

EVALUATION REPORT

COLLEGE OF THE SISKIYOU

**Siskiyou Joint Community College District
800 College Avenue
Weed, California 96094**

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

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
College of the Siskiyous on March 8-11, 2004**

Sherrill L. Amador, Ed.D., Chair

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**Summary of Evaluation Report
College of the Siskiyou
March 9-11, 2004**

**Sherrill L. Amador, Ed.D., Team Chair
Superintendent/President, Palomar College**

College of the Siskiyou (COS) is a small, public, comprehensive, two-year community college located in the extreme north central region of California. The college serves Siskiyou County and a small portion of northern Shasta County. The total population in this geographically large district is slightly less than 45,000. The main campus is located in Weed, a rural mountain community, and a small branch campus is located in Yreka, 30 miles to the north of Weed. The college was founded in 1957 and the initial buildings on the Weed campus were funded by the County.

COS is located in a county where the median household income is \$18,000 per year less than the State average and over 87% of the local population categorizes themselves as Caucasian. The County has a high unemployment rate and the industry/business base is limited and currently in decline. Siskiyou County was the fourth slowest growing county in the state per the 2000 census.

The mission states “Siskiyou Joint Community College District, an open-access, public educational district, is dedicated to provide excellence in education, cultural enrichment, and service to the community.” It is stated that the primary mission of the college includes: transfer education, vocational/occupational education, associate degree and certificate programs, general education, remedial education, and economic development. It is stated also that in support of its primary mission, the District will provide learning services, student services, basic skills, general education, continuing education, adult education, community service, and contract education service.

Over 3,500 students are served each semester by courses in general, vocational, and non-degree education delivered at a variety of sites and through several distance learning modalities. The college has observed a consist pattern of having smaller enrollments in the fall than in the spring semesters, however, the total retained enrollment has steadily increased each fall semester. The college recognizes it is in the beginning stages of institutional measurement of student learning outcomes, but has historical kept records of student achievement using traditional measures of retention, degree and certificate attainment, and transfers.

COS is widely recognized for its excellent programs in humanities and arts, the sciences and technology, and athletics. Some of the most notable vocational programs are the Fire/Emergency Response Technology, EMT/Paramedic, Administration of Justice, Welding, and Licensed Vocational Nursing programs. Services offered to students to assist them with their goals include academic counseling and advising, assessment, career/transfer center, child care center, campus housing, academic support services, financial aid, and special

needs services, e.g. EOPS, Student Support Services (federal program), MESA, re-Entry, DSPS, and CalWorks.

COS attracts students of all ages, the majority of students, 23%, are under 20 years, but all other age groups are fairly evenly represented at 12% to 19% of the student population. The ethnic breakdown of COS is primarily homogeneous, but less Caucasian, only 75% compared to the county at 87%.

COS was initially accredited in 1962 and has continued to maintain its accreditation. The last comprehensive evaluation visit occurred in March 1997 wherein COS received a reaffirmation of its accreditation and the college was asked to respond to six recommendations:

1. *It is recommended that a Program Review model specifically for Student Services be developed. A realistic calendar should be developed to assure the orderly review of all elements of Student Services (5.10).*
2. *It is recommended that short- and long-term measures be adopted to assure that the computer resources in Admissions and Records are functional and reliable while pursuing a long-term solution (5.9)*
3. *It is recommended that staffing issues in the general area of information and learning resources and services be addressed to insure that there is an appropriate level of staff available to provide the needed support to users of information and learning resources (6.4 and 6.7)*
4. *It is recommended that a mechanism be developed for formally identifying safety problems and a means of planning for their removal or amelioration (8.2 and 8.3)*
5. *It is recommended that the scope and commitment of the Budget Development Committee be expanded to provide ongoing budget participation and communications throughout the year (9A. and 9A.5)*
6. *It is recommended that the college contract for a new actuarial study to revalidate its future retiree benefit obligation. Once the liability has been ascertained, the Board should either adopt an annual budget contribution of a prescribed amount to the self insurance fund or explore other ways to meet the obligation (9C.1)*

Response to the previous team recommendations

COS addressed the six recommendations along with its planning agenda action items in its November 2000 midterm report to the Commission. Subsequently, the Commission accepted the college's midterm report in January 2001 and commended COS "for its progress in addressing the team recommendations." The team found that the college had completed the 1997 team recommendations.

The team determined that the College of the Siskiyous (COS) meets the Commission's Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation based upon the evidence of documentation provided by the college in the self study and validated during the evaluation visit. COS has continued to meet the eligibility requirements since it was recognized as a degree granting institution in 1957.

An eleven-member evaluation team and a team assistant visited the College of the Siskiyous from March 9-11, 2004, and conducted a comprehensive evaluation based on the college's *Institutional Self Study in Application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation* and the evidence gathered to determine whether the college meets the accreditation standards. The College of the Siskiyous was one of the five pilot colleges who used the June 2002 accreditation standards for the spring 2004 self study and evaluation visit. The team prepared thoroughly for its visit by attending the Accrediting Commission Team Training Workshop, and by reviewing the *Commission Handbook for Evaluators*, the college's self study report, the college's November 2000 mid-term report, the college's 1997 comprehensive evaluation team report, the college's responses to previous team recommendations, the current catalog, and the spring schedule of classes. Each team member prepared two written evaluations of the self study and questions to serve as a guide for the visit. The team chair attended the Commission's special training session for pilot college team chairs.

The team arrived in Weed, California, on the afternoon of March 8, 2004, for a full orientation meeting and briefing. On March 9, 2004, at the Weed campus, the team met with members of the college who had participated on the self study standard committees. During the visit, the eleven team members interviewed over 70 students, faculty, staff, administrators, and governing board and community members. The team members observed over 35 classes at both the Weed and Yreka campuses and attended regularly scheduled college governance meetings. Considerable time was spent by team members gathering and validating evidence in support of the four standards. The team conducted two open forums for faculty, staff, and students to share their comments and observations.

Since the last accreditation visit, the College of Siskiyous has experienced one president resigning, an interim president, and a new president who has served less than two years. These changes in leadership coupled with an accreditation self study process and a new planning process have been major challenges for a small college. However, the team found a stable college community committed to moving forward and addressing the issues they identified in their self study.

The team observed, and it was confirmed during the visit, that the college had used the old accreditation methodology for completing the self study which was responding to each standard component part versus using some of the suggested global methods of planning models and/or themes. The team learned this situation occurred because the college was well on its way with the self study process before the Commission's training on the new standards. However, the college had sent staff to national conferences on student learning outcomes assessment in preparation for meeting the new standards. Clearly, COS experienced some of the timing issues associated with being a pilot college.

