

EVALUATION REPORT

GROSSMONT COLLEGE

8800 Grossmont College Drive
El Cajon, California 92020

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Grossmont College October 22 - 25, 2007

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**Grossmont College
Comprehensive Evaluation Visit Team
Monday, October 22 – Thursday, October 25, 2007**

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INTRODUCTION

History

Grossmont College is a comprehensive California Community College, one of two such colleges in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. The second campus, Cuyamaca College, was founded in 1978. The district serves the residents of eastern San Diego County including La Mesa, El Cajon, as well as other cities and communities.

The voters approved the formation of the Grossmont Community College District in 1960, and the first college classes were held in 1961. Classes began on the current campus location in September 1964. The student population has grown from 1,538 in 1961 to a high of 18,123 in 1990. Enrollment in the fall of 2000 was 16,778. Approximately 59 percent of the student population lives within district boundaries. The majority of the remaining 41 percent come from other areas of San Diego County. All of San Diego County has grown rapidly in the past 25 years and it is expected to grow by another one million residents by 2020. The east San Diego region has experienced large growth over the last several years. This trend is expected to continue for the next two decades.

Conducting the Team Review

This visit was conducted during a severe fire storm in San Diego County that at one point had seven fires in place. Some of these fires merged and both campuses were used as assembly sites for resource personnel being used to fight the fire. The fire came close to Cuyamaca College at one time and forced the evacuation of all personnel except those fighting the fire. Air quality in the area got increasingly bad and eventually forced the closure of all schools in San Diego County.

The fires started on Sunday night before the accreditation visit and made it difficult for team members to get to San Diego. The complete team was able to travel to San Diego.

The accreditation visiting teams informed ACCJC of the fire difficulty, but since the team was in place and the colleges were willing to work through the difficulty, a plan was devised to move the visit forward.

Grossmont College personnel worked with the accreditation team to move all the resources to the Doubletree Hotel near the Qualcomm Stadium, and additional meeting rooms were acquired. The Steering Committee and administration worked with college personnel to get members of the faculty, staff, students, and the community to all meetings. The regular visitation schedule was met and those individuals that wanted to talk to the visiting team had that opportunity.

Both the visiting team and the college staff provided every opportunity for those that wanted to speak with the team to have that opportunity. The visiting team feels that they were able to acquire appropriate documentation, see resources, and talk to faculty, staff, administrators, student and community members that were involved in the accreditation

process. Members of the visiting team were able to get on campus for the visit with the District administration and the Board of Trustees. All members of the team had access to the rich resources that were online or prepared in CD form to provide visiting team members with appropriate evidence.

A ten-member team appointed by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges conducted a comprehensive visit of Grossmont College from October 22–25, 2007. Team members interviewed a broad representation of the campus community, held an open forum, met with district office administrators and all five members of the Board of Trustees, met with each standard committee in order to acquire a thorough understanding of Grossmont College's instructional program, services for students, organizational culture, and climate, and student population.

The purpose of the visit was to validate the college's self-study (guided by the four standards of accreditation for a comprehensive community college and conducted during the previous 24 months) to determine how well the college had addressed the recommendations of the previous visiting team, to provide recommendations regarding quality assurance and institutional improvement so as to assist the college in strengthening its programs and services, and to enable the team to make appropriate recommendation to the Accrediting Commission regarding the accredited status of Grossmont College.

In preparation for the visit, team members studied the Commission Handbook for Evaluators, attended training workshops conducted by staff of the Accrediting Commission for community and Junior Colleges, and read the college's self-study and related documents provided by the college. Part of the training included a meeting with the Team Chair and the team prior to arriving on campus. Each team member prepared written reactions to the Grossmont College Self study, identified questions to be addressed by the college, and determined individuals and groups to be interviewed. Meetings were established with each Standard Committee, the Board of Trustees, officials of the district office and appropriate individuals on the campus. The team met collectively to review the self-study report and discuss themes to address. Members of the team met the co-chairs of their primary and secondary assignments and were introduced to college officials and members of the self-study steering committee.

The 2007 visiting team found the self-study to be well organized, well written, and easy to use. The team was impressed with the thoroughness of the study, the manner in which the findings of the previous visit were addressed, and the quality of educational programs and services.

Grossmont College has a number of assets that contribute to quality educational programs and services. Among those strengths are:

1. A faculty, staff, and administration committed to quality education and loyalty to Grossmont College.
2. A district vision understood and adopted by the college constituents.
3. Relatively new planning processes and budget allocation models accepted by

the leadership of constituent groups.

4. Strong program review processes in academic programs and student services.
5. Collegial relationships on campus and an appropriate model to build these relationships at the district.
6. Excellent research support provided by the district office.
7. The construction of three new campus buildings--a new Learning Resources Center, a new science building, and a Digital Arts Building.
8. Quality educational programs.

There is a disturbing but small contingent of faculty and supporters that feel the District administration and the Board of Trustees have moved resources from Grossmont College to Cuyamaca College which has deprived the college of necessary and earned resources. This contingent continues to challenge the administration and contends that there are gross violations in collegial consultation, resource distribution, and inappropriate use of noncredit apportionment. This contingent was given their opportunity to be heard, but no evidence was presented that represented a challenge to meeting eligibility requirements or ACCJC standards.

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Visiting Team commends the Accreditation Liaison Officer and other members of the campus community that supported the team in making the accreditation visit a success under very challenging circumstances.
2. The faculty, staff, administration, and Board are commended for their dedication and exemplary participation in the accreditation review process during this crisis time for the community and individuals due to the fire challenges for the citizens of San Diego.
3. The College is commended for its Griffins Academic Assistance Program (GAAP). This comprehensive support program provides athletes with needed guidance through a partnership of efforts by a counselor, an advisor, and the coach, ensuring academic progress and completion of an academic curriculum.
4. The Library is commended on its creative resourcefulness that includes minimizing expenditures and maximizing resources through reference database acquisition and online tutorial program development.
5. The faculty is commended for their dedication to the development and maintenance of quality educational programs as exemplified in the rigorous curriculum review and approval process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Visiting Team Recommends

1. In order to satisfy the standards on diversity the College must establish policies and practices with the District to ensure equity and diversity are essential components of its human resource planning. The District must regularly assess its record in employment equity and diversity and communicate that record to the college community. (I.A.1, III:A.4.a, III:A.4.b)
2. The College establishes a specific timeline for producing student learning outcomes at the course level and the program level; incorporate student learning outcomes into the curriculum and program review processes; identify systematic measurable assessments; and use the results for the improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. (Standards I.B.a, II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.c, II.B, II.B.3.f, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.b, III.A.1, III.D.1.a, IV.A.1, IV.B.1.b)
3. In order to satisfy the standards on planning, the College must review and revise as necessary its institutional planning processes and make the timing, processes, and expectations of all staff in the institutional planning process more widely known and understood. (Standards I.B, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5., I.B.6, I.B.7, IV.A.2, IV.A.3)
4. The District, in consultation with the College, should provide “primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity” for the College. The District should expand its own strategic plan to link its Allocation Formula to the District and College’s plans. (IV.B.3, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.c)
5. The District needs to clarify its policies and procedures to enhance the delegation of responsibility and authority to the President of the College and include clearly defined policies and procedures for the selection and evaluation of the President. (IV.B.1.j, IV.B. 2, IV.B.3.e)
6. The District should regularly and systematically review its functions and goals, including: (a) Goal setting and self-evaluation by the Board of Trustees (b) Evaluation of the District’s services to the colleges and its effectiveness as a liaison between the College and Board of Trustees (IV.B.1.g, IV.B.3.f, IV.B.3.g)
7. The College, the Chancellor, and the District must improve relations among their various constituency groups in order to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation. The entire College community must work together for the good of the institution. (IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.2)

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS EVALUATION TEAM

1. *The college ensures that progress in the area of institutional planning continues from its nascent stages and makes the timing, processes, and expectations of all staff in the institutional planning process more widely*

known and understood.

A significant amount of effort has been made since the last accreditation visit to weave the numerous constituent forums for collegial consultation into the mainstream of institutional planning. If anything, the attempt to ensure all constituents a voice has made the system cumbersome and leads to a lack of clarity of actions at the campus level and the District level. No traditional District Strategic Plan exists. The Board of Trustees identified planning themes entitled “The Way Forward” that identifies six strands for planning: (a) Academic Excellence; (b) Unity; (c) Standardization; (d) Alignment; (e) Resources; and (f) Facilities. These themes are expected to be addressed in the strategic plans of the individual colleges. The structure would lead the reader to believe the mechanism for institutional planning is robust and includes all constituencies.

The Report references a spring 2004 planning group’s report that was commissioned by the College’s Planning & Budget Council to outline the relationship among the various planning documents and processes. While an initial gathering of information occurred, the planning group reports it did not complete its task. During the College’s spring 2006 Leadership Planning Retreat, participants discussed improvement to the College-wide planning processes referencing Standard One goals, highlighting those which have been met while recognizing those that have only been partially met.

A clear understanding of the planning process across the campus continues to be a challenge. During the 2006-2007 academic year, the Planning Processes Review Task Force formally addressed the need for higher levels of awareness and clarity regarding planning processes among constituent groups across the campus. As such, an integrated calendar of planning processes has been developed. With this in place, each segment of the process may interact and support the others as the college updates its Educational Master Plan in relation to the 2004-2010 Strategic Plan. As the calendar is integrated, realignment of the timing of respective planning processes has given the college representatives to the Planning and Budget Council a greater sense of comfort in clarifying these relationships. The college is sincere in its efforts to improve the institutional planning process and maintains efforts to seek refinements that will make all constituents comfortable with the process.

While the campus constituencies still need to refine the process, it is evident that the campus did address the recommendation of the previous visiting team. There is still room for improvement and refinement of the cumbersome process so that the time for planning and acting on plans can be shortened.

2. *The college considers improving its management information system that has become somewhat antiquated. The review team believes the current system may cease to be effective in handling student records and web-based programs. (3.B.3, C.1, C.3, 4.A.1, A.5, D.3, D.5, I.E. 5.9, 7.D.4, 9.B.1, 10.C.4)*

Grossmont College and the District have completed major changes in this system that impacts both colleges. This was initiated in October 2000, when Grossmont College was awarded a Title III grant. The main activity of the grant was to strengthen student retention and success with technology-enhanced academic programs and student services. The major objective of the grant was to procure a new student record information system (SRIS) that integrates educational, financial, physical, and human resources.

