

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Cerritos Community College

11110 Alondra Boulevard

Norwalk, CA 90650

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

This report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team that Visited
Cerritos Community College on March 3, 2014 through March 6, 2014

Dr. Gilbert H. Stork, Chair

LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS

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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION: Cerritos College

DATES OF VISIT: March 3-6, 2014

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Gilbert H. Stork, Superintendent/President, Cuesta College

A team of ten professional educators and two team assistants visited Cerritos College from March 3-6, 2014, to evaluate the institution for reaffirmation of accreditation according to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges' Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

In preparation for the visit, team members attended an all-day training session on February 11, 2014 conducted by Commission personnel and studied Commission materials designed for visiting teams. Team members read the College's Self-Evaluation Report, including the recommendations from the 2008 evaluation team, and assessed the various forms of evidence provided by the college. In addition, team members read the 2009 Follow-up Report, the 2010 Follow-up Report, the 2011 Mid-term Report, as well as other materials submitted to the Commission by the college since its last comprehensive visit.

Prior to the visit, team members completed written assessments of the college's self-evaluation report and began identifying areas for further investigation. During the visit, the team members met with approximately 85 college faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Team members also met with the college president and all of the members of the Board of Trustees. The team conducted two open meetings to allow for comments from faculty, staff, students, and interested parties. The college provided excellent logistical support during the visit. All members of the college were welcoming, hospitable, and gracious.

The team found the college's Self-evaluation Report to be complete and included responses to all Accreditation Standards. In addition, the college provided access to electronic versions of the self-evaluation report, evidence to support the report, catalogs, and class schedules which helped team members do ample research prior to the visit.

The team wishes to express its appreciation to the institution. Team members commented on the quality of the college, its employees, its students, and the manner in which everyone made the team feel welcome.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the 2014 Visiting Team

Team Recommendation:

As a result of the March 2014 visit, the team made the following three Major Recommendations and eight Recommendations for Improvement:

Recommendation #2: Degree and Certificate Outcomes

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the college establish program student learning outcomes for all degrees and certificates, assess student achievement of the program student learning outcomes, and use the results of the assessment to make improvements to the programs. (II.A.2.f)

Recommendation #3: Leadership and Governance

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the members of the governing board demonstrate compliance with their policies on the appropriate roles of the Board and the Superintendent/President, the requirements of Standard IV, and adopted Board Policies 2410, 2040, 2510, 2200, 2430, Administrative Procedure 2410, and the Shared Governance Handbook. (IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.B.1.e)

Recommendation #4: Board Development

In order to meet the Standards, the Board should, through its behavior and actions, demonstrate compliance with Board policies and Accreditation Standards (IV.B.1.g, IV.B.1.f)

Recommendations for Improvement

During the March 2014 visit, the team also noted areas that could strengthen the college's efforts to achieve continuous quality improvement:

Recommendation #1: Planning and Effectiveness

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college clearly demonstrate how assessment is utilized in the integrated planning and resource allocation cycle for human resources, information technology, and fiscal services to improve institutional effectiveness (I.B.4)

Recommendation #5

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends each part of the integrated planning process cycle should be assessed and results should be analyzed to allow for continuous quality improvement of the integrated planning processes. (I.B.6)

Recommendation #6

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that all student learning outcomes be made available to students and prospective students. (II.A.6)

Recommendation #7

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college reevaluate the number of assessments in Counseling per year in order to improve the timeliness of the

SLO/AUO assessments and institutionalize a comparable campus-wide program planning and SLO/AUO assessment cycle for all areas of the college (II.B.3, II.B.3.c, II.B.4).

Recommendation #8

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college develop and implement an assessment plan that will measure the effectiveness of library resources and services in enhancing student achievement of identified learning outcomes. (II.C.1.a)

Recommendation #9

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college develop a more formal structure to ensure that students are acquiring necessary information literacy. (II.C.1.b)

Recommendation #10

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends Human Resources evaluate all personnel evaluations systematically and at stated intervals based on existing Board policy, procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. (III.A.1)

Recommendation #11

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends securing all personnel records on a consistent basis and improving internal controls for access by employees and Human Resources personnel based on post-interview site assessment. (III.A.3.b)

Team Commendations

During the visit, the team also recognized numerous noteworthy aspects of the college:

Commendation 1

The team commends Cerritos College for the development of the iFALCON program. Established in 2009 with funding from a federal Title V grant, the iFALCON program aims to increase success for all students while working to close the achievement gap for those historically underrepresented in higher education.

Commendation 2

The team commends the College for the creation and development “The 7 Circles” student success model. In 2006 the College recognized the need for a comprehensive student success plan that would create a highly sophisticated learning environment. Created in 2009, the core of this plan is the seven areas that significantly impact student success - student engagement, teaching practices, academic infrastructure, instructional programs, support services, resource management, and campus leadership.

Commendation 3

The team commends the College for the establishment and the operation of the Student Success Center. This comprehensive and friendly central campus resource was viewed by many students as their “life line” to success.

Commendation 4

The team commends the College for its comprehensive Equal Employment Opportunity plan that focuses on increasing the diversity of the district employee force that more clearly reflects the student population.

Commendation 5

The team commends the college for implementing its Physical Resources prequalification of vendors for all services and contracts on an annual basis to prevent litigation, cost controls, and inexperienced vendors in school construction or services.

Commendation 6

The team commends the College for establishing a creative messaging plan to encourage and assist students in navigating the financial aid processes. The “4 Easy Steps to Cash” was lauded by students as user friendly, visible, and helpful.

Commendation 7

The team commends the College for achieving tremendous support from the surrounding communities within the district. This is evidenced by the successful passage of a \$210 million general obligation bond in 2004 followed by a second general obligation bond in 2012 for \$350 million for the continued work on renovating a 60-year old campus.

Commendation 8

The team commends the College for demonstrating its commitment to maintain its fiscal strength, accountability, and responsibility.

EVALUATION OF THE COLLEGE USING ACCJC STANDARDS TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

CERRITOS COLLEGE ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT MARCH 3-6, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Cerritos College is a comprehensive community college serving southeastern Los Angeles County, with its campus in Norwalk, California. The college serves the cities of Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada and Norwalk and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate. Founded in 1955, the college offers degrees and certificates in more than 180 areas of study in eight divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete their course of studies, and enrollment currently averages 22,000 students per semester.

The evaluation visit was held from Monday, March 3, to Thursday, March 6, 2014. The twelve member team, supplemented with two team assistants, conducted a comprehensive evaluation to review evidence that Cerritos College meets the accreditation standards of the ACCJC. The team received and analyzed the Self-Evaluation, requested and reviewed additional evidence provided by the college, and extensively viewed information provided by the college on its web site.

The team reviewed past evaluation reports, follow-up reports, as well as the 2011 midterm report. The previous comprehensive self-evaluation report and subsequent site visit of March 2008 resulted in an external visiting team report and ACCJC Action Letter placing Cerritos College on Warning requiring a follow-up report. In June 2009 the Commission removed the Warning sanction, but required Cerritos College to submit a Follow-up Report followed by a team visit to verify completion of one recommendation and demonstrating sustainability on another. In June 2010, the Commission took action to accept the report.

Team members found the Institutional Self Evaluation Report visually appealing, well written, and reasonably complete. It was evident there was broad participation in the development of the self-evaluation report. Overall the report presents a fair and accurate portrait of the institution. The report includes all required sections, including college history, demographic information, achievement data, overview of the self-evaluation process, educational programs and delivery modes, and compliance with Eligibility Requirements, policies, and practices.

Prior to the visit, team members greatly appreciated the availability of most evidence online, via a flash drive and direct web links embedded in the electronic version of the document and found this invaluable in preparing for the visit. However, there were several cases of “evidence overload” in which the listing of documents or reports did not really address the standard or claim in the report. In addition, there were several

instances in which the links did not work which required the team to spend additional time prior to the visit viewing evidence that was unnecessary. Subsequent requests for additional reports and data were provided promptly and made available in a well-managed team room with superb technical support throughout the visit.

Cerritos College was exceptionally well prepared for the team visit. The open forums and the exit report were especially well attended, and team members found faculty, staff, and students who were interviewed to be knowledgeable about the accreditation process. The visiting team was warmly received by the College, and college faculty and staff responded graciously and efficiently to requests for interviews, additional data, and other special requests.

The team found the faculty and staff of Cerritos College to be outstanding professionals who care deeply about the college and are dedicated to the service of students. The team observed many functions of the college to be exemplary and the individuals responsible for those services to be talented and innovative.

RESPONSES OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS EVALUATION TEAM

Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the college further develop the statement of its mission to include a description of its student population and to state its commitment to student learning and to the value of diversity. (Standard IA.1, IA.3, I.A.4, IIIA.4.b)

The Cerritos College Board of Trustees approved their current mission statement in October of 2013:

Cerritos College values its diverse student population and is committed to providing these students with high quality, comprehensive instructional programs and support services that improve student success and offer clear pathways to achieve personal, educational, and career goals. In doing so, the college develops in students the knowledge, skills, and values that prepare them to be productive participants in the global community.

Cerritos College's new mission statement contains a statement which defines its broad educational purpose, a description of the college's commitment to its diverse student body, and the college's commitment to achieving student learning. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

In order to improve, the team recommends that the college, under the leadership of the president, establish effective methods of communication leading to the participation of all constituencies of the campus community in an on-going collegial dialogue regarding continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. (Standard IB.1, IV.2.a, IVB.2.e)

Upon investigation of the college's actions addressing this recommendation, the team found that since the new president came on board, much work had been accomplished to address these standards. Through extensive interviews, the team validated that the president has improved communication about institutional processes. The president regularly attends Faculty Senate meetings, meets monthly with the Association of Cerritos College Management employees leadership, chairs monthly management team meetings, and meets regularly with leadership from each constituency group. A communication survey was conducted in spring 2013, and the results indicated that communication has improved since 2010. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

Because the college has not met Recommendation 2 from the 2002 Evaluation Team Report, that recommendation is repeated here with additions relevant to the college's current deficiency with the standards cites.