The team appreciated the college's honest appraisal of their institution in the self study report and throughout the visit. The team had difficulty assessing the overall self study report due to some inconsistencies in the approach and the thoroughness of the descriptions and evaluations within and throughout the standards. The team was unable to adequately discern the college's approach to future implementation of the planning agenda summarized in the self study report. It did not appear to the team that an internal review of the planning summary was conducted prior to publication. Also, the team had some concerns with the college's heavy reliance on employee satisfaction surveys, rather than direct student input, for the self study report.

Commendations

Based on the team's visit, it was evident that the self study report did not reflect completely all the college's positive efforts undertaken to meet the standards. The team was pleased to make these commendations:

1. The college's apparent collaboration among faculty, staff, and administrators to provide training, engage in the dialogue, and begin to complete the tasks required for the new student learning outcomes accreditation standards.
2. The college's continuance of the activities and the dialogue to institutionalize the new student learning outcomes standards into its on-going processes.
3. The pleasing aesthetics and safety of the campuses, the maintenance, continuous improvement and cleanliness of the interior and the exterior of the buildings, and the grounds, as well as the extensive use of the displays to enhance the learning environment.
4. The effective, on-going assessment of, planning for, and implementation of technology which included rapid response time of the technical staff, development and support of a customized, responsive MIS system, a well-developed infrastructure and state-of-the-art online processes and distance education.
5. The enterprising and extensive use of public and private institutional partnerships to better serve students and the community.

It was evident to the team, based on the college's self study and the evaluation visit to validate evidence and documentation, that the college is at the beginning stages of fully meeting the new accreditation standards. To assist the college in its future plans, and to ensure that the college will meet the standards at the end of the next accreditation cycle, the team recommends that:

1. The college promptly review and revise its mission statement, so that the accreditation focus on student learning is incorporated into the statement. Once revised, COS should establish a regular review cycle for its mission statement that provides for updates to the mission as needed. The college also needs to develop a systematic and regular way to

assess the achievement of its mission, and then communicate its progress to all of its constituents. (IA, IA.3)

2. The college develop a new broad-based strategic planning process that clearly incorporates the revised college mission into the plan. The process should provide the college with measurable, long-term goals and include a systematic cycle of evaluation, implementation, and reevaluation leading to improvement. (IA.4, IB.2, IB.4, IB.6)
3. The college develop an institution-wide process, with timelines and responsible parties, for the establishment of specific student learning outcomes and criteria for measurement and review. The plan should include the identification of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, general education, certificates and degrees, and for student services and learning support services; the assessment of student and employee achievement of those outcomes; and the utilization of the assessment results in a systematic way to make improvements. (IIA.1.c, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1, IIC.2)
4. The college review its values, policies, procedures, and practices with regard to issues of diversity to enhance the learning environment and create a climate of mutual respect and appreciation. (*ACCJC Policy Statement on Diversity*, IIA.3.c, IIB.3.d, IIIA.4)
5. The college establish a process, including timelines and responsible parties, to systematically review its board policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure their currency. (IVB.1.e)

The team was convinced that COS has the “can do” spirit and ability to address these recommendations for the benefit of its students and community. In fact, the team observed that the college had already begun to address some of them.

Introduction

Description and Accreditation History

College of the Siskiyous (COS) is a small, public, comprehensive, two-year community college located in the extreme north central region of California. The college serves Siskiyou County and a small portion of northern Shasta County. The total population in this geographically large district is slightly less than 45,000. The main campus is located in Weed, a rural mountain community, and a small branch campus is located in Yreka, 30 miles to the north of Weed. The college was founded in 1957 and the initial buildings on the Weed campus were funded by the County.

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COS is widely recognized for its excellent programs in humanities and arts, the sciences and technology, and athletics. Some of the most notable vocational programs are the Fire/Emergency Response Technology, EMT/Paramedic, Administration of Justice, Welding, and Licensed Vocational Nursing programs. Services offered to students to assist them with their goals include academic counseling and advising, assessment, career/transfer center, child care center, campus housing, academic support services, financial aid, and special

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Response to the previous team recommendations

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Eligibility Requirements

The team determined that the College of the Siskiyous (COS) meets the Commission's Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation based upon the evidence of documentation provided by the college in the self study and validated during the evaluation visit. COS has continued to meet the requirements since it was initially recognized by WASC in 1957 as a degree granting institution. It was evident that the college had responded to all requests for information by the Commission to meet these requirements. The team found the college to be focused on student success based on their mission, educational programs and services, public disclosure policies and practices, and openness in descriptions and evaluations of their programs and operations.

Evaluation Team

An eleven-member evaluation team and a team assistant visited the College of the Siskiyous from March 9-11, 2004, and conducted a comprehensive evaluation based on the college's *Institutional Self Study in Application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation* and the evidence gathered to determine whether the college meets the accreditation standards. The College of the Siskiyous was one of the five pilot colleges who used the June 2002 accreditation standards for the spring 2004 self study and evaluation visit. The team prepared thoroughly for its visit by attending the Accrediting Commission Team Training Workshop, and by reviewing the *Commission Handbook for Evaluators*, the college's self study report, the college's November 2000 mid-term report, the college's 1997 self study team report, the college's responses to previous comprehensive evaluation team recommendations, the current catalog, and the spring schedule of classes. Each team member prepared two written evaluations of the self study and questions to serve as a guide for the visit. Each team member was assigned to one of the four standard teams with an identified standard team chair whose responsibility it was to coordinate the evidence gathering and written report on the standard during the visit.

The team chair attended the Commission's special training session for pilot college team chairs. The team chair conducted a pre visit at the college on January 16, 2004 and met with the president, his vice presidents, the campus leaders, the accreditation liaison officer, and staff in preparation of the March visit. It was evident at that time that the college was involved in the appropriate preparations for the evaluation visit.

The team arrived in Weed, California, on the afternoon of March 8, 2004, for a full orientation meeting and briefing. On March 9, 2004, at the Weed campus, the team met with members of the college who had participated on the self study standard committees. During the visit, the eleven team members interviewed over 70 students, faculty, staff, administrators, and governing board and community members. The team members observed over 35 classes at both the Weed and Yreka campuses and attended regularly scheduled college governance meetings. Considerable time was spent by team members gathering and validating evidence in support of the four standards. The team conducted two open forums for faculty, staff, and students to share their comments and observations.

General State of the College

Since the last accreditation visit, the College of Siskiyou has experienced one president resigning, an interim president, and a new president who has served less than two years. These changes in leadership coupled with an accreditation self study process and a new planning process have been major challenges for a small college. However, the team found a stable college community committed to moving forward and addressing the issues they identified in their self study.

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5. The enterprising and extensive use of public and private institutional partnerships to better serve students and the community.