The system serves the entire district; District Information Services included Cuyamaca College in the review of various web-based management information systems for the handling of student records. Representatives from all operational areas at both colleges affected by the new information system participated in the selection process. The final selection was DataTel's Colleague.

Much of the system is still being installed and tested. As with all such systems, there is significant staff work to make the data system functional. The first phase of the installation is in process and is scheduled for completion in summer 2008.

In addition to the new data system, the report also identifies other resources and institutional research tools that support the efforts of the campus in planning, program review, and continuous improvement. The Office of Districtwide Academic Planning and Research Services (IR-PASS) coordinates this effort. While the district is still in the installation process of much of the new system, the recommendation has been addressed.

3. *The college continues to address issues of diversity found in the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Statement on Diversity. In particular the team recommends every effort be made to hire a faculty, administration, and staff that reflect the changing demographics of the student population, and that educational programs and services meet the need of a changing student population. (2.6., 4.C.3. 5.7. 7.D. 2; Statement on Diversity)*

Grossmont College provided extensive information to report the current analysis of diversity among all populations of the college. The end result is that there have not been significant shifts in the population at any level. However, the college may have more difficulty dealing with diversity since the passage of Proposition 207, curtailing the use of ethnic targets in hiring.

It is important to note that there has been a shift in the median age of employees and that the community profile is shifting to a majority of minority populations. That shift has not been as significant as other parts of San Diego or California, but the trend will continue to impact the college.

The college community has taken diversity seriously as evidenced by the significant work that has been completed by the college community to establish standards for graduation that include an understanding of cultural diversity. The increased offering in the curriculum and the activities to bring about awareness of cultural diversity are to be commended. It is also important to note that the col-

lege has adopted the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) guidelines that expand the context of diversity to include a wide variety of perspectives, including, but not limited to, racial, ethnic, cultural, physical, gender, and sexual orientation. The college is to be commended for the extensive curricular work and activities to enrich the college community understanding, acceptance and support of diversity issues.

Progress in the employment realm is well documented but shows insignificant progress when the changing demographics of the community are taken into consideration. There is a need to develop more aggressive programs for finding and encouraging applicants in the future that will be more reflective of this changing population. Since the accomplishment of a diverse representation can be best accomplished when a strong policy is in place, it is important that current Board policies and goals be reviewed to ensure that this leadership is in place.

This recommendation has been partially addressed by the college, but will require continued effort to fully realize diversity in all its aspects including the profile of the student body and the employees of the College.

4. *The college continues to encourage district and college leadership stability in order to allow the very encouraging changes in campus and district climate to become acculturated. (10.B.1, B.2., C.1., C.6)*

The intent of the recommendation from the previous visiting team reflected on the turnover of leadership of the management team for the college. A significant portion of the administrative staff was in interim status. At the close of the fall 2006 semester, 13 of 21 administrators had been in their position fewer than two years. The college had an interim president, an interim vice-president for Academic Affairs, an interim vice-president of Student Services, an interim associate dean of EOPS, and an interim assistant dean of Student Affairs.

At the start of the spring 2007 semester, three of these positions (vice-president of Student Services, associate dean of EOPS, and the assistant dean of Student Affairs) were filled on a permanent basis. The search for a college president was finally completed after three searches, and the new President took office this summer.

Many factors contribute to the high staff turnover and the difficulty in attracting highly qualified applicants. The factors cited most frequently during interviews with constituency representatives include the current climate within the district and non-competitive salaries.

With pending retirements, it is expected that Grossmont College and the District will continue to have a significant turnover in the future. One bright spot in this picture has been the stability of the faculty leadership. The Academic Senate president completed her second term. The chair of Chairs & Coordinators was a veteran in her position. Faculty involvement in campus collegial consultation committees remains strong. At the same time, it must be noted that the inability of the college to hire new and replacement faculty is affecting this situation. The

many faculty vacancies have a deleterious effect on morale and lessen faculty enthusiasm for serving in these leadership positions.

The self-study reinforces another area of tension in relationship to leadership at the Board and Chancellor level. Unlike the recommendation that focused on sustainability of leadership, this tension is vested in collegial consultation issues and appears to be far from solution. The District administration will need to expand its perception regarding collegial consultation and include resolution to these issues in relationship to leadership stability.

Grossmont College included a series of responses to its “plan of action” from the previous visiting team report. These plans focus on student services, general education, transfer education, and articulation between the sister colleges. Progress is reported on the plans developed in this area.

A second focus was on promoting communications between campus constituent groups. The focus was to improve communication and activities by all constituent groups in relation to the shared (participative) governance model. This was expanded to address hiring and evaluation policies, budgeting process, and institutional research. From the standpoint of campus interchange the planning process has made significant progress in building bridges with the constituents. This does not appear to have been reflected in the relationships at the District level.

The third focus of the “plans of action” is directed at evaluating and strengthening resources. Three threads are identified in these plans. The review of hiring, orientation, and evaluation of tenured faculty is one thread. A second thread is the one causing current tension because it calls for involvement of constituents in management evaluation and a more inclusive evaluation process for the college president. The third thread evaluates professional development, curriculum development, and continued integration of critical thinking skills, diversity recognition, etc. into the curriculum. Of the later plans the topics on diversity appear to have made the most improvement.

This report comments on the “plan of action” recommendations because most of the negative portions of the self-study are derived from the frustration of various constituents regarding the progress of these recommendations even though they were not among the major recommendations of the previous visiting team.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. AUTHORITY

Grossmont College is a member institution of the California Community College system and is authorized to provide educational programs by the California Education Code. The college acts under the direct authority of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Governing Board, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the Chancellor’s Office. Grossmont

College's programs and services follow the guidelines set by the California Code of Regulations Title 5. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

2. MISSION

The current Grossmont College Mission Statement was adopted October 2, 2006. The mission statement has been thoroughly integrated into the institution's planning documents and has been published and displayed in key locations throughout the campus. It functions as an expression of the philosophy, principles, and values of the institution. This requirement has been met.

3. GOVERNING BOARD

A five-member elected Board of Trustees for the Grossmont/Cuyamaca Community College District has responsibility for the programs and operations of Grossmont College. These members are elected from the district's geographical area and serve four-year terms. Terms in office are staggered to provide for continuity of membership. Students elect one student representative from each of the two colleges that comprise the district. The student members serve in an advisory capacity. Representatives from shared governance groups also attend governing board meetings to provide advisory information as needed.

This is an independent Board that has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. The Governing Board meets the requirement of being an independent policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Grossmont College has a chief executive officer, the College President, who is appointed by the Governing Board on recommendation by the District Chancellor. The College President has full-time responsibility to the college and possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies. Neither the District Chancellor nor the College President may serve as the chair of the Governing Board. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

Academic and classified managers possess the minimum required qualifications as approved and established by the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College district Governing Board. A thorough and careful hiring process ensures that the college selects the most qualified staff possible. Training and experience are defined by position descriptions that are then used by selection committees as a means to ensure that administrators are qualified to perform their responsibilities. Academic and classified managers are routinely evaluated. The College meets this requirement.

6. OPERATING STATUS

Grossmont College is committed to serving students completing lower division major preparation for transfer to a four-year institution as well as students interested in completing occupational/vocational programs. Grossmont College also offers programs that meet the needs of special populations, which include personal development, basic skills, and English as a Second Language. The Grossmont College Catalog and the Grossmont College web site provide information on the philosophy, mission, and educational objectives of the college. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

7. DEGREES

The college awards Associate in Arts and/or Science degrees in 80 majors and offers 73 certificate programs. A substantial portion of the institution's educational offerings are programs that lead to degrees, and a significant proportion of its students are enrolled in them. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Grossmont College's degree and certificate programs are established to support the missions of the college and the district as well as the missions of the individual departments. Title 5 regulations for degrees and certificates are followed closely, as are, in some of the vocational fields, the dictates of State Board accrediting bodies. Programs are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and scrutinized for appropriate length, breadth, depth, and sequencing of courses. Members of the Academic Program Review Committee critically scrutinize all programs to ensure effectiveness and support of the district and college's missions. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

9. ACADEMIC CREDIT

The Grossmont College catalog clearly describes the grading system and information on grading procedures, repeating classes, and grade responsibility is also repeated in the class schedule. Credit is awarded based on the conventional Carnegie unit; each unit represents three hours of the student's time each week – one hour in classroom lecture, and two hours in outside preparation – for one semester. Grossmont College meets the minimum academic requirements established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. The College meets this requirement.

10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Grossmont College is currently involved in identifying college, program, and course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) and their related assessments. In the past two years, much dialogue has occurred throughout the college on SLOs along with a variety of in-depth workshops. By 2013, the goal is to have faculty collaboratively write and collectively agree upon SLOs and the assessments for both academic program and course completion. Through regular and systematic analysis of

assessment data generated through SLO achievement studies, the faculty will continuously be able to improve on methods of instruction and assessment along with modes of delivery. Student Learning Outcomes have not been defined for all disciplines. Some career technical programs have completed the identification of student outcomes and the rubrics for measurement.

Student achievement measures are established and incorporated into the program review process. This information is used currently for planning, budgeting, and program improvement related to the District Strategic Plan and the campus Educational Master Plan. This requirement is partially met.

11. GENERAL EDUCATION

Grossmont College defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education coursework designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. In addition to the general education component including demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills, an introduction to some of the major areas of knowledge, it also infuses critical thinking, reading, speaking and listening, personal ethical standards, and awareness and appreciation of diversity. The quality and rigor of Grossmont College's General Education is consistent with the academic standards appropriate to higher education and provide comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Governing Board promotes public understanding and support of academic freedom for the implementation of the educational philosophy of Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the instructor in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights. Regardless of institutional affiliation or sponsorship, the institution maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

13. FACULTY

Grossmont College employs 235 full-time instructional faculty as of fall, 2007. There are 32 full-time non-instructional faculty members (librarians and counselors) and approximately 645 adjunct faculty members. All faculty members meet minimum qualifications. Necessary qualifications and equivalency procedures have been established through the shared governance process between the local Academic Senate and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Governing Board. The process and procedures by which the faculty members are evaluated are outlined in the contract between the district and the United Faculty.