To meet the standards, the team recommends that the college make full use of the Office of Research and Planning to complete the development of a comprehensive planning and

evaluation process that is guided by the college mission statement and integrates strategic, master, and operational planning; unit planning based on appropriate program review; and the allocation of institutional resources. Both the planning process and a delineation of responsibilities for the implementation of the process would be communicated clearly to the entire campus community. (IA.3, IB.4, IVB.2.b)

The team further recommends that

- The college complete the initial cycle of planning and resource allocation and evaluate the process so that each review cycle is complete and the resulting data and research can be fed back to provided continuous improvement (IB.6),*
- The college provide adequate staffing and resources to the Office of Research and Planning so that data, research, and analysis can be provided sufficient for the college to implement integrated planning, resource allocation, and evaluation; to identify student learning needs; and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes (IB.3, IIA.1.a, IIA.2.b, IVB.2.b),*
- Data used to produce reports that contribute to the college's on-going self-assessment include both quantitative and qualitative information (IB.3),*
- The college state its objectives in measurable terms in all its planning documents including the strategic plan and the unit plans (IB.2), and*
- The college integrate planning for human resources, facilities, technology, and finances into the college plan and use the results of this evaluation to improve human resource processes, facilities utilization, the effective use of technology, and the distribution of financial resources. (IIIA.6, IIIB.2.b, IIIC.2, IIID.1.a)*

The college has responded to the previous recommendation in several ways. Additional positions were added in the Office of Research and Planning to support data collection and analysis. In addition, the college currently has stated its objectives in measurable terms in its strategic planning process. This has been facilitated by an institutional annual strategic planning retreat at which representatives from all constituency groups are invited to participate in the review and development of goals and objectives under the 7 Circles of the college's Strategic Plan.

The institution provides evidence that the planning process is implemented within instruction and student services. Institution-wide department unit planning takes place within the business services division and human resources department. Unit planning occurs without annual system evaluation, defined outcomes, assessment, and analysis for continuous quality improvement. The Annual Unit Plan illustrates goals and resource requests listed in priority order. Unit Plan goals that are important or in alignment with goals in other Unit Plans, are rolled up into Division and Area goals, and Unit resource requests are merged into Division and Area resource request lists, in discussions by Division and Area managers. Area discussions take into consideration the college's integrated planning documents. With input from the Planning and Budget Committee, the Executive Council evaluates Area resource requests and merges the Area requests into a recommendation to the college president for final action and budget development.

Much progress has been made regarding this recommendation, but there appears to be a lack of evidence documenting how assessment and analysis informs future planning. The

team concludes that the College has not fully satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

The team recommends that the college identify student learning outcomes for programs, certificates, and degree; the team also recommends that the college assess student achievement of outcomes recently identified for courses and extend that assessment to outcomes for programs, certificates, and degrees; and the team further recommends that the college use these assessment results to make improvements. Finally, the team recommends that the college fully achieve the Development Level on the Rubric for evaluating Institutional Effectiveness-Part III Student Learning Outcomes and begin movement to the Proficiency Level. (IIA.1.c, IIA.2.a,b,f,i, IIA.3)

The college has worked very hard and effectively to reach the Proficiency level for student learning outcomes and assessment. Under the guidance of two faculty SLO coordinators, as well as the Senate Committee on Student Learning Outcomes, the college developed a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle in which all programs are engaging in authentic assessment and improvement planning. The participants have all been identified and the assessment calendars have been posted on the college's website. Competencies have also been developed in General Education, Career and Technical Education, and Developmental Education, each following its own assessment cycle. In addition, the team validated that all academic programs are engaged in SLO assessment. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 5

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the college implement procedures and practices to ensure that catalog information is consistent and accurate regardless of how publications and information are made available. (IIA.6.c, IIB.2)

The college has developed procedures to ensure the accuracy of the college catalog. The team spent time reading the printed college catalog and searching the online class schedule, the online registration system and reading through the evidence provided. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 6

Because the college has not met Recommendation 4 from the 2002 Evaluation Team Report, that recommendation is repeated here.

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the college extend the new program review process, recently revised for instruction, to other non-instructional area of the campus with appropriate accommodation to address the unique nature of each service area. Further, it should be clear to the campus community how the process of program review is connected to the planning and budgeting process, and, ultimately, to program improvement. (IB.3, IIA.1.a, IIB.1, IIB.3)

Cerritos College has developed a comprehensive Program Review (Unit Plan) process for Student Support Services. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 7

In order to improve, the team recommends that the college update policies, procedures, forms, and guidelines in all areas under the purview of human resources to assure that those employed are appropriately qualified, hiring criteria are clear and relevant, criteria for prioritizing faculty and staff positions to be hired are in place and are followed, and fairness in all practices is clearly stated. (IIIA.1, IIIA.1.a, IIIA.2, IIIA.3.a)

The team investigated the evidence provided by the college and interviewed key individuals associated with this recommendation. The team recognized significant progress in the area of updating policies and procedures that continue to be reviewed and revised as well as the new Equal Employment Opportunity plan. Hiring guidelines have been revised, reviewed and updated through the shared governance process, approved, and implemented. The team encourages the college to continue improvement in the area of updating policies and procedures on a regular basis and ensure that these are consistently disseminated throughout the institution. The team concludes that the College has satisfied this recommendation.

Recommendation 8

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the college, through the leadership of the president, establish a climate of empowerment, innovation and collaboration resulting in a decision-making process that provides for a substantial voice for faculty and middle managers and meaningful input for students and staff in areas that reflect their responsibility. The team further recommends that processes for decision-making be regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. ((IVA.1, IVA.2.a, IVA.5, IVB.2.a, IVB.2.b)

Through extensive interviews, the team validated that the president has improved communication about institutional processes. The president regularly attends Faculty Senate meetings, meets monthly with the Association of Cerritos College Management employees leadership, chairs monthly management team meetings, and meets regularly with leadership from each constituency group. A communication survey was conducted in spring 2013, and the results indicated that communication has improved since 2010. Since the last visit in April 2010, the college has continued implementation of updated decision-making and institutional planning processes with descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all constituent groups, decision-making timelines, accountability expectations, and strategic goals that are generally understood by the College president and all staff. Information about institutional performance has been widely circulated, discussed at governance committee meetings and annual Strategic Planning Retreats, and posted on the College's website. However, since the most recent Board of Trustees election in 2012, in which a new majority has taken leadership, this newly claimed empowerment has been challenged by the board's effort to micromanage key areas that, by board policy, have been delegated to the President. The board has assigned their legal counsel to attend and monitor President's Cabinet meetings and other major meetings of governance bodies. The board has inserted itself within the hiring process. The board has engaged in direct meeting with employee bargaining teams without the inclusion of

its own district bargaining team. The team concludes that the College has not fully satisfied this recommendation

Institutional Effectiveness

The team examined how the college was utilizing student achievement data to assess institutional effectiveness. Interviews were conducted with faculty, department chairs, deans, vice presidents, and the college President. It was found that data used for decision-making was collected and made available to all constituents via the research and planning website.

Data collected on a regular basis includes: Student Learning Outcomes, Administrative Unit Outcomes, Administrative Learning Outcomes, teaching evaluations, student success/retention rates, graduation rates, and transfer counts to the University of California and California State University campuses. In addition, the college collects data on assessment placement results, cut score validation, ARCC data, FTES, weekly student contact hours analysis, student demographics, Perkins/VTEA core indicators, student right-to-know data, student engagement data, and student satisfaction survey data.

The team confirmed that the data that is collected is utilized in making decisions regarding course effectiveness, program effectiveness, quality of services, scope of services, which degrees and certificates are needed most, and the degree to which students and staff are satisfied within their respective roles. This confirmation took place through examining minutes of committee meetings, Board of Trustees minutes, and the Planning and Budget Committees process for determining institutional priorities for funding.

Eligibility Requirements

1. **AUTHORITY**
The team verified that Cerritos College receives the California Community College's approval of its programs and services and is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges. The college is authorized to operate as an educational institution and to offer undergraduate education.

2. **MISSION**
The team verified that Cerritos College has a Mission Statement that was revised and adopted by the Board of Trustees on October 16, 2013. The college also has vision and philosophy statements published in its catalog and has completed its process to update the vision statement. The college mission statement is included in both print and electronic publications.

3. **GOVERNING BOARD**
The team verified that Cerritos College has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality, integrity, and fiscal stability of the institution. The board is composed of seven elected members from the geographical area that comprises the district. In addition, the board has one student representative and is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all of its responsibilities. The board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the constituent groups and public interest in its decisions.

4. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**
The team verified that Cerritos College has a chief executive officer who was appointed by the governing board. The chief executive officer is responsible for administering the policies adopted by the board and executing all board decisions.

5. **ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY**
The team verified that Cerritos College has the administrative staff to support its mission and purpose, programs, and services. All administrative personnel meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for the positions they hold.

6. **OPERATIONAL STATUS**
The team verified that Cerritos College is operational and offers courses at the main campus and through distance learning.

7. **DEGREES**
The team verified that Cerritos College offers a variety of Associate of Arts/Science degrees and vocational certificate programs in areas of study leading to 159 degrees and 94 certificates.

8. **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

- The team verified that Cerritos College degree programs are compatible with its mission, are based on recognized postsecondary fields of study, and have sufficient content and rigor. The institution has completed incorporating student learning outcomes at the course and program levels.
9. **ACADEMIC CREDIT**
The team verified that Cerritos College awards credit for coursework using the Carnegie Standards as defined in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.
 10. **STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**
The team verified that Cerritos College has developed student learning outcomes for all its courses and programs and has formulated assessment tools that measure these outcomes.
 11. **GENERAL EDUCATION**
The team reviewed the Cerritos College degree requirements. Programs require the completion of 18 units of general education courses in oral and written communications, analytical thinking and computational skills, natural science, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences, and these courses are designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.
 12. **ACADEMIC FREEDOM**
The team verified that Cerritos College faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic and educational community in general.
 13. **FACULTY**
The team verified that Cerritos College employs 274 full-time faculty members. The faculty members are qualified to conduct the institution's programs and meet state mandated minimum requirements.
 14. **STUDENT SERVICES**
The team verified that Cerritos College provides adequate student services for all students in the context of its institutional mission.
 15. **ADMISSIONS**
The team verified that Cerritos College has adopted and adheres to admissions policies and procedures consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs.
 16. **INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES**
The team verified that Cerritos College provides access to sufficient information, learning resources, and services to support its mission and all of its educational programs.
 17. **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The team verified that Cerritos College documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The team verified that Cerritos College annually undergoes and makes available an external financial audit by a certified public accountant.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The team determined that Cerritos College provides basic planning for most areas of the institution, but needs further development in the assessment of the effectiveness human resources, information technology, and fiscal services.

