

# **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

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

**A confidential report prepared for  
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team that  
visited MiraCosta College October 3-6, 2016**

**Frank P. Gornick, Ph.D.  
Chair**

**NOTE: this page shall be added to the External Evaluation Team Report (Team Report), immediately behind the cover page, and shall become part of the final report associated with the review.**

DATE: February 3, 2017

INSTITUTION: MiraCosta College  
One Barnard Drive  
Oceanside, CA 92056

SUBJECT: Commission Revisions to the Team Report

The Team Report provides details of the findings of the evaluation team that visited MiraCosta College October 3-6, 2016 with regard to the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, and should be read carefully and used to understand the team's findings. Upon a review of the Team Report sent to the College, the MiraCosta College Self-Evaluation Report, and supplemental information and evidence provided by the College, the following changes or corrections are noted for the Team Report:

1. The Commission has deleted Eligibility Requirement 19 from College Recommendation 4 to increase effectiveness wherever it occurs in the Team Report.

## List of Team Members

### Chair

Dr. Frank Gornick  
Chancellor  
West Hills Community College District

### Assistant

Dr. Kristin Clark  
President  
West Hills College Lemoore

### Academic Representatives

Ms. Kristina Allende  
Professor of English  
Mt. San Antonio College

Mr. Gary Allen  
ESL Instructor  
Santa Rosa Junior College

Ms. Shawn Abbott  
Faculty, Business and Computers  
College of the Siskiyous

Dr. Lianna Zhao  
Dean, Math, Science, and Engineering  
Irvine Valley College

Mr. James Matthews  
Librarian  
Chabot College

Dr. Laura Ramirez  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
East Los Angeles College

### Administrative Representatives

Ms. Meredith Plummer  
Chief Business Officer  
Copper Mountain College

Dr. Donald Wallace  
Superintendent/President  
Palo Verde College

Dr. Ryan Theule  
Vice President, Canyon Country Campus  
& Grants Development  
College of the Canyons

### Other Representatives

Dr. Christina Leimer  
Executive Director of Planning, Research  
& Institutional Effectiveness/ALO  
College of Marin

## Summary of the External Evaluation Report

**INSTITUTION:** MiraCosta College

**DATES OF VISIT:** Monday, October 3 – Thursday, October 6, 2016

**TEAM CHAIR:** Dr. Frank Gornick

A team of twelve educational professionals made up the accreditation team which visited MiraCosta College on October 3-6, 2016. The purpose of the visit by the evaluation team was to determine whether the college continues to meet accreditation standards, eligibility requirements, Commission policies, and United State Department of Education (USDE) regulations. The team evaluated how well the college is achieving its stated purposes, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement, and submitting recommendations to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges regarding the accredited status of the college.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop on June 29, 2016 and conducted a pre-visit to the campus on September 2, 2016. During this visit, the team chair and team assistant met with campus leadership and key personnel involved in the self-evaluation preparation process. The entire team received team training provided by staff from the ACCJC on August 30, 2016.

The evaluation team received the college's self-evaluation document and related evidence well in advance of the site visit. Team members found it to be a comprehensive document that detailed processes used by the college, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies and USDE regulations. The team confirmed that the self-evaluation report was compiled through broad participation by the entire college community including faculty, staff, students, and administration. The team found that the college provided a very thoughtful self-evaluation containing several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement.

Upon the team's arrival Monday morning, October 3, a tour of the campus at Oceanside (which is the largest campus site) was provided. Members of the team also visited the San Elijo campus and participated in an open forum at that location. In addition, a member of the team visited the Community Learning Center.

The team participated in a reception hosted by MiraCosta College for members of the campus teams to meet with the accreditation team members, at which time discussion took place concerning upcoming meetings and processes.

During the visit, the team conducted approximately 100 formal meetings, interviews, and observations involving College employees, students, and board members. There was ample time for less informal meetings and discussions with the college community. The open

forums, which there were three, allowed the team to interact with members of the community and staff.

The team reviewed numerous materials supporting the self-evaluation report in the team room and electronically, which included document and evidence supporting the Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. Evidence reviewed by the team included, but was not limited to, documents such as institutional plans, program review procedures and reports, student learning outcomes evidence, distance education classes, College policies and procedures, enrollment information, committee minutes and material, and College governance. The team also viewed evidence and documentation through the College's intranet and electronic copies stored on a flash drive.

The team greatly appreciated the enthusiasm and support from the College employees throughout the visit. The team appreciated the assistance of key staff members who assisted the team with requests for individual meetings and other needs throughout the evaluation visit. Campus staff members met every request of the team.

The team found a number of innovative and effective practices and programs and issued a number of commendations to the College. The team found the College satisfies the vast majority of Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations, but issued some recommendations to increase effectiveness.

## **Major Findings and Recommendations of the 2016 External Evaluation Team**

### **Team Commendations**

During the accreditation visit to MiraCosta College, the team recognized several aspects of the College worthy of commendation:

Commendation 1 – The team commends the College for a positive campus culture that promotes student success and engagement with comprehensive student support services offered throughout all campus sites.

Commendation 2 – The team commends the College for the purposeful examination and use of student success data through the collaborative work of student equity, basic skills, and the student success and support program. Student success data is transparent, discussed, and utilized for improvements to student life.

Commendation 3 – The team commends the College for Project Joy, a Teaching and Learning event which was a joint effort between the Academic Senate and the Professional Development Program that promoted the profession of teaching and its impact on student success.

Commendation 4 – The team commends the College for creating the Safe Space Program which aims to increase awareness of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersexed, and asexual/ally communities on campus. More than 200 faculty, staff, and administrators now display “safe space” stickers in their offices.

Commendation 5 – The team commends the College for its integrated planning process which synchronizes all planning and resource allocation processes and ensures that all stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to have a voice at the table.

Commendation 6 – The team commends the College for its Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) calculation.

Commendation 7 – The team commends the College for achieving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the past two years. The award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and reflects the commitment of the Board of Trustees and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting.

Commendation 8 – The team commends the College for excellent Board/CEO relations that have promoted collegiality among all college constituents.

## **Team Recommendations**

As a result of the external evaluation, the team makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1 – In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College’s program review process be evaluated to ensure that all College employees understand that the goal of the process is continuous quality improvement, not simply resource allocation. (I.B.5)

Recommendation 2 – In order to improve effectiveness, the College is encouraged to explore more effective ways to publish and communicate student achievement results that will allow for improved interaction with, and use of, the data for dialog and decision making. (I.B.8)

Recommendation 3 – In order to improve effectiveness, the College is encouraged to integrate and streamline its various plans and, if the strategic plan remains, it should be incorporated into the Board Policy on Institutional Planning. (I.B.9)

Recommendation 4 – In order to improve effectiveness the College is encouraged to utilize student achievement data and evaluation results and learning outcomes assessment to communicate its academic quality to students, prospective students and the public. (I.C.3) (ER 19)

Recommendation 5 – In order to improve the College’s implementation of best practices in Human Resources, the College is encouraged to review its use of terms such as “director” and “supervisor” to ensure there is no intermingling of purely supervisory duties with other classifications of employees. Specifically, a review of all “faculty director” job descriptions might prove useful. (III.A)

Recommendation 6 – In order to increase effectiveness and clearly delineate functions of the CEO, the team recommends the Board revisit current practice for tenure recommendations to include the CEO in this important process. (IV.C)

## Introduction

Oceanside-Carlsbad Junior College (O-CJC) opened in 1934 in a wing at the Oceanside-Carlsbad High School. With just 20 faculty members, approximately 120 students, and only 16 courses, the College was an extension of the Oceanside-Carlsbad Union High School District. In 1956, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) granted the College full accreditation status, and by the end of the decade, the school population grew to 500 full-time students. Due to the College's need for expansion, it separated from the Oceanside-Carlsbad Union High School District in 1960 and became its own entity – the Oceanside-Carlsbad Junior College District. Construction began on the College's new campus, located at its present day hilltop location on Barnard Drive in Oceanside. In 1965, the College adopted a new name: MiraCosta College.

In 1975, the areas served by the San Dieguito Union High School District were annexed to the College, increasing the College's district to include the areas of Del Mar, Solana Beach, Encinitas, Carlsbad, and Oceanside. Because of this, MiraCosta purchased 47 acres in Cardiff to build a site to better accommodate the southern portion of the district. The San Elijo Campus (SEC) opened its doors in 1988. The first semester it was open, nearly 2,500 credit students enrolled. Over the ensuing decades the campus expanded to include new buildings for classrooms, a new student center, and a new science complex.

By 1990 the district enrolled more than 11,000 credit and noncredit students taking classes and in 1995, students began taking classes online. In 1998, the College used local funds to purchase property in Oceanside and in 2000 created a permanent facility, the Community Learning Center (CLC) for its growing adult education program.

Since the college's last self-study accreditation visit in 2010, MiraCosta has undergone further expansion. In 2010 the College opened up the Technology Career Institute (TCI) which has a primary focus on high tech industries in their service area.

MiraCosta's accreditation was last reaffirmed in January 2010.



## **Eligibility Requirements**

### 1. Authority

The team confirmed that MiraCosta College is authorized to operate as a post-secondary, degree-granting institution based on continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The ACCJC is the regional accrediting body recognized by the United State Department of Education and granted authority through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

The College meets the ER.

### 2. Operational Status

The team confirmed that the College is operational and provides educational services to 21,263 unduplicated student enrollments within degree applicable credit courses for the academic year 2014-2015. The College has seen an increase in full time enrollment since 2010-2011 from 29.5% to 34.0% in 2014-2015. More than 66% of the students are pursuing educational goals that relate to degree, certificate, or transfer.

The College meets the ER.

### 3. Degrees

The team confirmed that over 95% of the courses offered lead to an Associate Degree and/or transfer. A 70% majority of MiraCosta College students identify themselves as seeking to transfer or completing an Associate Degree.

The College meets the ER.

### 4. Chief Executive Officer

The evaluation team confirmed that the Governing Board employs a superintendent/president as the chief executive officer of MiraCosta College. The CEO serves as the secretary to the board. The team found that the Governing Board vests requisite authority in the superintendent/president to administer board policies.

The College meets the ER.

### 5. Financial Accountability

The team confirmed that the College engages a qualified audit firm to conduct audits of all financial records. The College has had unqualified audits for the past five years and all results are presented to the Board of Trustee and made available to the public.

The College meets the ER.

## **Compliance with Commission Policies and Federal Regulations**

### **Public Notification of an Evaluation Team Visit and Third Party Comment**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions</i> as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:**

Information regarding the College mission, programs, services, locations, and learning outcomes are posted in various locations around campus, in catalog and class schedules, and on the college website. The College has a new online tool for scheduling classes and planning future semesters (Schedule Builder), advertised on bookmark flyers. Accreditation information is also included on the website. Flyers for programs with class and certificate information as well as faculty contact details are also made available in the student center.

### **Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement
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	have been determined as appropriate to the institution's mission.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level.

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

**Narrative:**

MiraCosta College has defined elements of student achievement performance across the College and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion, degree completion, certificate completion, transfer, CTE measures, and fall-to-fall persistence are the elements of student achievement identified by the College. These elements of student achievement performance for measurement are appropriate to the College mission.

Additionally, the College has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each of these elements. In programs and fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers are included. While job placement rates are included generally, those for specific program completers are not included. The College has recently begun training with GradLeaders, a subscription program that will allow better access to this data.

The institution-set standards for programs across MiraCosta College are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement. The defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education. The results of the assessment of data relevant to the ISS is reported regularly across the campus; however, it is not clear how the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.

The College analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and there have been no instances identified where its performance is not at the expected level.

**Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education’s conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits</i> .

[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:**

Administrative Procedure 4025, Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education, states that “Major or areas of emphasis that provide this depth are composed of a minimum of eighteen (18) units.”

Administrative Procedure 4026, Philosophy and Criteria for International Education, states that “Students participating in regular, semester-length study-abroad programs through study abroad consortia must have at least twelve (12) credit hours of college coursework completed”.

Administrative Procedure 4100, Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates – Associate in Arts or Associate in Science Degree, states that “To obtain an associate degree, students must: A. Complete a minimum of sixty (60) units of approved coursework, including a minimum of eighteen (18) units in a college-defined major.”

Administrative Procedure 4020, Program, Curriculum, and Course Development, states that “For purposes of federal financial aid eligibility, a “credit hour” shall be no less than the following:

- A. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately sixteen weeks for one semester hour of credit or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
- B. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in the paragraph above for other academic activities as established by the college, including laboratory work, internships, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award if credit hours.”

The credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure).

The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the instruction office and the deans and is reliable and accurate across the classroom based courses, lab courses, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practices, such as the nursing program, verified by random checking of MiraCosta spring 2016 credit course class schedule, and talking to the deans and the Vice President of Instruction.

Tuition is consistent across degree programs at \$46 per unit for California residents and \$246 per unit for non-residents.

Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education’s conversion formula and, in practice, verified by random checking of MiraCosta spring 2016 class schedule and talking to the department deans.

The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission “Policy on Institutional Degree and Credit.”

## **Transfer Policies**

### **Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Transfer of Credit</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(ii).]

### **Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

### **Narrative:**

The schedule of classes (p6) offers new MiraCosta College students with previous college experiences an opportunity to petition for prerequisite review and approval. Students are directed to a link for the application and informed they must also complete an assessment, orientation, and advisement.

The 2015-2016 college catalog (p55) informs students of the 12 unit residency requirement for conferral of a degree from MiraCosta College.

The 2015-2016 college catalog (p56) informs students to submit all transcripts from any institutions where coursework may be applied for conferral of a degree and that they must be on file before submission of the petition for graduation.

The 2015-2016 college catalog (p69) informs students of the opportunity to apply coursework completed at any U.S. regionally accredited college toward the AA-T or AS-T.

Reference to C-ID, comparable/equivalent content and student learning outcomes, and appropriate prerequisites is used in each publication.

The 2015-2016 college catalog (p27, 30, 31, 69) informs students of the ability to use Advanced Placement, College Level Examination Program, and International Baccalaureate credits toward general education credit and/or CSU admission units.

Foreign transcript evaluation is clearly defined in the college catalog and on the college website.

Board Policies and Administrative Procedures were updated in May and June 2016.

**Distance Education and Correspondence Education**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student’s grade) or correspondence education (online activities are primarily “paperwork related,” including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing examinations, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has appropriate means and consistently applies those means for verifying the identity of a student who participates in a distance education or correspondence education course or program, and for ensuring that student information is protected.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:**

The technological needs associated with distance education are delineated and incorporated into technology planning. The Academic Information Services Department (AIS) proactively oversees student verification and single sign-on capabilities. Exam proctoring,



for distance education students, is also available at the College and is utilized extensively. College budgetary commitments are consistent and indicative of the College's support of its distance education technology infrastructure.

MiraCosta College thoughtfully addresses distance education planning and procedures in its Online Education Plan, as evidenced by the 2015-2018 Online Education Plan. The Courses and Programs Committee oversees the integrity of distance education offerings and clearly specifies the policies and procedures applicable to distance education courses. Interviews with a sampling of distance faculty confirm the adherence to MiraCosta College's stated policies.

