the learning outcomes of its students.

While the program review process has improved dramatically since the last accreditation visit, the apparent lack of consistent, useful data is a concern. Although program review is not primarily a vehicle for securing additional resources, there is a lack of communication as to how the planning review process might affect a program's future budget.

Recommendations

- 4.1 Curriculum review procedures need to be revised in order to expedite the process while still maintaining quality. (Standard 4B.1)
- 4.2 The College needs to understand the importance of the learning outcomes of its students and improve its ability to document them throughout the learning process. (Standard 4B.3)

(See also Recommendation 3.1)

Standard Five **Student Support and Development**

Observations

Student support services at San Joaquin Delta College consist of the following programs: Guidance and Counseling, Disabled Student Programs and Services, Admissions and Records, Outreach and Enrollment, Food Services, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), Financial Aid, Veterans Services, Campus Police, Student Activities, and Bookstore Services. The services are found throughout the campus and involve several different campus facilities. There is a general feeling among students that student services staff members are friendly, eager to assist students, give accurate information, and are generally concerned about student welfare. This was especially true in reference to financial aid, counseling, admissions, disabled student services, and EOPS. Student workers were also found to be friendly and courteous. The team did validate a concern raised in the Self Study that there is a problem with the scheduling of full-time counselors resulting in students not having access to counseling services during the latter part of the academic year.

Student support services have made a concerted effort to provide colorful brochures and pamphlets describing programs and services. Printed information regarding programs and services was easily found in program offices. In addition, the College has printed brochures in several different languages. Student Services has made an effort to expand the availability of information by using the College's Web site. According to students, the financial aid information on the Web site is especially attractive and user friendly. The student orientation guidebook is visually attractive and informative and is located in several offices around the campus.

To assist students with varying levels of academic abilities, the College has developed several special programs and services. These programs cover a wide range of needs including providing financial support, specialized counseling services, early alert from faculty for students who need additional assistance and coordination with instructional support programs such as the Assessment Center.

The Student Activities program provides interested students with the opportunity to learn leadership skills and participate in the College governance process. The Associated Student Body Government (ASBG) raises funds through a college flea market that provides funding for student scholarships and supports some College programs. The students involved in the ASBG appreciate the opportunity to participate in this activity and are working to expand student participation.

Conclusions

Student support services at San Joaquin Delta College are well integrated into the campus not only physically but also programmatically. The fact that they are not centrally located on the campus does not appear to detract from their ability to serve students. The

student services master plan calls for centralized student services, which might be more beneficial to students.

The emphasis on providing program information to students is apparent by the volume of material available and the different delivery methods used. By expanding the dissemination of material using the College Web page, students have an additional method of receiving information. Students who do not have access to a computer at home may use one of several computer labs on campus to access this information.

While the College provides good service to students, the availability of services to evening students should be reviewed to ensure that the needs of that population are being addressed. The addition of on-site counseling services at the Tracy Center indicates the College's commitment to expanding such services to all students regardless of location. The College will need to continue to review off-site location options, especially as off-site course offerings increase.

Overall, student services on the College campus meet the needs of students with the exception of the issues raised in the Self Study regarding the availability of the counseling staff. Providing services to students to enhance their educational experience is a primary responsibility of the counseling and guidance function. When these services are available they are appreciated and respected.

Recommendation

- 5.1 It is imperative that the College enact a plan to resolve the issue of the counseling department schedules to ensure that the counseling needs of students are being met. (Standards 5.3, 5.6, and 5.10)

Standard Six **Information and Learning Resources**

Observations

The Self Study provides a complete description of library services. The analyses and plans were supported by documentation and by other materials that were provided at the request of team members. Interviews and visits with the library staff, classified staff, students, faculty, management, and the Board of Trustees reinforced the study's validity. This particular standard report appeared to be written by people with a very intimate understanding of the service area and definite ideas about the College's needs.

The library plans expressed in the Self Study demonstrate the ongoing concerns for the needs of library users both on and off-campus. Enthusiasm for the addition of new adaptive technology to meet the needs of the low vision user and the hearing impaired, the planned acquisition of a self-charging system for patron checkout, and plans to implement a digital reserve system was evident in interviews with students.