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The team verified that Cerritos College publishes information, in print and electronic format, in its catalog, class schedule, and other publications, concerning the college's purposes and objectives, admission requirements and procedures, rules and regulations affecting students, degrees offered, and degree requirements. In addition, the college distributes annual publications that focus on program accomplishments and student graduates.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The team verified that Cerritos College adheres to the eligibility requirements, standards and policies of ACCJC, describes itself in identical terms to all of its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accreditation status in a timely manner, and agrees to disclose information required by ACCJC to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

Compliance with Commission Policies

The team reviewed each of the following Commission policies to ensure that the college is in full compliance:

Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education

The team found evidence that the college has an established policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education. (Standard II.A)

Policy on Compliance with Title IV

Examination of financial aid documents and interviews with financial aid personnel indicates that the 3-year default rate for the college approximates 18.6% in 2009 and 20.0% in 2010 reflecting the college's ability to manage default rates. The team found evidence of the college/district policy for compliance with Title IV. (Standard II.B)

Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

The team found evidence of college-wide policy regarding advertising, student recruitment and representation in the college catalog, Office of School Relations, and the college website. (Standard II.B)

Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits

The team found adequate evidence that the college conforms to the 60-unit credit hour standard required of the associates in arts or science degree.

Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics

The team confirmed that the college upholds and protects the integrity of its practices through its mission statement and institutional priorities, commitment to diversity, policies and procedures, and compliance with the California Educational Code and other relevant regulatory requirements. In addition, evidence indicated that the college regularly reviews its practices to ensure that they are current and accurate.

Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Institutions

The team verified that Cerritos College does not contract responsibilities for programs or services with any non-regionally accredited organizations.

Standard I – Institution Mission and Effectiveness

Standard IA - Mission

General Observations

The College has made significant progress in addressing strategic planning goals, creating a timeline and responsible parties, and reviewing the mission statement. The new mission statement is one that the entire college community can embrace. The mission is visible throughout the institution and shows students the importance of keeping focused on a core idea.

Findings and Evidence

The team evaluated many documents and validated information through interviews. Through review of the college catalog, the Program Review Process document, the Guide to Planning and Resource Allocation document, and Planning and Budget committee minutes. In addition the team conducted interviews with members of the Planning and Budget Committee, administrators, classified staff, and faculty. The team also reviewed the alignment of the student learning programs and services and the mission of the college. The mission statement clearly states the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning. (I.A.1)

The Board of Trustees approved the college's mission statement on October 16, 2013. The mission statement is published in Board Policy 1200 and in the catalog, schedule of classes, online, and in many other college Web pages. (I.A.2)

Following the provisions of Board Policy 1200, the college undertook the process of revising the mission statement during the annual strategic planning retreat on May 10, 2013. The current mission statement was approved by the Cerritos College Board of Trustees on October 16, 2013. (I.A.3)

The Unit Plan Template document requires that each unit of the college have a mission statement which connects the unit back to the college mission and that "A good mission statement should: ...describe how the unit's mission supports the college's mission."ⁱ The college also places the mission of the college into the center of the Cerritos College Strategic Planning document. The team concludes that with this fourth iteration of their mission statement since the 2008 Accreditation Self Evaluation, the institution has made progress towards making the college mission statement central to institutional planning and decision making. (I.A.4)

Conclusion

The college meets Standard IA.

Recommendations

None

Standard IB – Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations

The college has a wide variety of programs aimed at students whose goals are quite varied. Programs range from traditional transfer-oriented programs to vocational programs which support the needs of the local community. The college has made much progress in completing program review in all areas and has substantively made progress on student, program, and institutional outcomes.

Findings and Evidence

The college's dialogue occurs on multiple levels and begins with the unit planning and program review. Each department, both instructional and student services, participates in an annual unit planning process where it reviews the previous academic year's student achievement, learning and engagement data, as part of a review process. After review and discussion each department develops an improvement plan which consists of activities and goals for the upcoming academic year. The instructional program review process at the college is conducted on a six year cycle that focuses on departmental student learning and success. Faculty work together to develop course SLOs and assessment tools. Once the student work has been assessed, departments collaborate to analyze the results and develop plans to improve student learning. Student Services engage in dialogue concerning student learning through the unit planning which enfolds student learning outcomes and program review. The college demonstrates progress in developing student learning outcomes. At the time of the visit, student learning outcomes had been developed and assessments completed for 94% of all courses which was an increase from the Self Evaluation which indicated that 80% had been completed at the time of printing the report. The team found that not all of the instructional and non instructional programs had developed outcomes at the time of the visit. (I.B.1)

The College developed a Student Success Plan in 2009 which based student success on "5 circles" which further transitioned into "The 7 Circles". The 2010-2016 Educational Master Plan further defined the college's strategic directions. In the 2014 Self Evaluation the college states: " 'The 7 Circles' are known as the Strategic Plan." At the 2012 planning retreat, the two processes became integrated. The college has a document illustrating how the two plans are integrated by "The 7 Circles" and the Strategic Directions. Throughout college-wide planning levels, the goals also serve to establish resource allocation priorities. Annually, the college holds a strategic planning retreat with constituent groups to analyze the previous years' data and to set the next year's goals. The departments' participation through the unit planning process encourages all constituent groups to participate in the college's strategic planning process by directing each of the departments to review the goals from the prior year and assess whether the department has accomplished those goals and if there are new and/or continued improvements to be made. (I.B.2)

The college has established an annual planning retreat that serves as a springboard for annual planning. In the retreat process, dialogue occurs regarding the college's goals,

progress and analysis of student achievement data towards the goals, development of new goals, and the general strategic direction of the college. To more effectively prioritize resource allocation based on how well the data and goals of a department align with the data and goals of the college, the college has integrated annual unit planning with annual unit planning and instructional program review (6 year cycle). The research department collects data, produces analyses, and evaluates goals from the previous five years of unit plans to determine the department's strengths and challenges. Based on long and short term analysis, departmental goals and resource needs are developed. Unit Plan goals that are important or echo goals in other Unit Plans, are rolled up into Division and Area goals, and Unit resource requests are merged into Division and Area resource request lists, in discussions by Division and Area managers. Area discussions take into consideration the college's planning documents, prioritize requests and present the results to the Planning and Budget Committee. The Planning and Budget Committee then prioritizes resource allocation based on how closely resource requests align with the college's strategic goals. The Executive Council evaluates and prioritizes Area resource requests and forwards the prioritization back to Planning and Budget which forwards it to the president. The president then forwards the priorities to the Board which adopts the budget. (I.B.3)

The institution provides evidence that the planning process is implemented within instruction and student services. Institutional wide department unit planning takes place. Within the business services division and human resources department, unit planning occurs without annual system evaluation, defined outcomes, assessment, and analysis for continuous quality improvement. There is a lack of evidence documenting how assessment and analysis informs future planning. The unit goals are not in alignment with the planning and resource allocation process. It appears planning and priorities are coming from the top down and are not part of the participatory governance process of institutional prioritization and resource allocation. Instructional departments analyze institutional data provided by institutional research and service departments pull from data sets or surveys. Each department reviews previous year goals, and goals and resource requests move through to the broader division and area plans in the planning process. Constituent groups participate in the analysis of achievement and learning data throughout the planning process and in the annual strategic planning retreat. All departments other than those in business services and human resources are part of the unit planning process. Constituent groups have an opportunity to participate through shared governance committees and also by input through the annual strategic planning retreat. Instructional program review action plans and unit plans state their resource requests based on program or unit needs. These requests, along with Strategic goals, move through the prioritization process and are reviewed by the Executive Council and the Planning and Budget committee. Action plans and improvement plans for each department are found in program review and in unit planning. Course Student Learning Outcomes, Institutional Learning Outcomes and either the general education, CTE or developmental education competencies outcomes are addressed at the program review or unit plan. It was difficult to determine how the planning process and its evaluation lead to improvement of institutional effectiveness. (I.B.4)

Documented assessment results are communicated to departments concerning course

student learning outcomes, administrative unit outcomes, administrative learning outcomes, student success, retention rates, graduation rates, and transfer rates. Data is shared with constituent groups through the Strategic Planning Retreat. Data is frequently discussed and evaluated within committees. The public can access the website to obtain data about the college and its performance. The campus presents data to the public through the State of Education address and campus convocations. (I.B.5)

To assess the effectiveness of planning processes, in 2010 and 2012 the college administered a planning survey to faculty and staff to assess satisfaction levels with regard to the general planning processes, communication about planning, available planning resources, and available training for planning and resource allocation software programs. The results were used to refine “Planning Plus,” the college’s unit planning software. In addition, the college added tips and guidelines and developed a rubric to define what departments need to address in their planning documents. The resource allocation process was improved to include specific questions required of departments. (I.B.6)

The college utilizes various mechanisms to gather evidence about the effectiveness of programs and services. Through the annual unit plan process, departments analyze the previous year’s student achievement, learning and engagement data. Based on analysis, each department determines how well it is serving students. These departments are provided six years of student achievement and learning data. Instructional departments use course SLO assessment results as evidence of how well students are learning. The SLO committee assesses institutional and general education student learning outcomes, CTE student learning outcomes and developmental education outcomes, which are defined as programs at Cerritos College. Through the unit plan, Service and Administrative departments review previous year’s department administrative unit outcomes and goals. Institutional student achievement data are used in the annual strategic planning process. Annual institutional goals are defined through the data analysis which occurs during the strategic planning retreat which supports the college’s strategic goals of “the 7 circles” (Student Engagement, Teaching Practices, Academic Infrastructure, Instructional Programs, Support Services, Resource Management, and Campus Leadership). Through the governance process, unit planning, and the Strategic Planning Retreat, the college’s members understand the goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement. (I.B.7)

Conclusion

As noted above, unit planning occurs without annual system evaluation, defined outcomes, assessment, and analysis for continuous quality improvement. There is a lack of evidence documenting how assessment and analysis informs future planning. The unit goals are not in alignment with the planning and resource allocation process. It appears planning and priorities are coming from the top down and are not part of the participatory governance process of institutional prioritization and resource allocation. The college does not meet Standard IB.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Planning and Effectiveness

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college clearly demonstrate how assessment is utilized in the integrated planning and resource allocation cycle for human resources, information technology, and fiscal services to improve institutional effectiveness (I.B.4)

Standard II – Student Learning Programs and Services

Standard IIA – Instructional Programs

General Observations

The college offers a broad-based curriculum with balance across disciplines. The instructional programs are organized through the academic affairs office under the leadership of the vice president and the instructional division deans. Also included within academic affairs are community and contract education as well as library and support services. The college has a glowing reputation for the quality of its academic programs.

The college provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency and achievement of stated student learning outcomes.