### **Student Complaints**

#### **Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student complaint files for the previous six years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> and the <i>Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

#### **Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

#### **Narrative:**

The college website contains a page entitled Concerns and Complaints that gives a full explanation of how one goes about filing a complaint, defines what a complaint is, provides applicable policies and procedures, and much other useful information. Student complaints are managed in the college’s Maxient database, and a previous version for earlier years, which contains the previous six years (since the last comprehensive visit) of files. The files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.

**Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status</i> .
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status as described above in the section on <u>Student Complaints</u> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(vii); 668.6.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:**

The College has fulfilled third party notifications. The Board of Trustees held two meetings on the Self Evaluation Report. The College has posted the report and informed the public of the team visit and the three open forums where comments were encouraged. The local newspaper also ran an article on the visit and listed the open forums. The ACCJC has not received any third party comments.

**Title IV Compliance**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE.
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations</i> and the <i>Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

**Conclusion Check-Off:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

**Narrative:**

MiraCosta College has maintained unqualified audits for the past five years, demonstrates the fiscal and administrative capacity to address issues, and has held student loan default rates under the USDE threshold. Contractual relationships comply with standards and requirements noted above.

# **STANDARD I**

## **MISSION, ACADEMIC QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRITY**

### **Standard I.A: Mission**

#### **General Observations**

The Standard IA section of the Self Study is clearly written and the evidence presented is sufficient to demonstrate that MiraCosta College meets the standard. The mission statement is widely publicized and reflects the institution's educational purpose, its intended population, and the types of educational programs and services it provides. The mission statement and college planning and evaluation efforts are clearly organized and connected.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

MiraCosta College has a regular three-year review of its mission, which clearly defines the institution's broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning and achievement. Evidence includes minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting (2011) approving the former mission statement. The 2015 Board of Trustees agenda identifies approval of a revision to the mission statement for the adoption of the baccalaureate biomanufacturing degree program and substituted the word "undergraduate" for "associate". (I.A.1) (ER 6)

The evidence demonstrates the College's integrated and regular review of data elements and the inclusion of those elements in determining whether the mission directs institutional priorities. Through the articulation of its Institutional Goals, the Comprehensive Master Plan, its Strategic Plan, and the annual program review process, MiraCosta College uses data to measure how effectively it is accomplishing its mission. One example of this process is that program review authors are required to explicitly link their plans to Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategic Plan goals. (I.A.2)

The Self Study and supporting evidence provide a detailed explanation of the resource allocation process. The evidence is robust and demonstrates a strong link between planning, decision making, resource allocation, and the college mission. The program review document, as described above, is linked to the mission goals and is a factor in resource allocation recommendations made by the Budget Planning Committee. In evaluating program review documents, a rubric is used which asks if the requests are directly aligned with the mission. The action plan outlined within the Strategic Plan has clearly expressed outcomes, metrics, and responsible parties. Through this processes, the College aligns its programs and services with its mission. (I.A.3)

The mission is widely publicized as evidenced by its presence in several areas on the College website, in the College Catalog, the Program Review Handbook, the Student Planner and Handbook, and many other places. Additionally, it is posted in various meeting rooms and

public spaces around the campus. As noted above, the College also conducts a regular review of the mission statement, making updates when necessary. (I.A.4) (ER 6)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets Standard I.A and ER 6.

## **Standard I.B: Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness**

### **General Observations**

The narrative is well organized and clearly defines and explains the integrated planning process. The use of data to support student learning, student achievement, self-evaluation, and allocation of resources is well documented. The use of disaggregated data is also evident in college level and program level dialogue and planning.

The college process for resource allocation is clearly defined, transparent, and streamlined. The SER and interviews with college personnel reflect a strong link of program planning as it relates to resource allocation to the college mission.

Board Policy 2410 requires review and revision of board policies and administrative procedures. Board Policy 2510 requires collegial governance participation in policy and procedure review and modification and Administrative Procedure 2410 describes this review process. The College's Governance Manual, based in these Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, further delineates the process. Examples provided demonstrate that policies and practices are evaluated and modified in instructional programs, student and learning support services, resource management and governance processes to improve the institution's effectiveness and accomplish its mission. (I.B.7)

The College makes student achievement and learning outcomes data available to employees in its portal and has been increasingly conducting assessments and evaluations of student achievement and sharing and discussing these results in committees and college forums. These data and findings are used to determine institutional strengths and weaknesses and set priorities.

In their Analysis and Evaluation, the College says "to increase its institutional effectiveness it will explore more effective ways to publish and communicate student achievement results that will allow for improved interaction with, and use of, the data for dialog and decision making."

The College integrates program review, planning and resource allocation in a manner that helps to establish and fund its priorities, accomplish its mission and improve institutional effectiveness and academic quality. The College's governance system is the primary mechanism through which the planning, budgeting and program review processes are carried out. While requests for new funding come through the program review process, the fixed

costs and budget assumptions are reviewed annually by the Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) as well. Assessment of learning outcomes, which is incorporated into program review, is managed through the Outcomes Assessment Committee with assessment and discussion occurring to some extent in most academic and student support departments. The College's capacity for producing student achievement data and evaluating programs and initiatives has improved with the expanded staffing in the Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (RPIE) department. RPIE staff participates on committees such as the Student Success Committee and help facilitate dialog about data and research findings and their implications for actions that can aid in achieving the College's planning priorities and goals. Long-range and short-range plans include educational and student support services as well as human, physical, technology and financial resources.

Each component of this integrated planning process is in flux, usually changing as a result of examining the effectiveness of the structures and processes. For example, the program review process has shifted from six years, to a three year mid-term update, and is now an annual cycle. The Outcomes Assessment Committee was reorganized to include non-faculty personnel. The College has plans for, and is in the process of, incorporating new statewide initiatives into their planning process as well as integrating the annual data review – having joined Achieving the Dream to aid in the College's investigation of student equity issues and help to integrate the SSSP, Equity and Basic Skills Plans which are new California Community College Chancellor's Office requirements. The College will be re-writing its Integrated Planning Manual as it works to revise some of its plans and processes. It has been difficult to determine the need for and relationship between some of the institutional plans and the various descriptions and models do not all correspond. The Strategic Plan is not mentioned at all in the Comprehensive Master Plan introduction nor in the Board Policy on Institutional Planning (Board Policy 3250).

MiraCosta College has demonstrated a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialog about student learning outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. This is seen through the College's learning outcome assessment and reporting, the program review process, and the College's participation in Achieving the Dream. The campus dialog on student learning and achievement is broad based and tied in to achieving campus goals and budget; and the use of data to support student learning, student achievement, self-evaluation, and allocation of resources is well documented. The use of disaggregated data is also evident in College level and program level dialogue and planning. There is a strong link of program planning, as it relates to resource allocation, to the College mission.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan and the Educational Plan Addendum are robust and demonstrate the college's use of data and processes that support student learning and achievement. The college has engaged in two years of dialogue around basic skills student achievement. An example was offered of using the Student Success Committee narrative surrounding basic skills students to changes in the assessment practices and adoption of multiple measures. The results include the placement of students in higher level English and

math. However, no data offered that supports increased success in respective courses. (I.B.4)

The college demonstrates a culture on continuous improvement as noted in the transition of a six year program review and three year mid-term update to an annual program review. The review process includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Data is robust, internal, external, and disaggregated. The data is disaggregated by face to face and online, and a number of student level factors. The program review includes a reflection and planning component at the program/department level is scored and validated. The program review process is also evaluated and modified based on survey feedback from campus and committee members. (I.B.5)

The development of the 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan and the Educational Plan Addendum included analyses of disaggregated student performance data. This effort resulted in the identification of performance gaps to which the college developed clear objectives. Use of disaggregated data is evident in other college planning efforts including the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), Equity and Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) plans. Moreover, the college ISLO assessment and evaluation is also disaggregated at the student level which facilitates robust dialogue and analyses. (I.B.6)

Board Policy 2410, Board Policy 2510 and Administrative Procedure 2410 require policy and procedure review and collegial governance participation in this process. The College Governance Manual describes the process for moving proposed changes of board policies through the governance system, Administrative Procedures are disseminated to relevant governance committees by College Council and this Council ultimately approves or declines committee revisions. Board Policies use this same approach, but instead of College Council as the final arbiter, Board Policies approved by College Council go to the president and then to the Board of Trustees (flowchart on page 5 of Governance Manual). (I.B.7)

February 2016 minutes of the Courses and Programs Committee and its Curriculum Committee showing agreement to review all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and recognition that several Board Policies and Administrative Procedures will need to be reviewed and revised to implement baccalaureate degree. March 2016 minutes of this body shows development and review of seven Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, four related to the baccalaureate and the rest to other curriculum issues. The following policies and procedures were created to advance implementing the baccalaureate in biomanufacturing: Board Policy 4100B and Administrative Procedure 4100B relate to graduation requirements for the baccalaureate; and Administrative Procedure 4025B establishes the criteria and philosophy for the baccalaureate and general education. (I.B.7)

Their participation in Achieving the Dream resulted in changing Administrative Procedures related to Satisfactory Academic Progress and requirements for students on academic probation as they reviewed data and learned that their practice of allowing students to continue for three semesters while on probation (though without Board of Governors (BOG) eligibility) was detrimental rather than helping students succeed. Instead, they shortened the time period students are allowed to be on probation and required participation in particular

support services. This change was reported by the VP for Student Services in a group meeting focused on Achieving the Dream and Bridge to Success in Math on October 4, 2016. (I.B.7)

When data showed the success rates of students placing into developmental math and English and the disproportionate impact by demographic group, placement testing was modified to instead use multiple measures that include high school GPA and English and math courses taken in high school. The effects of this change in practice was evaluated and showed that 14% more students placed into transfer level English than under the old placement testing model with Hispanic/Latino students making the greatest gains, 20% more placed into college level. This change was described in a meeting with RPIE on October 3 and the AtD meeting mentioned above. The old and new placement criteria are described and evaluation data shown in the report entitled “Preliminary Evaluation of MiraCosta’s new Models for Placement and Accelerated Pathways in English” spring 2016 provided by RPIE. (I.B.7)

As shown in their Governance Manual, the College governance system is evaluated annually for continual improvement. College Council reviews results and recommendations from committees. Proposed changes are forwarded to all four councils for approval. These reviews have led to numerous substantive changes including the creation of an Institutional Program Review Committee, improvements to the Courses and Programs Committee, replacement of the Student Interests Committee with the Student Success Committee, creating the College Council, expanding the Outcomes Assessment Committee and deleting the Institutional Effectiveness Committee that demonstrate the continuous quality improvement of the governance structures at MiraCosta College. (I.B.7; IV.A.7)

An interview with Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) members revealed that members had a good understanding of the participatory planning process, as they could articulate how the process works to a fine level of detail, and understood the evolution of the processes over time. As an example, the evolution of their Integrated Planning Model (IPM) to include Resource Category Planning (RCP) demonstrates that they evaluate their processes and make necessary changes over time. The College also has participatory processes in place to resolve any possible disputes that may arise. (I.B.7; IV.A.2)

Policies related to resource management are included in the College’s regular review of Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and one such review is delineated in the Budget and Planning Committee Minutes dates September 16, 2016. Also, the College undergoes actuarial studies every two years to assess retiree health benefit obligations and, in considering going out for a bond, the Board directed staff to maintain the 15% minimum total reserve to position the College for a favorable bond rating. (I.B.7)

The College has been increasingly conducting assessments and evaluations of student achievement and sharing and discussing these results in committees, such as the Student Success Committee and the Budget and Planning Committee, and college forums as evidenced by interviews with RPIE, interviews with Counselors and Academic Senators, a session on Achieving the Dream and the Bridge to Success in Math, and Assessment Day (I.B.8-4) as well as results of studies such as “Preliminary Evaluation of MiraCosta’s new



Models for Placement and Accelerated Pathways in English” spring 2016. SLOs and a summary of assessment activity and some results are available on their website (Student Learning Outcomes webpage) and PSLO statements are included in their catalog.

Employees feel use of these data has deepened their knowledge of the institution and, along with the program review process – which also uses institutional data – helped them see their connection to institutional priorities.

Interviews with the Academic Senate, BPC, and others demonstrate that the program review process has changed from six years, to a three year mid-term update, to annually. It includes student achievement and learning outcomes data, as well as resource allocation requests, which are ranked and successively prioritized through various managers and committees before reaching the Budget and Planning Committee for final recommendations. Further, fixed costs, budget assumptions and the draft annual institutional budget are reviewed by the BPC.

Outcomes assessment is required each year (though the cycle seems to have changed over time based on review of information recorded in TracDat) and outcomes and results are maintained in TracDat with a summary posted on the Student Learning Outcomes webpage. Results are discussed in departments and at a college-wide Assessment Day. The RPIE staff has been expanded (per an interview with them) so the institution has greater capacity to provide data, conduct research and evaluation and facilitate dialog that helps to determine ways to improve and address institutional priorities. Multiple studies were provided to show these analyses (Learning Communities, Placement and Accelerated Pathways, SSSP Report). In the interview with the BPC and another with the counselors and VP for Student Services, the effect of sharing data and results is a much broader understanding of why decisions are being made, growth in the College’s use and understanding of data, more accurate and accessible data, cross-departmental dialogue around results and actions and knowledge of how individuals and departments relate to institutional goals and priorities.

An interview with BPC members revealed that members had a good understanding of the participatory planning process, could articulate how it works to a fine level of detail and understood the evolution of the processes over time. However, the plethora of plans and the relationship between them is confusing to the review team. In the interview with the BPC, the CBO drew the relationship between the CMP, Educational Plan, Facilities Plan and Strategic Plan on a white board but the strategic plan seems to be outside of the flow. Further, its placement in the Educational Master Plan Addendum (I.B.9-1) beginning on page 23 of the document seems out of order relative to the CBO’s diagram. The Strategic Plan is not shown in the Board Policy on Institutional Planning (Board Policy 3250) or in the Resource Allocation Process & Flowchart legend, though it is shown in the model from the IPM on page 120 of the ISER.