There are specific processes and timelines for evaluation of tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, and adjunct faculty. Current evaluation criteria monitor the effectiveness of academic instruction. Regulations regarding faculty conduct are included in

the Grossmont College Faculty Handbook. Grossmont College faculty members develop a variety of new programs and courses, while maintaining quality in existing courses. Faculty are also responsible for curriculum development and specific training has been provided on the development of student learning outcomes. They also provide a variety of services to students. Faculty members take seriously the mission of the college as they attempt to meet the diverse needs of their students. The College meets this requirement.

14. STUDENT SERVICES

Grossmont College has a long history of providing comprehensive student support services. The emphasis the college places on these services is reflected in its long-range planning documents. At the core of many of these programs and services are specific support services aimed at promoting retention and success. In order to be as effective as possible in providing services to meet the students' educational needs, the college conducts regular and systematic self-studies, surveys, and evaluations of its programs and services. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

15. ADMISSIONS

Grossmont College admissions policies and practices promote access to the college as stated in the Grossmont College Mission Statement. Access is provided to anyone with a high school diploma or equivalent, or to anyone who is 18 years of age who may benefit and is interested in seeking a postsecondary experience. The admission policies are published in the catalog, the student handbook, and on the college web site. Health Science programs have additional requirements of students prior to enrolling. These policies are also published in the catalog, in brochures, on the college web site, and on the Health Science web site. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Grossmont College provides long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered. The recently renovated Library Resource Center and Technology Mall (2004) offers a full service Library, Informational Systems, Instructional Media Services, Graphics, Photography, Word processing, Video Conferencing, a Center for Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and instructional development labs as part of Instructional Media Services. The various computer-equipped centers and labs support diverse methods of instruction and address the varied needs and learning styles of our students. Support staff members of the centers and labs work in close collaboration with the classroom faculty. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Grossmont College documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability. College budget planning occurs within the context of district budget planning. The college president and other college staff are members of the district wide Budget Planning Committee (DBPC). The DBPC develops its budget within the framework of projections from the State Chancellor's Office based on campus-generated goals for enrollment. After the district sets campus allocations, the college then develops its budget, which includes fixed costs, categorical programs, committed expenses, and the use of discretionary funds. Under the college's current budget planning process, the linkage between financial planning and other planning efforts is clear and open. Proposals for expenditures will not be considered, other than in emergencies, in the budgeting process unless those proposals have completed a rigorous planning process. Proposed expenditures must be tied to specific objectives in the appropriate plans.

Through the district budgeting system, the Integrated Financial Accounting System (IFAS), the Vice President of Administrative Services administers the finances for all college programs, except those funded by the Grossmont Foundation, and contractual agreements. An external, independent auditor audits all funds each year. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Grossmont College, as part of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College district, annually undergoes and makes available an external financial audit by a certified public accounting firm. The institution submits with its eligibility application a copy of the budget and institutional financial audits and management letters prepared by the outside certified public accounting agency, who has no other relationship to the institution for its two most recent fiscal years, including the fiscal year ending immediately prior to the date of the submission of the application. The audits are certified and any exceptions are fully explained. Auditors employ as a guide *Audits of Colleges and Universities*, published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. No annual or cumulative operating deficit exists. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The Office of Districtwide Academic, Student, Planning and Research Services (IR-PASS) conducts an array of research for the campus and the district. Grossmont College systematically uses this data to evaluate and make public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, which will now include assessment of student learning outcomes. The college assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. The president uses the information to update the college's annual report regarding the accomplishment of goals as outlined in the Strategic

Plan. Research information is valuable in supporting program development and evaluation.

The allocation of resources is based on the planning process. The Strategic Plan and the Educational Master Plan are the documents that drive the initiatives and activities developed each year. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Grossmont College Catalog is made available to students, public and private institutions, and the community. The complete catalog is posted on the Admissions and Records web site. The catalog contains residency and admission requirements, general education requirements, associate degree requirements, course descriptions, financial aid and scholarship information, and general information on student activities and services. Members of the full-time faculty, classified staff, distinguished faculty, instructional and student services administration, and Governing Board members are listed in the catalog. The check list included in the *ACCJC Accreditation Reference Handbook* has been addressed by the college.

The Grossmont College Student Handbook includes tips for students with regard to admission, registration, educational plans, general education, Transfer Admission Guarantee agreements, financial aid regulations, assessment information, and strategies on being a successful student at Grossmont College. The handbook is also available on the college web site.

The Grossmont College Class Schedule contains the courses of instruction, student services information, fees refunds, admissions requirements, and course descriptions. Class schedules are published in the spring, summer, and fall, and also appear on the college's web site. Grossmont College meets this requirement.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

Grossmont College has complied with the Accreditation Commission's standards. All segments of the college have been involved in the self-study. Each standard committee was comprised of administration, faculty, staff, and students.

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College district Governing Board has been informed of the accreditation process through reports from the Accreditation Steering Committee. Moreover, the trustees have participated in the process, sharing information and making recommendations to the committees as those standards were written.

The Grossmont College Catalog includes information about the college's accreditation through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The college addressed the previous visiting team's recommendations and submitted updates to the Commission.

Grossmont College meets the requirements regarding its relationship to the Accrediting Commission, fully complies with reports, and communicates results of

Commission findings to its constituencies and the public. This requirement has been met.

ADDRESSING ACCREDITATION THEMES

Institutional Commitments:

Guided by its recently (November, 2006) adopted mission, Grossmont College provides ample evidence that its instructional programs and learning support focus on student learning. Programs of study are offered that support student achievement of educational goals or purpose. The college committee structure, funding processes, and review procedures are all designed to serve the ultimate needs of students and to ensure that instructional programs are responsive to the needs of the college community.

Evaluation, Planning and Improvement:

The college has an annual planning process that incorporates systematic evaluation of programs and services, improvement planning, linkage to budgeting, and reevaluation following implementation. The primary processes (Strategic Plan, Educational Master Plan, and Program Reviews) are initiated annually and demonstrate a conscious and systematic effort to organizationally support student learning. The cycle begins with a spring annual leadership planning retreat at which time annual institutional goals and objectives are agreed upon. Individual department program reviews follow each fall in which departments and programs are asked to assess what they are doing and identify how they plan to continue or improve the program. The linkages between these two processes are not clearly evident. The prioritized program needs, as identified by each department, are forwarded to respective committees (Staffing, Facilities, and Equipment and Technology) and through these committees to the college Planning and Budget Council for funding recommendations. These funding recommendations are prioritized prior to forwarding to the President. Exemplary evidence is provided of the availability of data to support the decision-making process. With the Student Learning Outcome Initiative in its infancy at Grossmont, processes for improvement may become more targeted in the future. There is a specific need to address progress toward student learning outcomes so they become an integral part of the planning and program review process.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Grossmont College is engaged in the development of Student Learning Outcomes. There is evidence that dialogue has occurred for the past three years resulting in a document adopted by the Academic Senate diagramming and delineating institutional outcomes. The college has not developed assessments to measure achievement of these institutional outcomes.

Instructional faculty have attended numerous workshops on student learning outcomes and are at various stages of identifying course and program level outcomes. Evidence of successful progress is found in the Administration of Justice, English, ESL, and Foreign Language Departments where they have collaborated to write exit criteria (SLOs) and identified particular assessments to be used in evaluating them. There is minimal evi-

dence that assessment data is being used for program change and improvement.

Student Services areas have identified student learning outcomes and are in the process of assessing them. No results of these assessments have been employed toward program improvement.

The college has recognized the importance of moving forward with the identification and assessment of SLOs as a basis of program evaluation and improvement. This is demonstrated by the establishment of a faculty SLO Coordinator position and suggested timeline for SLO and assessment identification (self-study, p 45). While the campus has attempted to move forward on the SLO initiative, additional steps should be planned and the timeline in which to do this needs to be clearly communicated to the campus at large.

Organization:

The organizational structure of the college and District is designed to support and promote the ultimate needs of the students served. The many (college and District) committees are organized to address the broad instructional-related concerns of curriculum, budgeting, marketing, facilities, planning, student life, and many other important concerns. The District's Strategic Planning and Budget Council and their Coordinating Educational Council provide broader constituencies an opportunity to participate in the decision making. The processes are (on paper) inclusive, informed, and intentional in efforts to support and demonstrate the college's mission. Faculty, during the visit, expressed concern for the minimal number of meetings held and shortness of time in which true discussion, planning, and decision making can occur. Grossmont College has adequate staff to meet student needs; however, restricted fiscal resources and limited physical space have been identified as restrictive in completely meeting needs.

Dialogue:

The dialogue at Grossmont College is believed to be important to the development and strengthening of programs. As a result, employees, regardless of title or position, are engaged in open and honest dialogue, through the appropriate organizational network, on any initiative designed to improve the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. This formal dialogue occurring through governance is delineated in "Organizational and Governance Structures" wherein the roles of faculty, administrators, staff, and students are described.

Dialogue between the college and the district has been identified by campus constituencies to be problematic. The college is committed to productive, collegial dialogue with the district and suggests efforts toward this beginning.

Institutional Integrity:

Grossmont College is well known for the rigor of its courses, its highly professional staff, and its value to the community. Effective and efficient governance contributes to this reputation along with honest, dedicated, and academically focused leaders. It represents itself honestly to all its constituencies. The college provides the community and members of the college with clearly and accurately written publications, such as the catalog

and course schedule, in print and online. The college demands and enforces academic honesty on the part of students and faculty. The college continually seeks clarity and fairness in hiring and employment practices.

The self-study report contains an admirable amount of self-reflection and demonstrates integrity by clearly acknowledging its inability to meet accreditation standards related to the use of student learning outcomes in assessing students and services as well as concern for its relationship with the district.

STANDARD ONE: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

General Comments:

Standard I sets expectations for the institution in two areas: (1) the development and implementation of a widely communicated mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning, and (2) the use of analyses of quantitative and qualitative data in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness of the mission.