The recently opened Faculty Training Center in the Goleman Library has been well received by faculty members, with many commenting on the state-of-the-art equipment and the expert advice and training available. The new Video Conferencing classroom has also been well received by the College community as it allows the delivery of interactive video-conferencing services to the College's four remote learning centers.

Many students commented favorably on the number of computers available on campus and the long hours that many of the computer labs are open. They also expressed appreciation for both the quality of the labs and for the assistance they receive in the labs.

Continued funding has allowed new faculty to receive a computer for their offices as soon as they are hired. This has enabled them to connect with colleagues on campus and to keep in close touch with their students via e-mail.

Conclusions

The Self Study presents a clear and accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of information and learning resources. There has been an enormous effort to provide the campus with excellent and up-to-date computing resources. As evidenced in the Self Study and in interviews with many people on campus, there is an ongoing effort to implement plans outlined in the Five-Year Plan for Information Technology and Library Services to complement instructional delivery.

There is widespread support for the library among faculty members and students. Library materials are carefully selected with extensive faculty involvement to maximize support for the curriculum. The judicious use of an outside vendor to set up a book acquisition profile rapidly increased the receipt of new print materials and has greatly improved the size and quality of the collection, as has the careful withdrawal of out-of-date materials.

The library provides an active bibliographic instruction program, which includes plans to offer classes next year over the Internet. Classes are also handled in conjunction with particular disciplines and areas such as EOPS to especially meet the needs of the students in those programs.

As validated by interviews with students, the acquisition of on-line library databases has made remote Internet access to the library more valuable. Demands for these services, arising from visits at busy times in the building, appear to demonstrate a need for additional computers to access the various online services provided over the Internet.

The library should continue to address the needs of off-campus students by implementing its plan to offer a digital reserve bookroom and to plan for an increase in library services and equipment for both on and off-campus users. While there are online Internet services available at off-campus sites, there appears to be a need to plan for an adequate on-site library. Currently, print materials are delivered the next day by van. With the anticipated increase in student population, there may be an increased need for materials and staffing at sites other than the Stockton campus.

It is clear that the library has its own plan and priorities, but those must be fully integrated into an institutional strategic plan. The pursuit of an extensive list of library and information services equipment and staffing expenditures should be evaluated in the context of overall budgeting processes that are predicated on development and implementation of an institution-wide strategic plan and institutional goals.

Recommendation

(See Recommendation 3.1)

Standard 7 **Faculty and Staff**

Observations

The College has sufficient faculty, qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience, to support its programs and services. There are 218 full-time faculty who teach 75 percent of the classes every semester. Of these, 94 percent have masters degrees or higher. Seventy-nine percent of students surveyed stated that faculty members are committed to high standards of teaching and 83 percent stated that their major subject area of instruction was excellent. The Self Study is silent, however, regarding the adequacy of staffing levels for classified staff. Interviews with classified staff indicated that the College has not undertaken a study to determine whether staffing levels are adequate.

Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selecting all personnel are maintained in the Policy and Procedures Manual. District policy states that copies of these policies are available upon request. An original copy and all updates are in administrative offices, division offices, the Goleman Library, and the offices of the Academic Senate and the bargaining units. A list of full-time faculty and administrators, the degrees they hold, and the names of their degree-granting institutions is published annually in the College catalog.

The College uses an entitlement process to determine and justify new and replacement full-time positions. The process is supposed to be related to institutional objectives; however, faculty, administrators, and staff interviewed by the visiting team indicated that the process yields inconsistent entitlements for each constituency group. Some classified staff expressed reservations about the most recent reclassification process and stated that revised job descriptions do not always reflect job responsibilities.

The selection process for instructional faculty evaluates teaching effectiveness by asking candidates to make a short presentation or provide a teaching sample. Some faculty are concerned that teaching demonstrations are not always required of candidates pursuing a teaching position; others believe the teaching samples are too brief to represent a candidate's abilities or effectiveness as a teacher.