Recommendations

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1. The college promptly review and revise its mission statement, so that the accreditation focus on student learning is incorporated into the statement. Once revised, COS should establish a regular review cycle for its mission statement that provides for updates to the mission as needed. The college also needs to develop a systematic and regular way to assess the achievement of its mission, and then communicate its progress to all of its constituents. (IA, IA.3)
2. The college develop a new broad-based strategic planning process that clearly incorporates the revised college mission into the plan. The process should provide the college with measurable, long-term goals and include a systematic cycle of evaluation, implementation, and reevaluation leading to improvement. (IA.4, IB.2, IB.4, IB.6)
3. The college develop an institutional-wide process, with timelines and responsible parties, for the establishment of specific student learning outcomes and criteria for measurement and review. The plan should include the identification of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, general education, certificates and degrees, and for student services and learning support services; and the assessment of student and employee achievement of those outcomes; and the utilization of the assessment results in a systematic way to make improvements. (IIA.1.c, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1, II.2)
4. The college review its values, policies, procedures, and practices with regard to issues of diversity to enhance the learning environment and create a climate of mutual respect and appreciation. (*ACCJC Policy Statement on Diversity*, IIA.3.c, IIB.3.d, IIIA.4)

5. The college establish a process, including timelines and responsible parties, to systematically review its board policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure their currency. (IVB.1.e)

The team was convinced that COS has the “can do” spirit and ability to address these recommendations for the benefit of its students and community. In fact, the team observed that the college had already begun to address some of them.

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

General Comments

The College of the Siskiyous accreditation self-study accurately addressed the institutional and effectiveness requirements. To support its statements, the self-study cited numerous committee meetings, area/college retreats, and documents. The self-study and team visit indicate COS has a Board approved mission statement that is readily available to internal and external constituents and is used to support numerous activities. The college has begun a serious collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes, has many of the necessary institutional effectiveness components in place, and has planning agenda items to address most of the remaining components. Since the self-study was completed, the college has actively worked to pursue its planning agenda items.

Findings: Mission

The college has a mission statement that identifies the students it serves and the programs and services it offers. The most recent revision of the mission statement was approved by the Board on October 6, 1998, as was confirmed by interviews, Board meeting minutes, and retreat documents. (IA.2) The mission statement is readily available in the college catalog and on the official website. (IA.2) Overall, faculty and student surveys, as well as transfer, degree, and certificate attainment data supported the self-study statement that the college is meeting its mission. Numerous documents and minutes indicate the current statement is used to guide institutional planning, course and program development, and student services programs. (IA.1, IA.4).

Although the mission statement has been revised twice since its original adoption in 1968, the college does not have an agreed upon schedule to regularly review and then adapt its mission statement as needed. (IA.3) The self-study and team interviews confirmed that the college recognizes this needs to be done. Further, the current mission statement does not directly state its commitment to achieving student learning, as required in the accreditation standards. (IA)

Findings: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The college has initiated an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. (IB.1) Team interviews and meeting minutes confirmed that this dialogue is taking place in each area of the college, as well as in a large variety of college councils, committees, and the Academic Senate. College administration has supported this dialogue by providing resources for training on student learning outcomes, access to college research services, and encouragement for faculty and staff participation. In turn, the Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, and student services departments have provided leadership by beginning to define and develop student learning outcomes for specific areas of responsibility.

The Board annually sets three broad goals for the college. These goals, along with the college mission, are used to inform a three-level institutional planning process. The Board goals have largely replaced the 2001-2006 COS Strategic Plan. Interviews with college staff indicate that since the original adoption of the Strategic Plan, changes in college leadership, the accreditation standards, and progress on Strategic Plan areas mean the plan is no longer useful to the college. Further, there has been no systematic and regular evaluation of plan accomplishments. (IB.2)

In 2001-2002, COS developed and implemented a three-level institutional planning process to improve operational planning and resource allocation by creating broader constituency input. (IB.4) Review of the three-level model, the recent increase in constituency representation in the level-three committee, and interviews during the team visit indicated this model is generally well received by the college community. Although the process is still undergoing refinement, users report the three-level process has increased grassroots or level-one input from all areas of the college, and has allowed for successful prioritization of resource allocation decisions by the level-two and level-three committees. Some users particularly value the dialogue and collaboration that occurs during the prioritization process. Team interviews and level-three minutes indicate the process also proved useful in prioritizing budget cuts when a 2003 downturn in the California state budget resulted in cuts to colleges across the state. However, the process still lacks a clear evaluation of whether or not the planning decisions result in an improvement of overall institutional effectiveness. (IB.3)

COS uses a wide variety of assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to its appropriate constituencies. (IB.5) Internal constituents have access to a broad variety of reports and minutes through their area administrators and constituency leaders. The public has access to quality assurance information through appropriate newsletters and Board reports communicated through the Public Information Office in a variety of media formats. Feedback from the internal and external constituents is used to further improve processes as evidenced by the development of additional planning tools by the Research Office and changes to membership in the level-three planning committee. The quality of the print and electronic communications with the public appears to be quite adequate.

To successfully implement the accreditation requirements of student learning outcomes and improvement of institutional processes, the college must have the research capacity to engage in the required activities. The team noted that the college has easy access to internal MIS data needed for quantitative reports, and the ability to provide qualitative data by creating surveys (including web surveys) and facilitating focus groups. The research office is also able to provide numerous customized reports based on user needs. In some instances, such as the Top Ten Key Assessment Indicators for Student Services, areas of the college have provided their staff with a regular snapshot assessment of performance indicators for their areas. This concept needs to be expanded to track institutional mission and strategic goal achievements and to identifying areas for further improvement. (IB.2, IB.3) In addition, once the college identifies its student learning outcomes, it must develop a process for assessing progress on those outcomes. (IB.2)

COS has program review processes in Instruction and Student Services that appear to be systematic and effective in leading to program improvement. The Library has not yet done a program review, as confirmed by the self-study report and team interviews. The team found that the review processes for Institutional Support and Administrative Services/Information Technology are less defined than other areas of the college.

Conclusions

As noted in its own self-study and confirmed by team interviews and review of college documents, the team finds the college needs to promptly review and revise its mission statement, so that the new accreditation focus on commitment to student learning is incorporated into the statement. (IA) Once revised, COS needs to establish a regular review cycle for the mission statement that provides for updates to the mission as needed. The college also needs to develop a systematic and regular way to assess its achievement of its mission and then communicate its progress to all its constituents. (IA.3)

COS has successfully initiated a cross-institution dialogue regarding improvement of student learning outcomes. (IB.1) The team commends the college for continuing its dialogue even after the self-study report was completed, and noted during the visit that activities for continued progress in this area are underway.

The college has worked to improve its planning processes by establishing the three-level institutional planning process in 2001-2002. Through continuing refinement this process has indeed provided broader opportunities for input by appropriate members of the college community. (IB.4) However, the team finds the college needs to create a strategic plan to identify long-term planning goals that will help it achieve its mission. Further, the strategic plan should provide the college with goals that can be measured, so that the progress on the plan can be widely discussed, and steps to further goal attainment and institutional improvement can be developed and implemented. (IB.2)

The college has effective processes in place to communicate matters of quality assurance to the appropriate constituencies. (IB.5)

To fully implement the accreditation standards, the college will need to maximize its current research capabilities. This will require a review of the current research capacity and the development of strategies to address the expected increase in research demands. (IB.6) The college is strongly encouraged to engage in this review in the near future since the current researcher will be leaving this spring.