Evaluation of how well Grossmont College meets or exceeds the standard was conducted by a careful review of the self-study and group and individual meetings with college leadership, faculty, staff, administration, and students. Review of the evidence was a major focus of the team assigned to Standard I.

The college provided abundant evidence when addressing and substantiating their assertions regarding its mission statement and its use of data to develop a cycle of evaluation, planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to improve its effectiveness. Examples of evidence include the mission statement revision process; the college mission statement; the district mission statement; faculty, staff, and student surveys; various plans and processes, including department educational master plans, sample program reviews and course syllabi, ad hoc research reports, technology, facilities, and staffing plans, the Strategic Plan, the College Fiscal Resources Planning diagram; and sample minutes of meetings for the Academic Senate and the Planning and Budget Council.

The college mission statement was revised by a committee of college and district-level representatives during the 2005-2006 academic year, the fall 2006 semester, and approved by the Governing Board in November 2006. Shortly after, in December 2006, the Governing Board approved the district vision and mission statements. The college mission statement states its broad institutional purposes and establishes the foundation for student learning programs and services.

The college demonstrates progress in institutional planning. Numerous opportunities for dialogue regarding the improvement of student learning and institutional processes exist for campus constituencies.

Goals are set by individual departments in the four primary college areas, Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Services, and the President's Office, in their annual Educational Master Plans (EMP), and they are aligned with the goals of the

Strategic Plan.

Both quantitative and qualitative data are available at every level to support evaluation and planning decisions. The college has taken the initial steps to establish the process for developing and measuring student learning outcomes (SLOs). However, the efforts are short of full involvement and use in the planning process and are therefore still in the development stage according to the Commission's Rubric on Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness.

The planning process begins at the instructional and service department level when the individual units analyze their current and prior-year budgets to make decisions regarding their staffing, technology, and facilities needs for the coming year. They communicate their needs through their annual educational master plans. Then the plans filter through the appropriate committees, ending with the College Planning and Budget Council, for determination of the recommended funding level. The opportunities for campus constituencies to participate in planning were thoroughly explained. Plans are updated on a regular cycle.

Currently, the planning process is explained and the connections and integration of plans are made through the use of the *Fiscal Resources Planning Diagram*. The *Organizational and Governance Structures* handbook describes the roles that constituencies play in the plans. The diagram, along with the guidelines found in the handbook, are intended to aid in the college's continuing efforts to clarify how the plans are integrated and overlap and who is responsible for a particular action.

Findings and Evidence:

A. Mission:

The current mission statement was approved by the Governing Board in November 2006. The review and subsequent revision were accomplished through a review of sample mission statements, state regulatory requirements for the mission of the California community colleges, the College 2004-10 Strategic Plan, and the comprehensive district Environmental Scan. The Strategic Plan, as well as the other plans and institutional processes, reflect the mission statement, which focuses on student success. Due to the timing of the preparation of some college documents, for example the 2004-10 Strategic Plan, the old mission statement still appears in this plan. A number of academic and vocational programs have been instituted to meet the needs of the identified student populations. Two notable examples are the creation of the Proficiency Certificate for "Tribal Gaming: Culture and Policies" and an associate degree in Arabic. Also programs and services have been added or enhanced to serve the students. The district mission and vision statements were revised and approved by the Governing Board in December 2006. Included with the statements is a document titled *The Way Forward*. *The Way Forward* identifies six themes or elements which are designed to serve as the district's framework for its values and direction. The college mission statement does not show alignment with these themes. It appears in printed and electronic publications, is posted in a number of locations on campus, and is acknowledged by faculty and staff to be the guide for college planning and decision making. The statement will be reviewed and updated in 2010. (I.A.1,1.A.2, I.A.3, I.A.4)

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness:

The self-study identifies and provides ample evidence of the numerous opportunities for participation in dialogue about improvement in student learning and institutional processes. Some mechanisms include opportunities to participate in the Curriculum Committee, Academic Program Review Committee, Student Services Program Review Committee, Council of Chairs and Coordinators, Instruction Administrative Council, Student Services Council, professional development activities, departmental activities for developing educational master plans and program reviews, Academic Senate, and most recently, student learning outcomes (SLOs). (I.B.1)

SLO development and assessment are still in the awareness stage, having just begun in spring 2004 when the Academic Senate passed a resolution establishing that SLOs would be collaboratively authored and collectively agreed upon. A faculty member was selected to serve both as the SLO Coordinator and the faculty co-chair of the self study. The faculty self study co-chair and two administrative self study co-chairs, one of whom was an off-campus consultant, have conducted workshops, forums, and training sessions to inform the full SLO process campuswide. The Academic Senate approved institutional outcomes on March 5, 2007. To date they have not been approved by other shared governance bodies. Thus far, some course SLOs, primarily in the vocational programs, and student service outcomes have been developed. Few have been assessed. No program SLOs have been developed. No evidence was provided for the development of SLOs by administrative services units. (I.B.1)

As evidenced by current course syllabi and discussion with faculty, development of course SLOs has been growing with a consistent attention to assessing the efficacy of the new learning outcomes. In fact, the publishing of student learning outcomes for classes has been inhibited by the close attention faculty have paid to revising as assessments of the outcomes have occurred, especially in the areas of math and English. Faculty who teach technical courses are pleased that outcomes are a natural function of their disciplines.

The Academic Senate recently solicited nominations for a permanent student outcomes coordinator, with plans to fill this position by the beginning of spring 2008 semester. The first charge of the coordinator will be to oversee the development of a comprehensive student learning outcomes plan. The Academic Senate intends to devote the entire flex week to student learning outcomes in January 2008 with the goal of making considerable progress in the development of course-level student learning outcomes by week's end.

Goals at the highest level of college operation are presented in the Strategic Plan 2004-10. Goals are set and identified by individual departments in the four primary college areas, Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Services, and the President's Office, in their annual Educational Master Plans (EMP), and they are aligned with the goals of the Strategic Plan. The EMPs are intended to guide most of the planning and budget decisions regarding facilities, equipment, technology, and staffing that are made by the college via the Planning and Budget Council, the shared governance council that recommends to the college president. No goals for SLOs as a measure of institutional

effectiveness have been developed. Further, the College acknowledges that it does not articulate its goals in either the Strategic Plan or the EMPs in measurable terms as required by the standard. (I.B.2)

Both quantitative and qualitative data are available at every level to support evaluation and planning decisions. Various types of internal and external data for completing, supporting, and/or evaluating program reviews, staffing proposals, curriculum, student performance and fiscal operations can be obtained through IR-PASS and Data on Demand. There is little data regarding assessment of progress on SLOs. (I.B.3)

The college has made progress in its many efforts to increase effectiveness by engaging in substantive dialogue about planning, student learning outcomes, improvement of student learning and processes at the college. While the dialogue is to be applauded and campus awareness of planning processes has grown, faculty and staff involved in the different planning processes have not identified and have yet to set goals, tasks, and timelines that clarify the planning process for its constituency.

The college has developed a diagram titled *College Fiscal Planning Resources* to provide a visual depiction of the relationship among planning processes, planning documents, and shared governance groups to make recommendations to the president regarding financial resources allocations. The cycle of activities for planning is further described in detailed narrative about the diagram. This document was developed as an effort to assist campus constituencies in understanding the planning process, including how the plans relate to one another, ultimately resulting in budget allocations that are based on a plan. The document does not contain a timeline for the sequencing of plans. (I.B.3)

The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness that align with its mission. Input from area councils, departments and instructional divisions drives development of the annual Educational Master Plan (EMP), updates to the three-year technology plan, and facilities remodel requests. The Facilities Master Plan accompanies the EMP to the staffing committees, the Campus Facilities Committee, and the Equipment and Technology Committee. While the process is robust, it leads to inefficiency in the process that may prohibit good planning. (I.B.3)

Instructional and service departments analyze their current and prior-year budgets to make decisions regarding their needs for the coming year as stated in their educational master plans. Then the plans filter through the appropriate committees for determination of funding. (I.B.4)

The Organizational and Governance Structures model further attempts to identify the overall process for college governance, including the specification of key constituencies and the charge and composition of all deliberative bodies, such as councils, committees, and task forces for decision making. Over 50 councils, committees, and task forces operate at Grossmont. It appears that better efficiency in planning could be achieved through a review and refinement of this process. (IV.A.)

The Academic Senate leadership, in recognition of the confusion and frustration that has resulted from having many plans that appear redundant and that are constructed on a timeline that is not apparent and may be out of synchronization with the timeline necessary for movement to the budget allocation level, plans to work through their representation on the Planning and Budget Council with other represented constituencies on the refinement of the planning processes to provide a streamlined, coherent, and integrated process.

Numerous publications and reports inform the public about student data and college outcomes. A Publications Committee, established in 2006, oversees the visual and message consistency in publications. Campus publications are reviewed regularly to ensure quality. (I.B.5)

Grossmont relies strongly on the value it has given to promoting and making its campus community aware of the need for clear and progressive planning in all aspects of campus life. The institution is aware that there is a limited understanding among faculty and staff about the availability, usefulness, and proficiency that can be gained by using research data to drive planning and to assess the capacity of the institution to meet the needs stated in its planning documents. Linking measurable terms into the fabric of planning will substantially improve the effectiveness of its goal-setting process. With the already high collaborative nature of staff and faculty on campus, the institution will easily continue its robust and pervasive dialogue, especially when data and appropriate analyses are used and widely distributed throughout the institution. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4)

The campus evaluates and adjusts plans regularly. Educational master plans are updated annually. The EMP Implementation Task Force, a subcommittee of the Planning and Budget Council, reviews and makes recommendations about the EMP planning process. The program review process is re-evaluated at the end of each review cycle and last occurred in 2002-03. The resource allocation process for the coming year's budget, as well as the process for distribution of discretionary resources, is reviewed by the President's Cabinet which makes recommendations to the Planning and Budget Council. (I.B.6)

There is no plan for reviewing the student learning outcomes process. The October 2, 2006, Academic Senate minutes report that SLO questions to be answered during the program review process were passed. A small sample of department program reviews completed in 2007 showed the inclusion of responses regarding their SLO progress. Student Services programs follow the same guidelines for review of their program review process as the academic programs. As well, the Curriculum Committee conducts an annual review. Staffing, Equipment and Technology, and Facilities Committees periodically review their processes. (1.B.7)

The two principal mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of programs and services is program review for academic and student services and IR-PASS which generates data and reports on general and specialized topics related to the effectiveness of programs and services. Instructional program review is a process of consistent quality improvement and integrity. The evaluation within program review is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data. (1.B.7)

Conclusions

Grossmont meets the standard parts regarding the mission statement. The writers thoroughly documented the process used by the college to update its statement and its plan for the next update. The role the statement plays in institutional planning and decision making is also well documented. Although the Grossmont mission statement was revised and approved on the approximate timeline as the District's mission statement, it is not aligned with the six elements described in *The Way Forward* which is part of the District's mission statement.