According to District policy and collective bargaining agreements, the evaluation of each category of employee is to be conducted at regular intervals. For permanent classified employees, self-evaluation and management evaluation are to occur annually; however, classified staff interviewed stated that a regular cycle of evaluation was not being observed. New managers are evaluated every year for the first three years and, thereafter, at least once every three years. In accordance with Education Code provisions, regular faculty members are evaluated at least once every three years and part-time instructors are evaluated annually. Faculty evaluations have peer, management, and student evaluation components. The previous team recommended that student evaluations be included in faculty evaluation; some faculty members who were interviewed by the

visiting team stated that student feedback had been used informally and is now formally incorporated in the evaluation process.

The evaluation process does not appear to be well understood; moreover, some faculty and staff who were interviewed stated that there was a lack of adherence to established procedures. In a February 2001 survey of College employees, at least half were unsure of the processes for evaluation or felt those processes needed improvement. Classified staff had the most negative impression of the evaluation process, with only 31 percent agreeing that the process assessed performance effectiveness. In particular, some classified staff stated that performance evaluation was not being used to encourage improvement. They felt that performance evaluations administered sporadically could be perceived to be punitive in nature.

San Joaquin Delta College provides staff development opportunities to faculty, staff, and management employees. Campus-wide staff development activities are allocated among the three groups, with the largest percentages going to faculty and classified staff. Each constituency group determines how staff development funds are used. Recently, a Faculty Training Center has provided a means for faculty development in the area of technology training.

The College routinely assesses and reports to appropriate agencies the ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds of full-time and part-time faculty and staff. The students are diverse, with African Americans and Asian/Pacific Islanders better represented at the College than in the County's population. A Fall 2001 survey of enrollment data indicates that Hispanic students are less well represented at the College than their numbers in the County. Staffing at the College shows a significant disparity between the number of Hispanic employees when compared with both the population of enrolled students and the numbers of Hispanics in the County. With the exception of African American employees, perceptions about campus climate have improved since the last accreditation visit. Among African Americans, only eight percent in a spring 2001 survey agreed that the atmosphere of the College welcomed and supported ethnic minorities in management and supervisory positions; further, only 17 percent agreed that the atmosphere of the College welcomed and supported ethnic minorities in faculty ranks.

Conclusions

While the standard asks for a description of "sufficient faculty and staff," only the numbers of full-time and adjunct faculty are provided. Interviews with classified staff appear to indicate the need for an evaluation of classified staffing levels to ensure numbers are sufficient to support College programs and services.

Significantly, 45 percent of survey respondents indicated they did not know, were not sure of, or disagreed that the College adheres to policies ensuring fairness in employment. The Self Study acknowledges that this figure represents nearly half of the respondents but does not provide an analysis or a plan. Interviews with some faculty

members and classified staff identified a lack of adherence to established procedures as well as the need to communicate information about employment processes.

Personnel evaluation had been identified as an area for improvement by at least two previous teams, and the 1996 visiting team recommended that regular personnel evaluations be established at all levels. The Self Study confirms that intervals for staff evaluations are established in District policy and outlines procedures for classified staff, management, and faculty evaluations. Nevertheless, the February 2001 survey found that at least half of the respondents were unsure of the processes of evaluation or feel they need improvement.

In its response to the recommendations of the 1996 team, the College commissioned a biennial survey of faculty and staff by the Office of Planning, Research and Grants Development. Results from the 1997 survey were compared with a 1993 survey. It was discovered that attitudes among minorities about the prospects for promotion and recruitment had worsened. Results from the 2001 survey reveal perceptions have improved significantly for women obtaining management and faculty positions. The data and interviews with some College employees suggest, particularly with regard to African Americans, that the College needs to consider issues of race, diversity, and inclusion in hiring, promotions, professional development, and campus events. The College has an established cycle for gathering data on campus climate issues. Results could be used to develop measurable goals and action plans to remedy the lack of community and sensitivity expressed by some College members and to eliminate the perception of bias on the part of some members of the College community so that all employees have equal access to workplace opportunities.