COS needs to continue its successful program review processes for Instruction and Student Services. The team strongly suggests the Library develop a program review process comparable to those in Instruction and Student Services and implement it as soon as possible. It is also suggested both Institutional Support and Administrative Services/Information Technology review their processes for comprehensiveness and usefulness and make any appropriate adjustments. (IB.7)

Once the college reviews and revises its mission and the strategic planning processes, it will have met the standard.

Recommendations

The team recommends that:

1. The college promptly review and revise its mission statement, so that the new accreditation focus on student learning is incorporated into the statement. Once revised, COS should establish a regular review cycle for its mission statement that provides for updates to the mission as needed. The college also needs to develop a systematic and regular way to assess the achievement of its mission, and then communicate its progress to all its constituents. (IA, IA.3)
2. The college develop a new broad-based strategic planning process that clearly incorporates the revised college mission into the plan. The process should provide the college with measurable long-term goals and include a systematic cycle of evaluation, implementation and reevaluation leading to improvement. (IA.4, IB.2, IB.4, IB.6)

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

General Comments

The team found that the College of Siskiyou offers high-quality instruction and services, particularly given its large geographical service area and relatively small student population. The college appears responsive to student needs, providing classes in a variety of delivery formats, and adding or revamping services based on student demand. Although the college has not fully met the accreditation standards for student learning programs and services at this time, it seems to be adequately knowledgeable about the new expectations as evidenced by the numerous self study plans which address them. Additionally noted in the self study report is the college's awareness of the need to evolve a more systematic plan for development of measurable student learning outcomes and assessments for its entire student learning programs and services.

Findings: Instructional Programs

COS is a comprehensive community college offering quality instructional programs to address its broad mission of providing transfer education, vocational/occupational education, remedial education, and economic development. The team noted that pertinent dialogues about student learning began in 1999 during the Educational Master Planning discussions, leading to the establishment of three optional associate degree plans for each of three main student educational goals, with each containing a core of general education requirements. COS cites its use of many different assessment tools and research methods to identify the educational needs of its students and to assess their educational progress: placement tests, online educational plan monitoring, academic achievement monitoring through student profile database tracking, follow up surveys of completers, occupational outlook surveys, scheduled program reviews, select focus group data gathering, Distance Learning Assessment and Survey, student satisfaction surveys and continuous assessment in the externally audited programs of EOPS, SSS, DSS. (IIA.1.a)

Student needs in this widely dispersed population and mountainous terrain have led to the development of a variety of delivery systems – on site at the main campus in Weed and at the satellite campus in Yreka and other county locations; videoconference courses for real time interactions for students in Weed, Yreka, Happy Camp and Tulelake; and online courses. The team observed that when the 2002 Distance Learning Needs Assessment and Survey revealed that their former outreach classes were not as effective as other delivery modes, the college eliminated them effective spring 2003 and increased staff development and focused resources on establishing more online and videoconferencing courses. Other staff development efforts have focused on assisting faculty with the use of technology in the classroom, with addressing the needs of diverse learners, with improving teaching skills in general and with learning how to develop student learning outcomes for their courses and, to a more limited degree, their programs. Regarding student learning outcomes, the instructional area has started with a focus on the course outline sections for course objectives and for the course methods of assessment as courses come up in the program review cycle, a review of the faculty evaluation process, student learning outcome orientations for members

of targeted advisory committees, and a student learning outcome section in the faculty “first day” handouts. (IIA.1.b, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.d)

The team found that faculty have a central role for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs as evidenced by the work of the five faculty representatives on the Curriculum Committee and its review of proposed changes and additions to course and degree requirements, the minutes from Academic Senate curricular discussions, six-year and three-year program review team work, course revisions concurrent with faculty evaluations, advisory committee minutes for selected vocational programs, and faculty input to course outlines and first day handouts. Procedures for faculty input are made available in the college’s Curriculum Development Handbook and the Faculty Handbook. Understandably, most faculty and staff are only now at the orientation point of the paradigm shift represented by the Commission’s focus on student outcomes, but the dialogue on student learning outcomes and assessment appears to be widespread and ongoing. Some courses have student learning outcomes, but virtually no programs or degrees have them. Plans include Academic Senate discussions on this topic with staff development follow up to support its recommendations, and workshops to orient advisory committee members to the development of student learning outcomes for the certificate programs. (IIA.2, IIA.2.a, IIA.2.b)

Since COS volunteered to be a pilot college, it started its self study concurrent with the distribution of the Commission’s new standards. The team noted that starting in 2002, COS began its orientation to the new standards by establishing and attending numerous local flex activities and other student learning outcomes workshops and briefings, sending faculty and staff to the 2001 and 2002 AAHE Assessment Conferences, and participating in an Research and Planning Group student learning outcome workshop. The college has noted that now it needs to look beyond success and retention rates for assessing the achievement of learning outcomes. It has also noted that while course objectives are measured in a variety of ways, more specific work is needed in terms of not only developing student learning outcomes at all the specified levels, but also in identifying strategies for assessment and providing evidence of student achievement. (IIA.2.b, IIA.2.e, IIA.2.f)

The team found that the college’s faculty and administrators have been reviewing and revising general education philosophy in preparation for establishing general education student learning outcomes, which will then be incorporated into specific course level student learning outcomes. Within these discussions are plans for addressing assessment strategies and graduation requirements. The college has revised the requirements for majors and increased its majors from five to a targeted 36. Its subsequent plans are to establish student learning outcomes for each major and follow up with wide distribution to the student community. Vocational education programs will be reviewed and revised as warranted. The college has cited its promotion of diversity through a range of classes (including History 44, English 12 and 38, Anthropology 8). However, the team noted that these courses were not listed in the spring 2004 schedule. The Academic Senate is credited with researching possible ways to incorporate a diversity requirement into existing academic programs; however, the team did not find evidence to support this being done. (IIA.3, IIA.4)

The team noted that the college sends its catalogs to all prospective students at no charge. The catalog, which is updated every two years, contains all of the pertinent required information. The college website is updated with any information that is revised within that time frame. The college finds that its current process for the creation, review, and updating of key college publications appears to be effective. In the few instances when a program is eliminated or changed significantly, the college makes provisions for student completion. The 2002 Noel-Levitz *Student Satisfaction Survey* and the 2002 Staff/Faculty Survey section gave credence to the college's perception that its faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline, and present information fairly and objectively. The Student Handbook, which is distributed in selected classes, available upon request and viewable online, clearly establishes expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty. While codes of ethical conduct are included in the Student Handbook and the Faculty Handbook, no such document has been available for administrators and staff; and a staff handbook to include Board adopted codes of conduct is in development. (IIA.6, IIA.7)