Findings and Evidence

The Senate Committee on Curriculum assures that all instructional programs address and meet the mission of the college and uphold its integrity, regardless of the location or means of delivery. Courses are reviewed on a regular cycle as outlined in the curriculum committee handbook as well as the faculty handbook. Much focus has been placed on the emerging growth of distance education classes by the curriculum committee in order to assure similar compliance. (II.A.1)

The college is committed to addressing students' diverse educational needs by ensuring decisions are made and assessed based on The 7 Circles supported by strong institutional research. Even though the college is currently filling the leadership position in the research office, the work that is being produced by that office is exemplary. A new program that has emerged since the 2008 visit that focuses on student engagement is iFALCON (Focus, Advance, Link Up, Comprehend, Organize, New Ideas) which was funded initially by a grant. The college has utilized published research regarding student success as related to student engagement. The college assesses the effectiveness of this program by conducting an annual student survey. Programming changes are made on the basis of the results of this survey. (II.A.1.a)

Modes of delivery and instruction are reviewed on a 3-year cycle and approved by the curriculum committee as outlined in the curriculum committee handbook. The college ensures that instruction fits the objectives and content of its courses through the annual unit planning process, the Senate Committee on Curriculum, and the program review process. This practice was confirmed through interviews with faculty and deans. (II.A.1.b)

The college has made great progress in defining student learning outcomes for courses, programs, and the institution. Since the 2008 visit and subsequent follow-ups, the college achieved the Development Level and has now reached the Proficiency Level. Courses and programs are being assessed on a regular basis and improvements are being made based on the resulting data. (II.A.1.c)

The college utilizes established policies and institutional processes to guide the development of its courses and programs. Procedures of the curriculum committee and the program review committee ensure that institution recognizes the role of faculty for establishing and improving instructional courses and programs. The SLO coordinators continue to meet with faculty to assist in the development and evaluation of course level student learning outcomes. The team reviewed posted evidence within the curriculum committee handbook, program review committee website, SLO website, and faculty interviews. The findings from the SLO and program review processes provide the basis for unit-level department plans for improving instructional programs. (II.A.2.a)

The college relies on faculty, as content experts, to identify competency levels and measurable SLOs for its courses, certificates, programs, and degrees. Instructional faculty members within each department collaborate to establish competencies and learning outcomes for programs and courses. Departments with transfer majors refer to content standards outlined by relevant professional associations. SLOs are institutionalized through the course outline of record. Assessment of course SLOs occurs toward the conclusion of the course through direct or indirect assessment. The team examined a sample of 25 courses and determined that all courses had SLOs and that these samples had performed assessments of the SLOs. (II.A.2.b)

The ongoing and systematic review of courses by the curriculum committee and the program review process support this standard. Evidence for these finding were found by the team in the curriculum committee handbook, faculty handbook, program review documents posted on the program review website, discussions with administrators regarding evaluations of full-time and adjunct faculty, and review of curriculum committee minutes. (II.A.2.c)

The team found the college population to be diverse. Faculty members develop course outlines of record which list a variety of teaching methods which might be used for a specific course. Course developers provide a multicultural statement for the course proposal. Course outlines also include writing, problem-solving, and critical thinking assignments. The team reviewed the college catalog and found evidence that a variety of programs are available to students to meet diverse student needs. (II.A.2.d)

The team verified that the college regularly and systematically evaluates all courses and programs through the curriculum, SLO, and instructional program review process. Courses are reviewed on a three-year cycle, whereas program review is conducted on a six-year cycle. The Office of Research and Planning provides ongoing institutional data with regard to enrollment, student conduct hours, retention, student success, and

efficiency. CTE programs include Perkins core indicator data in their evaluations. (II.A.2.e)

In reviewing the evidence provided and conducting interviews with faculty and administrators as well as SLO progress charts and timelines, the team confirmed that course-level student learning outcomes have been assessed, analyzed, and evaluated. In addition, there appears to have been much work completed on developing institutional outcomes, program level student learning outcomes, and general education student learning outcomes and performing required assessments. However, additional work needs to be completed by the college in establishing program student learning outcomes for all degrees and certificates, assessing student achievement of the program student learning outcomes, and using the results of the assessment to make improvements to the programs. (II.A.2.f)

The team confirmed that the college does not use any internally developed department or program examinations. However, in chemistry and nursing, standardized examinations are developed by their respective governing bodies. The college then relies on the testing service to validate the effectiveness and minimize the bias of the test. (II.A.2.g)

Credit is awarded based on criteria established in Title 5. The college awards course credits to students on the basis of their grades as they progress through course objectives and demonstrate their attainment of the student learning outcomes. The team interviewed faculty members and students and confirmed that students receive course syllabi in each class attended which identifies the criteria for grade determination. (II.A.2.h)

The team confirmed that the college awards degrees and certificates based on the students' achievement of the SLOs established for general education portion of the degree or certificate as well as the SLOs for the major or concentration. The college assesses GE students after they have completed 50 units and certificate students after 18 units in a designated Career/Technical program by means of a survey. (II.A.2.i)

The college requires all academic and vocational degree programs include a component of general education courses based on the philosophy that is clearly stated in the catalog. The college curriculum committee reviews each course to determine its appropriateness for inclusion in the general education pattern by examining the stated learning outcomes for each course. The team confirmed through an examination of the catalog, curriculum committee handbook, and interviews with faculty and division deans that the college general education requirements includes humanities, fine arts, natural sciences, and the social sciences. (II.A.3, II.A.3.a)

The college has developed a process for reviewing the rigor of each general education course and whether the course qualifies for one or more of the general education sequences. To ensure that the students are achieving the outcomes, the college assesses SLOs at the course, program, and institutional level. Assessment results are aggregated by each department and division and included in the department's unit planning. The team examined the most recent general education assessment results and determined that

the data showed that learning was occurring and that analysis was incorporated in developing any necessary improvement plans. (II.A.3.b)

The team evaluated the college's policy on general education and found that it included emphasis on personal growth, professional development, and citizenship. The college measures these qualities in individual courses such as Introduction to Ethics, American Political Institutions, introduction to Political Science and American Government, Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication, Philosophy of Cultural Diversity: Challenge and Change, and sociology of Cultural Diversity: Challenge and Change. In addition, the team confirmed that the above-mentioned qualities are also explored in other ethics courses in business, law, history, and fine arts. Furthermore, the curriculum committee requires that all new courses include a unique multicultural statement to ensure that they embrace a multicultural approach to course presentation and learning methods. The college, in turn, assesses these values in its four institutional competencies: independent learner, personal responsibility, global awareness, and civic responsibility. (II.A.3.c)

The team confirmed through an examination of the catalog and a sampling of degree requirements that the degree programs included focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. The college also demonstrated progress toward developing a variety of Associate Degrees for Transfer per AB 1440. (II.A.4)

In reviewing a variety of evidence sources (e.g., advisory board minutes, job placement data, licensure pass rates in nursing/allied health and career/tech programs), the team confirmed that students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards. (II.A.5)

Educational courses and programs, transfer policies, degree and certificate descriptions are defined in the college catalog and on the college website. Interviews with faculty, students, and administrators indicate that all students receive a course syllabus in every class. The student learning outcomes are stated in the course syllabus. The Transfer Center provides information relative to the transfer policies and requirements as well as the college website. Additional information regarding transfer of credit is available in the college catalog and the college website. Review of the college practices for transfer and articulation reveal that the college consistently follows these established policies. (II.A.6, II.A.6.a)

The team reviewed the college's policy for program discontinuance. While it is a rare occurrence at Cerritos College, the policy was implemented in spring 2012 when the college determined to phase out its court reporting program. The college developed and publicized a process for students, who were in the program, to finish within a given timeline. All new students who wished to pursue court reporting were not permitted to enroll. For those who inquired about the program, information was shared with them as to other entities that offered the training in this discipline. (II.A.6.b)

The college regularly reviews its catalog and schedule of classes. It publishes a catalog annually and a schedule of classes three times a year both in print and electronic formats. The appropriate administrators in academic affairs and student services make sure that the information is accurate and relevant. The team confirmed that information is also disseminated through website social media sites, Daily Falcon announcements, and the college newsletter. In addition, the college publishes the *inSight* newsletter, which is a bi-monthly publication distributed to the residents in the college's district. All these sources present accurate, clear, and consistent information. (II.A.6.c)

Policies and statements regarding academic freedom and responsibility and student honesty can be found in the college's catalog. The college does not require its staff, faculty, administrators, or students to conform to a specific code of conduct, belief system or world view. Interviews with faculty and students revealed a high degree of professionalism and integrity of the faculty. Expectations for student academic honesty are defined and explained in the college catalog, student conduct policy and statement of student rights and responsibilities. (II.A.7, II.A.7.a, II.A.7.b, II.A.7.c)

Cerritos College does not offer curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals. (II.A.8)

Conclusion

The college has made much progress in meeting the requirements for establishing and assessing student learning outcomes for all courses. It was found by the team following the review of evidence provided and conducting interviews with faculty and administrators as well as SLO progress charts and timelines, that course-level student learning outcomes have been assessed, analyzed, and evaluated. In addition, there appears to have been much work completed on developing institutional outcomes, program level student learning outcomes, and general education student learning outcomes and performing required assessments. However, additional work needs to be completed by the college in establishing program student learning outcomes for all degrees and certificates, assessing student achievement of the program student learning outcomes, and using the results of the assessment to make improvements to the programs.

The college does not meet Standard IIA.

Recommendation

Recommendation #2

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the college establish program student learning outcomes for all degrees and certificates, assess student achievement of the program student learning outcomes, and use the results of the assessment to make improvements to the programs. (II.A.2.f)

Recommendation for Improvement

Recommendation #6

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that all student learning outcomes be made available to students and prospective students. (II.A.6)

Standard IIB – Student Support Services

General Observations

Standard IIB of the self-evaluation report describes the scope and reflects the status of a comprehensive array of student services that helps support the success of students learning. These services, under the direction of the vice president of student services, include: admissions and records, veterans affairs, assessment services, counseling services, transfer center, career services, CalWORKs, financial aid, disabled students programs and services, extended opportunities programs, and services, student health services, international student services, student activities, campus police, and student success center. The college should take pride in its extensive services and opportunities for students to connect with the college outside of the classroom. The team experienced exceptional cooperation from everyone in student services during the review of evidence and the interview processes.