Recommendations

- 7.1 As called for in the 1996 Accreditation Evaluation Report recommendation 4-1, the College should ensure that evaluations of staff are conducted at agreed-upon intervals and provide training on evaluation procedures to managers, faculty, and classified staff. (Standards 7.B1 and 7.B2)

(See also Recommendation 2.1)

Standard 8 **Physical Resources**

Observations

A comprehensive Master Plan for San Joaquin Delta College was completed in August 1999. With regard to facilities, much of the emphasis in the plan focuses on needs identified at the Stockton campus. But there is also a clear articulation of the College's commitment to serving the outlying areas of the District and a dramatic projection over the next 15 years of a change in the ratio between enrollment at the main campus and the outreach centers.

The College is challenged geographically as one of the largest college districts in the state and has a rapidly growing population in the outlying areas. It relies on a network of outreach centers, loaned classroom facilities, and a configuration of distance education infrastructure and delivery systems to serve the outlying areas. Significantly, the 1999 Master Plan projects a rather steep decline in the percentage of total District enrollment at the Stockton campus from 92% in 1997 to 60% in 2015, with corresponding increases in enrollment in Tracy/Manteca and Lodi/Galt. The report emphasizes that rapid growth in outlying areas will create a substantial challenge for the College in determining how and when to expand services.

The College campus is very attractive and well maintained. Safety issues identified in the mid-1990's have been substantially addressed. Energy efficiency infrastructure installed in the past several years exceeds expectations. Scheduled maintenance identified in the 1999 Master Plan was observed to be proceeding on an acceptable timeline, as noted in the Self Study. According to staff, the transition of the College's Business Services Department into leased facilities near campus will be a positive change, providing "new" facilities for Business Services and freeing up space on campus. A new Microscopy Technology Center scheduled for completion later this year was financed primarily with state funds. It will add needed instructional space and is expected to have minimal impact on custodial staffing requirements.

A site visit to the Tracy Learning Center revealed an attractive facility with an energetic and capable staff. The Center is co-located with a new high school in Tracy. Limited classrooms at the Center are supplemented with local high school facilities for classes such as lab science. Currently, most courses are in the evening and include both occupational-technical and transfer offerings. There is an interactive video classroom with broadcast capability on-site. The Center is intended as an interim facility until construction of the proposed Mountain House Center is completed.

Enrollment projections presented in the Self Study for the new Mountain House Center were based on data developed for the Master Plan completed in 1999. These figures have been revised substantially downward based on State Department of Finance projections. Moreover, a change in the proposed site location from a donated former federal facility in Tracy to the new site proposed in Mountain House has necessitated extensive

Environmental Impact Report (EIR) preparation, added new and different agencies to the planning process, and has brought substantially increased costs for land acquisition and basic utilities infrastructure. A bond measure to fund the Mountain House Center anticipated in the Self Study for November 2002 will now be delayed, according to staff, until Spring 2004. This delay may eliminate the opportunity for the College to qualify in time to receive matching funds from a state community college bond measure on the ballot this fall.

Discussions with College finance staff and consultants revealed that delaying the bond measure was not necessarily inopportune. The delay will provide more time to plan the facility, monitor demographic growth patterns in the Tracy area, and coordinate with other agencies involved in the Mountain House development. Some staff interviewed regarding the Mountain House facility expressed differing opinions about the need for the expanded facility, its proposed location at the periphery of the District, its projected size, and its operational cost implications for the District.

Conclusions

Facility planning and maintenance at the main campus is exemplary. Although the Self Study identifies some maintenance equipment and vehicular needs, these do not represent significant budgetary challenges and can be absorbed in near-term annual equipment budgets. Safety issues have been substantially addressed from a facilities standpoint.