MiraCosta College demonstrates a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. Dialogue about student learning outcomes is evident at both the program and institutional level. All programs assess outcomes, have a dialogue about results, and take action. This dialogue continues in

governance committees. The College's program review process is the place for the documentation of SLO activity. Additionally, the College sustains dialogue about student equity and institutional-set standards. (I.B.1, I.B.3)

MiraCosta College defines and regularly assesses student learning outcomes (SLOs) for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. Each official Course Outline of Record must include at least one SLO. The organization of collaborative discussions about SLOs varies with department. All College academic programs have Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are published in the College Catalog. The Outcomes Assessment Committee provides a workshop and faculty support for program assessment methods. Distance Education courses have the same content as those taught in a face-to-face modality. Departments are prompted to disaggregate SLO data by modality. All student and learning support services have established SLOs for their programs, as has the College Library, and the President's Division has established Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUOs). Additionally, the College assesses both General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs). (I.B.2) (ER 11)

MiraCosta College has established institution-set standards for student achievement. After extensive analysis and discussion, the Student Success Committee (SSC) recommended either the statewide average or the College's prior year data average be used for the standard of performance. Both the SCC and the Board of Trustees annually reviews and assesses college-level progress toward the standards. MiraCosta complies with the Federal disclosure for Gainful Employment Data for each degree and certificate program, it is provided on the portal. The results are published on the Student Success Dashboard within the College's portal and on the college's website. (I.B.3) (ER 11)

MiraCosta College's 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan and the Educational Plan Addendum are robust and demonstrate the College's use of data and processes that support student learning and achievement. The College has engaged in two years of dialogue around basic skills student achievement. An example was offered of using the Student Success Committee narrative surrounding basic skills students to changes in the assessment practices and adoption of multiple measures. The results include the placement of students in higher level English and math. (I.B.4)

The review process includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Data is robust, internal, external, and disaggregated. The data is disaggregated by face to face and online, and a number of student level factors. The program review includes a reflection and planning component at the program/department level and it is scored/validated. The program review process is also evaluated and modified based on survey feedback from campus and committee members. However, the process does not appear to close the loop on action plans that do not require resources, evaluate prior action plans, nor evaluate the impact of resource allocation. (I.B.5)

The development of MiraCosta College's 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan and the Educational Plan Addendum included analyses of disaggregated student performance data. This effort resulted in the identification of performance gaps to which the college

developed clear objectives. Use of disaggregated data is evident in other college planning efforts including the BSI, Equity and SSSP plans. Moreover, the college ISLO assessment and evaluation is also disaggregated at the student level which facilitates robust dialogue and analyses. (I.B.6)

MiraCosta College's Governance Manual clearly describes the process for moving proposed changes of Board Policies through the governance system. The College's participation in Achieving the Dream resulted in changes to Administrative Procedures related to requirements for students on academic probation, as data showed that the practice of allowing students to continue for three semesters while on probation was detrimental rather than beneficial to student success. The College also implemented the use of multiple measures for placement, including high school GPA, and analyzed the resulting data that showed an increase in placement levels and success. The College governance system is evaluated annually, and those evaluations have led to substantive changes in college processes. (I.B.7)

MiraCosta College has been increasingly conducting assessments and evaluations of student achievement and sharing and discussing these results in committees, such as the Student Success Committee and the Budget and Planning Committee, and College forums. SLOs and a summary of assessment activity and some results are available on the College's website (Student Learning Outcomes webpage), and PSLO statements are included in the College Catalog. Employees of the College express that use of data has deepened their knowledge of the institution and, along with the program review process which also uses institutional data, has helped them see their connection to institutional priorities. (I.B.8)

Outcomes assessment is required each year, and outcomes and results are maintained in TracDat with a summary posted on the Student Learning Outcomes webpage. Results are discussed in departments and at a college-wide Assessment Day. As the RPIE staff has been expanded, the College has greater capacity to provide data, conduct research and evaluation, and facilitate dialog that helps to determine ways to improve and address institutional priorities. While the College has a Strategic Plan, it resides outside of the flow of the CMP, the EMP, and the Facilities Plan. Also, the Strategic Plan is not mentioned in the College's Board Policy on Institutional Planning. (I.B.9)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets the Standard.

In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College's program review process be evaluated to ensure that all College employees understand that the goal of the process is continuous quality improvement, not simply resource allocation. (I.B.5)

In order to improve effectiveness, the College is encouraged to explore more effective ways to publish and communicate student achievement results that will allow for improved interaction with, and use of, the data for dialog and decision making." (I.B.8)

In order to improve effectiveness, the College is encouraged to integrate and streamline its various plans and, if the strategic plan remains, it should be incorporated into the Board Policy on Institutional Planning. (I.B.9)

## **Standard I.C: Institutional Integrity**

### **General Observations**

The College uses specific review processes to assure clarity, accuracy and integrity of information provided to all constituents, including the public, for each component of this standard: mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs and student support services. One piece of evidence provided to show consistent use of the required accreditation status language is missing a part of that required language. (I.C.1) (ER 20)

The catalog contains all of the catalog requirements in ER20 and there are processes for review, approval and accuracy checking to assure precise, accurate and current information. (I.C.2) (ER20)

The College makes student achievement and learning outcomes data available to employees in its portal and has been increasingly conducting assessments and evaluations of student achievement and sharing and discussing these results in committees and college forums. The College makes SLOs and a summary of activity and results available on their website as well as PSLO statements in their catalog. (I.C.3) (ER19)

Degree and certificate requirements are published in the catalog along with at least one PSLO for each program. The awards' purpose and content are included as well. (I.C.4)

The College reviews policies and procedures through its governance system with Vice Presidents having responsibility for certain policies. All Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are posted on its website. (I.C.5)

The College provides information on cost in multiple places and forms. It began publishing actual costs in the 2015-2016 Catalog. Previously only published types of expenses that could be expected were published, not the actual dollar amount of the cost. (I.C.6)

The College publishes and uses board policies on academic freedom and responsibility. (I.C.7)

The College has policies and procedures that promote honesty, responsibility and academic integrity among all constituents. (I.C.8)

The College has a policy and means of addressing personal conviction and professionally accepted views. Presenting data and information fairly and objectively is addressed in the faculty evaluation process. (I.C.9)

The College is a public institution that does not seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews but does specify a student code of conduct and a code of ethics that applies to all faculty, staff and administrators. (I.C.10)

No curricula are offered in foreign locations. (I.C.11)

In general, the College complies with accreditation requirements for notification, disclosure and posting of accredited status. However, one piece of evidence provided to show consistent use of the required accreditation status language is missing part of that required language. (I.C.12) (ER 21)

The College demonstrates honesty and integrity in relationships with external agencies and complies with regulations and statutes. It delineates its correspondence and responses to accreditors and results of visits and lists agencies to which the College reports as well as the originators of regulations they comply with. (I.C.13) (ER 21)

No commitments pre-empt that of high quality education. The College is a public non-profit educational institution. It has a Board conflict of interest policy and standards of practice in which Board members commit not to use their position for personal benefit. In addition, there are codes of ethics for constituent groups that prohibit profit-making when carrying out their institutional roles. (I.C.14)

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College uses specific review processes to assure clarity, accuracy and integrity of information provided for each component of this standard: mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs and student support services. Board minutes show updating the mission and substantive change process approval for the baccalaureate offering (page 123) and each place the mission is published it is included in those publications' quality assurance processes. The catalog shows at least one PSLO for each program and the Outcomes Assessment Committee assures the integrity of learning outcomes information published on the College website and in the course outline of record. The Office of Instruction assures accuracy and currency of all information in the Catalog, including ISLOs and PSLOs and educational program information. The Public Information Office collaborates with multiple departments to assure information in flyers, brochures and the College website accurately reflect information in the catalog. (I.A.1-2; I.C.1)

All evidence cited in the ISER was checked for consistency of required accreditation status language. The statement of accredited status is consistent in three of the four pieces of evidence cited in the ISER. The annual student planner (page 127) is one of those pieces of evidence and it does not include the line about where to find additional information or file complaints nor does it mention the U.S. Department of Education. (I.C.1-11)

The College's 2015-2016 catalog contains all ER 20 required elements and the process for reviewing and approving facts, requirements, policies and procedures. (I.C.1, 2) (ER 20)

The College has been increasingly conducting assessments and evaluations of student achievement and sharing and discussing these results in committees and college forums. This is evidenced by interviews with RPIE, a session on Achieving the Dream and the Bridge to Success in Math, Assessment Day as well as results of studies such as “Preliminary Evaluation of MiraCosta’s new Models for Placement and Accelerated Pathways in English” spring 2016. (I.C.3) (ER19)

The College relies on the Chancellor’s Office Student Success Scorecard to make student achievement data available to the public, including current and prospective students, and provides a link to the Scorecard on the College website. SLOs and a summary of assessment activity and some results are available on their website (Student Learning Outcomes webpage) and PSLO statements are included in their catalog. ACCJC Annual Reports are posted on the College website accreditation page and these contain data on institution-set standards and information about assessment practices. (I.C.3) (ER19)

The College uses documented assessment of student learning and evaluation of student achievement to proactively inform students and the public about academic quality on its portal and specific program information. The College states in its Analysis and Evaluation section of this standard that it is “exploring more effective ways to publish and communicate results of student learning and achievement” (page 132).

The College includes very concise clear descriptions of the purpose, content, course requirements, PSLOs and what each program leads to in its 2015-2016 catalog. (I.C.4)

Policies, procedures and publications are regularly reviewed to assure integrity in representing the College’s mission, programs and services. Board Policy 2410, Board Policy 2510 and Administrative Procedure 2410 require policy and procedure review and collegial governance participation in this process. Student Success Committee minutes include a list of Board Policies and Administrative Procedures this committee is reviewing. February 2016 minutes of the Courses and Programs Committee and its Curriculum Committee showing agreement to review all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and recognition that several Board Policies and Administrative Procedures will need to be reviewed and revised to implement the baccalaureate degree. March 2016 minutes of this body shows development and review of seven Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, four related to the baccalaureate and the rest to other curriculum issues. Review processes for publications are described in I.C.1 and evidence. (I.C.5)

The College provides information on cost in multiple places and forms. It began publishing actual costs in the 2015-2016 Catalog. The college has Fees and Financial Aid Net Price Calculator webpages. Textbook costs and materials fees are included in the spring 2016 credit course schedule. Their Gainful Employment Program disclosure webpage includes estimated total cost to complete each program. (I.C.6)

The College publishes and uses board policies on academic freedom and responsibility as well as an institutional code of ethics (Board Policy 4030 Academic Freedom and College and Administrative Procedure 3050 Institutional Code of Ethics). In a discussion with the

Academic Senate about how these policies are used, they cited selecting their own texts and writing their own syllabi—though in alignment with the course outline of record. (I.C.7)

The College has policies and procedures that promote honesty, responsibility and academic integrity among all constituent groups. There is an Institutional Code of Ethics that applies to all (Board Policy 3050 and Administrative Procedure 3050), a student code of conduct (Board Policy 5500, Administrative Procedure 5500 and Administrative Procedure 5520), distance education administrative procedures that promote academic integrity in courses offered in this modality, (Administrative Procedure 4105) and a Board of Trustees code of ethics policy (Board Policy 2715). In addition to ethics training through the California Fair Political Practices Commission Board, a conflict of interest policy and standards of practice delineates that members of the Board commit to not use their position to benefit themselves. These are published on the College website and in the College catalog. (I.C.8)

The College has a policy and means of addressing personal conviction and professionally accepted views: Board Policy 4030 Academic Freedom and Administrative Procedure 3050 Institutional Code of Ethics. In a discussion with the Academic Senate about how they know faculty are presenting data and information fairly and objectively, they cited the faculty evaluation process which includes peer review and syllabi review. Fair and objective presentation is part of the peer review/observation of instruction process and it is part of the tenure review form (I.C.9-1). Peer evaluation is being added to the associate faculty review process. They also have a Student Complaint process. (I.C.9)

The student evaluation of instructor form asks about faculty treating students fairly and equitably and about the instructor emphasizing questioning and careful thinking and welcoming questions and/or classroom discussion and comments. The tenure plan includes evaluation of instructors' ability to respect students' rights and needs. (I.C.9)

The College is a public institution that does not seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews but does specify a student code of conduct and disciplinary procedures (Board Policy 5500, Administrative Procedure 5500 and Administrative Procedure 5520 and Student Conduct in 2015-2016 College Catalog) and a code of ethics that applies to all faculty, staff and administrators (Board Policy 3050 and Administrative Procedure 3050). (I.C.10)

No curricula are offered in foreign locations. (I.C.11)

The College posts accreditation materials on its website and communications are shared by the superintendent/president related to the accreditation process, team visits and any actions taken. The College disclosed to the public its June 2011 Probation sanction from ACCJC on its website and in the local newspaper. In addition, the College submits substantive change proposals including to offer numerous degrees and certificates primarily through distance education and another proposal to offer a baccalaureate. Overall, the College complies with accreditation requirements for notification, disclosure and posting of accredited status. However, one piece of evidence provided to show consistent use of the required accreditation status language is missing part of that required language. The statement of accredited status in the annual student planner (page 127) does not include the line about where to find

additional information or file complaints nor does it mention the U.S. Department of Education. (I.C.5; I.C.6; I.C.7; I.C.11; I.C.12)

The College demonstrates honesty and integrity in relationships with external agencies and complies with regulations and statutes. It delineates its correspondence and responses to accreditors and results of visits and lists agencies to which the College reports as well as the originators of regulations they comply with on pages 146 and 147 of the ISER. (I.C.13)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets the Standard.

In order to improve effectiveness the College is encouraged to utilize student achievement data and evaluation results and learning outcomes assessment to communicate its academic quality to students, prospective students and the public. (I.C.3) (ER 19)



## **STANDARD II**

### **STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **Standard II.A: Instructional Programs**

##### **General Observations**

Consistent with its mission, MiraCosta College offers a wide variety of educational opportunities to a diverse population of learners. The College regularly reviews and enhances its courses, its programs, its degrees, and its certificates. Student learning outcomes are identified and assessed at course, program and institutional levels. Faculty ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet accepted academic standards. Under the supervision of the Courses and Programs Curriculum Committee (CPCC), pre-collegiate, certificate and degree curriculum offerings are evaluated for academic appropriateness. Learning support services are extensive and aligned to the varied needs of students pursuing varied academic goals. The College offers a robust schedule of classes, at multiple locations and online, to facilitate students' ability to complete academic goals in a timely manner. For each of the College's degree programs, there is a focused area of study and a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy. Graduates of career-technical certificates and degrees demonstrate competencies that meet employment standards. Program eliminations, while rare, are implemented in a manner respectful of student impact.

MiraCosta regularly assesses courses and programs for quality and currency. Through program review, data is reviewed and emerging improvement opportunities are identified. Systematic evaluation extends to collegiate, pre-collegiate and career-technical courses and programs. All instructional programs, regardless of location or delivery mode, are subject to evaluation through the annual program review process. The College culture supports additional evaluative undertakings, such as Achieving the Dream and the Bridge to Success Math Program, prompting reflection, dialogue, and strategies for improvement.