Findings and Evidence

The team reviewed student services and distance education program reviews, SLO/AUO assessment, Cerritos web sites (Financial aid, admissions and records, distance education, tutors (online version), conducted interviews with the Vice President of Student Services, Deans of Student Services, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Support Services, Library and Educational Technology, several counseling faculty, and student services classified staff. The college offers both on-campus and online services. Based on the evidence reviewed, all services are of comparable quality. (II.B.1)

After a careful review of the college's catalog locating and verifying all listed requirements in standard II.B.2.a-d, all items are published in the catalog. They are easy to locate and are clear and concise in both the printed and electronic versions. (II.B.a-d)

The team examined surveys of students' engagement (CCSSE) results, SLO/AUO assessments, significant interviews with Vice President of Student Services, Dean's of Student Services, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Support Services Library and Educational Technology, several counseling faculty, student services classified staff and the planning and budget committee. The college regularly asks students, through surveys and focus groups, to determine their needs and then evaluates the support service to determine if they are meeting the appropriate needs. Student Service programs spent a great deal of time and effort in getting feedback from students and trying to provide services that meet students needs. (II.B.3)

The college is providing equitable access to all students by providing appropriate and comprehensive services to students. The team viewed evidence from the counseling web site, catalog, class schedule, distance education web site and significant interviews with Dean of Counseling, Counseling faculty and support staff, Dean of Student Support and

Dean of Admissions and Records and Dean of Library and Educational Technology. All services are provided in both on-campus and online formats. The college is currently piloting tutoring online in spring 2014. They have a plan to evaluate this service at the end of the semester. (II.B.3.a)

The college has developed an iFalcon program that encourages personal responsibility and development. The counseling courses through DSPS, EOPS, library and the Counseling department are designed to move students toward personal and civic engagement. The team reviewed iFalcon videos, a sampling of course curriculum and the SLO committee minutes. The college also has a robust student government and student activities program that is designed to promote leadership and personal development. (II.B.3.b)

Counseling was an early adopter of SLO/AUO assessments, having received a commendation from the 2008 visiting team. Counseling has 17 SLO/AUOs for both courses and program improvement. They use the assessment results to improve the program and service to students. The team was somewhat concerned about the sheer number of SLO/AUOs, given that they assess one a year, and the timely manner of assessing them to improve the program and delivery to students. (II.B.3.c)

The college promotes student understanding and appreciation of diversity on several different fronts. The college offer programs for ethnically and economically diverse student groups: Puente, CalWORKS, EOPS, International Students, Veterans and disabled students. The team reviewed Program Plans (Unit Plans) for programs listed above, SLO Assessments, Student Equity Plan and committee minutes, and list of Student Activity sponsored clubs and activities. Through the student activities office, there are over 60 student groups that address diversity and underrepresented students. In addition to the items listed above, the college has a very active Student Equity committee that is working to close the achievement gap among underrepresented students. (II.B.3.d)

On a regular cycle, Student Success and Support Program and the Assessment Center staff (formerly Matriculation), working with the Research Office and faculty in English and Math, evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment instrument in placing students. The assessment plan results are posted on the Research and Planning office website. The evaluation looks at placement scores, completion rates of students in each class level and success of students in the next level class. It also compares students who are placed by multiple measures as compared to those using the placement instrument. (II.B.3.e)

The team interviewed the Dean of Admissions and Records and the Director of Information Technology and reviewed relevant Board Policies and Administrative Procedures. The college secures old transcripts in a vault in Admissions and Records Office. These transcripts are kept in two formats, microfilm and microfiche. They have a plan to digitize these old records to ensure that they are secured behind a firewall in the future. Transcripts since 1981, when they were converted to PeopleSoft, are stored in the ERP system. Information Technology personnel back up the system nightly, and the records are stored in two different locations. (II.B.3.f)

The student support services have a very complex annual program review (Unit Planning) and SLO/AUO assessment process. The team reviewed surveys of students, CCSSE results, SLO/AUO assessment, significant interviews with Vice President of Student Services, Deans of Student Services, Counseling, Admissions and Records, Support Services and Library and Educational Technology, Area Planning Summit minutes and agendas, several counseling faculty, student services classified staff and the planning and budget committee. Programs annually assess one SLO or AUO and use these assessments to improve programs and services to students. From an outside prospective, the process is difficult to understand. All levels of staff seem to understand it, but in significant interviews with department staff, most do not understand how the entire process works. The Area Planning Summits are clearly having a positive effect on the understanding of the process and the impact of program review and SLO assessment are having at all levels. The team received feedback from numerous people that reported they did not understand the process until they attended the Planning Summit. (II.B.4)

Conclusion

The Annual Student Service Program Review and SLO/AUO process is complex, but the team does believe that it allows programs to take a comprehensive, holistic view of the program and its delivery. The college meets Standard IIB.

Recommendation for Improvement

Recommendation #7

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college reevaluate the number of assessments in Counseling per year in order to improve the timeliness of the SLO/AUO assessments and institutionalizing a comparable campus-wide program planning and SLO/AUO assessment cycle for all areas of the college (II.B.3, II.B.3.c, II.B.4).

Standard IIC – Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

The college provides library and learning support services for students and faculty. As the college has developed more online courses, both the library and the learning support centers have addressed the needs of students who may never come to campus. The library provides a student-centered environment that encourages students to use its space, resources, and services. Located in the center of the campus, library staff have designed, furnished, arranged, and staffed the space to meet the needs of Cerritos' diverse student population.

The Learning Resource Center is comprised of an appropriate number of support services and labs. The library has developed student learning outcomes (SLOs) for its information competency course and for its orientations and workshops. The college is in the process of developing and implementing an assessment plan that will measure the effectiveness of library resources and services in enhancing student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

The Library and student support services demonstrates focused attention on providing resources and services to increase student success. The Success Center exemplifies the Library and Learning Resources' thoughtful and inclusive review of existing resources and how they need to better meet students' needs. The Library has developed and assessed student learning outcomes in library courses, orientations, and workshops. Their unit level plans and program reviews show that assessment for learning outcomes occurs regularly, and the plans contain goals for improvement based on the data.

Findings and Evidence

The team found that Success Center has developed and assessed outcomes for the topical workshops, and has completed success rate comparisons for students who used the Math Success Center (MSC) and non-MSC users. User data on directed learning activities and assessment preparation are gathered and analyzed. There is insufficient evidence that these resources and services are assessed to determine their contribution to student learning outcomes. (II.C.1.a, II.C.2)

The team also found that the Library has developed and assessed student learning outcomes for Library courses, orientations, and workshops including distance education library courses. The data are used for improvement. The Library has a wide variety of current, relevant materials to support student learning based on informal instructional faculty's contact with librarians, and the library evaluates its collection for relevance with the college curricula based on its collections' development handbook. The library offers comparable services to distance education students through distance education library courses, electronic materials, chat reference, and phone reference. The Library's annual unit plans have set goals to create additional digital learning objects, online orientations, and a dedicated computer lab for information competency instruction so that students

would have hands-on practice. Additionally, the library teaches information competency through these aforementioned means. However, there was a lack of evidence on how the institution acts purposefully to teach information competency to all its students.

(II.C.1.b)

The college provides ample opportunity for students to access the Library and Student Success Center during a substantial part of the day. The library as well as the Success Center remain open four evenings a week during the regular fall and spring terms. Students and faculty have access to electronic library resources and services around-the-clock by means of the Internet. (II.C.1.c)

The college ensures that maintenance and security of library and learning support services through a combination of trained and vigilant staff and the use of current technology. The library undergoes a regular schedule of maintenance which is essential given the increased usage of the library. To secure library collections, the main and secondary exits from the library have 3M book detection systems to prevent the theft of library materials. All emergency exits from the library have alarms to alert staff to unauthorized exiting through those doors. (II.C.1.d)

The college library maintains formal reciprocal borrowing agreements with the University Libraries at CSU Long Beach and CSU Dominguez Hills and with the Cerritos Public Library. The college library informally reviews resources and services it has mutual or contractual agreements with. In the planning stage is a regular evaluation process. (II.C.1.e)

The college evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. The team confirmed through a review of the data collection on satisfaction, traffic, and use of library and other learning support services that services are support students as intended. It was also confirmed through interviews with library staff that the data are regularly used in the decision making process and planning. (II.C.2)

Conclusion

The college meets Standard IIC.

Recommendations for Improvement

Recommendation #8

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college develop and implement an assessment plan that will measure the effectiveness of library resources and services in enhancing student achievement of identified learning outcomes. (II.C.1.a)

Recommendation #9

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college develop a more formal structure to ensure that students are acquiring necessary information literacy.

(II.C.1.b)

Standard III – Resources

Standard IIIA – Human Resources

General Observations

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity.

Findings and Evidence

The team recognized significant progress in the areas of policies and procedures that continue to be reviewed and revised and are incorporated in the new EEO plan. The team reviewed evaluation procedures and timelines for faculty, management, confidential and classified employees. The team also reviewed the Hiring Standards Committee website, the Cerritos Minimum Qualifications and Local Standards, and the Employment Opportunities – Academic Employment Application. In addition the team conducted interviews with the vice president of human resources, director of human resources/risk management, and the director of diversity, benefits, and compliance. It was determined that the college assures integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services. (III.A.1)

The team confirmed that criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized US accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-US institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established. (III.A.1.a)

Through a review of the evidence provided and interviews with selected staff, the team verified that the institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate in their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage

improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented. (III.A.1.b)

The team verified through a review of the evidence that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. (III.A.1.c)

The team confirmed that the college upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel. The college's employees are required to uphold the college's code of ethics, which state its value system and ethical principles and outlines specific ethical responsibilities. The board is required to uphold its code of ethics/standards of practice as stated in Board Policy 2715. (III.A.1.d)

As was noted in the 2010 Midterm report, based on the 2008 Evaluation Team Report as Recommendation 7: Human Resources Policies and Procedures. The recommendation stated, "In order to improve, the team recommends that the college update policies, procedures, forms, and guidelines in all areas under the purview of human resources to assure that those employed are appropriately qualified, hiring criteria are clear and relevant, criteria for prioritizing faculty and staff positions to be hired are in place and are followed, and fairness in all practices is clearly stated." The team confirmed that the college has a well-documented, ongoing process for ensuring a sufficient number of qualified full-time faculty, staff, and administrators. The college also effectively incorporates results of program review to determine support and learning resources. (II.A.2)

The college has addressed the 2010 Midterm report which was based on the 2008 Evaluation Team Report regarding Human resources policies and procedures. The team found that the college has updated its policies, procedures, forms, and guidelines in all areas under the purview of human resources. The college is now able to assure that those employed are appropriately qualified, hiring criteria are clear and relevant, criteria for prioritizing faculty and staff positions to be hired are in place and are followed, and fairness in all practices is clearly stated. (III.A.3.a)

The team found through physical examination of the evidence that the college makes provision for the confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law. Interviews revealed that employee data is maintained in locked filing cabinets within the human resources office and also entered into PeopleSoft which is restricted to those who have security clearance. The team also expressed concern that, while touring the human resources office, it was noted that some file cabinets remained unlocked during business hours and were accessible to anyone entering the office. (III.A.3.b)

The team confirmed that the college meets the needs of its diverse faculty and staff by designing programs and services that provide for a range of diverse applicants and personnel. The college encourages a diverse pool of applicants and does not discriminate

on the basis of any of the protected classifications. The college provides training and special interest opportunities to its employees through professional growth programs. Employees may also seek staff development opportunities by participating in programs such as the Falcon Leadership Academy. (III.A.4, III.A.4.a)