The college has developed processes for and created a number of plans and identified the life cycle for each. However, a number of issues regarding institutional planning still leave the institution at the developmental level on the Commission's Rubric in the area of planning. There is ample evidence that numerous opportunities exist for participation in dialogue about improvement in student learning and institutional processes. There is no evidence of how SLO plans are integrated or drive the budget. The college Fiscal Planning Resources diagram does not adequately explain the relationship among the plans. It does not present a clear description of how the plans are integrated, a timeline for completion of the plans, or how resources are allocated. Faculty believe that funding for their programs is not adequate to enable the College to accomplish its mission. These beliefs may be partially due to the continuing issue of their lack of understanding of the planning and funding processes. The Planning and Budget Council will continue to address this problem.

Given that goals are not stated in measurable terms, the College has no definable method for determining if it effectively implements and achieves its goals. The College has self identified that it will continue to explore how this accreditation requirement can be met as the EMPs as the Strategic Plan are reviewed.

Extensive amounts of data are collected and provided for use in planning. However, collection of data regarding SLOs is just beginning. Insufficient progress has been made in the development and assessment of SLOs. Student learning outcomes results are not currently formally communicated to the appropriate constituencies. There is no plan for implementing and reviewing the student learning outcomes process, nor is there a method for assessing the use of student learning outcomes as an evaluation tool for improvement of student learning.

Recommendations:

1. The College should review and adjust its institutional planning to ensure refinement and understanding of the planning cycle in consideration of the number of plans, the timing of the completion of the plans to ensure linkage to budget to improve institutional decision making, planning, and effectiveness. (Recommendation 1 - 2001 Evaluation Team Report, Standards I.B, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, 1.B.7, IVA.2)

STANDARD TWO: STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT

General Observations

This section of the Self Study reflects broad input from the campus constituency. It is worthy of recognition for the consistent emphasis on the key role of the faculty and of the curriculum and program review committees in developing, ensuring the integrity of, and considering the effectiveness of curricula, instructional modes and methods, and beginning to prepare the college for developing student learning outcomes and assessment practices.

There is a high degree of commitment by faculty and staff to make Grossmont College one of the area's premier community colleges. One of the co-chairs of the self-study interviewed noted that at least 65% of the contract faculty are actively engaged in the college on committees and in developing out-of-class initiatives that support the strategic and on-going instruction-related demands of the college.

Interview statements suggest a spirit of cooperation among the faculty, staff, and current college administration. Interviews also reveal that an underlying conflict existed among the faculty and between the faculty and the administration regarding the will to support the student learning outcomes assessment initiative. With the approval of an SLO coordinator and a commitment from the college administration to provide whatever is needed, the mechanics to implement SLOs are now in place.

The self-study illuminated challenging conditions at Grossmont College. While the instructional program remains solid, strife over shared governance and instability in the ranks of top management partially explain why established timeframes for accomplishing requirements were delayed significantly. The greatest difficulties described within the document and validated through interviews have been the instability among college administrative leadership, conflict between the faculty, the Chancellor and the Board; differential treatment of the two colleges in the district; and a strong perception of inadequate college funding, all of which has led to a general sense of frustration with the status quo. If not rectified, this turmoil will begin to negatively impact the instructional program.

With regards to student learning outcomes, the self-study reports that the College plans to complete outcomes for courses and programs by 2010. When approximately thirty faculty and administrators were asked why the college had not made more progress six years after the new Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) SLO-based standards, initial deliberation regarding the validity of the use of SLOs by the statewide Academic Senate was cited as a factor. Additionally, resistance to SLOs by senior faculty, distraction caused by internal strife at Grossmont, and the lack of an SLO coordinator were all cited as factors that delayed SLO progress. The college may need to expedite this process and be sure to include the development of assessment measures, the analysis of the results of SLO assessment, and then use results to improve college programs and services.

Findings and Evidence

A. Instructional Programs:

The college demonstrates that all instructional programs meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity. It does this through the rigorous and highly structured efforts of the curriculum committee through which programs are developed and approved. The various college review processes including program reviews and faculty evaluations validate how the institution's mission is met and integrity is upheld. Program review evaluates all courses and programs every six years. Faculty are evaluated on a regular basis per union contract, and a score of 3.5 or lower may result in non-rehire of adjunct faculty. The curriculum committee, program review, and faculty evaluation efforts are supported through the use of District institutional research Data on Demand to understand emerging trends and the research fact book to equip all professionals of the college with information about student demographics, student needs, and student success. (IIA.1.a)

Increasingly, research data on specialized learning outcomes is provided to facilitate individual programs in carrying out analyses. For example, Project Success conducts comparative analysis of students in the linked courses to students in non-linked courses to determine the efficacy of its program. Particular units including the English, math, English as a Second Language, and chemistry departments develop and use specialized tests to assess student achievement in meeting established learning outcomes. Many of these departments are also engaged in specialized analyses leading to deconstruction of the work of learning. While some of these efforts are new for faculty, reportedly most occupational faculty have had to consistently engage historically in this type of work to meet externally driven standards of certifying industry partners and accrediting agencies in addition to occupational advisory committees. The locally developed statewide initiative, CalPASS, helps the college examine transitional data. (IIA.1.a)

In general, faculty and students believe that Grossmont College offers high quality and relevant educational programs. Transfer rates have remained constant since 2001 for UC transfers and have increased by 10% for CSU transfers. Program success is not evaluated by student learning outcomes collegewide at this time, but the institution is committed to see this happen in the next two years. (IIA.1.a.)

The college has developed student learning outcomes for the institution. Yet, it has not identified student learning outcomes for all of its courses, programs, degrees, and certificates. Particular courses within a number of college disciplines have completed this effort at least in part, and occupational programs are reported among the leaders in this effort. Some trial assessments of learning outcomes are also occurring. However, procedures and evidence of a collegewide effort will occur after the completion of the accreditation review anticipated fall 2007. In the meantime, the discussion stage of this effort continues with focused professional development activities used to prepare for a collegewide plan to complete this task. Grossmont College can be said to be poised to enter the developmental stage for student learning outcomes according to the Commission's Rubric on Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness.

The instructional programs at Grossmont College meet the mission of the institution, address the varied educational needs of its students, and are offered through a wide variety

of delivery systems (II.A.1., II.A.1.a., II.A.1.b.,). Faculty takes pride in having an extensive and rigorous academic program which is subjected to regular review and improvement. Through regular review of courses by the Curriculum Committee and Program Review, courses and programs are updated and modified on a regular basis (II.A.2., II.A.2.a., II.A.2.e.). Faculty are integrally involved in the review process and an institution wide commitment to high academic standards ensures high quality and rigor (II.A.2., II.A.2.c.)

The instructional programs rely on a range of formal and informal assessment of student learning and student learning styles primarily at the course and program levels. Individual faculty conduct knowledge and skills specific assessment to determine student success. In general, the college relies primarily on that level of assessment to judge the efficacy of learning objectives and learning outcomes where they exist (the exception being many of the occupational programs). Where gaps in performance are observed, faculty rely on a host of learning support services in fourteen different locations (e.g., English writing center, math study center) of the college to provide tutoring and other support services. Faculty also rely on a comprehensive set of institutional data, the District's Data on Demand. To less a degree, the college has available research support to conduct course or program level studies. (IIA.2.d, IIA.2g)

The current accreditation standards focus on evaluation of success in instruction through the use of student learning outcomes collegewide. Despite numerous efforts by the accreditation team to find successful completion of student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses and programs, it is apparent that instructional SLOs are still in the discussion stage for many programs. (Particular departments, including many occupational programs, have identified and are assessing the effectiveness of SLOs.) As a college, Grossmont has failed to satisfy the sub-standards that pertain to evaluation though SLOs. SLOs are mentioned throughout the section primarily for what they will bring to the institution in the future. Where SLOs are clearly a requirement to satisfy the standard, the report claims partial satisfaction of the standard due to the fact that full dialog has not taken place. The faculty and staff have expressed doubt that the college will commit the funding necessary to fully implement SLOs (II.A.1.c). With the approval of the SLO Coordinator position, faculty now believes that the resource needed to complete the task of implementation of SLOs is in place. (II.A.1, II.A.1.c, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.h., II.A.2.i)

The college requires that carefully considered philosophy of general education is a component of all academic and occupation degree programs. The college catalog reveals the faculty-developed rationale for general education. Beyond this document, this rationale is communicated to stakeholders, and it is reflected in the degree requirements. It is the basis on which the college established the college level comprehensive student learning outcomes for students who complete the general education requirements. The curriculum committee's process ensures that these requirements are included in course content and methodology. Intentionally, as described by members of the curriculum committee and the office of instruction staff, this committee will assure alignment among the course goals and objectives and the philosophically grounded general education requirements (IIA.3.a).

The college has a highly evolved process that ensures courses render students capable

of being productive individuals and life-long learners. Its general educational requirements address the broad range of skills including oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means. Computer literacy and information competency is a special priority area of the college. And the college student achievement data (grade, persistence, completion, and transfer rates) indicate attainment of these outcomes. (IIA.3.b)

Toward a more inclusive curriculum, the college curriculum committee strategically determined how to improve its diversity offerings. It formed a subcommittee of the curriculum committee, investigated ways to add diversity component to general education classes during spring 2003, and developed a plan to infuse a diversity component into all general education courses, which is scheduled for review by the academic senate this academic year. In the meantime, the curriculum committee identified courses that satisfy the requirement that were already part of the general education core, yet no new courses have been created to expand diversity offerings. (IIA.3.c)

The vocational and occupational certificate and degree programs are developed to ensure that students completing those programs meet employment and other applicable standards, and they are prepared for external licensure and certification. This is evident in review of course outlines and program reviews, and consistent with the statements of the senior dean of business and professional studies and reflected in other institutional documents.