##### **Findings and Evidence**

MiraCosta offers a wide variety of programs in support of degree obtainment, transfer, and employment. MiraCosta also offers a noncredit program which, in recent years, represents about 12% of all course offerings. Through the Courses and Program Curriculum Committee (CPCC), the Institutional Program Review Committee, CTE Advisory Committees and dialogue regarding program and course outcomes, MiraCosta College monitors the appropriateness of its academic offerings. The Online Education Plan 2015-2018 explicitly references the intent for online education to reflect the College's mission and institutional goals. Student achievement data is collected and disaggregated to evaluate instructional programs by means and location of delivery. Annual reporting to the California Community College Chancellor's Office includes data documenting the degree, certificate and transfer achievements of MiraCosta students. (II.A.1) (ER 9; ER 11)

In order to continuously evaluate and improve courses and programs, MiraCosta College maintains a robust system of curriculum review, professional development, and faculty evaluation. The comprehensive course and program review process is articulated in the Curriculum and Program Committee Handbook. In addition, in order to monitor currency in disciplines, the College has a well-developed professional development program requiring contract faculty to accumulate 60 hours of professional development per academic year and associate faculty two hours for each lecture hour equivalent. The faculty evaluation and tenure review process includes a professional development report as well as a written self-reflective component. (II.A.2)

The MiraCosta College Outcomes Assessment Committee is responsible for overseeing the outcomes assessment process. The committee's webpage displays outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels. Approved course outlines and course syllabi consistently include student learning outcomes (or a link to the outcomes on the Outcomes Assessment Committee webpage). Outcomes and assessment results are a structured part of the Program Review process. Each department and program has a designated SLO lead person that records information in the TracDat system, which is used to collect the results of outcomes assessment. A sampling of TracDat assessments and program reviews reveals that the extent of assessment, analysis and dialogue occurs across departments and programs. In the effort to integrate outcomes assessment into the College culture, MiraCosta hosted several all-college SLO events. The College's commitment to further developing the impact of student learning outcomes is evidenced in the Quality Focus Essay, in which an action project has been developed to "strengthen the use of outcomes assessment results for continuous improvement." (II.A.3)

In order to assure appropriate rigor and oversight of pre-collegiate curriculum, the Courses and Programs Curriculum Committee (CPCC) thoroughly reviews all courses. The committee's membership composition is structured to include both a non-credit and pre-transfer faculty member. Currently, the Chair as well as two of the faculty members on the committee have expertise in pre-collegiate curriculum. MiraCosta College is engaged in the Achieving the Dream network, and in that process identified three areas to improve: completion of the basic skills sequence; the student equity gap; and the need for greater student support in the first year. The College completed the first year inquiry stage of the Achieving the Dream process and is now in the design stage. In support of its pre-collegiate curriculum, the College offers a variety of student success programs as well as learning communities that involve links between pre-transfer and transfer level courses. For example, MiraCosta's Bridge to Success Math program aids students in acquiring the math skills necessary to achieve placement test results leading to an accelerated math pathway. The well over 90% success rate in this program since its inception in 2014 attests to its effectiveness. The primary facility for non-credit offerings, the Community Learning Center (CLC), offers resources comparable to those at the main campus with full-time non-credit faculty, an admissions and records office, tutorial services, library staff and others. The College's commitment to equitable support services and its desire to foster additional improvement in this area is documented in its Quality Focus essay. Specifically, the following action plan is noted: "Improve on the completion of student educational goals and

close the achievement gap via the development of integrated learning and support experiences.” (II.A.4)

According to the webpage for the Courses and Programs Committee, “The Courses and Programs Curriculum Committee (CPCC) acts by means of careful study and open discussion to assure the district’s curriculum has consistent quality, rigor, and compliance with state regulations and standards.” The 2016-2017 CPCC Handbook documents the College’s procedures and guidelines to foster program development in accordance with its standards. Course outlines of record (CORs) are updated every six years. CORs are reviewed and recommended by the CPCC to the Academic Senate and board of trustees for approval before being submitted to the Chancellor’s Office. Students complete courses in seven designated general education categories. All degrees offered by MiraCosta include a minimum of 60 units of degree-applicable course work and a minimum of 18 units in a major or an area of emphasis. MiraCosta offers eight associate degrees for transfer. MiraCosta’s credit courses comply with Carnegie units and hours of instruction. The College’s noncredit courses are approved by the board of trustees and Chancellor’s Office, and are scheduled for the number of hours prescribed in the COR. (II.A.5) (ER 12)

MiraCosta College attempts to schedule classes to meet the needs of a diverse student body (day, twilight, evening, Friday, Saturday, and online). At the department level, where faculty are familiar with course sequencing for degrees, certificates, and transfer, department chairs work to develop schedules that will provide students with the courses they need. MiraCosta pursues continuous improvement in its scheduling efforts. The College recently created and committed to a predictable two-year schedule rotation, published as the 2016-2017 Student Guide. In addition, the College uses EDDI as a scheduling management tool and is forecasting student demand by mining Ed Plan data from DegreeWorks. CTE course-rotation matrices are designed to allow students to complete and gain employment in a time frame that meets their individual needs. (II.A.6)

The demographics of MiraCosta credit students reflect a student body that is predominantly under age 24 (57%) and female (57%). 37% of students are economically disadvantaged. 26% of credit students carry a full-time load (minimum 12 units). 48% of the credit student population is white, while Latinos make up 33%. From 2009–2015, approximately 57% of incoming students assessed into transfer-level English, while approximately 20% assessed into transfer-level math. To meet the needs of this diverse group of students, MiraCosta’s instructional delivery modes include face-to-face, hybrid, and 100% online formats. Departments consider student demand and program review findings when they propose courses to be offered via distance education. The College utilizes a variety of peer reviewed and approved methods of instruction. College faculty participate in many Academic Senate and College-wide governance committees such as Courses and Programs Curriculum Committee, Student Success Committee, Outcomes Assessment Committee, MiraCosta Online Educators Committee, and President’s Alliance on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (PADEI), dedicated to discussing and making decisions about student learning needs, pedagogy, and teaching methodologies. Recent evidence of the College’s efforts to address diverse learning needs is the development of contextualized learning in English composition for students interested in allied health careers. The first section of pre-

transfer English for HealthStart was offered in fall 2015; success rates were significantly higher in this section than in other in pre-transfer English sections. Approximately twenty-five sections of English composition utilize embedded supplemental instruction each semester, across transfer and pre-transfer courses, in both ESL and non-ESL classes. The Math Department created a new math pathway for students taking statistics as their transfer course: Math Fundamentals for Statistics I (Math 52) and Math Fundamentals for Statistics II (Math 95), with no prerequisite course for Math 52. The College has offered courses in this pathway each semester since the fall of 2015. Puente Project for Latino/students, Umoja for African American students, Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth (RAFFY), and the First Year Experience (FYE) Program for first-time college students in pre-transfer courses are supported at the college. In 2016-2017, the College added Mana to support Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. In addition to on-site services, such as tutoring, the Library, and learning centers, MiraCosta is providing an array of online student support services, not only to offer comparable services to “online students,” but also to make it easier for all students to obtain support, enhance their engagement with MiraCosta College, and successfully complete their educational goals. (II.A.7)

The College does not use department-wide or program examinations. The associate dean of Nursing and Allied Health reviews a student’s prior learning to determine if course work can be substituted or waived. All reviews are done on an individual basis. (II.A.8)

MiraCosta College uses clearly stated and published criteria to award credits, degrees, and certificates. Both the Course Outlines of Record and course syllabi include learning objectives and outcomes. Courses and programs, both credit and noncredit, are approved by the Chancellor’s Office prior to their being offered and include learning outcomes. The College offers two clock hour courses or programs. Administrative Procedure 4020 articulates that the College has a process for converting clock to credit hours, and a review of the process shows it is clear and follows federal guidelines. (II.A.9) (ER 10)

MiraCosta College’s transfer of credit policies are stated in the College Catalog and on the College website. The College evaluates courses from other regionally accredited institutions based on course description, content, SLOs, and prerequisites prior to acceptance for transfer.

Articulation agreements have been established with both public and private colleges and universities, and general education courses are articulated system wide with CSU and UC. Additionally, the College has articulation agreements with local high schools. (II.A.10) (ER 10)

The degree programs at MiraCosta College include a component of general education that has its own set of learning outcomes (GELOs). These outcomes are aligned with the College’s Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs). Both the GELOs and the ISLOs address the areas of effective communication, critical thinking and problem solving, information literacy, global awareness, and professional and ethical behavior. GELOs also address aesthetic literacy and appreciation. The College holds an Assessment Day each fall semester at which the whole College evaluates program and institutional outcomes assessment and dialogues about best practices and meaningful SLO integration. (II.A.11)

MiraCosta College includes a component of general education in all of its degree programs. All courses that are designed for general education at the College must meet the criteria of rigor, scope, autonomy, breadth, critical thinking, communication and literacy, and relevancy. Students who complete the general education program demonstrate a broad understanding of math, science, social science, humanities and the arts; effective oral and written communication; a multicultural perspective; critical thinking skills; adaptability to new environments; and social awareness and responsibility. (II.A.12) (ER 12)

Board of Trustees Policy 4025 and the C & P Handbook articulate MiraCosta's intent to provide degrees which possess sufficient depth in a field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest and career pursuit. Through the completion of eighteen units or more in a major or field of emphasis, students are expected to achieve the Program Student Learning Outcome Statements, as published in the College Catalog. (II.A.13)

MiraCosta offers 107 CTE associate degrees and certificates of achievement along with 57 certificates of proficiency. The input of advisory committees is cited as the primary mechanism in place to ensure that CTE programs address the technical and professional competencies desired by employers. Licensure pass rates for licensed vocational nurses and certified nurse assistants are consistent with statewide benchmarks. Employment data, captured as part of the Perkins Core Indicator Reports, reveals mixed results for MiraCosta students, when compared to all California Community College students. (II.A.14)

Since the last self-evaluation, MiraCosta has discontinued two programs. Both programs involved partnership with external entities. Impacted students were given the opportunity to complete the program prior to program discontinuance. Administrative Procedure 4021 describes the process to be followed in evaluating and implementing program discontinuances. (II.A.15)

MiraCosta has a robust and comprehensive annual program review process that is designed to evaluate instructional programs. Standardized data packets and student learning outcome assessment results are reviewed and action plans for improvement are explored. Non-credit offerings, delivered through the Technology Career Institute, are evaluated through student, advisory committee and program staff input. (II.A.16)

## **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets the Standard.

## **Standard II.B: Library and Learning Support Services**

### **General Observations**

MiraCosta College provides a variety of library and learning support services at its Oceanside Campus (OC), San Elijo Campus (SEC), and Community Learning Center (CLC)

that support learning, achievement, and student success. The Library, the three tutorial services (Tutoring and Academic Support/Retention Services (TASC), Math Learning Center and the Writing Center) and the open computer labs all have locations at the campuses. Nursing and the Surgical Technology laboratories are only at the OC. The Library and the Academic Information Services (AIS) are organized together under the Dean of Academic Information Services. The three Tutorial Centers report to the Dean of Math/Sciences. (II.B) (ER 17)

The two campus libraries provide all of the services and access that a modern library provides, including collections (web based and print), reference (face to face and online chat), computer labs, reserves, and bibliographic/information competency instruction. At the CLC there is a branch library with services for the non-credit programs of the center with a particular focus on ESL. The library has established two overall SAOs and one general instructional SLO in the areas of library services, resources, and has additional SLOs for credit instruction. Also, the Library uses the ISLOs for assessment. (II.B.1 and ER17)

The OC and SEC Libraries are open six days a week for a total of 68 hours in fall 2016. The CLC library is open four days a week. The OC Library has computers for students, 10 group study rooms, and a designated classroom with 35 computers. The SEC Library has computers for student use and uses one of 3 Hub classrooms for bibliographic instruction sessions. The libraries provide laptops that can be checked out for in library use. (II.B.1)

The library offers three Library Science credit courses. LIBR 101, LIBR201 and a new honors LIBR 201H as well as bibliographic instruction/library orientation information competency workshops, one-on-one reference desk assistance and online chat. The library participates in an interdisciplinary course, INTR 100 targeted at new and returning students. (II.A.1, II.B.1).

The library has an established collection development policy and Guidelines for Selecting and Discarding Materials to guide in the selection of materials that the students need to access for their research needs. The Library has assigned librarians to the collection development of all materials and databases used by the students, faculty and staff. The librarians use a number of data sources, including faculty and course outlines to inform them of student needs. Proposed new databases are trialed each year and feedback is solicited from the campus. (II.B.1, II.B.2)

Through the Library webpages, all on-campus and distance education students have equal online access to library resources, including fully digital serials and book databases, reference materials, and librarians. Access to the Library's resources for students with remote access is provided through proxy servers. Registered students with an ID number and PIN may access any digital content, which includes many databases and e-books. Online, the Library provides chat reference, APA, MLA and Chicago style manuals and other useful handouts concerning research. Additionally, a Library portal is available in Blackboard and Moodle to ensure seamless access to library resources and databases within the College's learning management systems. (II.B.1, II.B.2)

Students have reciprocal borrowing privileges at Cal State San Marcos and Palomar College. The Library also participates in interlibrary loan services through the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) and can obtain materials through U.S. mail to fulfill student needs. (II.B.4)

Academic Information Systems (AIS) manages the student computing labs and centers, lab classrooms, and technology enhanced classrooms (TECs) across all three campus locations. (The AIS also runs all of the other technology services for the College and is discussed more fully in Standard 3C.) Open labs are available in the Library and Information Hubs of the OC and SEC as well as at the CLC. (II.B.1)

The Writing Center, TASC and the Math Center provide peer tutoring to students on all of the campuses. All of the Centers report to the Dean of Math and Sciences. However, each center has its own faculty director and its own pedagogical philosophy and methodology in order to serve students who use their services. The Centers have either or both peer tutors and permanent tutorial staff with Bachelor or higher degrees. The three Centers work directly with faculty on assignments and other instructional tutorial needs of students. All three services offer on-campus services, either by drop-in or in timed sessions. The Writing Center offers asynchronous online "appointments" and the TASC uses the Western eTutoring Consortium service for online tutoring. TASC collaborates with Counseling on the First Year Experience (FYE) program. (II.B.1)

The Nursing Department has skills laboratories for students to learn and practice their skills during open lab hours. The main lab houses five hospital bed units with head wall units to simulate an authentic hospital or clinical patient care area. It is also equipped with all the equipment, tables, gurneys, and supplies to accomplish appropriate skills so students can be monitored on completing and passing each skill. Nursing provides its student with an in-house tutorial program with both peer and faculty tutors. The nursing laboratory building contains a simulation laboratory off the main room. (II.B.1)

### **Findings and Evidence**

The library provides materials, instruction and other library services to all students regardless of which campus the student is on. The library staff is organized to provide similar resources and services regardless of which campus or whether the student is online. The librarians and some library technicians are assigned at multiple campuses during the regular work week. Collection development and acquisition of materials, while housed at the Oceanside campus, addresses the needs of both the general student body as well as particular programs at each campus. Library orientations occur at all campuses. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

The library engages in the comprehensive annual program review process and in the student learning outcomes assessments. To assess library services, there are a number of quantitative measures utilized by the Library including gate counts, library and institutionally developed surveys, circulation records and database usage. The libraries are actively using student and staff surveys and student data for their decisions on what services to provide and to

improve. In the 2015 Survey of Credit Students and the fall 2014 Faculty Staff surveys, the rates of satisfaction are very high as is the student usage of the library. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

The library has also instituted a process to collect student identification numbers wherever possible. This new data collection technique has allowed the library to link its services assessments to student groups thus gaining a better understanding of how library services impact and support students. This new data is collected in reference interviews, orientations and anywhere else that students access library services. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

In the library's program review process, using the data it collects, the Library has been able to identify services needs improvements for the various student groups. Fourteen projects were identified in the 2015-2016 program review. Many of those projects have been completed, including more study rooms, a need discovered through their data collection. Another project identified through this process is the purchase and checkout of laptop computers. Many other projects addressed the physical space within the library to mitigate noise, provide better seating with electrical outlets and other amenities for students. (II.B.3)

The Library collections are diverse in formats and subject scope. The OC Library physical collection consists of 47,000 books, nearly 100 periodical subscriptions and 5700 DVDs. The SEC library has an additional 13,000 physical books and over 500 DVDS. The online collection, which also supports distance education and outreach students, is available 24/7 on and off campus. This collection provides access to 221,000 eBooks, 50,000 online videos and over 90 databases. The libraries have a closed and open reserve collection for students to use to access textbooks. (II.B.1; II.B.2)