The college has made concerted efforts to recruit and employ personnel that reflect the growing diversity of its student population. When considering the student population of Hispanic, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native descent, the administrator group increased from 9.5% to 19.1% since 2008. During the same time period, the number of employees hired belonging to these monitored groups increased by 3 percent. Classified employees from the same groups increased from 55.6% to 60.9%. Continued efforts to attract greater numbers of faculty applicants remain a goal of the college. (III.A.4.b)

The college has adequate policies and procedures in place which clearly define how administrative, faculty, staff, and student concerns are addressed. The college ensures that its personnel and students are treated fairly by providing organizational procedures to address complaints and violations to college regulations. (III.A.4.c)

The team confirmed that the college plans and delivers professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel. Under the direction of the president, the college established the Falcon Leadership Academy in spring 2012. The academy consists of several workshops focusing on a variety of important topics – issues in teaching and learning, history and traditions of the college, skills to become a dynamic leader, etc. In addition, the college created the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTX) in 2011 which provides faculty with professional development workshops. In addition, the college participates in the Liebert Cassidy Whitmore Employment Relations Consortium which provides quality employment relations training, consultation, and informational services to its members. (III.A.5, III.5.a)

The team confirmed through interviews that the college assesses the professional development needs of its employees based on their feedback. At the conclusion of workshops offered by the college, the presenter distributes a survey to the participants to solicit comments about the presenter, the topic, and suggestion for future trainings. The College Committee on Employee Development also monitors professional development trends and practices and advises the college on training and development activities. (III.A.5.b)

The team verified that the guide to planning and resource allocation model is designed to integrate human resources unit planning into the budget allocation process as noted by the unit plan and program review format including staffing needs. At the last review, the process had been implemented, but a full cycle had not been completed. The planning cycle was implemented, assessed, and suggestions for improvement were made. (III.A.6)

Conclusion

The college meets Standard IIIA.

Recommendations for Improvement

Recommendation #10

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends Human Resources evaluate all personnel evaluations systematically and at stated intervals based on existing Board policy, procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. (III.A.1)

Recommendation #11

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends securing all personnel records on a consistent basis and improving internal controls for access by employees and Human Resources personnel based on post-interview site assessment. (III.A.3.b)

IIIB Physical Resources

General Observations

A very active modernization effort is occurring at Cerritos College fueled by the passage of two successful general obligation bond campaigns. While much construction and remodeling are in motion, the campus remains an inviting and well-kept environment. The maintenance and cleanliness of the buildings and grounds are the responsibility of the facilities department. The facilities department reports to the vice president of business services. Consisting of two units, maintenance and custodial, both units have managers who report to the physical plant director. The Facilities Department performs small projects and contracts out for larger projects as needed.

Findings and Evidence

The team confirmed that the college incorporates all of its physical resources, which includes facilities, equipment, land, and other assets to support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. (III.B, III.B.1, III.B.1.a)

Through interviews and a review of the evidence provided the team verified that the institution assures that physical resources at its main campus, where it offers courses, programs, and services, are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment. (III.B.1.b)

The team noted that the college uses R-25 software to schedule its facilities. This provides maximum efficiency and utilization of room use and room planning. The unit plans include an assessment of unit needs for space which is coupled with the five-year capital construction plan. The college has effectively utilized its long-term facilities plan to successfully achieve the necessary funding by means of two general obligation bonds. (III.B.2, III.B.2.a)

The team confirmed that the college ensures that physical resource decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement through several processes. Institutional planning is driven by the Cerritos College Strategic Plan, “The 7 Circles.” The annual strategic plan identifies seven themes that have a significant impact on student success. One of these is resource management. The team also validated that physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. In addition the institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement. (III.B.2.b)

Conclusion

The college meets Standard IIIB.

Recommendations

None

III.C Technology Resources

General Observations

Over the past few years, the college has worked hard on creating the availability of technological resources that support learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. This has been accomplished by integrating technology planning with institutional planning. Energized by the Information Technology mission statement, IT supports the technology required by all areas of the college to fulfill their mission and achieve their goals in pursuit of supporting student success. In general, IT focuses on maintaining and upgrading the college's technological infrastructure. The college has developed a computer replacement policy and has improved the college network.

To ensure that instructional divisions, student support services, and administrative services receive the technological resources necessary to support and improve student learning, the college has integrated technology planning into the budget and planning process. Through the unit planning and program review processes, departments make requests for the purchase of new technology or for the updating of existing technology. This entire process is overseen by various shared governance committees.

Findings and Evidence

The team confirmed that all college technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. It was also confirmed that technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The team toured the facilities noting access to technology as well as interviewing students, faculty, and staff as to the adequacy of the technology available to them to perform their learning and/or employment responsibilities. The personal testimony gathered by the team was very supportive of the college's efforts to deliver appropriate levels of technology to the users. There was much praise given to the technical support that was available to assist students and staff with technology challenges. It was also confirmed that technology needs are linked to specific technology-related projects within the college's strategic goals. (III.C, III.C.1)

The team conducted interviews with the Director of Information Technology, faculty, staff, other administrators, and students. It was determined by the team that primary leadership for technology support is coordinated by the College Committees on Information Technology Standards and Facilities Planning. The college has established standards to create a more responsive, dependable, and supportable computing environment. It has also ensured that faculty, staff, and students have the proper technological support whether in traditional or Distance Education courses. The IT department utilizes ePolicy Orchestrator reports which help determine if hardware is obsolete or in need of an upgrade. In addition OpManager is an application used by the IT manager to analyze critical feedback that helps drive technology resource allocations.

The team also confirmed that IT utilizes regular assessment results to evaluate its level of service and the quality of service received by the end-user. (III.C.1.a)

The college identified in its 2010-2016 Educational Master Plan that the college would "...promote effective teaching practices informed by pedagogical expertise, collaboration, reflective self-assessment, and integration of classroom and online technology to facilitate students engagement and achievement of educational goals." In response to this goal, the college initiated the help of the College Committee on Employee Development to determine the training needs of its employees. Surveys were conducted for faculty and staff, and the results were considered by the College Coordinating Committee. As part of the strategic plan, the college created the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTX). The center supports, among other things, technology training. CTX offers training in software that the college supports, including Microsoft Office and TalonNet, the web-based course management system. These training workshops occur twice a month. In addition, faculty can schedule a private tutoring session with a CTX trainer. The team also confirmed that the Student Success Center provides support for students and their skill building needs with technology. On a regular basis, the college measures its effectiveness in technology support through a variety of assessment techniques and analyses of the resulting data. (III.C.3.b)

The team reviewed the evidence provided as well as examined the Technology Plan, Student Lab Replacement Plan, and major IT initiatives. It was determined that the Board had established a new goal to "...develop a plan for replacing faculty, staff, and administrator computers on a regular cycle." IT then produced a replacement plan that ensures that technology across campus is consistent, up-to-date, and reliable. The college utilizes its integrated planning process and strategic plan to identify those needs that qualify for institutional resources. The team confirmed that the college systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs. (III.C.3.c)

The team confirmed that the college distributes and utilizes technology resources to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services. The college demonstrated that it uses data in many of its decisions for distribution and allocation of resources. Following each installation of new technology or a new application for Distance Education courses, IT surveys the user on the service provided by the technician installing the computer and on the quality of the replacement computer. Utilizing the TalonNet course management software, IT was able to verify for all faculty users, but especially Distance Education faculty, that over 85% of faculty report that the technology provided allows them to perform their duties "well." (III.C.3.d)

It was determined by the team that the college integrates technology planning with institutional planning. The team examined the college's integrated planning process, the Technology Plan, interviewed administrators, faculty and staff, and Planning and Budget Committee meeting minutes. It was also confirmed that the college systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources through its annual strategic planning process and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement. (III.C.2)

Conclusion

The college meets Standard IIC.

Recommendations

None

IIID Financial Resources

General Observations

The fiscal operation of the college lies under the Vice President of Business Services. This position delegates authority for managing college fiscal affairs to the Director of Fiscal Services. This division is organized into three departments consisting of Accounting, Budget, and Payroll, each of which is led by a manager. This team is responsible for all the fiscal services at the college and use of the Los Angeles County Office of Education as their service provider. The college complies with the requirement of an annual independent audit.

Findings and Evidence

The college successfully maintains fiscal strength and financial stability annually. The college manages its financial operations utilizing a system of fund accounting, which is a specialized accounting methodology that public colleges, universities, and other government and non-profit agencies are required to utilize. This method allows the college to track, monitor, and accurately report to legislative bodies, taxpayers, and other stakeholders how money is being used to accomplish the institution's mission and to demonstrate that specified funds are used in accordance with any appropriation requirements or legislative directives. An important measure of the college's fiscal strength and stability is the annual ending balance of the unrestricted General Fund. While the state requires a 3% fund balance, the Cerritos College Board of Trustees sets an expectation that the ending year fund balance should be no less than 5%. From 2007-2008 through 2012-2013 the ending balance fell within the range between 11% to 14%. This allowed the college to survive more successfully during the fiscal crisis in the state over the last five years. (III.D)

The team confirmed that the college mission statement and the college's annual strategic goals provide the basis for all financial planning and resource allocation. (III.D.1)

Over the past few years, the college has integrated financial planning into all aspects of institutional planning. Within the 7 Circles strategic plan, the unit division/area plans identify the resource needs of their respective areas and link those needs to the various institutional goals and initiatives. The team confirmed that the resource allocation model and process then prioritizes the institutional needs and recommends funding as appropriate. (III.D.1.a)

The team reviewed the college's financial practices, policies, and guidelines and determined that the college is financially sound and has provided a stable financial environment. The college has also initiated an innovative partnership with the Cerritos Redevelopment Agency to establish an assisted living complex on college property. The income from this program is kept in the Vintage Fund and used for identified institutional priorities related to student success. (III.D.1.b)

The team confirmed that the college, through its multi-year budgeting methodology, ensures financial stability by balancing short-range plans with long-range priorities. Since the recession of 2007, the college has exhibited great care in planning and preparing for unexpected harmful circumstances, such as mid-year or end-of-year revenue shortfalls imposed by the state. The team also confirmed through interviews with the Director of Fiscal Services and the Vice President of Business Services as well as minutes from Planning and Budget Committee meetings that funding of all liabilities, including long-term liabilities of a special nature, such as Other Post-Employment Benefits, are proactively and sufficiently considered and funded. (III.D.1.c)

The team interviewed the Director of Fiscal Services, Vice President of Business Services, and the chair of the Planning and Budget Committee. The team confirmed that the Planning and Budget Committee has consistently strengthened the institution's financial planning and budget process throughout the past few years. Improvements have included enhancements to the college's planning software and implementation of upgraded planning processes and related rubrics for objectively evaluating unit, division, and area level resource allocation requests. (III.D.1.d)