Findings: Student Support Services

COS recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with the college mission. The Student Services mission is to facilitate the retention of students in their courses and to assist them in the successful completion of their educational goals. The team observed that the college offers a wide range of services that support student learning regardless of location, and that are continually monitored for effectiveness. The Student Services Office monitors effectiveness through program reviews, learning outcomes, assessment indicators, statewide reporting, student services retreats and annual planning processes. A new program review model was developed and approved as an official college procedure in 1999/2000 that examines student satisfaction levels and outcome data. The college has made significant progress this past year in defining and developing student learning outcomes for the student services programs. (IIB.1, IIB.4)

The college website provides extensive information online for all students including those with disabilities and those using distance learning. One additional feature within the on-line services for students is that students may access their own class schedule and unofficial transcripts while on campus. The college promotes equitable access through a variety of student service programs. Students enrolled at the Weed campus benefit from the full range of services provided. Services are duplicated as much as possible at the Yreka campus, however limited in breath and scope. Students interested in EOPS need to travel to Weed for meetings with the staff. (IIB.2, IIB.3.a)

The team noted that clubs such as Phi Theta Kappa, the Intercultural Club, Latino Student Union, and the Black Student Union help to provide a college environment that promotes personal and civic responsibility. The college art gallery and various instructional programs display and rotate work from student and professional artists. (IIB.3.b)

The college has been proactive in the design, maintenance and evaluation of counseling and/or advising programs. The counseling services and activities provided to COS students

are well established. The electronic student educational plan program is assisting students and advisors to meet matriculation standards. The college recently opened a new Welcome Center for students as a point of first contact with the community and prospective students. The Welcome Center concept has been an effective and efficient method to matriculate students. In addition, the college's extended orientation course (Guidance 5, College Success Skills) has been revised and made a mandatory course for all matriculating students. The team noted the exemplary work by the counseling faculty to design a post course survey designed to specifically measure student learning outcomes. The electronic Advisor Handbook continues to be modified. Cross training and specialization for counseling faculty and advisors further enhance the knowledge and skills of the discipline faculty. (IIB.3.c)

The team observed that the college designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices and services in support of diversity. The college hosts and encourages a variety of intercultural clubs (e.g. Intercultural Club, Intervarsity Christian Club, Black Student and Latino Student Unions). The Tools for Tolerance Committee sponsors ongoing events, including annual workshops, to promote the understanding and appreciation of diversity. While the college strives to expand the cultural diversity of the campus, it needs to give greater consideration to the implications for the students as it pertains to their campus climate and residence life. (IIB.3.d)

The college regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases. Contacts with American College Testing (ACT), as well as workshop attendance, are employed to maintain currency on COMPASS testing. Students, instructors, and program managers are surveyed to obtain data and determine the validity of current placement instruments. (IIB.3.e)

The college maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provisions for secure backup of all files. The team found evidence that every effort is made to assure the confidentiality of student information. The entire college computer system is backed up daily, six times per week, and copied onto tapes which are stored in the LRC building. (IIB.3.f)

Findings: Library and Learning Support Services

Learning Support Services at COS are comprised of the Library, Tutoring and Critical Skills Labs. Survey results from the Noel- Levitz *Student Satisfaction* Inventory, and the 2002 Accreditation Self Study Employee Survey documented a belief that these services adequately meet student needs. The team observations concurred with this assessment. The team observed mutual respect between the Learning Support Services staff and other instructional staff which has grown out of collaborative efforts to select and maintain educational equipment and materials to support student learning and to enhance achievement institution's mission. (IIC.1, IIC.1.a)

The COS Library provides instruction for students and staff in a variety of ways: staff members assist students, staff and community members one-on-one, and librarians offer instructional sessions to various classes, research seminars and flex activities. Some of these

are offered by distance education. Information literacy components have recently been added to designated courses so that any degree or 18 unit certificate program completer would receive this instruction. The official class outlines are being revised to include objectives in developing skills in information competency and library research techniques. Librarians are available to assist classroom faculty with component, if requested. (IIC.1.b)

For the most part, the library and learning support services are centered in Weed. Efforts to extend services to Yreka and other locations have met with only limited success because a critical mass of students does not exist outside the Weed Campus. Electronic access to library databases exists and some writing assistance is available electronically and by mail. The team suggests that the college continue to be alert to opportunities to deliver more fully these services to geographically remote students. The team noted that the college provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services. (IIC.1.c, IIC.1.d)

COS states that it does not rely on or collaborate with other institutions or sources for library and learning support services for its instructional programs. The team noted that the college has initiated a process of program review that includes learning support services. The Reading Lab completed this process in 2001-02; the Writing and Computer Labs completed theirs in 2002-03. Tutoring is currently engaged in the review process; and it appears that the library is not yet scheduled for a program review. The staff indicated to the team that student learning outcomes and their assessment will be included in each of the learning support service areas. (IIC.1.e, IIC.2)

Conclusions

The team noted that until the college develops a systematic process for establishing measurable student learning outcomes for each course, certificate, program and degree, and for the student services and learning support services components, the college is not in a position to fully meet many of the Standard II components. This is because the standard requires the college to rely heavily on the established student learning outcomes from which to plan its course and program evaluations and improvements, to evaluate and distribute its students' learning achievements, and to assess the institution's awarding of credits, degrees and certificates and services to students. (IIA.1.c, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1, IIC.2)

The design and implementation of a new student service program review model and the new student registration system has addressed identified program and service deficiencies. Student Services has met the minimum accreditation standard expectation in identifying core student services student learning outcomes and measurements by program area. The reengineering of the Guidance 5 course and linking of the curriculum to student outcomes is innovative and timely. The design for the Welcome Center appears to effectively create a positive atmosphere for comprehensive processing of new students. (IIB.3.c)

The team noted that the college has addressed the identified staffing issues in the general area of information and learning resources, and that through some efficiency changes in staffing

and in hours of operation, there is an appropriate level of staff available to provide the needed support to users of these services. (IIC.1)

The team commends the college for having already initiated or completed many of the Standard II plans. Additionally, the team commends the college for its integration of technology into the instructional program, for its enterprising use of extensive public and private instructional partnerships to better serve its students and community, for the numerous examples of student-centered instruction observed while visiting in classes and labs, and for the productive relationships the learning support services staff maintain with classroom faculty as they collectively facilitate student learning. (IIA, IIB, IIC)

Recommendations

The team recommends that:

3. The college develop an institution-wide process, with timelines and responsible parties, for the establishment of specific student learning outcomes and criteria for measurement and review. The plan should include the identification of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, general education, certificates and degrees, and for student services and learning support services; assessment of student and employee achievement of those outcomes; and the utilization of the assessment results in a systematic way to make improvements. (IIA.1.c, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1, IIC.2)

Standard III: Resources

General Comments

The team found that the college meets the accreditation requirements for resources. The college has made a strong and consistent effort to serve students and staff well by managing its human, physical, technical and financial resources prudently and efficiently. The district has made efficient use of technology to deliver classes to distant areas and to maintain good communication with staff at multiple sites. The district maintains two facility locations, the main campus in Weed and a satellite center in Yreka. In general, the physical resources of the campus are sufficient to meet the instructional needs of the district. The college is well maintained and processes are in place to make sure a safe, clean environment is provided.