At least eight of the twenty-three vocational and occupational certificate and degree programs must adhere to State or national requirements including for external licensure and certification. College program review documents reveal that students who complete the law enforcement academy, correctional academy, forensic technology, security academy, nursing, respiratory technology, and occupational technology programs go on to successfully complete the required external certification requirements.

All vocational and occupational programs undergo scrutiny in the development of courses and programs. At the program development stages, processes of the curriculum committee require rigorous review by a three-person team including the vice president of instruction, the faculty committee co-chair, and the curriculum supervisor. Once approved, the program review process requires systematic look at the quality and integrity of the programs considering salient criteria as student performance indicators (grades, retention, persistence, completion rates). It is important to note that many of these programs are required to carry out program reviews for two separate entities—the college and the appropriate external validating industry or accrediting body. In some instances, those program reviews are in addition to a self study. For example, the nursing program regularly is reviewed by the California Board of Nursing, and it opts to also undergo accreditation review by the national accrediting board for nursing. According to the senior dean, this action of the nursing program epitomizes the proactive efforts of occupational faculty to welcome substantive and critical review of their efforts.

The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. This is evident through the curriculum committee process, in the college catalog, and other pub-

lished documents (i.e., class schedules, college brochures). In these documents are also descriptions about the college's degrees and certificates. In some form, these documents evidence the purpose, content, course requirements, and learning objectives. The class syllabi specify the learning objectives that are consistent with the approved relevant course outlines of the college. (IIA.6a.)

The college has yet to develop student learning outcomes that will allow it to complete the due diligence necessary to ensure that they are comparable to the expected learning outcomes of all of its partnering institutions. Even so, progress is evident within particular disciplines and occupational programs. (IIA.6a.)

The college makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption when programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed. In the college catalog, the college provides detailed procedures for students to address changes while assuring students that they have "catalog rights." College counselors inform students of program changes and options. Lists of changes are maintained in the instructional office and the counseling department. In addition, all changes are reflected on the college's website as part of a time-sensitive updating of the college catalog. (IIA.6b, IIA.6c.)

The college demonstrates a commitment to academic integrity of the teaching-learning process. The district governing board adopted a policy on four points of academic freedom. The Academic Senate adopted a modified version of the AAUP statement on professional ethics in 1992. The college uses professional development training to "reinforce the need for such behavior." Those policies are reinforced by Board Policy 4035, Controversial Issues, which reflects the district's intent that "controversial issues do not 'stifle the spirit of free inquiry' " Furthermore, the Board has policies on standards of student conduct, academic honesty (5500), rights of students (5510), and due process for students (5520) when policy is violated. The college ensures knowledge of these policies in part by printing them in the college catalog, in the student handbook and in class syllabi, and placing them on the Academic Senate and college websites. And the code of conduct for faculty is communicated in the faculty handbook, while the student code of conduct is provided in the student handbook. Both sets of conduct policies are also on the college website. (A code of conduct for classified staff and administrators does not exist.) (IIA.7.a, IIA.7.b, IIA.7.c.)

Conclusions

Grossmont College is to be commended for its comprehensive self study report for this standard. Clearly, the college is committed to high quality academic programs including its occupational programs. Commendations are deserved for the clarity of information about the educational offerings and documentation of success and for the course and program evaluation processes.

The college still relies on a system of evaluation through grading and program completion. Although the college has a rigorous course and program review process using this method which is fully implemented, sustainable and generates plans for institutional improvement, it now needs to carry out the tasks necessary to complete student learning outcomes at all levels and align them with the institutional student learning outcomes.

The college also needs to move directly from the campus dialogue stage to successful completion of SLOs for every campus course and program.

The college has made progress on addressing the recommendation on diversity from the 2001 accreditation report. The college should move forward to meet diversity requirements in General Education and continue to identify classes that satisfy the requirement. As progress in hiring a more diverse faculty is made, their contributions will lead to progress in this area.

Recommendations

2. The team recommends that the college establish a specific timeline for producing student learning outcomes at the course level and the program level, develop and implement a process to incorporate student learning outcomes into the curriculum and program review processes, identify systematic measurable assessments, and use the results for the improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. (Standards I.B.a., II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.c, II.B, II.B.3.f, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.b, III.A.1, III.D.1.a, IV.A.1, IV.B.1.b.)

B. Student Support Services:

Findings and Evidence:

Grossmont College is committed to providing students with the support services they need. To that end, the division as a whole regularly assesses its practices and services and makes changes accordingly. Every department participates in Program Review; similarly, every department is involved in Student Learning Outcomes (or Student Services Outcomes), though the latter is in the early stages of development. Most services (including counseling) are offered in person and online so students, regardless of their location, can receive support. That being said, the current Student Services Administration Center is inadequate to the needs of the departments housed in that structure. (II.B.1)

All students are provided the fundamental tools for navigating the college experience. They are given a current catalog, which describes the policies and procedures of the college, as well as needed information on specific services and resources. Information within the catalog is precise, accurate, and current. (II.B.2 a-d)

Grossmont College is focused on providing equitable access to all of its students. The student body is regularly surveyed and changes are made according to the findings. As an example, past student evaluations prompted the scheduling of orientation before assessment. When the student body was surveyed about this change, the students strongly affirmed the new student advising process. (II.B.3a)

The college is committed to modeling and supporting an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development. This is reflected in its Mission Statement and in the overall educational philosophy of the college. Moreover, examples of how this environment is supported are ample. For instance, workshops and classes on personal development are offered regu-

larly through several different Student Services departments. This is in addition to the opportunities for engagement through the Associated Students. Another concrete example is how the Code of Conduct is enforced and violations adjudicated. (II.B.3b)

The counseling department at Grossmont College is unique in that each counselor is a liaison with one or more academic departments. This structure has bridged Student Services to Instruction in a manner that has profited students and faculty alike, and because of that fact, there is now greater campus-wide understanding and support of the important role of academic advising. Counselors meet weekly for updates and training. (II.B.3c)

Student Services is exemplary in its diversity efforts. Numerous programs and social activities are offered throughout the year, which promote an appreciation of diversity. Additionally, programs within Student Services co-sponsor events and cultural activities with the World Arts and Cultural Committee and the Cross Cultural Studies Department to bring notable programs to campus. As attested by the Accreditation survey, students strongly endorse the college's efforts with respect to diversity. (II.B.3d)

The Admissions and Records Department has an enviable relationship with the rest of the campus. Students, staff, and faculty endorse its processes and strongly affirm its effectiveness. The assessment instruments have gone through rigorous state validation and have been tested for cultural and linguistic bias. All records are permanently, securely, and confidentially maintained and backed up and are held off-site by the District's Information Services. Release of student records is guided by the college's published policy which is available in the catalog. (II.B.3e-f)

The Division of Student Services regularly evaluates support services to ensure their efficacy. Some of the departments (i.e., Financial Aid, DSPS, and EOPS) are subject to additional accreditation self-studies and independent audits. A review of the accreditation survey clearly shows strong endorsement from faculty, staff, and students. In terms of student learning outcomes, every department within Student Services has identified Student Services Outcomes. They are now preparing to measure those outcomes. (II.B.4)

Conclusions:

Based upon the self study, the evidence reviewed, and multiple interviews with faculty, staff, students, and administration within Student Services, it is apparent that Student Support Services at Grossmont College is vibrant and responsive to the needs of students. Despite the inadequacy of the Student Center, staff and faculty are dedicated to providing the best service possible. They take pride in their achievements, which are many, and regularly survey students for their impressions. While Student Services has not measured their Student Services outcomes yet, it is noteworthy that every department has identified outcomes. They are now working with the District Research Department (IR-PASS) to establish a means to evaluate those outcomes.

Recommendations:

None

C. Library and Learning Support Services:

Findings and Evidence

Grossmont College employs a professional staff of librarians and technicians who work closely with instructional faculty to provide the resources necessary for course offerings and related research. Though the budget for collections and periodicals has decreased notably since the last accreditation visit, the College has opted to increase its online holdings through funding provided by the Telecommunications and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP) grant and to build a state-of-the-art Tech Mall with almost 200 computers on the first floor.

The response from students and faculty to the increased availability of resources through the Internet has been very positive. Patrons appreciate the 24/7 availability of resources. A concern, however, is that TTIP funds may not be a dependable source of revenue. That being the case, the college will need to earmark general fund money for the Library's memberships in the various online databases that include library consortia, full-text periodical databases, and online linkages with Public Access Catalog which provides access to the San Diego State University library and Cuyamaca College holdings via the Inter-Library Loan System. All contracts with other institutions are formal agreements. (C.1a, II.C.1e)

In addition to face-to-face instruction on the use of the library, the college offers an exceptional online tutorial option called Library User Computer Instruction or LUCI. This interactive tutorial option has grown in popularity and is reaching more students than ever before. Additionally, the librarians offer FLEX workshops for faculty to keep them abreast of new developments either in terms of collections or in terms of research methodology and policies. (II.C.1b)

Access to the library and other learning services is comprehensive because of the online access to electronic sources and the ability to email reference questions to "Ask a Librarian" on the library website. Nevertheless, almost 40% of the students believe the library should be open for longer hours. Meetings with students indicated that some of the students would like to use library computers for an extended period of time. The Information Systems Department of the district maintains and secures the library computer equipment. The building is appropriately alarmed when closed and the exits are equipped with book detection systems to prevent thefts. (II.C.1c, II.C.1d)

Finally, on a monthly basis, the library reviews suggestions and comments from patrons at the Division Council meeting. This is in addition to the cyclical Program Review process. Depending upon resources available to them, the library staff regularly makes improvements to better serve students. (II.C.2)

Conclusions:

Based on the self-study and multiple meetings with students, library staff and administration, it is clear that Grossmont College's library and learning services areas are meeting the needs of their constituents very impressively. The decision to convert to online da-

tabases with linkages with the Public Access Catalog is commendable. Students have 24/7 access to library resources in the form of eBooks, periodicals, and reference materials. Additionally, students have access to an online interactive tutorial program which helps them understand how to access the multitude of online materials.