The Library is using multiple measures to identify the appropriateness of its collections as well as the campus community's level of satisfaction with its resources. Data used includes circulation data of print materials, statistical results from online database vendors, reference interview data and circulation records to assess overall usage of the collections. The College wide surveys of students and faculty/staff indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the library mix of collection, both print and online. (II.B. 2)

The OC and SEC libraries provide instruction via the reference desks, over 24/7 chat and through its orientations and credit course offerings. The library has assessed its credit courses. As of fall 2015, the library finished a review process and removed two LIBR 101 SLOs after the SLOs were assessed in spring 2015. Library faculty are now in the process of assessing the SLOs in the LIBR 201 and the 201H3 unit course. The revised SLOs focus on critical thinking assignments based on real world scenarios. The libraries provided class orientations to 6,534 students in 2014-2015. The overall instructional SLO (used to assess orientations and other instructional library activities) was also evaluated in spring 2015 and then modified to focus more on student success in finding resources. When surveyed, the faculty, who bring their classes to these orientations, are very satisfied with the activities and instruction techniques. (II.B.2; II.B.3)

The library has used the College Mission Statement and the Institutional Student Learning outcomes (ISLOs) to guide its development of instructional displays that they collaborate on



with faculty and the outside community. The library creates both weekly or monthly display programs and a major annual program. For instance, on the Global Awareness ISLO, the library develops cultural displays as a way to support the ISLO. Last March, the major display and instructional program was on the Lunar New Year celebrations, while in March 2015, the library had a display and informational program on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the migration of Vietnamese people to the United States and particularly to the local area. (II.B.3)

The Library and AIS are administered by the Dean of Academic Information Services under the Vice President, Instructional Services. The integration and coordination of library services with technology/computer services supports the goals of the library. The integration of the computer labs with both the library and the tutorial centers provides a level of service that is seamless to the students as evidenced in the high student and faculty satisfaction rates enjoyed by these departments. (II.B.1)

AIS selects and maintains the student computing labs' computer hardware, software, and related equipment with input from College committees and its Technology planning processes. At each campus, the AIS maintains open computer labs in conjunction with the library and tutorial services. Instructional computing classrooms include 25 computers per classroom. (II.B.3)

For the assessment of its services, the department used many data points including the spring 2015 Credit Student Survey. Concerning the open computer labs, 98% of those surveyed reported being either satisfied (28%) or very satisfied (70%) with the service they received at the labs. (II.B.3)

The Writing Center is predominantly used by students in non-credit and credit basic skills and gateway classes. Supplemental Instruction is provided in classrooms and supports basic skills students in pre-transfer credit and non-credit writing courses. The Writing Center uses college-wide persistence and retention data to compare with students who use their services. The Center had three satisfaction SAOs and they are assessed through student surveys college-wide. The SAO's demonstrate that students have a high degree of satisfaction with assistance on writing papers. The Center is moving to create SLOs for instructional activities. Currently, one SLO concerning the building of confidence of students in their writing ability is being developed for assessment. The Center has used the assessments to improve training of their writing consultants. The Center also uses a two-week snapshot survey to gauge student perception of their services. Finally, the Center tracks usage of its different types of tutorial sessions. Evidence that the Center has improved its services uses its data points, is outlined by the changes from reducing its 50 minute sessions to 30 minutes, eliminating drop-ins and diversifying its menu of appointment types. The Center supports online instruction through asynchronous feedback sessions. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

The Math Learning Center (MLC) provides drop-in tutorial services by course with tutors rotating through the center on an as needed basis. The Center provides a collection of current math textbooks for students to use while they are in the center at the OC and SEC. The Center is included in the Math Department's program review. Current program review goals

revolve around adding additional hours to the Center and the purchase hardware and software to adequately track and analyze student usage in the MLC. The MLC faculty director is a member of the Math Department. The Center is working on a new set of SLOS as they move from SAOs. However, in the 2015 Credit Student Survey, 96% of students were satisfied with the service. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) submits its own annual program review and a separate annual report, where its performance in supporting the instructional and student services programs and meeting the learning needs of students is analyzed. In the 2015-2016 year, TASC employed 79 tutors, had 12,513 individual credit appointments attended by 1,971 students in approximately 140 courses.

The CLC had 3,732 appointments serving 751 students. TASC continued participating in online tutoring by utilizing the Western eTutoring Consortium. There were 656 contacts made by 157 students. Students utilizing the services persist and succeed between 73% and 71% for all semesters enrolled. This is at least 8% more than students who do not use these services. (II.B.3)

Its four SAOs are directly related to success measures, from students coming to appointments to training of tutors and faculty and finally to the commitment to pilot new intervention ideas regularly. All of the SAOs are being assessed within the program review process. The TASC focuses on student successful completions, persistence, grades and withdrawal rates and demographics to further assess its services. (II.B.1; II.B.3)

The Laboratories use student surveys which have been positive, in fact exceeding the department's benchmark for laboratory satisfaction. Due to survey comments, open laboratory time has doubled with the new certified nursing assistant lab. A new laboratory has been identified as a College priority and is included in the Facilities Master Plan Update. (II.B.1, 4; II.B.3)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets Standard II.B and Eligibility Requirement 17.

### **Standard II.C: Student Support Services**

#### **General Observations**

MiraCosta College presented organized evidence of broad and comprehensive student support services aligned with its mission. The College provides appropriate services throughout college sites, including the Oceanside Campus (OC), the San Elijo Campus (SEC), the Community Learning Center (CLC), as well as online/other sites. Primary student support services report through several Deans (Admissions & Student Support; Counseling & Student Development; Student Life & Judicial Affairs – pending), an Associate Dean (San Elijo Campus), and a Director (Athletics & Intramurals) under the supervision of the Vice

President, Student Services. Student support services are provided at all locations, and many include online components in addition to in-person services.

Program review and planning processes for student support services indicate a robust level of participation and dialog by student services staff, along with conscientious use of disaggregated student success data. Additional supporting material noted in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) included evidence of regular assessment of the quality of student support services, comprehensive services tied to campus needs, use of student survey and performance data, and an institutional culture exemplified in the student services division that values robust services to support student learning. Program review, outcomes assessments, point-of-service surveys, and discussion at the student services division level address the quality of student services and ongoing improvement.

The College offers more than 37 different programs and services to support student learning and has embedded their evaluation and improvement into campus planning and dialog. Significant coordination and discussion as part of the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) student success plans – Student Equity, Basic Skills, and the Student Success and Support Program – has helped increase institutional capacity to provide appropriate services to support student learning. The team confirmed that student services programs are appropriate for the College's student population, community, and mission.

### **Findings and Evidence**

MiraCosta College utilizes a variety of activities to measure the quality of student support services, including annual program review, college surveys and point-of-service surveys, institutional student success data, and CCCCCO Scorecard data. Service area outcome (SAO) results inform action plans to improve service. Several student services staff have been trained to conduct focus groups, providing additional capacity for assessment of services.

The Student Success and Support Program, Basic Skills, and Student Equity categorical programs provided additional opportunity to discuss, evaluate, and improve student services. The College first established a student equity committee in the early 1990s, and has recently expanded the committee to include representatives from core planning committees along with integration with the Student Success Committee (SSC). The College has demonstrated intentional and sustained commitment to coordination of student support services as part of efforts to align required student success plans. The College utilizes clear and compelling data to visualize student success, performance, and disaggregated data and has also joined the Achieving the Dream initiative to assist with continuous improvement efforts for students.

Several support services and programs were discussed as exemplars of continually improving student support programs, including: The First Year Experience Program (FYE); Puente, Foster Youth (RAFFY), Umoja, and Mana; and the Bridge to Success in Math Program, each of which presented evidence of a positive impact on student success. Placement test improvements, through the use of multiple measures and on-site high school assessments, were also described as an example of changes made based on regular evaluation with the goal of improving student support and completion.

Student success goals are incorporated in the College's master plan, educational plan, and strategic plan, including a crosswalk of department-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), division-level SLOs, and institutional SLOs. Disaggregated student success data, including student data disaggregated by campus type/modality, helps indicate areas of improvement needed and informs departmental and division objectives.

Other student success planning documents, such as the Student Equity, Basic Skills, and the Student Success and Support Program also demonstrate regular evaluation by the institution of the quality of student support services. Use of disaggregated data is evident in college success plans, they are connected to institution-set standards, and these data are used to foster robust dialogue and analysis, including review of face-to-face, online, and off-site student success, and student readiness levels. Reflection and planning are part of annual student services program review, which is also reviewed and validated by department staff and institutional research to ensure that it is clearly linked with long-term college plans.

The College has demonstrated intentional and collegial dialog about student support services to enhance student learning, as demonstrated in the program review process, division wide planning, participation in the Achieving the Dream initiative, and commitment to student equity and basic skills improvement. Student services planning demonstrates a culture of continuous improvement. Interviews with college staff corroborated that a culture of improvement and reform is both natural and engrained in division discussions, planning, operations, and communication with students. Student services departments, in concert with the Institutional Research Office, rely upon detailed, disaggregated, programmatic data as well as substantial reflection and analysis at the level of departmental program reviews as well as at the division level. Departments propose surveys and assessments to inform service in addition to reviewing results of college wide research reports and surveys, demonstrating that use of data is both department-led and facilitated by college Institutional Research staff.

Examples shared in evidence and with team members throughout the team interviews described regular discussion, use of student feedback, and process evaluation to continually improve the effectiveness of student support services. For example, financial aid timelines for students previously took up to sixteen weeks, but this was reduced to four weeks after taking a step-by-step analysis of procedures, reducing redundancy, and increasing efficiency, while still maintaining required controls and legal compliance. Student services division meetings have also included roleplay discussion of student barriers to completion, increasing empathy and awareness of student challenges, and also generating suggested solutions to provide quality support services throughout student educational experiences at the College. (I.B.1; II.C.1) (ER 15).

The student services division at MiraCosta College utilizes overarching Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) for the division as well as Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Four service area outcomes – college identity development, cognitive development, interpersonal competence, and community participation – were identified as division outcomes along with several sub-goals for each category to be used for departmental assessment as part of annual program review. Counseling, for example, utilized student satisfaction surveys to assess the

division goal of student self-advocacy with the sub-goal and expected student learning outcome that students will utilize college support services. By measuring activities including student participation in the matriculation process through use of services and a survey, the department employed data as part of improvement planning. However, the use of student learning outcomes and/or service area outcomes by student services departments has evolved in recent years as described below.

Student services staff participated in an important planning retreat in fall 2014, facilitated by a consultant, during which time student services staff reviewed the six factors of student success and engagement according to the RP Group's Student Support (Re)Defined literature. These six factors became a scaffold on which to construct department and division level assessment and planning. The six factors were mapped to student services division SLOs, which were connected to Institutional Learning Outcomes. A prior consultant encouraged student services departments to solely concentrate on student learning outcome assessments instead of service area outcomes. This led to a period of time during which some student services departments struggled to produce authentic SLO assessments. However, in the last year with the hire of the current Dean of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness, student services departments were welcomed to produce SLOs and/or SAOs as appropriate to their department. This was reiterated in an April 2016 planning retreat and also during summer student services division meetings. All student services departments, as part of the program review process currently underway at the College, will include either SLO and/or SAO assessments befitting their departments. In addition, student services representatives are now included in the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC), supporting authentic planning and assessment for the division.

Integrated planning processes connect service area outcomes for the student services division, student learning outcomes, department goals, and assessment of individual programs. TracDat records assessments and outcomes, and forums such as an annual student services council provided opportunities for dialog about improvements needed outside of planning documents. Outcome assessments by student services departments at the College inform concrete actions, such as staffing levels, service promotion, hours of operations, and coordination with other services in order to continuously improve student service and student learning

One example of creative, authentic continuous improvement was noted in the Admissions and Records (A&R) department's utilization of what they call a "broken wall" for improvement. This wall is dedicated to suggestions for things that need fixing, including processes, communications, departmental functions, and anything that is a perceived barrier to student enrollment or success. Staff members of all levels affix notes to the wall as an issue is encountered or as an idea is incubated, providing real-time suggestions for improvements to the department which are then regularly discussed with staff in order to determine possible solutions. The department celebrates moving items from the "broken" side of the wall to the "fixed" side of the wall when an issue has been addressed, and these solutions are documented as part of the department's program improvements. This effective

innovation was so successful at the Oceanside Campus A&R office that it has now been replicated in the student services center at the San Elijo Campus as well.

Authentic evaluation and a cohesive student support services division are exemplified at MiraCosta College. (II.C.1; II.C.2; and IV.A.7)

MiraCosta College provides a broad array of student support services across sites, including the Oceanside Campus, San Elijo Campus, and the Community Learning Center. Core student services include Admissions & Records, Counseling, Testing/Assessment, Financial Aid, as well as services through DSPS, EOPS, Veterans Services, Transfer Center, and the online myEdPlan educational planning tool.

Programs and student support services offered at college sites are viewed as an integrated whole, and students benefit from the College's commitment to equitable and seamless services between instructional sites. These efforts have done well to provide a unified identity and welcoming environment at all college locations. Campus deans from off-site centers regularly attend appropriate decision-making and planning committees at the Oceanside Campus in order to maintain suitable services at all locations. In addition, semi-regular student services division meetings are held at the San Elijo Campus (SEC), and Student Equity has also met recently at SEC. A newly instituted joint deans' meeting between student services and instructional personnel held weekly helps support this continued collaboration and coordination of student support needs for the College, and team member interviews corroborated a consistent commitment by student services and instructional staff to working together to support students.

As noted in several program review documents, the College is committed to being student-centered, professional, and collaborative across division silos. Recent agendas of joint deans' meetings included coordination of education plan dashboards, campus events, student success plans, development of Tableau data visualizations, and academic pathway maps. Student services personnel work closely within their own departments, but also with staff from outside their division. This collaboration ensures that student services practices, communication with students, and improvements do not take place within a vacuum but rather within an integrated college wide pursuit of coordinated and equitable student support services.

Services and programs described in detail by the College in the ISER included: Core Services; Application, Enrollment, and Matriculation; Supplemental Website; Bookstore; Career Studies and Services; Counseling Services; Disabled Students Programs & Services; Food Pantry; Extended Opportunity Programs and Services; Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth; Financial Aid; Health Services; Help Desk; Institute for International Perspectives; Scholarship Office; School Relations and Diversity Outreach; Service Learning; Student Equity, Puente, Umoja, FYE; Transfer Center; Testing Services; Veterans Services Office and Veterans Information Center.

Student satisfaction surveys specific to departments, along with annual institutional student surveys as well as largescale surveys such as the Community College Survey of Student

Engagement (CCSSE), help determine the need for services in addition to necessary department improvements to address identified gaps.

Many student services staff, including those at off-site centers, have been cross-trained in order to provide clear and timely information for students at departments throughout the College. Cross-trained staff, especially at the centers, minimize the need for students to unnecessarily travel from office to office in order to obtain appropriate service.

The student services division clearly seeks to continually improve services and has established substantial momentum for this task. After completing a year of inquiry through the Achieving the Dream initiative, student services personnel are now engaged in detailed discussions of student pathways, barriers to completion, and strategies to improve student support services.