Analysis of the projected expansion of the Tracy Learning Center into a permanent facility in the planned community of Mountain House is complex. The pattern of events associated with the proposed Mountain House development, shifting demographic trends, and the considerable scale of the project suggests the need for an up-to-date, comprehensive, and integrated analysis of all of the District's outlying areas including educational needs, changing demographic growth patterns, educational strategies, and facilities needs. Educational strategies should incorporate traditional classroom offerings, expanded distance learning opportunities, including Internet courses, as well as leveraging of neighboring colleges' offerings through cooperative agreements. In addition, a dramatic shift in proportional enrollment from the main campus to one or more regional centers as projected in the Master Plan would have enormous implications for District finances and operations and would need to be addressed comprehensively.

The demographic data presented in the 1999 Master Plan is already dated. The Master Plan does not provide the comprehensive analysis required to assess the educational needs of the District as a whole and to develop an approach to addressing these needs that balances expansion of regional centers with distance education opportunities and changes at the main campus. Rapid shifts in demographic projections make this planning process more difficult but no less urgent. Distance education strategies and infrastructure, although somewhat underutilized, are an area of strength for the College District and can perhaps have a mitigating effect on facilities pressures in the outlying areas. Nevertheless, there is a need for a comprehensive plan for educational program delivery throughout the College service area that clearly links educational services delivery to

facilities and infrastructure requirements. Engagement of all relevant constituencies in a comprehensive planning process would have many benefits including helping ensure passage of the bond measure.

Recommendation

- 8.1 A comprehensive strategic plan should be developed with input from all key constituencies, which integrates educational programs and facilities needs for the entire San Joaquin Delta College District including the main campus in Stockton, the Tracy Learning Center, the proposed Mountain House Center, and other centers and sites. The plan should build in contingencies for short and long-term demographic trends and shifts, anticipate and balance needs at the main campus with needs at regional centers and outlying sites, maximize the use of distance education strategies, project expansion and investment in centers and sites as needed, and consider development of collaborative agreements with neighboring college districts to help address educational needs in outlying areas. (Standards 8A.1 and 8A.5)

Standard 9 **Fiscal Resources**

Observations

San Joaquin Delta College strictly adheres to a balanced budget policy that restricts recurring expenditures from exceeding recurring income. Budget reserves have been maintained at appropriate levels.

Budget Change Proposal packets are provided to all area managers to request changes to line items in their budgets. The area managers must fully justify and support their requests in order to demonstrate genuine need for additional budget augmentation. The budget process traditionally begins with area managers submitting requests to the appropriate vice president. Each vice president then reviews and prioritizes those requests, which are then forwarded to the Planning and Budget Committee.

Area managers have online access to financial information and can download this information to their own personal computers. This password-protected system reflects transactions as soon as they are entered into the system.

Annual independent audit reports for both the College and the Auxiliary Foundation indicate appropriate internal controls are in place and find that the financial statements are fairly stated.

The long-term facilities master plan includes purchase of property at Mountain House, California. The College is awaiting State approval for center status for the site. If the facility wins State approval, the College will purchase and develop the land. The development of this site is also dependent upon the College's passage of a bond measure. There is no clear plan for what will happen if a bond measure does not receive voter approval.

Conclusions

The College's finances are sound. The College meets the accreditation standards set forth in Standard Nine and follows appropriate State guidelines regarding reserves. Long-range capital planning is difficult due to the uncertainty of the passage of a proposed bond measure. The College has adopted a self-insurance approach to property, liability, and workers' compensation coverage. Although there has not been a recent actuarial study, there is a plan in place to control the significant liability of lifetime health benefits for retirees.

Although there is a formal financial planning process in place, there is significant campus-wide skepticism of its objectivity. When the faculty and staff were asked their perceptions of planning and budgeting, only 33 percent stated that the College has an effective planning and budgeting system. A significant 46 percent answered that they were not sure or did not know.

The entire budget allocation process appears to be vague and not well understood throughout the College community. Although there seems to be an attempt to tie allocations to program review recommendations, it is uncertain whether or not this is an effective process. There is also anecdotal information suggesting there has been allocation of funding outside of the formal process. It is unclear whether or not areas that have not performed program reviews receive requested funding. The budget process should be integrated with planning and clearly communicated throughout the College.