Recommendations:

None

STANDARD THREE: RESOURCES

General Observations

Since the last accreditation review, there has been dissention between the college and district. Significant turnovers at executive levels of management and the non-renewal of the president contributed to some of the strife. Executive leadership was left to interims. Personnel changes have also occurred with retiring faculty members and classified staff. Faculty stopped participating on committees until late 2006. However, with all of the personnel issues, the college was able to come together to complete the self-study.

Physical resources for the college are reviewed on a more systemic basis by the Facilities Committee composed of representatives from divisions and bargaining unit personnel. The college has a Facilities Master Plan to reflect new facilities and prioritize any new projects, maintenance and renovations, state maintenance projects, etc.

Technological changes on campus have been significant. A new technology center was opened in 2004 which serves over 5,000 students per semester. Several new labs on campus have opened to better serve students such as the Math Center, English Writing Center, Physics Lab, Health Professions Labs to name a few. A new enterprise system, Colleague, has been purchased and the major components are in the process of being tested. The college was also commended for its technological change by "Converge" magazine.

Since the last accreditation visit, the campus continues to enjoy positive external financial audits. Campus financial reserves since 2003-04 continues to be above 5% ensuring financial stability.

Findings and Evidence

A. Human Resources:

The college employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services (classified, faculty, and administrators). The college utilizes the support of the College Staffing Committee (membership is through shared governance) in the decision-making process to determine which open or new positions are filled. However, there still needs to be a college-specific process for conducting hiring processes. Job descriptions state the job requirements and identify minimum qualifications. Positions are advertised in national publications such as "Chronicle of Higher Education," as well as the California

Community Colleges Registry, Latinos Higher Ed, IMDiversity, local newspapers, college and career placement centers, the Employment Development Department, and to all individuals in an active file who have applied for the same or similar position in the past. The positions are also posted on the district website. Selection committees are appointed through the shared governance process. (III.A.1a)

Selection committees review all applications for each position and select candidates for interview. Reference checks for each position are made at the college level prior to the district offering the position. (III.A1a)

The previous team (2001) recommended that the college “continue to address issues of diversity . . . In particular the team recommends that every effort be made to hire a faculty, administration, and staff reflective of the changing demographics of the student population, and that educational programs and services meet the needs of a changing student population.” The 2007 visiting team commends the college, its Academic Senate, and Curriculum Committee for their efforts to modernize the curricula with an emphasis on diversity, and we find the college is attempting to identify a more diverse workforce. We nonetheless find that the college has not established, implemented, or evaluated a formal diversity policy for faculty, classified, or administrative hiring. (2001 Recommendation 3; III:A.1; III:A.4; III:A.4.a; III:A.4.b; III:A.).

We also find that the self-study’s claim that the district Human Resources office has not produced the data or offered other support necessary to establish a college diversity plan to be partially true. The district Human Resources office routinely produces relevant and timely information on the diversity of the college and the community it serves. The district has also created a district-college staff diversity committee, which is currently at work producing a new diversity policy. The Human Resources office expects the committee to complete its work by spring 2008.

According to the Human Resources office, the staff diversity committee has yet to define “diversity” or explain how it relates to student learning and success. In view of the fact that the Commission itself provides a useful definition of “diversity,” and considering that the Commission urged the college to “address issues of diversity” in 2001, the committee’s delay in achieving consensus on such a basic concept is difficult to understand

Faculty and staff evaluations are defined by requirements specified within the respective union contracts. Procedures for evaluating administrators on an annual basis are described in the Administrator’s Association Handbook. Evidenced by surveys of evaluations, faculty agree that the procedures are effective in improving the quality of instruction. However, as noted in the study, the college should address the issues of timeliness of evaluation of classified staff and feedback to faculty which are ongoing. (IIIA.1b)

With the introduction of student learning outcomes, the college is making steps to introduce an assessment component to validate stated learning outcomes for both courses and program. Many faculty members have already added outcome statements to their syllabi. SLO workshops have been offered and attended by both part-time and full-time faculty members. It will be difficult to evaluate faculty and staff on the effectiveness in producing outcomes as this is a very new process, and there is no documentation as of

yet to link teaching methodologies with SLOs. However, it is evidenced in the self-study that the college is making progress in this area. (IIIA.1c)

In response to increased interest in ethical behavior within the college community, there is board policy, adopted in August 2001, regarding Code of Ethics and Conduct for Board members as well as a section in the Faculty Handbook that covers professional ethics and academic freedom that sets forth ethical obligations of faculty. However, the college has no formalized written code of professionalism for all personnel. This should be addressed as soon as possible. (III.A.1d)

The college maintains a sufficient number of qualified staff and faculty to meet the current mission and purposes in most disciplines. However, there appears to be a need to hire more full-time faculty to meet stated goals of the institutional plan. The college seems to be hampered by several factors in this area, i.e., lower compensation for the area, process to hire new personnel seems very slow, and the rift between district and college groups to agree on the Confidentiality Statement. (IIIA.2)

The college has personnel policies and procedures ensuring fairness in all employment practices. Personnel records are maintained and stored in a secure manner in the Human Resources area of the district. Procedures are in place for employees to review their personnel files in accordance with legal requirements. The college is effectively meeting this standard. (IIIA.3) (IIIA.3a) (IIIA.3.b)

As evidenced in the self-study, the college has a broad commitment to diversity within classroom instruction. They have established "The World Arts and Cultural Committee (WACC) to offer college wide programs supportive of diversity. Programs have been created by the Faculty Professional Development Committee to promote and provide information and training about the range of social groups that populate the campus. Evaluations received reveal that these programs are being well received. The district should reinstate the practice of assessing and reporting achievements of objectives relative to employment equity consistent with the institutional missions to the college on a regular basis. Survey responses indicated that personnel are all treated satisfactorily at the college level. However, as recommended by the Accreditation team in 2001, it is evidenced that the college and district are still not working cohesively to collect and share statistical data regarding diversity. (IIIA.4a) (IIIA.4b) (IIIA.4c)

As evidenced, the college provides ample opportunities to faculty and staff for professional development. Faculty and staff each have a committee of peers who establish priorities and schedule professional development opportunities for the school year. Some professional development is available for staff through flex week activities. (III.A.5a) (III.A.5b)

Integrated planning is assessed through periodic program reviews. Program reviews are also incorporated in the development of other plans such as the Educational Master Plan and the Strategic Plan. All college organizational and governance groups work to ensure that human resource needs of program and service areas are attended to as funds become available. (III.A.6)

B. Facilities Resources:

Based on the Five-Year Construction Plan, the college does not have sufficient instructional and support space to adequately serve its existing student population as well as staff. The increasingly high cost of construction has impeded the completion of the Facilities Master Plan. There was a local bond passed to expand facilities and equipment. This local bond (Proposition R), in conjunction with state funds, have funded the Learning Resources Center, Science Laboratory and Digital Arts/Sculpture Buildings Complex, and a multi-story parking lot. They were only able to fund 8 of the 21 Facilities Master Plan projects. Some projects had to be reprioritized due to the increase in the cost of construction. Some off-campus sites are currently being used for instructional purposes. However, the college does provide physical resources that support and ensure the integrity of its programs. Safety issues are addressed as well on campus. (III.B.1) (III.B.1a)

Based on surveys results as evidenced in the self-study, the college appears to have made strong efforts to ensure an accessible, safe, secure and healthful environment. (III.B.1b)

Currently, the college does have a process for long and short-term facilities planning, building, maintaining and upgrading. Through the use of their Educational Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Five-Year Construction Plan, and Scheduled Maintenance Plan, the college has successfully integrated institutional planning with facilities resource planning. However, the college appears to be hampered by the lack of state funding to address all of the issues they need for furniture, fixtures and equipment. As evidenced in the 2006 survey in the self study report, improvement continues to be a problem for the college due to lack of funding. (III.B.2, III.B.2a, III.B.2b)

C. Technology Resources:

Technology support for computers is divided into two areas, Instructional and Administrative computers. Instructional Computing Services supports and maintains 13 instructional servers and 32 instructional labs (approximately 1,100 machines) and over 500 faculty and instructional support computers. The college's hardware, software and network systems exceed the current standards and facilitate operations effectiveness and student outcomes. A new enterprise system, Colleague, has been purchased and the IS staff is in the process of testing the major components. The new system will replace the old one. The new system will house components for admissions and student information, program audit, prerequisite checking, registration, instructor information, educational planning, and a student portal. Projected implementation date is 2008. Training is offered prior to the beginning of each semester for faculty and staff during Professional Development Week (Flex Week). The college has in place a Technology Plan outlining computer lab rollovers. Departments review their software requirements several times during the academic year, departmental needs, maintenance and infrastructure updates. Updates or replacement of technology is completed on a systematic basis. The plan was developed and updated through a shared governance process. The college depends on state block grants for funding of technology updates, but it plans to develop a plan to use some general funding to support technology by fall 2009. As evidenced in the self-study, the college is very committed and should be commended for their efforts in this area. (III.C, III.C.1, III.C.1a, 1b, 1c, 1d)

D. Financial Resources:

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services. There is a process in place for annual planning priorities. The college has ended the last six fiscal years with an average ending balance of \$2.2 million. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of financial solvency. (III.D)

As shown in the self-study report, the facts reveal that the college does rely upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning and meets the requirement of this standard. (III.D.1a)

The college has in place a planning process in which budget planning takes place. The process is district wide, consisting of members from campus administrators, faculty, staff, and the college presidents. The budget development process begins with the Educational Master Plan in late fall. After considering information and recommendations from all sources, the Planning Budget Council makes determinations and recommendations based on available funds. Capital projects or other forms of debts, retiree health benefits, and other long-term funding obligations are handled at the district level. (III.D.lb, 1c, 1d)

Based on information, the college has demonstrated appropriate allocation and use of financial resources. This is evidenced by the college's and district's ability to maintain a 5% plus reserve as required by the state. Financial information is provided via the Planning and Budget Council which comprises representatives from the various constituency groups across campus. (III.D.2a, 2b)

Audit reports are conducted on an annual basis by an outside independent firm (note, need to review last audit report). The district has enjoyed ending reserve balances of 5%+ for the past three years and has utilized these funds for emergency purposes. The college has not experienced a cash flow problem in several years. Also, the college is insured through Association of Southern California Insurance Programs (ASCIP) for liability, property and casualty claims. As stated in the report, there is sufficient insurance to cover any significant losses. (III.D.2c. 2g)

Evidence as presented, indicates that the college has demonstrated they have processes in place for external and internal reviews and audits of financial processes, contractual agreements, and that they adhere to generally accepted accounting standards and the law. All external contract agreements reflect the mission and goals of the college and are monitored by the Business Office. (III.D.2d, 2f, 2g)

Conclusions:

There are processes in place that define recruitment, selection, and employment of classified staff, faculty and administration. However, the college and district need to come together to develop a college-specific hiring process without contradicting or duplicating hiring processes at the district level. This was also suggested in the 2001 accreditation visit. The college does practice fair and equitable opportunities for all applicants. These practices, along with promoting ethics in the workplace, provide an appropriate levels of staffing. Based upon the self-study, it is apparent that human, physical and technology

resources are used to support student programs and services.