Findings: Human Resources

The team found that COS has hiring policies for all personnel. (IIIA.1.b) The faculty hiring procedures require faculty input on job descriptions, interview questions, and final candidate selections. Both the Academic Senate and Director of Human Resources stated that the process is effective, but few faculty positions are being filled due to budget limitations. The classified staff collective bargaining agreement of 2002-2003 outlines the processes for classified transfers and new hires.

The faculty collective bargaining agreement provides clear timelines and steps to complete the evaluation process for full-time tenured, full-time non-tenured, and adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty are reviewed every three years by a peer team review, which includes faculty members from the same and different discipline areas. Adjunct faculty are reviewed every six semesters. Their evaluation includes an observation of classroom performance. Adjunct faculty are required to submit first day handouts and student evaluations to the Office of Adjunct Faculty/Instructional Services. Currently, the college is discussing how to include student learning outcomes in the evaluation process. (IIIA.1.b)

Classified staff evaluations follow the procedures outlined in their collective bargaining agreement contract. Information gathered from the contract, and interviews with the Classified Senate President and Director of Human Resources indicated the process for evaluation is well understood by all members. (IIIA.1.b)

The Board Policy 1.7.2 for evaluation of administrators, last revised in 1992, provides for the formal evaluation process currently in use. (IIIA.1.b)

The Academic Senate has nearly completed a Faculty Code of Ethics. The Senate anticipates adopting the code by April 2004. The Classified Senate is considering pursuing a Code of Ethics and including it in the Classified Handbook. There is not a Code of Ethics for administrators. The Board does have guidelines in the Board Manual that speak to its professional role and responsibilities. The Board conducts an annual self-evaluation, but does not have a written Code of Ethics. A planning agenda item in the self-study report states that a code of professional ethics for all staff members will be completed by June 2005 (IIIA.1.d).

The college currently has just over 50 full-time faculty, 6 administrators, 10 managers, 97 classified, and 20 administrative support staff. Some positions have not been filled due to state budget reductions. While the overall staff is small and the needs of the campus seem to be met, interviews with staff and faculty, and the self-study report identified that four unfilled positions may negatively impact the ability to meet future student needs. The team confirmed that faculty and administrators have the appropriate academic preparation for their positions. (IIIA.2)

Personnel records are secured in locked cabinets under the control and within sight of the Personnel Department. The vice presidents and president are authorized to view personnel files. In addition, employees can review their own personnel files at any time, as is clarified in all the collective bargaining agreements. The office has a procedure for tracking those persons that review personnel files. (IIIA.3)

Team review of documents and interviews with staff confirmed the Classified Handbook is outdated and the process for revision has not yet been identified or begun. The self-study report states that the handbook will be completed by June 2004. The Faculty Handbook is maintained by the Instruction Office. The Academic Senate would like to include the new Faculty Code of Ethics in future editions of the handbook. (IIIA.3)

Several years ago, the college selected a small number of employees to attend the “Tools for Tolerance” training offered by the Museum of Tolerance. Since that time, team interviews confirm that initial attendees have become trainers and have provided on-campus training to additional staff members. As the number of people trained has increased, new topics have been introduced. This year a presentation on poverty will be offered. A number of the staff members reported to the team that they have participated in this program and have encouraged others to become involved. The college plans to include students in next year’s training activities. Team interviews with the Director of Human Resources, who is also the Equal Opportunity Officer, indicate that the college’s Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee has not met in a significant amount of time. The general education philosophy developed and approved by the Academic Senate speaks broadly on social, cultural and political issues. Although these activities are occurring, the team did not sense that the diversity of students is fully understood and appreciated by staff. Those students interviewed felt that this was adversely affecting their academic experience. (IIIA.4.a, b, c)

The team determined based on staff interviews that the college views diversity through a multicultural and international view. Faculty leadership stated they are considering what curriculum changes or additions should be made for students, but this was not confirmed in documentation. The Curriculum Committee asks faculty to address diversity in their course proposal/revisions forms. Course Outlines of Records reviewed did not indicate that faculty carefully address this issue. Staff who were interviewed, stated the college is providing some speakers that enhance their understanding of diversity. What does not seem clear is if the campus has had an active conversation about diversity and developed a timeline in making decisions on whether there should be a diversity graduation requirement or another process of bringing diversity to staff and students. (IIIA.4.a, b, c)

Job announcements are developed with the immediate supervisors and the Director of Human Resources. For faculty positions, the Area Director works with the faculty in the area to provide input to the process. The hiring procedures and evaluation processes are part of the collective bargaining contracts. (IIIA.4)

The district has a formal process for all staff members to have the opportunity for staff development. The Staff Development Committee requests that a written discussion be given on how proposals will fit the mission of the college and specifically how students/programs will benefit. Two separate staff development committees allocate funds classified and faculty professional development. The college sponsors an Annual Planning Day, flex activities, and technology training. All employees are encouraged to participate in professional growth activities. Classified staff can obtain a stipend of \$475 for 10 units of course work. This stipend is available once an academic year. The district, while small, has many opportunities to try new technology. The faculty also have within the collective bargaining agreement an opportunity for sabbatical leave. The team found college staff believe they work in a supportive environment that encourages involvement and innovation. (IIIA.5)

Findings: Physical Resources

The team found that the district ensures that its facilities are well maintained and safe for its students and staff. Safety meetings are held monthly to inspect and assess any issues that arise. The district maintains an Architectural Barrier Removal binder to identify access issues and address them. Many of the identified issues have been taken care of but the most expensive items are waiting for funding to become available from the State Chancellor's Office. This is an ongoing process and as new issues are identified and communicated to the Safety Committee they are addressed. A custodial staffing and standards study was completed. It provides the guidelines by which the campus performs its custodial services. Although staffing standards were set, the district has not had the financial resources to staff the prescribed standards. The 2002 Self Study Employee Survey indicated a perception that the custodial and grounds efforts are still falling short. The team, however, found the interior and exterior of the facilities and grounds were clean and well maintained. (IIIB.1.a, b)

