

**MiraCosta College
One Barnard Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056**

November 1, 2000

**Midterm Report to the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**

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Statement of Report Preparation

The Accreditation Liaison Officer consulted with members of the college Cabinet and then prepared a draft document. That document was presented to the Classified Executive Council, the Academic Senate, and the Student Senate for comment and suggested revisions. The suggestions were incorporated in the final document by the Accreditation Liaison Officer.

Tim T.L. Dong, Ph.D., President

Date

Responses to Team Recommendations and Commission Action Letter

Accreditation Team Recommendation # 1 - It is recommended that MiraCosta Community College develop and implement a strategy that increases a climate of inclusiveness. This strategy should develop an ongoing commitment to diversity and the cohesiveness of the trifurcated district.

MiraCosta College carefully considered the recommendation that the college find ways to increase a climate of inclusiveness. Efforts have been made to foster communication between and among the college sites and to improve the physical plant at each location.

In 1999-2000 MiraCosta College, at a cost of \$8.2 million, constructed and equipped a new Community Learning Center in the heart of Oceanside. The Center opened in September 2000 and has won universal acclaim for the design of the building and the services provided to a very culturally diverse community.

In late Fall 2000, MiraCosta College will remodel a science laboratory at the San Elijo Campus. The remodel will permit the college to offer a full array of physical science classes. In 1998-1999, MiraCosta College remodeled the library at the San Elijo campus and converted it to a combination electronic hub and library. These remodels, and the construction of the Community Learning Center, underline the college commitment to improving the cohesiveness among the three sites. The electronic hub facility at San Elijo is the first of its kind for the district. An electronic hub is planned later for the Oceanside campus.

To ensure the inclusiveness of all ethnic and socioeconomic groups from our community, the MiraCosta College Planning and Budgeting Council included a new strategic goal for 2000-2001 which addresses the need to increase diversity at the college. That action underlines an ongoing commitment to diversity in staff, students, and cultural programs.

In order to address inclusiveness among the three sites of the college, MiraCosta has expanded efforts to rotate staff members. These efforts have included rotating campus police officers, admissions and records staff members, counselors, and the San Elijo campus dean. Rotation helps staff members to understand the issues that may be unique to each site.

The college has launched an aggressive campaign to recruit non-credit students from the Community Learning Center into the credit programs at both Oceanside and San Elijo. The college sought and received grant funding to help limited English proficiency students succeed in basic skills classes. In addition, the college has sponsored college information nights for prospective students and parents of prospective students.

Accreditation Team Recommendation # 2 - It is recommended that the district respond to the 1992 recommendation by developing a college-wide, comprehensive, and coordinated retention plan with leadership from both instruction and student services. The team

recommends that the district implement this recommendation in a timely fashion. Although it appears that district staff has developed a number of retention strategies, these strategies have not been incorporated into a comprehensive college-wide retention plan, with goals, objectives, and an evaluation process. This does not meet the requirements of the previous team's recommendation.

In 1999-2000, MiraCosta College established an ad hoc Retention and Persistence Committee. The committee worked for an entire academic year to gather information and in May 2000, a formal MiraCosta College Retention Plan was adopted by the Academic Senate Council. The plan addresses the recommendation of the accreditation team by pulling together a variety of retention efforts into one comprehensive, college-wide document. In addition to the overall retention plan, the Academic Senate Council requested and approved a specific list of retention initiatives which would have highest priority and would be implemented as soon as funding and staff time permit. Both documents are attached to this report.

The college sought grant funding for and began operation of a service learning program which now involves nearly 400 students. The program is stable and serves to further the connection between students and the communities from which they come.

MiraCosta College groups such as Friends of Humanities and Friends of Dance sponsor events that bring faculty and students together in order to showcase student talent. More recently, a group called the Faculty Forum has sponsored a series of special lectures and a film festival with an emphasis on interdisciplinary participation. This year the Faculty Forum adopted the theme of Phi Theta Kappa (honor fraternity) "In the Midst of Water: Origin and Diversity of Life" as the theme for these lectures and films. The intended goal of the Faculty Forum is to foster an intellectual atmosphere wherein students and faculty come together and exchange ideas. Participation in these events increases retention and facilitates inclusiveness as students get to know their professors better and feel that they belong to a campus community.

Tangential to the formal retention plan is a district-wide effort to provide attractive and comfortable conversation areas. A college Spaces and Places Committee has worked very hard over the past two years to beautify all three sites and to help college retention efforts by providing opportunities for informal communication among students.

Accreditation Team Recommendation #3 - It is recommended that given the district's enrollment is currently under cap and has been declining, it is essential that the district strengthen its community and student outreach efforts. The team recognized that district staff has implemented a number of student recruitment strategies, primarily through the efforts of student services and the public information office.