During the interview process and through survey information reflected in the Self Study, it appears that perceptions regarding the budget process and actual budget practice are incongruent. It is recommended that the College communicate the budget process and the resultant outcomes more clearly to the entire campus community.

Although it has been noted that there are numerous references to needed additional resources throughout the Self Study, the team has refrained from making specific recommendations regarding increased funding. It is believed such decisions should be incorporated into the appropriate planning and budget processes.

Recommendation

(See Recommendation 3.1)

Standard 10 **Governance and Administration**

Observations

In response to the 1996 Self Study, the Board addressed a number of concerns related to its leadership and planning responsibilities. The current Self Study, however, notes that some matters need further attention, such as the definition and development of policies and procedures, the integration of institutional planning, and lingering confusion about the role and authority of constituent groups in the planning and decision-making activities of the College. The visiting team found that concerns about these matters persist throughout the College, although opinions as to the severity of the problems differ.

Since the last accreditation visit, the President of long standing retired and his successor served a year and a half before taking another job, just a few months before the current accreditation visit. The Self Study commends the recent President for bringing new vision and improved communication among constituents to the College. The team verified this positive appraisal.

The College is administratively organized and staffed to reflect its purposes, size, and complexity. The faculty's role in governance is consistent with the standard, as are the roles of classified staff and students. Concerns in the Self Study regarding the effectiveness of decision-making and the level of involvement of classified employees and students were confirmed by the visit, as was the need to revise the process for appointing classified staff to committees to conform to recent changes in law.

Conclusions

San Joaquin Delta College is fortunate to have dedicated leadership on the Board as well as in the ranks of the faculty, administration, and classified staff. All share a commitment to student success and the continuous improvement of educational programs and support services. The College community sustains a hopeful spirit, as a result in part of the efforts of the recent President in partnership with College leaders. The College can build on this spirit as it selects a new President and addresses the governance challenges noted here.

Given the work done thus far, the history of the institution, and the challenges to be faced in the future, continued attention to governance issues should be a high priority for the College and the new President. As the team interviewed people it became clear that the structure to allow communication necessary for a truly effective and participatory governance system is not present. The team found that the numerous College committees essentially operate independently as governance entities and often do not communicate and share developing ideas within an overall participatory governance structure. There is a lack of consensus—or simply confusion—about the role and function of key governance committees. For example, the President's Council, although composed of leaders of the various constituencies, does not have a clear or widely understood role in the governance system. Discussion with the Interim President confirmed that the

President does not receive recommendations through a participatory governance structure that are useful in making the best decisions for the College.

Although many planning activities are in place, the College does not have a strategic plan or its equivalent, at least in any formal sense. The absence of a strategic plan adversely affects the decision-making process in that institutional priorities are not established, and governance entities lack the guidance to make decisions in the best interest of the institution as a whole.

The perception persists among many members of the College constituencies that the Board is still too involved in establishing detailed procedures and in directing operational activities. The team encourages the Board to follow through on its plan to join with the new President in leadership training sponsored by ACCT.

Although classified personnel are currently participating effectively in governance, the number of personnel available to participate is limited due to work schedules and the fact that many classified employees do not have ready access to e-mail. Although some limited effort to involve more classified personnel in governance has been made, the team suggests that the College review this matter to identify steps that can be taken to involve more classified employees.

The College has several committees that participate in College governance, but there is no formal structure of inter-relationships that allows for a productive participatory governance process. Committees and individual decision-makers are seen as impediments to forward movement. An apparent lack of trust in a process that no one clearly understands encourages constituents to exercise power by blocking forward progress. The new President will need to work with constituent groups to identify their appropriate role and to create ways for individuals and committees to contribute to effective decision-making. It is important for all constituencies to remember that participatory governance processes are not an end in themselves, but are means to improving the way the College fulfills its mission.

Recommendation

- 10.1 In matters pertaining to policy development, planning, and resource allocation, the College needs to develop a broad consensus about the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board, the President, the vice presidents, and the various governance committees. (Standards 10A.3, 10B.1, 10B.2, 10B.4, 10B.5, 10B.6, 10B.8, 10B.9, 10B.10)