The college demonstrated that its financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, have a high degree of credibility and accuracy, and reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. The college has consistently received an "unqualified opinion" on its independent audit report for at least the last six years. These audits are conducted in accordance with generally accepted standards applicable to financial audits contained in government auditing standards. The results of the annual audit are posted to the college website as well as presented to the Board of Trustees. The team confirmed that the college allocates its resources in a manner that achieves its stated goals for instructional and student support programs and services. (III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b)

The team confirmed through an examination of evidence and interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators that the college communicates all aspects of its financial information to all stakeholders throughout the institution in a timely and relevant manner. The college is committed to full transparency in how it manages and allocates its financial resources. (III.D.2.c)

In reviewing the financial documents and processes for the college, the team confirmed that all financial resources of the college, including those obtained through debt instruments, auxiliary activities, grants, and fund-raising efforts, are included in the scope of the institution's annual independent audit. In addition, it was determined by the team that the college's Measure CC General Obligation Bond – Election of 2004 is subject to specialized financial and performance audits on an annual or semi-annual basis. (III.D.2.d)

The team confirmed through interviews, presented evidence, and documentation from the college website, that the college reviews, evaluates, and assesses its internal controls on a regular basis through the annual independent audit process. This methodology allows for

expert assessment of a wide-range of internal control matters. When a deficiency is identified, college administrators quickly develop and implement corrective action. The corrective action is then tested for effectiveness by means of scheduled review by the auditor during the ensuing independent audit. (III.D.2.e)

The college has demonstrated it manages its cash and financial resources well. It has been able to maintain a position of financial strength and stability through the tough state fiscal crisis. The team confirmed that the college was able to accomplish this while minimizing any negative impact on employees, and the instructional programs and student support services. The team reviewed the college's history in maintaining an adequate General Fund reserve, use of one-time only revenue sources, prudent borrowing money from internal funds, and the effective use of short-term borrowing through the use of TRANs funding. (III.D.3.a)

The team confirmed that the college applies effective oversight of all aspects of its finances through internal practices, fund accounting procedures, oversight involvement by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and an annual independent external audit that focuses on evaluating the college's system of internal control over its financial reporting, its compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grants applicable to federal and state programs, its expenditure of federal, state, and local funds, and its assessment of whether the college practices effective oversight on a wide variety of key financial matters. (III.D.3.b)

In reviewing college documents and conducting interviews with the Vice President of Human Resources, Director of Human Resources/Risk Management, Director of Diversity, Benefits and Compliance, and the Vice President of Business Services, the team confirmed that the college adequately plans for and allocates appropriate resources for the payment of liabilities and future obligations, including Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), compensated absences, and other employee related obligations. (III.D.3.c)

The team reviewed the tentative and final budgets for the current year as well as interviewed the Vice President of Business Services and the Director of Fiscal Services. The team confirmed that the college follows the GASB Standards 43 and 45 in meeting its compliance requirement in recognizing the total compensation for employee services, including the costs of other post-employment benefits (OPEB). The college employs an actuary to conduct an actuarial study biennially to determine OPEB costs in conformance with proper accounting standards. The most recent study was completed on June 14, 2013. (III.D.3.d)

The team confirmed that the college assesses and allocates resources for the repayment of any locally incurred debt instruments that can affect the financial condition of the institution. On March 1, 2013, the college borrowed \$15 million for a short-term loan through a Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) to offset a severe cash flow reduction that was caused by state revenue deferrals. At the time of the visit, the college had received the deferred fund payment and was scheduled to repay the TRAN. Two

successful general obligation bonds, Measure CC Election of 2014 for \$210 million and Measure G Election of 2012 for \$350 million will be paid by the taxpayers. There is not additional local debt. (III.D.3.e)

The team verified that the college has developed and implemented a very successful Default Management Plan which contributes to maintaining a default rate well under the federal guidelines of 30 percent. The college's current default rate is 18.6 percent for the latest three years on record for this index. Proactive and informed efforts by staff such as loan denials or repayment counseling also helps combat any escalation of the rate. (III.D.3.f)

The team reviewed current practices utilized in working with outside contractors. The team examined board policies and bidding processes as well as conducted interviews with the Vice President of Business Services, Director of Facilities, and Director of Purchasing. The team confirmed that the college has appropriate control over its contracts and uses standardized contractual agreement, approved by legal counsel. These precautions allow for control of the terms and conditions as well as the execution of the agreements. (III.D.3.g)

The team confirmed that the college utilizes a variety of methodologies to regularly evaluate its financial management practices. It was also confirmed that the results of these evaluations are used to improve internal control structures. (III.D.3.h)

The team reviewed the processes for integrating financial resource planning with institutional planning. Team members interviewed the Vice President of Business Services, Vice President of Human Resources, and representatives of the Planning and Budget Committee. The team confirmed that financial resource planning at the college is integrated with institutional planning. In addition, the college systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement of the institution. (III.D.4)

Conclusions

The college meets Standard IIID.

Recommendations

None

STANDARD IV – Leadership and Governance

Standard IVA – Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations

Leadership has stabilized with the appointment of the current President/Superintendent five years ago. This stability has allowed the faculty, staff, and administration to continue its efforts to achieve excellence in everything that they do. Through extensive interviews, it was evident to the team that the decision-making process has been improved and that managers, faculty, and staff feel included in planning and providing input to decisions. There does seem to be a disconnect between the Board of Trustees and the administrative function of the college in relationship to roles and responsibilities as stated in policies and procedures involving governance.

Findings and Evidence

Evidence reviewed to address this standard included interviews with constituent groups including students, classified, faculty, management, college committees, board members, and the president. College documents reviewed included Board Policies 2410, 2040, 2510, 2200, 2430, Administrative Procedure 2410, Shared Governance Booklet, The Guide to Planning and Resource Allocation, Strategic Planning Process Flowchart, Shared Governance Webpage of the Cerritos College President, List of Strategic Planning Retreat Attendees, Annual Unit Plans 2013, and List of Shared Governance Committees. Since the last visit in April 2010, Cerritos College has continued implementation of updated decision-making and institutional planning processes with descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all constituent groups, decision-making timelines, accountability expectations, and strategic goals that are generally understood by the College President and all staff. Information about institutional performance has been widely circulated, discussed at governance committee meetings and annual Strategic Planning Retreats, and posted on the College's website.

Cerritos College has developed and implemented a six-year Master Plan used for criteria in determining annual priorities. The Strategic Plan, also called The 7 Circles is the institutional framework for ongoing improvement in student engagement, teaching practices, academic infrastructure, instructional programs, support services, resource management, and campus leadership. This framework guides the development and annual assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) for all units. The college is committed to reviewing institutional performance and placing that information in the center of institutional discussions and decision-making processes. The college explicitly calls for all constituent groups to be involved in institutional planning and decision making in both the Shared Governance Booklet and Board Policy 2510. Cerritos College leaders, especially at the campus level, have created a climate of empowerment, innovation and instructional excellence. All concerned are encouraged to take initiative in improving practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. The team observed that

there is an apparent lack of clarity of roles between the governing board and the executive administration. Board policy provides for the delegation of authority to the President to run the college according to the policies, regulations, and practices approved by the board. However, actions taken by the board, such as assigning its legal counsel to attend meetings of the President's Cabinet and other governance institutional committees clearly undermines the authority of and the effectiveness of the President. Furthermore, this action interferes with the morale of the campus employees and threatens the empowerment which has recently been achieved. Additional examples are provided in Standard IV.B.1.e to provide documentation of the conflict between practice and policy for the Board of Trustees. In addition, decisions and actions for the board appear to be inconsistent with current Board policies and administrative procedures. (IV.A.1)

Cerritos College faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance. They exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions. Cerritos College has a board policy in place (BP 2510 – Participation in Local Decision-Making) that ensures participation in decision-making processes. Additionally, BP 2510 establishes that the participatory process values consensus to act on all matters following extensive input into college decision-making. The board has Policy 4020 that specifically describes the role and authority of Faculty Senate in educational and instructional matters. The college describes the shared governance process in the Shared Governance Booklet. Division Chairs have recently established a Division Chair Council to facilitate regular meetings of all Division Chairs to improve communication, consistency of practices and collegial interaction and support. All parties acknowledge that effective, clear and consistent communication is an ongoing area of emphasis and improvement. (IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a)

Cerritos College relies on faculty, its faculty senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services. Board Policy 2510 clearly delineates the circumstances upon which the Board will rely primarily on the advice of the Faculty Senate and when it will seek to reach mutual agreement. BP 4020 also states that the development and improvement of curriculum and other educational matters rests with the faculty in coordination with instructional deans. In addition to the Faculty Senate there are a number of committees that address educational issues on campus. The responsibilities and membership of each committee are outlined in the Shared Governance Booklet. (IV.A.2.b)

Cerritos College has established governance structures, processes, and practices, which allow the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students to work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies. The shared governance process at Cerritos College occurs primarily through a series of campus committees, Faculty Senate, the College Coordinating Committee, deans, president's cabinet, executive council and

the president. The guiding documents include Board Policies 2410, 2040, 2510, 2200, 2430, Administrative Procedure 2410, The Shared Governance Booklet, The Guide to Planning and Resource Allocation. The college website provides access to governance committee meeting schedules, minutes and written summaries of participatory discussions. Numerous meeting agendas and sign-in sheets show the College has made a concerted effort to get everyone's input in the decision-making process. The president instituted annual Strategic Planning Retreats open to all interested constituents to discuss college wide performances results, assess annual progress toward district strategic goals and propose adjustments/revisions to actions planned within the institution's framework of The 7 Circles. The Office of Research and Planning provides targeted survey feedback and institutional data to assess the effectiveness of the processes and measure Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and Unit Area Outcomes (UAO). (IV.A.3)

Cerritos College clearly demonstrated that it advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It is in full agreement to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-evaluation, and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The college has taken great strides to respond to recommendations made by the Commission. Cerritos College has responded in a timely and appropriate manner to the Commission's findings and requirements during the period of 2008 through 2010 and was successfully removed from Warning status and restored in good standing with the ACCJC. Publication and transparency of the college's status is made available and kept current on the college's website. Individual units and programs are in good standing with various licensing and accrediting agencies. (IV.A.4)

The leadership team at Cerritos College has regularly evaluated the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement. To evaluate its decision-making processes the college conducted college-wide communication surveys in 2009, 2010 and 2013. These survey results are used inform the College Committee on Planning and Budget and the annual Strategic Planning Retreats as feedback for the effectiveness of the institution's progress on the Strategic Goals. Additionally the survey titled Cerritos College Planning and Resource Allocation Process was administered twice since 2009-10. The college developed rubrics to define areas that departments must address in their planning document. In 2011 the college revised the annual strategic planning process to include the seven college goals tied to the 7 Circles. The college strengthened its self-evaluation process by establishing a planning calendar and soliciting broader input to develop and evaluate college strategic goals. (IV.A.5)

Conclusion

The team found that the leadership established by the current President/Superintendent had stabilized the college over the last five years after several years on inconsistent leadership. The college has replenished its key leadership positions and has developed a

governance system that is designed to empower individuals as well as governance groups to contribute to the overall success of the college. However, as mentioned above, the new dynamic within the Board of Trustees is creating a threat to the authority of the President. With the Board's interference with the delegated authority given to the President by the Board according to Board Policy, the role of the President and the effectiveness of the governance process are compromised.