Within the last two years MiraCosta College has launched several initiatives designed to increase enrollment to reach the state established cap. The college hired a consultant to prepare a TRIO grant application, which would enable the college to recruit and serve a new population of academically deficient students. The college applied for and received a five-year grant from the

State of California for a new Teaching and Reading Development Partnership effort. This grant will provide resources to recruit area high school students for Palomar and MiraCosta Colleges, to provide initial education courses, and to help the students transfer to California State University, San Marcos, to be trained as teachers.

In May 2000, the college Planning and Budgeting Council approved funding for additional student ambassadors who will recruit students in area elementary, middle, and high schools.

In 1998 the college established a Marketing and Retention Committee which put together a two-year marketing plan to help the college become more visible in the district. The Planning and Budgeting Council subsequently provided a permanent \$85,000 marketing augmentation to the Public Information Office in order to carry out the activities included in the plan.

The several efforts to increase enrollment seem to have paid off. In 1999-2000 the college enrollment grew nearly to cap (see the attached chart).

Accreditation Team Recommendation #4 - It is recommended that the college address the facilities limitations at the Oceanside campus, the coordination of library services across the Oceanside and the San Elijo campuses, and reevaluate the balance between print resources and technology in the library.

MiraCosta College sought and received funding for the construction of a new Child Development Center and a new Library and Technology Hub facility at the Oceanside campus. Construction on the Child Development Center will begin in 2001 and construction on the Library and Electronic Hub will begin in 2002.

The college studied library resources in 1999-2000 and implemented new staffing patterns at Oceanside and San Elijo. The 1999-2000 study recommended that more resources be directed to the purchase of print media. In 2000, the Planning and Budgeting Council authorized a permanent enhancement of \$60,000 for print resources. The planned Library and Electronic Hub at the Oceanside campus was designed to strike a balance between print and electronic media.

Summary Discussion of Self Identified Issues

Standard 1 – The college has created formal links between the Academic Master Plan Committee and other college committees and will continue to assess the planning process.

Standard 2 – The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee is awaiting clarification of procedures regarding sunsetted courses. The college continues to evaluate student and employee survey comments. Efforts continue to demonstrate a concern for equity and efforts to recruit students and staff members who are culturally diverse. MiraCosta College has increased athletic teams since the last accreditation visit by adding women's soccer and intercollegiate surfing. Institutional policies and procedures are reviewed and updated annually.

Standard 3 - The Institutional Research and Planning Office has added a staff member. This person maintains a web page on which data are posted and updated periodically to enable faculty to evaluate trends in enrollment, retention, persistence, and even grade distribution as a part of their program review processes. The college now reports annually on progress made in accomplishing the goals set by the Board of Trustees. The various planning bodies of the college now understand more clearly their roles and responsibilities in the institutional planning processes.

Standard 4– Staff development opportunities for faculty are abundant, and the college has sent staff members to learn about outcomes assessment in a learning environment. New programs are added with the consultation of community members and when needs assessment deems additions to be appropriate. Vocational programs are approved after regional coordination, advisory board approval, and Chancellor's Office approval. A subcommittee of AP&P has conducted course review and has revised procedures for departmental program review. A new scheduling decision process has improved loading and comprehensiveness of all course offerings, while at the same time canceling any multiple sections of low enrollment classes in a timely fashion so that those students from cancelled sections can successfully enroll in other courses. Every attempt is made to offer even small sections which are needed for degree and certificate completion. Every four years each department conducts a program review process to evaluate the viability of current programs and to assure that course or program elimination will occur only when the needs of continuing students have been addressed. MiraCosta College continues to add full time faculty members who provide curricular leadership and help the college improve the full time/part time faculty ratio. The college has added a counselor for non-credit and ESL students and provided innovation grant funds for a study of online counseling. SCANS integration in general education courses continues to be an institutional priority. The college is working to improve rates of course completion and of preparation for transfer. The philosophy and rationale of general education requirements are examined systematically through a revamped program review process. Efforts to study course outlines and update them continue. The Senate has established the technology and pedagogy committee to study asynchronous learning.

Standard 5 – Student workers now sign confidentiality agreements.

Standard 6 – The college has successfully sought state funding for the Library and Technology Hub on the Oceanside campus. A wide array of online resources is available to faculty and students.

Standard 7 – The college continues to study appropriate staffing levels for classrooms and open labs. The college has revised classified performance appraisal processes and timely completion of the process is monitored.

Standard 8 – The college continues to improve campus facilities as funding permits and, most recently, has improved Oceanside campus lighting to address safety concerns. The Facilities Master Plan and the Technology Master Plan are scheduled to be updated in 2000-2001.

Standard 9 – The college has established an internal auditing committee. The district publishes an annual financial report. The bookstore has been contracted out successfully. The college prepared for a disaster drill which will take place in Spring 2001.

Standard 10 – The district's financial condition is monitored carefully and the district is fiscally sound as of Fall 2000. The Board of Trustees has adopted a policy governance model and has identified Ends Policies for the college. Trustee turnover has helped the college to focus efforts on systematic new trustee education. The process for the hiring of faculty members has been revised and now all roles have been clarified.