The facilities planning is done via the Long Range Site Development Plan which is a ten-year plan completed in 2000. This plan shows that the campus facilities are sufficient to meet the anticipated enrollments for the next ten years. Facilities issues are discussed at various levels of the districts three-level planning process. However, the team found no evidence of a regular review process for the Long Range Site Development Plan to ensure that the plan continues to meet the needs of the campus. Some of the buildings on the main campus are aging and need replacement or remodeling; and the team found no evidence of a plan to address the issue. The self study mentioned the need to involve the Instructional Office earlier in the long range planning process. (IIIB.1.a, b)

The team found evidence that the district maintains an accurate inventory of all assets including equipment and capital assets. In addition, a facilities condition analysis has been performed. The data is being used to assess the ability of the facilities to meet district goals

and to provide recommendations for building replacement or renovations. The district uses the scheduled maintenance five-year plan to schedule and budget the facilities maintenance needs. The district has integrated facilities planning into the three-level institutional planning process. The team observed that the facilities component of the process is working well and that many of the individuals interviewed felt involved in the process. One result of the facilities planning process is the recent remodel of the Student Center to provide a one-stop Welcome Center for all student support services. The district's plan is to expand upon this process so that the district can develop formal assessment strategies for all renovations, capital projects, and physical resources. (IIB.2.a, b)

Findings: Technology Resources

Since the last accreditation, the team found that COS had taken very aggressive steps to ensure that technology resources are reviewed continually and upgraded systematically. The college developed a Technology Strategic Plan for 2000-2006. This plan has already been updated to cover 2004-2007 and it is in draft form. It will be finalized by the Technology Council in early spring 2004. The college has also hired a Vice President of Administrative Services and Information Technology and a Director of Information Technology to oversee the needs of the college in these areas. The Technology Council advises the vice president on issues of professional support, facilities, hardware, and software needs. The vice president oversees a staff of eleven, who are in constant demand to service technology needs in all areas of the college. In a survey conducted in 2002, 88% of the faculty and staff agree or strongly agree that the Technology Services Department provides effective services with reasonable response time. A student survey conducted in 2001 indicated that Technology Services at COS are adequate and accessible. (IIC.1, IIC.2.)

The college has made a special effort to provide equal technology support to the satellite campus 30 miles to the north of the city of Yreka. At this center, students have access to a Process Technology Training Center, which is equipped with a driver simulator, fire arms training simulator (FATS), video conferencing classroom, fitness center, and two computer labs. The college has a strong video conferencing network that supports its own video bridge and it has the capacity to interact with as many as eight sites at a time. To support distance learning, the college secured equipment to support an electronic white board and a document camera. In addition, the college has purchased SMART Symposium, which is a smaller, more versatile version of Blackboard. (IIC.1.a)

The college replaces computers for faculty and staff every 3-1/3 years, which was reduced by 2/3 years. It is the college's policy to offer a laptop or a desktop to all full-time faculty. The team noted that the 2004-2007 Information Technology Strategic Plan addresses the adequacy of the replacement cycle and the inclusion of associated technology. (IIC.1.c)

Findings: Financial Resources

The team found that the district has integrated financial planning into its institutional planning process through the President's Advisory Council. Utilizing its three-level planning process ensures that all areas of the campus are represented and have the opportunity to

provide input into the budget planning process. Budgets are developed with a realistic look at revenues and sources of income. These assumptions are shared with the district community and are revised as appropriate as evidenced in the President's Advisory Committee minutes and the 2002-03 and 2003-04 adopted budgets. This process ensures that the district can budget within its means and maintain fiscal integrity. (IIID.1)

The team noted that the financial integrity of the district is protected by a strong financial management system that provides for regular reports to staff, faculty, administrators and the Board of Trustees. Implementation of new financial accounting software has been successful, all though there are still issues to be resolved. This software now allows users to access financial reports with greater ease. The 2001-02 and 2002-03 audits confirm the district is audited annually and internal control mechanisms are tested. These audits are positive and do not identify any compliance items that are of material concern. The state's financial crisis has put the district at some risk, but the challenge has been overcome. Two factors that helped the district meet the recent financial crisis were strong reserves and a large amount of time spent in the planning process. (IIID.2)

The self study report indicated that the district has not had a consistent process to assess the effective use of financial resources; however, there have been recent efforts of assessment using the three-level institutional planning process. The district has identified a planning agenda item to formally integrate into the planning process an evaluation of how effectively funds are being used within each department. (IIID.3)

Conclusions

The team found that the district overall meets the requirements of the human resources standard. The college has indicated plans for further improvement and has been active in meeting their timelines. The college is making efforts to ensure that faculty and staff are well trained and prepared to serve their roles. Based on interviews with various staff members and students, it appears that the college has not yet clearly defined diversity. The team suggests that the college engage in an active conversation about diversity at various levels and develop a clear definition for the college. Students interviewed felt that since there was not a clear understanding many historically under-represented students dropped out and indicated that they do not feel a part of the college campus. (IIIA.4.a, b, c.) Staff development is on going on campus and is easily accessible such as the Flex Program and the Faculty and Staff Technology Center. (IIIA)

The team found that the district meets the requirements of the physical resources standard. The district is to be commended for its efforts in the development of its safety and crisis action plans. The team suggests that the district address the perception that custodial and grounds efforts are falling short and should be reviewed with actions to follow. (IIIB.1.b) The district has embraced the concept of institutional planning and has begun to integrate physical resource planning into this process. The team suggests that the district engage in a review process as part of the long term facilities planning process by which facilities needs and the planning process are continually monitored to make sure that they are consistent with the district's mission. Any facilities needs that are addressed in this process should involve

all users in the future facilities planning processes. The district is to be commended for providing strong support for distance learning classes throughout its vast service area, prompt response for technical support, and for providing the college with a strong infrastructure for online services for staff and the community. (B.1.a, B.2.a, b)

The team found that the district meets the requirements of the technology resources standard. The district has made very effective use of technology to meet the educational needs of its service area, which is challenging to serve because it spreads over 6,300 square miles and the population density is approximately 7 people per square mile (CA average is 2007). The college is making a continuous effort to reach more remotely-located students by offering more than 50 distance learning classes per year with an enrollment of over 800 students. In addition, COS continually provides training for faculty involved in teaching distance learning classes and also for those who are interesting in doing so in the future. (IIC.1, 2)

The team found that the district meets the requirements of the financial resources standard. The district is in a strong financial position due to effective fiscal management and policies. The district is to be commended for integrating the budget planning process into the institutional planning process. This has ensured that budgets are responsive to the mission and goals developed in the planning process on an annual basis. The district is encouraged to work to create a long-term budget review process to assess whether financial resources are being used effectively and reflect the long-term goals and strategic plan of the district. (IID.3)

Recommendations

The team recommends that:

4. The college review its values, policies, procedures, and practices with regard to issues of diversity to enhance the learning environment and to create a climate of mutual respect and appreciation. (*ACCJC Policy Statement on Diversity*, IIA.3.c, IIB.3.d, IIIA.4)

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

General Comments

The team observed that the college is beginning to engage in dialogue about various college issues and activities in the President's Advisory Council. When interviewed by team members on Standard IV, the Academic Senate leaders and Classified Senate leaders reported that they are engaging in dialogue on governance, decision-making, and institutional planning processes at College Planning Day and in their respective Senate meetings. The college views itself as being on the road to implementing effective college governance and institutional dialogue and recognizes further work is required.