The College also provides a weekly email to all students titled “This Week in Student Success,” which includes succinct, visually engaging information about student support resources, events, and other opportunities available to students. MiraCosta College offers services to support students through breadth and depth of programs offered in-person and/or online and across educational locations. (II.B.3; II.C.2; II.C.3) (ER 15)

MiraCosta College offers several programs that enhance the social and cultural dimensions of learning for students, including the Associated Student Government (ASG), Student Athletics, Honors Scholar Program, student clubs and events. The ASG is strongly engaged with campus activities, planning, and college culture, demonstrated by a breadth of clubs and activities at the Oceanside Campus and San Elijo Campus, along with new initiatives fostered by the Student Equity department.

All ASG positions were filled prior to that start of fall 2016 classes and student leaders are active on campus. A dedicated weekly college “hour” for student planning and activities provides necessary time and also demonstrates institutional commitment to supporting the more than 50 active student clubs and organizations. The student Inter-Club Council (ICC), a branch of the Associated Student Government, encourages student life, diversity, and learning outside of the classroom, while coordinating and promoting cooperation and communication between student clubs and organizations at the College. The ICC is one example of active student life at the College, enriching the social and cultural dimensions of the College experience for students at MiraCosta.

A recent, creative activity pioneered at the San Elijo Campus, known as Engaged 4 Success, provides students at this primarily transfer-oriented campus the opportunity to hear from motivational speakers on topics such as student success strategies along with marquee presentations from college faculty throughout the semester. A “deck series” of engaging workshops and presentations on the upper deck of the Student Center at SEC along with a “lunch club” offering free food along with student planning presentations, facilitated student engagement at this college site utilizing current spaces in a new and innovative way. This activity has increased student engagement at the San Elijo Campus and has fostered a sense of campus identity for the generally younger-than-average MiraCosta students who study at

this college site. San Elijo Campus staff continue to promote the use of student gathering spaces on campus, encouraging a sense of community and student engagement.

Through the leadership of Associated Student Government students, the College has recently established a Social Justice and Equity Center (SJEC) located at the Oceanside Campus. Students at the SJEC have the opportunity to participate in events, discussions, and research projects related to civic engagement, social justice themes, and equal rights in concert with activities led by the Student Equity department. The SJEC, the ASG, and the ICC demonstrate active, engaged student leaders ensuring that cultural and civic engagement is part of the student experience at MiraCosta College.

The College also demonstrates a commitment to supporting student needs, including those with food insecurities. In order to ensure that students do not study without reliable access to sufficient and nutritious food, student services staff and the ASG offer a free Food Pantry for any MiraCosta College student. The Food Pantry, located alongside Service Learning and the Admissions & Records Office at the Oceanside Campus, also includes information for referrals to local food pantries and CalFresh. The Food Pantry is funded entirely through donations and enjoys wide support.

Athletics at MiraCosta College contributes to the social and cultural dimensions of campus life and learning. Both intercollegiate varsity sports and intramural sports are offered on campus. Intramural sports are offered at no cost, in collaboration with the Associated Student Government, ensuring that this opportunity is accessible to students. Intercollegiate athletes at MiraCosta include a greater percentage of transfer-prepared students. Athletics will report to the incoming Dean of Student Life and Judicial Affairs. Program costs for Athletics as well as planning are accounted for in program review as well as the College's Facilities Master Plan and supported through college budget allocation. The team found ample policy and procedure to support athletics and intramurals on the campus. (II.C.4)

The College described a wide variety of counseling and advisement services to assist students with their educational goals, transfer, degree/certificate attainment, and personal growth. Counseling services include academic, career, and personal counseling, as well as program-embedded counseling through DSPS, EOPS, Transfer, Career Center, and for International Students.

Six approaches to provide timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements and pathways to the College's diverse student populations include: individual comprehensive counseling appointments, drop-in appointments, mobile/remote counseling, online advising, counseling workshops, and counseling classes. Students are informed of these various and interrelated services in-person, through the College website, and printed campus materials. The mobile counseling service, for example, is an innovative approach to general counseling, service students through Wi-Fi enabled devices.

Counseling and advising services are offered to more than 5,000 students each year, and the College has provided a variety of service modalities to support the various needs of students. In addition to traditional in-person counseling as well as technologically sophisticated mobile



counseling, the College also provides academic and career advising for several student cohorts such as foster youth (RAFFY), veterans, international students, as well as Umoja and Puente students among several other cohorts.

Highly utilized drop-in counseling is also offered at all college sites. Counseling and advising staff are trained and able to refer students to appropriate services. Students are notified of counseling and advising opportunities through email, website notifications, campus bulletins, and service office referrals. In-person orientation days, in addition to online orientation options, provide opportunities for interpersonal student and staff engagement and the development of social capital early in the student's matriculation process.

Online counseling is also provided utilizing video chat software, providing appropriate support service for the College's growing online student population. Moreover, the College was able to hire several additional counselors as part of the Student Success and Support Program allocation provided to advance matriculation services. Counseling and advising personnel participate in orientation and training to provide effective service. The College provides substantial counseling and support services for its students and has expanded service utilizing funds prioritized through CCCCO student success plans. (II.C.5)

The College has established clear and consistent policies concerning admission. These policies are published and detailed in the college catalog, student guide, A&R website, and college Administrative Procedures. Counseling services, student advisement, online planning portals such as myEdPlan, and degree audit systems provide useful information for students on academic pathways for college degrees and certificates, in addition to transfer. Students can also utilize the College Scheduler software to build class schedules around work/life commitments. Students and the institution can monitor progress toward completion, and student choices selected through educational planning also informs enrollment management planning and course offerings by the College. Weekly student success emails to all enrolled MiraCosta students also include pertinent articles and links to student services resources and academic pathways.

MiraCosta College's participation in the Achieving the Dream initiative is expected to result in additional support for clearly defined and well-advertised pathways for student completion. The College has also worked with consultants and staff from other institutions to discuss pathway models and determine elements that fit best with MiraCosta College student needs. (II.C.5; II.C.6) (ER 16)

MiraCosta College is an open access institution as part of the California community college system. The College defines institution standards in Administrative Procedure 5010 and 5052 and details the admissions and concurrent enrollment policies and procedures in the catalog, schedule, and on the College's website. (II.C.6)

The College's Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness reviews placement instruments on a three-year cycle, and the College publishes a list of alternatives for placement in the catalog and student guide. The College currently utilizes COMPASS,

and the Math and English departments have recently approved the use of multiple measures (HS GPA), which the College is now tracking and expects to have a positive impact on student completion and success. Approximately 70% of students are now placed through multiple measures. For the remaining 30%, the College is exploring alternatives to COMPASS, due to changes with the CCCC Common Assessment Initiative, to deploy during the current fall 2016 semester for English placement, with one likely alternative being Accuplacer. (I.B.4; II.C.7)

MiraCosta College has set, and complies with, Board Policy 5040 on student records, directory information, and privacy. Physical and electronic records are maintained securely, including those handled or processed at off-site campus locations. Campus records include student files since 1934, as well as all applications and academic records for students since 1968.

College student services staff are trained to handle these records accurately and securely, and department procedures are compliant with FERPA, Title 5, and Ed Code requirements. The College also described confidentiality tools, ongoing training, and physical and electronic steps to protect records. (II.C.8)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The college meets Standard II.C and Eligibility Requirements 15 and 16.

## **STANDARD III RESOURCES**

### **Standard III.A: Human Resources**

#### **General Observations**

The College has demonstrated in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report that there are sufficient policies and practices in Human Resources to support faculty, administration and staff. The Human Resource team at the College have done a tremendous amount of work to ensure that the hiring process follows EEO guidelines, is data driven, and includes appropriate representation. Evaluations of employees and professional development are a priority. There was a consistent theme noted during interviews with employee groups regarding the appreciation for “good” data and a sense of inclusion and fair representation. The faculty, staff, and students are a cohesive group that provide a united message.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The ISER refers to the policies and practices in place to ensure qualified candidates for faculty, staff, and administrator positions are hired. The Guide to MiraCosta College Full Time Faculty Employment Policy and Hiring Procedures dictates the committee structure. When positions involve Distance Education, the committee will include an employee with DE experience. The College has safeguards in place, such as having an EEO representative on every committee, to ensure that hiring procedures are consistent and in compliance with EEO regulations. Job descriptions are reviewed and changed if necessary. Faculty job descriptions state the requirements of the position which include serving on committees, writing curriculum, assessing student learning and contributing to the mission of the college. The interview process is extensive consisting of a teaching demonstration, writing exercise and scripted questions. Job announcements for positions are advertised appropriately. (III.A.1)

The College has processes in place to ensure faculty selected for hire have adequate and appropriate knowledge of their specific discipline. When faculty positions require DE expertise, criteria related to online teaching and curriculum development in the online environment is included in the screening and interview process. The faculty interview process consists of a teaching demonstration in front of the committee and students, a writing exercise, and 40-60 minutes of scripted questions. (III.A.2) (ER-14)

Educational administrators are subject to the minimum qualifications as described in the California Code of Regulations and consist of a master’s degree and one year of formal training, internship, or leadership experience reasonably related to the assignment. The Human Resources Department reviews transcripts, applications, resumes and cover letters to verify experience. Personnel files contain all the verification. (III.A.3)

The College ensures that degrees received by candidates are from accredited institutions. If the degree is from a non-U.S. institution then equivalency must be established by using one of the agencies listed on the Foreign Transcript Evaluation form. (III.A.4)

Processes and procedures are in place to ensure evaluations are done timely and effectively. The status of evaluations are tracked on a spreadsheet for all employees. Evaluations differ based on whether the employee is a tenured faculty, associate faculty, classified, administrator or President. Employees do a self-evaluation. The College demonstrated that the purpose of the evaluations is to align employee performance with departmental and organizational goals, provide feedback, and promote professional growth. (III.A.5)

Per review of College procedures, the evaluation process for full-time and associate faculty, as well as educational administrators includes a section asking the employee to address the use of student learning outcome results to improve teaching and learning. (III.A.6)

The Program Review Process is used to assure a sufficient number of full-time and part-time adjunct faculty in the appropriate disciplines. The process utilizes data analysis to ensure the College hires faculty that are essential to maintaining the quality of educational programs and support the institutional mission. This process was confirmed by reviewing evidence and speaking with Deans from various divisions and the Division Chair, including the Baccalaureate and DE programs. The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) forms a subcommittee to review and prioritize full-time faculty hiring requests. The AAC uses this information to make a recommendation to Academic Senate who makes the recommendation to the Superintendent/President for a final decision on hiring. All faculty hiring requests are reviewed and prioritized whether or not they are funded. The College has consistently exceeded the FON calculation and has used increases in revenues to support this mission.

The College has one faculty director of online education. In addition to supporting the development of courses, coordinating training, and providing leadership, the faculty supervise classified support staff. The appropriateness of faculty supervising classified has been included as part of the ongoing Classification Study to be completed late fall 2016/early spring 2017. (III.A.7) (ER 14)

Policies and practices are in place to support associate faculty orientation, evaluation and guidance. Associate faculty serve and vote on district governance committees and are given flex hours for professional development. There are five seats for associate faculty on the Academic Senate. The Associate Faculty formed a separate union (CCA, CTA and NEA) approximately 18 years ago and created a Collective Bargaining Agreement. Under the agreement, the College may require first-year instructional employees to participate in training and orientation activities. Members of the Associate Faculty union meet with the President once a month for breakfast to discuss any issues that may exist and give the College a chance to address them. The members also meet with the Board of Trustees occasionally to discuss items of importance. The Associate Faculty President and Vice President have served on hiring committees for the President and Dean. (III.A.8)

The College uses Program Review to evaluate staffing needs to support operations and the Institutional Mission. Non-categorical position requests come through Program Review, prioritized by the division and Executive Management Team (EMT) and finally the Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) who makes a recommendation to the President. Categorical positions are not subject to the program review process but require EMT approval and BPC notification. The Staffing Plan is also used to analyze enrollment, categorical programs and services, full-time/part-time faculty ratio, and turnover. The Staffing Plan goals align with student success. SSSP funds were used to create several new positions. Job descriptions are assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure qualifications are in line with the operational needs. (III.A.9) (ER 8)

The College determines the appropriate number, qualifications, and organization of administrators by the superintendent/president and vice president through careful analysis of staff levels through the Program Review process. The College redistributes duties and reorganizes as necessary to support the institution's mission. (III.A.10) (ER 8)

Personnel policies and procedures are located on the College website and through each employee group's working conditions manual. College Council is the designated authority for developing and approving policies and procedures. Human Resources provides training on the policies in new hire orientations, annual orientations, governance meetings and flex workshops. (III.A.11)

The College has policies and procedures in place for diversity in hiring, nondiscrimination, equal employment opportunity and prohibition of harassment. There are two District-wide advisory committees devoted to diversity and inclusion: The Equal Employment Advisory Committee and the President's Alliance on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (PADEI). PADEI advises the college president on diversity issues and campus climate.

In 2013 a Climate and Diversity Survey showed a perception of a lack in the District's ability to address diversity issues related to gender-identity and sexual orientation. Based on this data, the College adopted the LGBTQIA Safe Space Program which aims to increase awareness of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersexed, and asexual/ally communities on campus, to support the College's efforts to promote an accepting, supportive, and diverse learning environment, and to create a welcoming and tolerant environment for all members of the campus community. As of 2015, this program was completed by more than 200 faculty, staff, and administrators who display "safe space" stickers in their offices so students know where to locate resources. (III.A.12)

The College has an institutional code of ethics that is published in the College Catalog. The related Administrative Procedure was amended recently to include a statement of consequences for violation of the code. Although not necessary, the Board of Trustees completed ethics training as requested by the College. In addition, the Executive Management Team keeps the College employees informed about news events involving unethical behavior at other colleges and businesses to provide examples of the consequences. (III.A.13)

Professional development opportunities are available for all employees and the board of trustees. The Professional Development Program (PDP) for full-time and associate faculty maintains a library of resources and equipment to keep faculty current and improve learning outcomes. The Classified Senate coordinates and encourages attendance to professional development activities. The career incentive program offers financial rewards for completion of course work for classified employees.

In March of 2016, approximately 140 faculty, staff and administrators participated in an event called Project Joy: Teaching and Learning at MiraCosta College. The idea was to collaborate in a conversation about what they love most about teaching and learning. The joint effort between the Academic Senate and Professional Development Program resulted in established priorities for promoting the love of teaching and learning and supporting student success. There is a common consensus from interviews with faculty, staff and administrators that the event was successful and beneficial towards the Achieving the Dream effort. (III.A.14)

Personnel records are kept locked in the Human Resources office and are only accessible to members of the Human Resources and Payroll departments. Personnel files may be checked out by Human Resources Staff. Employees wishing to review their personnel files may do so by appointment during normal business hours. (III.A.15)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets the Standard.