The college only partially meets the standard of hiring a more diverse employment force. Yet they have an integrated diversity curriculum program for students as well as training opportunities for staff.

The college has developed an excellent technological infrastructure for the support of programs and services. Surveys have provided a valuable means to identify needs of each instructional program/department to enhance student learning.

Financial resources are sufficient to support learning programs and services. The college's financial resources provide a reasonable expectation of financial solvency.

Recommendations:

1. In order to satisfy the standards on diversity, the college must establish policies and practices with the district to ensure that equity and diversity are essential components of its human resource planning. The district must regularly assess its record in employment equity and diversity and communicate that record to the college community. (1.A.1, III.A.4.a; III.A.4.b)
4. The district, in consultation with the college, should provide "primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity" for the college. The district should expand its own strategic plan to link its Allocation Formula to the district and college's plans. (IV.B.3; IV.B.3.a; IV.B.3.c)

STANDARD FOUR: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

General Observations

The self-study is candid in its discussion of governance and governance issues and displays broad input into its preparation. The self-study includes broad participation in the development of the document. For the most part, the self-study accurately portrays the college's strengths as well as the challenges facing it. The self-study describes with remarkable candor challenges in the relationship between constituent groups at Grossmont College on the one hand and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca District staff and Board of Trustees on the other. The self-study demonstrates pride in a lively and open system of participatory governance within Grossmont College.

Grossmont College has a robust system of participatory governance which involves individuals from all levels of the organization. There is clearly a commitment by the senior administrators at the college to create an environment of openness and mutual respect. That commitment is codified by the college's Organizational and Governance Structures Handbook which defines the roles of a myriad of councils and committees. The Handbook lists 7 councils and 26 committees. The committee list does not include other committees, such as, the Division Councils or Workplace Advisor Committee, which appear in the Handbook under the "Committee Responsibilities" of various administrators.

All told, the college appears to have over four dozen committees. This does not include district-wide committees and councils, nor does it include task forces which are formed to deal with specific issues.

There are a number of ways by which Grossmont College and its various constituent groups link with the district. That is defined in the district Governance Structure which describes the relationships between 24 committees, councils, etc. This was supplemented in the self-study by an “Organizational Map of District and Grossmont College Functions for Accreditation” (referred to as the “Mapping Document”). Nevertheless, it was also clear to the visiting team that even with this large number of participatory organizations, there is a problem in communications between the district office including the Board of Trustees and Grossmont College. While it is beyond our purview to deal with this problem, it appeared to the team that the genesis of this disagreement resides in questions about resource allocation. This will be discussed at greater length below. The development of the “Mapping Document” and of a revised allocation formula are potentially the beginnings of an evaluation and review of the liaison relationship between the district and the college. It was also apparent to the team that the large number of participatory organizations does not necessarily lead to a large number of decisions.

The self-study, our interviews with staff and others, and our review of the documentary evidence make clear that faculty, staff, administrators and students have a substantive voice in all areas of operation of the college. It is less clear from the visiting team interviews and from the self-study whether the same groups have a substantive voice at the district level. There is no disagreement that there is talking going on. The disagreement is about whether it involves talking, listening, and ultimately understanding on both sides. There is a lack of trust which needs to be repaired if the full strength of the college and the district in the educating of students and service to the community is to be realized.

Findings and Evidence

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes:

Grossmont College has an administrative organization which is structured to achieve its mission and goals. The 2001 recommendations raised concerns about administrative turnover. That may still be a problem for the college. However, it is not clear that Grossmont College has greater turnover in its administration than is currently experienced by significant numbers of California’s community colleges. (IV.B.2.a)

There is a robust governance structure within the college which supports dialogues between and among all constituencies and which connects with an appropriate administrative structure. Institutional dialogue takes place in a number of venues and in a number of ways. It was not clear to the team that the dialogue leads to outcomes. In fact, there are several examples of important issues being discussed for some time without any resolution. (IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b, IV.A.3)

The college undertakes a number of planning and goal-setting activities which bring together all of the constituents either directly or through representative institutions. It is not clear that these activities connect with each other or that they lead to action, assessment and revision or reaction. For example, there is a good deal of discussion of the Spring

Planning Retreat in the self-study. That annual event is obviously a part of the fabric of Grossmont College. Yet, the team could find no evidence that the outcome of the Spring Planning Retreat includes measurable plans or that there is follow-up on previous plans. In fact, it appears that the retreat each year is disconnected from the recommendations which came from previous retreats and is not linked to the college's strategic plan, budget, or educational master plan. We found similar disconnects throughout our analysis of the connections between governance activities and planning. There is no doubt that the college took to heart and responded (IV.B.2.a) to Recommendation 1 from the 2001 team visit.

B. Board and Administrative Organization:

Planning has become part of the fabric of Grossmont College. The next stage is to integrate all of the planning activities into an integrated model with appropriate reviews of outcomes. The college needs to complete the loop in the planning model so that it becomes a process leading to continuous improvement. (IV.B.2.b)

In our review of the Grossmont College, we were struck by the sheer number of committees, task forces and councils in operation at the college and the district. As noted above, we found over three dozen committees and councils at the college alone. While such a large number of committees are a means to promote dialogue, they may actually hinder the development of a coherent long-range plan for the college. The college has developed a process for the annual review of each of its committees and councils. That process does not include a global review of the roles and interactions of the committees and councils. The college could profit from such a regular review. (IV.B.2.b, IV.A.5)

In reviewing the planning process, it became evident that, while planning has become part of the fabric of Grossmont College, it is not explicitly tied to planning at the district level nor is planning a part of the fabric of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. Similarly, we found that despite the existence of a "Planning and Budget Council," there is no apparent relationship between planning and budgeting at either the college or district. (IV.B.3.c;)

The district has not developed its own strategic plan. Rather, it relies upon The Way Forward a list of six objectives to "provide the District's guiding principles, the framework for our values and direction". The Way Forward was revised with the addition of "academic excellence" in 2003. There is no evidence that The Way Forward was reviewed between 1999 and 2003 or that it provided guidance for the college in its planning. In fact, the college's Mission Statement was adopted a month prior to the 2003 revision to The Way Forward. In reviewing The Way Forward, the team was unable to verify that measurable objectives had been established or that it led the college's planning. (IV.B.3)

We found omissions at the district level which, if remedied, might help resolve the issues between the college and the district. The Board has undertaken a regular and thorough review of its policies and the district's administrative procedures. In spite of that process, there are no Board of Trustees policies dealing with the relationship between the district and the college. The organizational roles of the district and college are not clarified in Board policy. This omission begins with the lack of a policy dealing with the selection and regular evaluation of the president of the college and includes a lack of

specification of the role of the president. (IV.B.1; IV.B.1.d IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2, IV.B.3.a IV.B.3.e, IV.B.3.g)

We could find no evidence that the district regularly reviews its services to the college. (IV.B.3.b) However, it should be noted that we heard no complaints about the services the district provides to the college. (IV.B.3.d) We found a thoughtful Board of Trustees whose members generally take the role of trustee very seriously as individuals and as a board (IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.c). There is evidence of orientation for new trustees (IV.B.1.f) as well as continuing professional development for all trustees. It appears that most Board members act appropriately, and when issues are raised about its procedures take those issues seriously and make appropriate adjustments. However, we found that the Board of Trustees has not had a regular process or policy (IV.B.1.g) of self-evaluation which could help it to continuously improve its practices. (IV.B.1.e) The Board has a Code of Ethics in its By-Laws and has developed consequences for violating that policy. (IV.B.1.h)

Most troubling for the team is a breakdown in trust between the constituent groups at the college and the district's leadership. This mutual distrust is preventing the college and the district from focusing on the achievement of student learning. Instead, the Team observed seemingly interminable dialogue without results. The college and the district must find means to resolve the issues which clearly separate them. We found a troubling degeneration into personal attacks. Such attacks, while intended to improve the district, are using up energy which could be better expended on improving students' learning. (IV.A.3) The personal attacks which have recently infected the Board of Trustees are especially troubling since the Board sets the tone for the behavior within the college. The Board may be moving in the direction of not meeting Standard IV.B.1.a. At this time, the team does not have a finding on this standard.

Recommendation

5. The district needs to clarify its policies and procedures to enhance the delegation of responsibility and authority to the president of the college and include clearly defined policies and procedures for the selection and evaluation of the president. (IV.B.1.j, IV.B. 2, IV.B.3.e)
6. The district should regularly and systematically review its functions and goals, including: (a) Goal setting and self-evaluation by the Board of Trustees; (b) Evaluation of the District's services to the colleges and its effectiveness as a liaison between the College and Board of Trustees. (IV.B.1.g IV.B.3.f., IV.B.3.g.)
7. The college, the chancellor, and the district must improve relations among their various constituency groups in order to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation. The entire college community must work together for the good of the institution. (IV.A.1., IV.A.2., IV.A.3., IV.B.2.)