Findings: Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The team reviewed evidence that included documents, interviews with faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees, the college's web site, and observation of meetings to determine whether the Standards for Institutional Leadership and Governance were met.

In the self study report, the college described the college's three-level institutional planning process, implemented in 2001, as a systematic participatory process for institutional governance and college-wide planning. In the abstract of the self study report, there was also an update on the college's planning process. It indicated that upon arrival of the new college president in August 2002, the campus community expressed concerns that the composition of the Level Three Committee was not adequately inclusive of the college community. In spring 2003, the committee was restructured to include the President, Vice Presidents, three faculty members, a representative from both the classified staff and administrative support group, and a student. In October 2003, the name of the committee was changed from the Level Three Committee to the President's Advisory Council (PAC). The purpose and role of the PAC is to serve as an advisory group to the President and as the shared governance body for the college, to consider significant budget allocations, to discuss policy for college wide issues, and to serve as the conduit for information and suggestions about appropriate campus wide issues. (IVA.1)

Members of the team observed a President's Advisory Committee meeting during the visit. The meeting agenda and discussion included reports on current activities and work in progress in the four units of the college, a report from the President on his recent activities in the community and at the state level, discussion among the faculty and classified governance bodies of the institution and the executive level administrators, and an update from the president on the California Community College hearings before legislators on the concurrent enrollment issue. Faculty and classified staff leaders reported satisfaction with the current governance structure in interviews. However, there were expressed concerns about the lack of consistency in following and maintaining their governance and planning processes, and college communications. (IVA.1)

During the team's visit, the college also provided the team with the College of the Siskiyous Institutional Governance, Planning & Budgeting Processes document, which was drafted on

February 24, 2003. It provides an updated description of the college's Institutional Planning Process, along with recently written, new documentation of the college's governance structure that incorporates the President's Advisory Council as the college's governance body. The document specifies how the college implements participatory decision-making processes, what the constituent governance groups of the institution are, and the membership, purpose, role, and reporting mechanism for each governance body. Attached to the document are the Board's Policies on Shared Governance; Control of District and General Statement of Duties & Responsibilities; Delegation of Duties and Responsibilities; Identification of Responsibility; Number of Members and Terms; and Student Trustee. (IVA.2, 3)

The college governance process and the revisions to the institutional planning process were implemented in October 2002. In the self study report, the college states that there is a plan for evaluation of the effectiveness of the institutional planning process; and that the college is currently developing processes to evaluate the current governance and decision-making structures. The team noted several comments in the notes for the College Planning Day of October, 2003 that referred to the need for increased college-wide communications, descriptions of the leadership of the college as a small number of people, and an interest in encouraging more staff to have leadership development opportunities. While these notes were an informal method of evaluation, the team was unable to find evidence of a formal process for evaluation of the college's governance structure and processes and the college's planning process. The team suggests that the college make it a priority to conduct these evaluations to assure the integrity and effectiveness of the college's structures and processes. (IVA.5)

The team found that the college's self study, college catalog and schedule of classes present the college's educational programs and student support services, as well as its relationship with the community and external agencies in an honest and forthright manner. (IVA.4)

Findings: Board and Administrative Organization

The team confirmed that the Board of Trustees serves as the body for the establishment of policies and procedures. According to minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and the President's Advisory Council (PAC), the Board uses the campus planning process for policy development. (IVB.1, IVB.1.b) District policies and procedures are available on the college website and in the various employee handbooks.

The district has in place almost all policies and procedures recommended by the Commission, with the significant exceptions of a policy regarding the Board's assumption of ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity for the district and a policy statement on filling board vacancies by appointment. (IVB.1.c, d, f.) According to the self-study report, the Board had planned to amend its code of ethics to address behavior that violates its code, and to revise the procedures for trustee development and orientation by December 2003. (IVB.1.f, h) The team found no evidence that either policy has been revised.

The President reported that the Board discussed its satisfaction with the current practices of the College President and Board President providing new trustee development and orientation, as well as, the college supporting trustee attendance at state and national conference that provide trustee development opportunities. According to the College President, the Board decided they will continue current practices. The team noted that more than half of the district's policies are at least ten years old and should be reviewed for currency with respect to state and federal laws, existing practices, and accreditation standards. (IVB.1.e) The Board has established a policy subcommittee to begin addressing this standard but has referred some policies to the PAC for discussion. The PAC has yet to take action on these policies. Members of the Board reported that the board policy subcommittee has been reviewing other selected policies in recent months. However, the team found no evidence of any forthcoming action.

The team found no evidence that the Board exerts undue influence over the day-to-day operations of the college, and it has recently adopted a policy delegating those responsibilities to the superintendent/president. The Board also recently reviewed and reaffirmed its policy regarding the selection and evaluation of the President. (IVB.1.j)

The College President has now completed more than a year of service, and campus employees remain optimistic about his leadership. (IVB.2.a) He has adopted and utilized processes that were in place before his arrival, such as the three-level planning process. He has also revised this structure to incorporate feedback from the various groups and has worked with the campus community to create a governance framework using the Board's annual goals for the district. (IVB.2.b) The College President and the Board have not yet assumed leadership roles in the development and ongoing evaluation of student learning outcomes and assessment measures for the college's programs and services. (IVB.2.b)

Conclusions

The team found a college that utilizes the contributions of all constituent groups in the leadership and decision-making processes and institutional planning. The team commends the college for encouraging student participation in the college governance structure. The team also commends the college for developing, implementing and documenting its decision-making and planning processes to facilitate institutional effectiveness. The college appears to meet the standards regarding utilization of formal decision-making roles and institutional planning processes. (IVA.1, 2, 3, 4)

The district provides employees and the service area with easy access to its policies and procedures. However, many of those policies are in need of review. The President has earned the trust of the college community, particularly his ability to delegate responsibility to various segments of the campus for the development of goals and setting a tone for the open communication of ideas. The team suggests that the President and the Board join with other segments of the campus community in providing leadership in the development and implementation of student learning outcomes. The college appears to meet the standards regarding the Board's recognition of their responsibilities. (IVB.1.a, b, d, f, g, i, j, IVB.2)

The college does not appear to meet the standards regarding board policies that address their ultimate responsibility for legal matters, regular evaluation and revision of its policies and practices, and violation of its code of ethics. (IVB.1.c, e, h)

Recommendations

The team recommends that:

5. The college establish a formal process, including timelines and responsible parties, to systematically review and update board policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure their currency. (IVB.1.e)