In order to improve the College's implementation of best practices in Human Resources, the College is encouraged to review its use of terms such as "director" and "supervisor" to ensure there is no intermingling of purely supervisory duties with other classifications of employees. Specifically, a review of all "faculty director" job descriptions might prove useful. (III.A)

### **Standard III.B: Physical Resources**

#### **General Observations**

Physical resources at MiraCosta are safe and sufficient to support the programs and services at all locations where courses, programs, and learning support services are offered. New facilities are constructed to meet California's Building Standards Code (Title 24), including Building Energy Efficiency Standards, and all facilities are maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment. The buildings and grounds are well-maintained and present a very attractive and efficient campus which includes iconic structures, such as a clock tower and a tribute to veterans' monument, as well as parklike settings for students to enjoy for study time or other activities.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The College ensures safety and security through a number of means including the installation of automatic intruder locks on classroom doors, audible emergency notification systems, a mass communication system, emergency call boxes, automatic emergency defibrillators (AED), and the posting of evacuation procedures and maps throughout the facilities. The College has a full-time risk manager and utilizes the risk management services of the San Diego JPA which inspects the facilities annually for any safety issues. Any noted safety discrepancies are tracked and corrected via the College's computerized maintenance management system, and most discrepancies are corrected within 24 hours of being reported. There are no known OSHA issues and all required safety training is tracked by the College's risk management office to ensure that all employees are appropriately trained. Administrative Procedure (Administrative Procedure 6520) outlines the processes for securing College property and for emergency responses to safeguard life safety and property. College police are P.O.S.T. certified and provide a number of services to students including escorts to the parking lots, unlocks, and emergency vehicle assistance as needed. Administrative Procedure (Administrative Procedure 3501) also requires that the police coordinate a nighttime security survey of all College facilities to ensure that all security issues, such as landscaping, locks, alarms, lighting, and communications are kept in proper and safe condition.

The institution assures access to its facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II requirements, and all new construction is approved by the Division of State Architect (DSA) to ensure compliance with fire and life safety codes as well as ADA standards. The College goes above and beyond the ADA requirements by installing automatic door operators in high traffic areas, and all other doors are adjusted to meet ADA standards. Off campus rented facilities are initially inspected to ensure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning environment, and the College works in collaboration with the owner or manager of the site to ensure that any discrepancies are promptly corrected. The institution uses relevant benchmarks and industry standards to evaluate its facility and equipment needs on a regular basis to ensure that its physical resources meet the needs of current and future programs and services. (III.B.1)

The College has a well-established facilities planning process that includes a long-range Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) designed to support the College's long-range Educational Master Plan (EMP). The CMP was originally developed in 2011 and has been recently updated in 2016 in support of the EMP that was updated in 2015. Additionally, the College submits the required five-year construction plan to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) by June 30 of every year, which identifies all of the College's planned capital construction projects along with estimated costs and schedules. Because of the recent failure of a GO Bond initiative to support the five-year capital construction plan, the College has developed its own Five-Year Construction Plan in order to address some of the capital needs without the financial support of a general obligation bond. In 2015, the College issued \$12.6 million in Lease Revenue Bonds (LRBs) to fund a portion of this Five-Year Construction Plan. The College is approximately two-thirds complete with the plan and expects to issue additional LRBs to finish the plan within the projected five-year

period. The College has placed a \$455 million GO Bond initiative on the November 2016 ballot to address facility needs into the future. (III.B.2)

The planning processes at MiraCosta are fully integrated through the use of a College-wide Integrated Planning Model which sets out all planning processes on an established timeline along with assigned responsibilities to ensure that the planning process is followed. The plan, which is collaboratively developed among all stakeholders, drives ongoing cycles of planning, resource allocation, program review, assessment, and continuous quality improvement. The planning process provides the opportunity for all College constituents to have input into the planning and resource allocation processes of the College. (III.B.2; III.B.3; III.B.4)

The College completes its planning processes on a regular, ongoing basis. Program reviews and updates to the Five-Year Construction Plan are completed every year. A facilities assessment is completed every three to four years by a team from the state chancellor's office along with a Facilities Condition Index Report, which provides data for each building with total repair costs and replacement value. The College manages its deferred maintenance needs through a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) and the College budgets \$600,000 from the general fund annually to address these needs. (III.B.3)

Long-range capital planning occurs in the Facilities Master Plan (FMP), annual updates to the Five-Year Construction Plan, program reviews, and action plans. These plans include projections for the total cost of ownership (TCO), which includes all relevant costs that are associated with the asset including acquisition and procurement, operations and management, and decommissioning at the end of its useful life. The College utilizes industry standards, such as, the APPA Institute (The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers) guide to educational facilities, as benchmarks to inform its long-range capital planning and total cost of ownership calculations. Additionally, the College has implemented a subcommittee of the BPC dedicated to the issue of total cost of ownership, and has hired a consultant to develop an improved total cost of ownership report. (III.B.4)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets the Standard.

### **Standard III.C: Technology Resources**

#### **General Observations**

MiraCosta College utilizes technology extensively in teaching and learning, student support services and college operations. Technology planning is well-documented and is informed by surveys, Program Review and widespread campus input. The College focuses on maintaining the adequacy of existing technology as well as identifying emerging technology needs.



Electronic data and resources are appropriately controlled and monitored at the Oceanside, San Elijo and CLC locations. Substantive procedures are in place to ensure the privacy and protection of personal data. The technological needs associated with online education are delineated and incorporated into technology planning. Budgetary commitments are consistent and indicative of the College's support of its technology infrastructure.

Students are able to access technology support and resources through physical and virtual computer labs. MiraCosta's online application and enrollment system (SURF) has a training component for students. The College offers employee technology training through a variety of entities including the Teaching/Technology Innovation Center, the Teacher Learning Center, the Office of Online Education, the Academic Information Services Department (AIS) and organized user groups.

### **Findings and Evidence**

MiraCosta College is actively engaged in assessing the ability of its technology to support the needs of the College. Reflections are provided on technology needs in the Program Resources component of Program Review. The Technology Environmental Scan is another effort to assess the College's ongoing technology needs. Formalized input from user groups such as ICECubes and pilot programs also inform the College's ability to address its technology needs. The College's commitment to the role of technology in teaching and learning is further demonstrated through its organizational structure, which houses technology services (AIS) in the Instructional Services Division. The College is committed to ensuring that technology resources are comparable throughout its service locations. (III.C.1)

MiraCosta College addresses technology planning in its comprehensive Technology Plan, Online Education Plan and Facilities Master Plan. The Equipment Replacement Plan, and corresponding budgetary and staffing commitments, support the College's ability to update and replace technology as needed. Recent AIS activities include support for Degree Works, PeopleSoft improvements in Admissions and Records and Financial Aid PeopleSoft applications, Tableau and the planning for migration to Canvas. (III.C.2)

Disaster planning and recovery is outlined in the Disaster Recovery Plan, last revised in June 2016. The main Data Center is located on the Oceanside campus at the Library and Information Hub building. The District also operates a second Data Center at the San Elijo Campus. The District has a "Step-by-Step Disaster Recovery Playbook" which specifies that "Recovery procedures will be tested on an annual basis". Partial testing conducted during the summer of 2016 found the procedures to be effective. The Enterprise Information Security Plan, dated August 2015, contains policy statements and a description of the District's approach to information security. AIS is currently offering all full and part-time staff an online Cyber Security Training in support of the College's procedures regarding computer and network use, as summarized in Administrative Procedure 3720. (III.C.3)

The College provides instruction and support in the use of technology in a number of ways. All staff can participate in individual or group training opportunities. Staff and

administrators are supported in accessing and maximizing the potential of new programs such as DegreeWorks, PeopleSoft and Tableau. Staff and faculty participate in regular trainings afforded through flex and professional development activities. Currently, MiraCosta contracts with AELearn, a third party technical support organization, to provide on-demand support for faculty using Moodle. The Program for Online Teaching (POT) offers faculty-led workshops on effective pedagogical practice with both College-supported and emergent web technologies. The Academic Senate's MiraCosta Online Educators "MOE" explores training and support needs specific to online education. The annual Online Education Department program review also considers various data sources and institutional planning documents to establish training goals. (III.C.4)

The Office of Online Education (with a faculty director), the Program for Online Teaching (POT) and the MiraCosta Online Educators (MOE) offer professional development opportunities to faculty and staff. The Teaching/Technology Innovation Center (OC) and the Teacher Learning Center (SEC) serve as the training meeting areas and open computer labs for their respective campuses. Training and tutorials are supported and purchased by the District. The AIS is committed to serving faculty training needs and supporting the instructional use of current technology in all learning locations. (III.C.4; III.C.5)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets the Standard.

### **Standard III.D: Financial Resources**

#### **General Observations**

The Institutional Self Evaluation Report is well written and substantiated with appropriate evidence. The Finance team at the College is competent and experienced. The budget is based on realistic projections of revenues and expenditures provided by the Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) and it incorporates fiscal elements of its long term planning. The Vice President of Business & Administrative Services is a recognized leader in his field and respected for receiving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association. The College is also one of the first to calculate and publish a Total Cost of Ownership for purchases in the budget presentation. A strong fund balance means the College has the finances necessary to both fund institutional improvements as well as protect the district from potential future state cuts. Financial resources appear sufficient to ensure fiscal solvency. Budget development follows clear guidelines and constituency groups are given opportunity for input. Program reviews are an integral part of the budget planning process.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The College receives funding through property taxes, student fees, state apportionment and other local sources. The BPC established a process to allocate resources using Program

Review that support student learning outcomes, institutional goals and effectiveness. A scoring rubric is used to align resource requests with institutional goals, outcomes/strategic plan objectives, implementation and assessment. The BPC process ensures that resource allocations will meet and sustain student enrollment. Recommendations from the BPC are forwarded to the superintendent/president. Information presented to the BOT and the BPC regarding expenditures, goals and directions on the upcoming budget year are published in the Budget Book. (III.D.1) (ER 18)

Each year, at the start of the budget process, the BOT reviews the College mission and goals. Departments are instructed to review the mission and goals while developing their budgets. The College policies and procedures for budget preparation, budget management and fiscal management ensure sound financial practices and stability. The College maintains an ending balance of unrestricted funds that is prudent and sufficient for emergencies. (III.D.2)

The processes for financial planning and budgeting are included in board policies and administrative procedures. Budgets are recorded in the District's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and are accessible to all employees. Every night the system generates departmental nVision budget reports that allow managers to review budgets on a daily basis. In addition, the Director of Fiscal Services makes budget presentations as requested. She was recently asked to make a presentation to the Student Services Council and explain the funding streams for categorical funds. The BPC, Program Review process and departmental budget development are mechanisms used to ensure campus-wide participation in the process. (III.D.3)

Institutional plans (annual, long-range staffing, facilities, equipment and supplies, and technology) are developed based on a realistic assessment of financial resources, partnerships and expenditure requirements. Factors such as funding GASB 45 retirement benefits, the STRS/PERS increases and the expiration of Prop 30 revenues are considered when assessing financial resource availability. Before applying for grants or entering partnerships, the College examines matching requirements, staffing/faculty needs, and other commitments. The Grant-Contract Summary Form must be completed and routed through the BPC and Administration before applications are submitted. (III.D.4)

The College has a strong internal control system as evidenced by the positive audit reports. In addition to the regular mandated audit, the College completed two audit projects in 2015-2016 as part of a goal to "maintain a system of internal controls that result in unqualified audits". The College is not required to do the internal control audits but chose to do them to improve operations. They chose their most vulnerable areas to assess: Financial Aid and Admissions and Records. There were no significant findings from the internal audits. (III.D.5)

The budget development process includes department budget managers, deans, vice presidents, and their support staff to ensure that funding allocations achieve institutional goals in support of student learning programs and services. This process ensures that funding allocations support the institutional goals and student learning outcomes. No deficiencies in

the financial statements, federal awards or internal controls have been reported in the audits for the last five years leading to a high degree of credibility of information. (III.D.6)

The College goes through an external audit annually and there have been no findings or exceptions since 2010. The finding in 2010 regarding banking practices was corrected. The college evaluates its financial and internal control systems on a regular basis to ensure the audits do not produce findings. (III.D.7)

The College regularly evaluates its internal control systems through audits by external agencies. The College's special funds are audited by funding agencies on a regular basis. An audit of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant (TAACCCT) 2013-2017 revealed that the College was significantly off schedule to meet enrollment, training completion and employment placing goals. An Implementation Plan and a modification to the Project Work Plan were completed, submitted and approved. During a meeting with the Director of the Grant, it was learned that there was a significant delay in services because they needed to build out the facility, a 23,000 square foot building, which included delays from the Division of the State Architect. The site is called the Technology Career Institute (TCI). Currently they are on track with serving students and placing them in jobs. (III.D.8)

The financial condition of the College is strong and reflects good fiscal controls, an improved state economy, prudent budgeting and fiscal oversight. The budget includes a contingency reserve for financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences. The College has adequate property and liability insurance. In the fiscal year 2015-2016, the College changed the required reserve balance from 8% to 10% and the ending reserve balance for that year exceeded the requirement at approximately 15%. (III.D.9)

The College has sufficient oversight of finances, financial aid, grants and auxiliary organizations, the Foundation and institutional investments and assets. Fiscal Services validates and certifies the expenditures by grant and categorical funds. Controls are in place in the ERP system that prevent expenditures from exceeding budget amounts. The College is also in compliance with federal Title IV rules as was evidenced in the OMB Circular A-133. The College has employees that specialize in grant expenditure oversight and are responsible for ensuring compliance with externally funded programs. The MiraCosta College Foundation is a separate 501(c)3 that supports the College and its students. The Foundation coordinates all of the College's private grants and identifies potential donors. The College provides financial oversight of the Foundation by employing an Executive Director and accounting services. (III.D.10)

The College uses data from the 5-Year Capital Construction Plan, Technology Plan, 5-Year Financial Plan, and the Staffing Plan to develop expectations of financial solvency. Funds are allocated for the STRS/PERS increases, health cost increases, the retirement of Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL) for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). (III.D.11)

The College undergoes actuarial studies every two years to assess retiree health benefit obligations. Funds are put into an irrevocable trust investment managed by the Community College League of California's Retiree Health Benefits JPA to cover 96.7% of the liability. The BOT is considering a potential general obligation bond measure in the fall of 2016 and directed staff to maintain the 15% minimum total reserve to position the College for a favorable bond rating. The proceeds from the bond will only be used for capital improvement projects. (III.D.12)

Locally incurred debt is assessed and allocated for each year by the Director of Fiscal Services. Allocations for repayment amounts are assumed in the Five-Year Financial Plan to ensure short and long-term financial solvency. This information is included in the annual audit report and Budget Book. (III.D.13)

At the end of June 30, 2015, the College had three debt repayment obligations: Lease revenue refunding bond maturing 2019, lease revenue bond maturing 2030 and a capital lease agreement with Sun Trust maturing in 2017. These obligations are reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and resources are allocated for debt repayments. The use of the funds are tracked and monitored in the ERP system. (III.D.14)

The Financial Aid Office monitors and manages student loan default rates and assets to ensure the institution remains in federal compliance. The current default rate is 9.4%, well below the federal requirement of 30%. The College provides financial literacy workshops to students in order to help them understand their obligations for student loans. (III.D.15)

College contractual agreements are executed and administered to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, codes, and regulations. Several contracts were reviewed and the processes evaluated. Prior to execution, every contract is reviewed and approved by the Director of Purchasing and Material Management for compliance with policies and procedures. (III.D.16)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets the standard.