The college does not meet Standard IVA.

Recommendation #3: Leadership and Governance

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the members of the governing board demonstrate compliance with their policies on the appropriate roles of the Board and the Superintendent/President, the requirements of Standard IV, and adopted Board Policies 2410, 2040, 2510, 2200, 2430, Administrative Procedure 2410, and the Shared Governance Handbook. (IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.B.1.e)

Standard IVB – Board and Administrative Organization

Findings and Evidence

The Cerritos College Board of Trustees is an independent governing board which consists of seven members elected by constituents in designated trustee areas and one student trustee elected by the student body. The board has adopted policies and procedures to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the district. As of November 2012, the board has four newly elected members and one re-elected board member which has created a new dynamic within the board. The team reviewed a wide variety of evidence in addressing this standard. The evidence included a series of intensive interviews with members of the faculty, staff, administrators, students and board members. In addition, the team reviewed many documents including Board Policy 1200, 2200, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2435, AP 2435 and several examples of Board meeting minutes.

The Board has clearly followed its Board Policy 2432 in the last selection/hiring of the President/Superintendent. The Board and president work collaboratively to establish the President/Superintendent's annual goals. Board minutes verify that the board has conducted yearly evaluations of the President/Superintendent. (IV.B.1)

The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. At its December 7, 2011 meeting, the board unanimously approved to divide the Cerritos Community College District into seven trustee areas so that trustees are elected from established trustee areas and no longer at large throughout the college district. The board took this action in order to remain in compliance with the California Voting Rights Act and the Federal Voting Rights Act. The board has policies in place to prevent undue influence. However, in reviewing the 2013 Board self-evaluation, the team expressed concern that the board as a whole does not fully understand its role in establishing and implementing policy. From the evidenced reviewed, the board appears to acts as a whole, once the board reaches a decision. (IV.B.1.a)

The team observed that the governing board follows Board Policy 1200 to establish policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them. The Cerritos College Strategic Plan (7 Circles) calls for ongoing improvement in areas of student engagement, reaching practices, academic infrastructure, instructional programs, support services, resource management and campus leadership. The plan drives goal implementation and unit/division/area plans. (IV.B.1.b)

The team verified that the board had adopted Board Policy 2200 that describes its ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. These responsibilities are described in California Education Code Section 70902, which provides the legal basis for board powers. (IV.B.1.c)

The board has adopted Board Policies 2000 through 2900 which establishes specifications of the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. All of the documents are available online, regularly reviewed, and are available for public viewing in the board office. Board meeting agendas and minutes are published in a timely manner in a public location as well as online in accordance with open meeting laws. (IV.B.1.d)

Cerritos College has a process for regularly reviewing and revising board policies. All parties acknowledge that communication on the policy review/revision process is an area of ongoing emphasis and improvement. Several instances were confirmed through extensive interviews where board members did not adhere to their respective roles and responsibilities described in their adopted policies. Board members directed their district legal counsel to participate in college site level operational meetings including the President's Cabinet and the College Coordinating Committee. Board Policy 2430 and Administrative Procedure 2430 delegates to the President/Superintendent or designee the authority to implement the policies of the district and oversee the operational functions of the district. No request for legal counsel participation was made by administration. Board members also directed each of the employee negotiating teams to appear before them in closed session to engage in direct contact negotiations. Current board policy indicates that the board shall engage in employee negotiations expressly through their direction and input to the district negotiating team. The team also raised concern when reviewing the last board self-evaluation that a particular board member added an agenda item on August 13, 2013. Board Policy 2340 provides for how items are placed on the agenda by public members, but for all other agenda items, "shall be developed by the president/superintendent in consultation with the board president." A final incident where board members were not following policy surfaced while conducting faculty and staff interviews. One Board member visited offices, staff and departments throughout the college distributing personal business cards and inviting all staff, faculty to contact them individually with any issues they desire. Board Policy 2200 clearly describes the board's role to function as a whole and responsibility to interact and govern openly in public through their governing board meetings. (IV.B.1.e)

The evidence reviewed by the team in addressing board development include a series of intensive interviews with faculty, staff, administrators, and board members and a review of the following documents: Board Policies 2010, 2100, 2200 and 2740 and Administrative Procedure 2200, board minutes of June 5 and 8, and the board self-evaluation for 2013. The board has adopted policy that establishes a mechanism for providing continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office. In 2012 the college implemented the legal transition from at-large elections to election by trustee areas. This resulted in four new board members being elected to office. The institution held full-day weekend workshops, special study sessions, sent board members to Effective Trustee conferences provided by the Community College League of California (CCLC), contracted with individual consultants and facilitators to do specialized training sessions for all board members and provided all board members with the Orientation

Handbook for New Trustees published by the CCLC. Due to work and personal commitments not all board members were able to attend all training opportunities. In direct interviews with board members, the visiting team learned that some board members refused to attend training opportunities in disregard for the adopted policies, California Education Code sections and accreditation standards that define board member roles and responsibilities. (IV.B.1.f)

The board's self evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies. Board Policy 2745 defines the board self-evaluation process. Each June the board does an online self-evaluation, receives the results in open meeting to give members of the public an opportunity to give feedback. In June of 2013 the board received the self-evaluation, but did not take public feedback. At the June 19, 2013 the board took action to appoint a board subcommittee to draft board goals, set a public study session to discuss and approve board goals, develop a new board self-evaluation survey and propose any revisions to Board Policy 2745. In reviewing board minutes of 2013, the team could not find any further evidence that the board completed the work outlined in the June 19, 2013 action taken by the board or that they made changes to Board Policy 2745 as recommended by the board-appointed subcommittee. (IV.B.1.g)

The governing board identifies its code of ethics and policy for dealing with behavior that violates that code in Board Policy 2715. The board last reviewed this policy at its December 12, 2012 meeting. In February 2013, the board discussed, in detail, its Code of Ethics policy with a consultant at a study session. (IV.B.1.h)

The board is informed about the accreditation process on a regular basis. The board has received multiple presentations by the Accreditation Liaison Officer and the Faculty Co-chair at public board meetings. The board reviews accreditation reports and documents as required and is aware of the timelines and approval processes involved. One board member was appointed to the self-evaluation subcommittee for Standard IV.B. Two presentations were given to the board in February 2013 by an ACCJC vice president to help the new board members learn about accreditation. (IV.B.1.i)

The board takes the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the President/Superintendent. In 2009 it went through the process and selected the current president. Board Policy 2430 delegates executive responsibility and authority for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board of Trustees requiring administrative action. Although efforts have been made to educate the board on its role and responsibilities at board meetings and through study sessions and workshops, the visiting team confirmed several instances where board members violate their policy and this Standard as described above under Standard IV.B.1.e. (IV.B.1.j)

Under the provision of Board Policy 2430, the board is supposed to delegate full authority to the President/Superintendent to provide effective leadership in planning,

organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness. However, as mentioned above, the new dynamic within the Board of Trustees is creating a threat to the authority of the President. With the Board's interference with the delegated authority given to the President by the Board according to Board Policy, the role of the President and the effectiveness of the governance process are compromised. The President/Superintendent's role and responsibilities are integrated into the college governance and decision-making through BP 2510, The Shared Governance Handbook, The Guide to Planning and Resource Allocation, Strategic Planning Process Flowchart, and Shared Governance Webpage of the Cerritos College President. (IV.B.2)

The president has initiated the Falcon Leadership Academy to develop successful leaders. It is available annually and all full-time classified, confidential, faculty, and managers are encouraged to apply. The President has worked to establish a climate of empowerment. A management survey shows that managers feel more empowered and valued by the Executive Council. There has been marked improvement since the 2008 visit. ((IV.B.2.a)

Through numerous interviews, the team validated that the president has improved communication about institutional processes. The president regularly attends Faculty Senate meetings, meets monthly with the Association of Cerritos College Management employees leadership, chairs monthly management team meetings, and meets regularly with leadership from each constituency group. A communication survey was conducted in spring 2013, and the results indicated that communication has improved since 2010. Since the last visit in April, 2010, the college has continued implementation of updated decision-making and institutional planning processes with descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all constituent groups, decision-making timelines, accountability expectations, and strategic goals that are generally understood by the College president, and all staff. Information about institutional performance has been widely circulated, discussed at governance committee meetings and annual Strategic Planning Retreats, and posted on the College's website. (IV.B.2.b)

The implementation of board policies and the executing of the action steps within the strategic plan are overseen by the President. The team found this to be an area of vast improvement since the 2008 team visit. The regular and systematic planning and decision-making processes that are in place and the general awareness by faculty and staff as to how the system ties into institutional effectiveness and resource allocation are much improved. (IV.B.2.c)

The President effectively controls budget and expenditures. The college is in excellent fiscal condition. Based on interviews and input from open forums, constituent groups appear to be satisfied with the fiscal affairs of the college. A concern that was raised in the 2008 Self-Evaluation that the centralization of the resource allocation process may decrease effective and timely response to needs at the unit/division level was no longer present. (IV.B.2.d)

The President works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the college. This is evidenced in the many outstanding programs on the campus as well as the successful passage of the college's second general obligation bond. (IV.B.2.e)

Conclusion

The team found that the leadership established by the current Superintendent/President had stabilized the college over the last five years after several years of inconsistent leadership. The college has replenished its key leadership positions and has developed a governance system that is designed to empower individuals as well as governance groups to contribute to the overall success of the college. However, as mentioned above, the new dynamic within the Board of Trustees is creating a threat to the authority of the President. With the Board's interference with the delegated authority given to the President by the Board according to Board Policy, the role of the President and the effectiveness of the governance process are compromised.

The institution does not meet Standard IVB.

Recommendation #4: Board Development

In order to meet the Standards, the Board should, through its behavior and actions, demonstrate compliance with Board policies and Accreditation Standards (IV.B.1.f, IV.B.1.g)

See Recommendation #3 in Standard IVA.