## **STANDARD IV LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Standard IV.A: Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

#### **General Observations**

MiraCosta College has established an institutional goal to become a vanguard educational institution through the use of innovation and researched best practices. The College has a well-developed governance structure which is defined in policy and that facilitates collegial participation at all levels of the organization. The institution recognizes and uses the contributions of leadership throughout the organization to promote innovation and continuous quality improvement. Examples of the effectiveness of the leadership and governance practices at MiraCosta include innovations that have come through that process, such as, the Bridge to Success in Math Program, and becoming an Achieving the Dream institution.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

Innovation at all levels of the institution is stimulated by four primary mechanisms: 1) the governance structure, which is codified in Board Policy, provides the framework for all constituencies to make recommendations on improvements regarding issues related to governance, operations, or working conditions; 2) the integrated planning process, which synchronizes all planning and resource allocation processes, provides the opportunity for continuous quality improvement through reflection on strengths, outcomes, and areas for improvement; 3) the work of committees, such as the Student Success Committee, provides the opportunity for intensive reflection on key areas where interventions can improve student success; and 4) at the operational level where departments or divisions are encouraged to experiment with innovative ideas that might lead to student success. (IV.A.1)

The Governance Manual was updated in 2014 and again in 2015. This manual along with numerous board policies and administrative procedures, authorizes and encourages participation in decision-making processes at all levels of the institution and outlines the manner in which individuals bring forth ideas and work together for the good of the organization and to promote student success. The College governance structure includes a number of councils that make governance and decision-making highly inclusive and participatory. An interview with Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) members revealed that members had a good understanding of the participatory planning process, could articulate how it works to a fine level of detail, and understood the evolution of the processes over time. As an example, the evolution of their Integrated Planning Model (IPM) to include Resource Category Planning (RCP) demonstrates that they evaluate their processes and make necessary changes over time. The College also has participatory processes in place to resolve any possible disputes that may arise. (IV.A.2)

The College Council, which serves as the penultimate governance group, and is chaired by the superintendent/president, brings the work of all the councils and committees to a focal point. The membership of each governance committee is carefully designed to allow this step in the process to be apprised of the best organizational thinking so that the best organizational decisions can be made. (IV.A.3)

Evidence of the efficacy of this governance structure include a number of major decisions that have been made through this process. During spring 2014, two separate and significant changes were made that affected the entire organization: 1) a transition from a senate of the whole to a representative senate; and 2) formation of the Faculty Assembly as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for full-time faculty. Another major decision that came through the governance process was the decision to submit an application to be a pilot institution to offer a bachelor's degree under the auspices of Senate Bill 850, and the concomitant decision of which discipline made the most sense given the needs of the community and the current offerings available at the four-year institutions. The governance structure supports and facilitates these kinds of important and substantial decisions. (IV.A.4)

Through its system of institutional governance, codified in board policy and administrative procedure, the institution ensures the appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives, decision-making aligned with expertise and responsibility, and timely action. (IV.A.5)

The processes for decision-making and the resulting decisions are documented and widely communicated across the organization through the College's document change management system, published BOT minutes, the MiraCosta SharePoint Portal, the College website, the superintendent/president's newsletters, and many other venues. (IV.A.6)

The effectiveness of the governance structure and processes are evaluated each year as specified in the final section of the Governance Manual. The analysis and findings of these evaluations are communicated widely throughout the organization and form the basis for proposed changes. These reviews have led to numerous substantive changes including the creation of an Institutional Program Review Committee, improvements to the Courses and Programs Committee, replacement of the Student Interests Committee with the Student Success Committee, and numerous other changes that demonstrate the continuous quality improvement of the governance structures at MiraCosta College. (IV.A.7)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets the Standard.

### **Standard IV.B: Chief Executive Officer**

#### **General Observations**

MiraCosta College has a chief executive officer, the Superintendent/President, who has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution including planning, organizing,

budgeting, personnel, and institutional effectiveness. This primary responsibility is delegated to the superintendent/president by the Board of Trustees in Board Policy 2430. Additionally, Board Policies 2510 and 6300, 7100 and 7110, and 7120 tie to the superintendent/president's role in governance, fiscal stewardship, and hiring, respectively. The Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness reports directly to the superintendent/president and provides high quality assessment data to allow the institution to make data-informed decisions and to encourage conversations about continuous quality improvement.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The Governance Manual and Board Policy 3250 ensure that the superintendent/president has the primary role of implementing a comprehensive, systematic, and integrated system of planning that involves the entire College community and that is supported by the Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. The superintendent/president has a strong, positive relationship with the governance committees and regularly attends committee meetings to communicate and reinforce institutional values, goals, and institution-set standards. Under Board Policy 6300, the superintendent/president establishes procedures to ensure the College's fiscal management and stability. Under the leadership of the superintendent/president, the College has achieved the highest award in governmental budgeting for the past two years (2014 and 2015), the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada. (IV.B.1)

MiraCosta has established policies and procedures for recruiting, developing, and retaining talented faculty, staff, and administrators. The superintendent/president establishes functional charts that delineate the lines of responsibility and fix the general duties of employees within the College. Board Policy 7110 specifies the delegation of authority to the superintendent/president, and Board Policy 3100 and Administrative Procedure 3100 establish the organizational structure of the institution and list the structure of key responsibilities of each position. Based on the organizational structure, the superintendent/president delegates authority to the vice presidents, deans, and directors consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate. These responsibilities and functions are delineated in the functional charts. (IV.B.2)

The superintendent/president oversaw the development of the 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) that established the College's long-term values, goals, and priorities. Based on the CMP, the College developed a series of three-year strategic plans that include measureable objectives and performance targets to ensure that the goals and priorities of the College are met. As outlined in Standard I.B.3, required institution-set standards for student achievement were developed in 2014. In order to ensure that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis, the superintendent/president has provided leadership in the development and expansion Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness, which reports directly to the superintendent/president. Under the leadership of the superintendent/president, the College has developed dashboards to make data more available and relevant to decision-makers, has added a data warehouse programmer and a research analyst, and has increased funding for the RPIE function. Additionally, the College's



integrated planning process ensures that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and allocation to support student achievement and learning. (IV.B.3)

The College embraces accreditation as part of its commitment to institutional effectiveness and continuous quality improvement. The superintendent/president has primary responsibility to ensure that accreditation eligibility requirements and standards are at the forefront of the institution's planning and processes. The superintendent/president regularly participates on visiting teams as a chair and team member and encourages faculty, staff, and administrators to participate in teams to allow for a better understanding of the accreditation process. In 2015-2016, seven College representatives participated in ACCJC site visits. The superintendent/president presents regular accreditation updates to the Board of Trustees and has conducted, with the help of a consultant, educational sessions on the role of the Board in accreditation. (IV.B.4)

Board Policy 2410 delegates responsibility to the superintendent/president for implementing all relevant laws, regulations, and policies, and for keeping Board Policies up to date. Additionally, the BOT delegates to the superintendent/president fiscal management and stewardship through Board Policy 6300, and holds the superintendent/president responsible for these matters as stated in Board Policy. The College subscribes to the Community College League of California (CCLC) policy and procedure update service, and updates its policies on a regular basis. In spring 2015, the College hired a consultant from CCLC to review the Colleges policies and procedures to ensure that they are up to date with all applicable statutes and regulations, and that they reflect the College's stated mission, vision, and values. Any proposed changes to Board Policies are brought to College Council for review, recommended to the superintendent/president, and brought the BOT for approval. (IV.B.5)

The superintendent/president maintains regular communication and engagement with the communities served by the institution. The superintendent/president holds an annual State of the College breakfast, which is attended by elected officials, educational organizations, business and community leaders, and other community members. In spring 2015, the superintendent/president presented a brief State of College address at city council meetings in each of the five cities served by the College. Additionally, the superintendent/president attends and presents at meetings of the various Chambers of Commerce, at a President's Roundtable, and via numerous media outlets including print, radio, and television. (IV.B.6)

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The College meets the Standard.

### **Standard IV.C: Governing Board**

#### **General Observations**

The MiraCosta College Board of Trustees has authority over and responsibility for policies to assure the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the institution's student learning programs and services as well as its financial stability. The College mission statement, which was approved by the BOT on September 9, 2015, makes clear that the College provides "superior educational opportunities and support services," thereby establishing the standard for academic quality. The mission drives the long and short term planning and goals of the institution as well as budget development.

## **Findings and Evidence**

The role of the MiraCosta BOT is highlighted in board policy (Board Policy 2200: Board Duties and Responsibilities). Specifically, Board Policy 2200 establishes the board's role in the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and services. The fiduciary role of the board is also clearly stated in Board Policy 2200. The board translates its policies and the College mission into action through its regular review of student success outcomes and initiatives to improve these outcomes. The BOT makes a compilation of policies available to the public on the College's website. These policies establish the standards for academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness for all the programs and services as well as financial stability. Policies are reviewed on a regular basis through the College's established governance and operational structure. The College subscribes to the Community College League of California (CCLC) policy and procedure service that sends draft revisions twice annually based on legal changes and suggested best practices. A College committee or council can also trigger a review based upon a need to change. (IV.C.1; IV.C.5) (ER 7)

The College BOT acts as a collective entity and all board members act in support of final decisions made by a majority of the board as outlined in board policy. Board Policy 2715: Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice states that the seven-member board is an independent policy-making board and that once a vote is taken, all board members abide by and uphold the final majority decision. Board Policy 2330 outlines the specifics of board voting. (IV.C.2)

The BOT has established procedures for the selection and the evaluation of the superintendent/president. Board Policy 2431 establishes the procedure for selection of the superintendent/president and Board Policy 2435 and its corresponding administrative procedure guide the process of evaluating the superintendent/president. The board used these procedures in its most recent chief administrator search in 2014, and has used these procedures to evaluate the chief administrator in December 2015 for the interim CEO and in March 2016 for the permanent superintendent/president. The evaluation process includes a self-evaluation and constituent feedback via survey. (IV.C.3)

The governing board is an independent, policy-making body with seven members, each representing a separate voting district within the College's overall district. Having the trustees elected by specific voting districts helps to ensure that the board members are appropriately representative of the public interest and can better advocate for the needs of their particular electorate. As an example, in support of the College's GO Bond initiative,

each board member is canvassing his or her own voting district to solicit support for the Bond measure. Additionally, the board has policies in place to ensure against conflicts of interest and undue political pressure (Board Policy 2710: Conflict of Interest and Board Policy 2714: Prohibition of Gifts). (IV.C.4) (ER7)

The governing board is aware of the institutional set standards and analysis of results for improvement of student achievement and learning. Interviews with board members revealed a BOT that is united around the mission, vision, and values of the College and appropriately engaged in the oversight of the College. The board is very supportive of the superintendent/president and understands and respects its policy role as differentiated from the operational role of the CEO. The board supports resource allocation (and re-allocation) for capacity building within the institution. As an example, the board is engaged, supportive, and pleased with the expansion of services to the San Elijo campus which will promote and sustain student learning, equity, success, and achievement in this important part of the College's service area. Board policy establishes that the board has ultimate responsibility for educational integrity and financial stability of the College. The board's actions are final and not subject to the actions of another entity. (IV.C.5)

The MiraCosta BOT has an extensive set of policies and procedures informed by the CCLC policy and procedure service, collegial governance, superintendent/president recommendations, and legal advice. These are made public on the College's website and direct the behavior of the trustees as well as employees, students, and the public. These policies also specify the BOT size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operational procedures. (IV.C.6)

A review of board meeting minutes and resolutions confirms that the governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. Board policies and administrative procedures are assessed on a regular basis and in conjunction with the CCLC policies and procedures service, and they are revised as needed as is demonstrated by the adoption and update history listed at the bottom of the policies and procedures. (IV.C.7)

To ensure the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success, the governing board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement and institutional plans for improving academic quality. The trustee dashboard, established in fall 2014, contains student success metrics from the California Student Success Scorecard, the institution-set standards, and the recently established IEPI standards. Additionally, the trustees are readily able to see annual institutional effectiveness measures such as cost indicators, facilities condition index, classroom fill rate, room utilization, and the status of the 50% law. (IV.C.8)

Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2740 lay out the process by which board candidates (prior to election) may be oriented to the College. The superintendent/president provides each new trustee with a packet of information containing a Student Services Division Primer, census and enrolment data, and a myriad of other information to help with new board member orientation. Additionally, new board members are encouraged to attend training seminars for new trustees that are provided by CCLC and ACCT on an ongoing basis, which the College pays for. Then, on an ongoing basis, trustees are encouraged to attend CCLC and ACCT provided training and conferences, which most have done. In order

to provide for continuity on the board, Board Policy 2100 provides for the expiration of board members' four-year terms in alternate election years with election of approximately one-half of the board members every two years in order to provide a two-year overlap between existing and new board members, if any. (IV.C.9)

The MiraCosta BOT has an established policy and procedure for assessing its effectiveness as a board through individual reflection, group discussion, and constituent feedback. This process is articulated in Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2745 and documented in workshop minutes. The results of the annual evaluations are used to improve board performance, academic quality, and institutional effectiveness and to set future goals. The board utilized the results of their 2014 evaluation to bring in specialized training in the areas of accreditation, board/CEO roles, and communication. The board used the results of its 2015 evaluation to establish its goals for the current year. (IV.C.10)

The board's stated process for dealing with unethical board behavior is outlined in Board Policy 2715: Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice as well as Board Policy 3050: Institutional Code of Ethics. If a trustee is suspected to have violated the code of ethics, an investigation proceeds via an ad hoc committee appointed by the board president and vice president. Following the investigation, the consequences of a violation are determined by the BOT and may include any sanction which the board deems necessary. There have been no violations of board policy within this accreditation cycle. (IV.C.11) (ER 7)

Through Board Policy 2410 and Board Policy 2430 the BOT delegates full responsibility and authority to the superintendent/president to implement and administer board policies without interference and holds the superintendent/president responsible for the operations of the College. Additionally, the board holds the superintendent/president responsible through evaluation and goal setting as defined in Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2435. (IV.C.12)

As described in Board Policy 3200, the BOT is informed about the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies and processes, and the accreditation status of the College. The board has had recent training focused on accreditation processes and is kept updated and appropriately involved in the accreditation process by the superintendent/president. (IV.C.13)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

The College meets the Standard.

In order to increase effectiveness and clearly delineate functions of the CEO, the team recommends the Board revisit current practice for tenure recommendations to include the CEO in this important process.

## **Quality Focus Essay Feedback/Advice**

The MiraCosta Quality Focus Essay (QFE) appears to be a well-developed document that provides an excellent explanation on the College's selected Action Project (AP). Through the QFE, the college establishes a framework for identifying areas for improvement and identifies strategies to improve institutional practices. It describes processes that are in place at the College, but also offers a suggested plan for how they will be strengthened to improve institutional effectiveness.

The College's selection of 1) Strengthen the use of outcomes assessment results for continuous improvement; and 2) Improve on the completion of student educational goals and close the achievement gap via the development of integrated learning and support experiences, provides a broad focus on all the integral parts of the college operations. The APs are based on the College's analysis of data collected and identify areas of needed change, development, and improvement. The APs and the outcomes they are attempting to achieve are reasonable and achievable within the timelines the College has put forth. The matrix clearly links the person or persons who have responsibility for the AP with the resources and alignment with ACCJC Standards. There is a periodic and regular schedule established which allows for the continuous dialogue to take place at the College.

The QFE leaves no doubt about the expected outcomes for each phase of the project. The team believes that the inclusion of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each stage of the project would provide a good barometer for performance of each AP.

The QFE establishes a high-level view for continuous quality improvement for the college. At this current stage of the QFE model, any recommendations provided by the visiting team should be considered as correlating information that can align with and or provide support for the Action Projects.