

# **EVALUATION REPORT**

## **Antelope Valley Community College District**

**A confidential report prepared for  
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**

**This report represents the finding of the evaluation team that visited  
Antelope Valley College from October 18-21, 2010**

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**Antelope Valley Community College District**  
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**October 18-21, 2010**

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## **SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORT**

**INSTITUTION:** Antelope Valley Community College District

**DATES OF VISIT:** October 18-21, 2010

**TEAM CHAIR:** Dr. Steven M. Kinsella, CPA, Superintendent/President Gavilan Joint Community College District

An 11 member accreditation team visited Antelope Valley College from October 18-21, 2010 for the purpose of evaluating how well the institution is achieving its stated purposes, analyzing how well the college is meeting the commission standards, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement, and submitting recommendations to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) regarding the status of the college.

In preparation for the visit, team members attended an all-day training session on September 14, 2010 conducted by the Commission's staff. Team members studied Commission materials prepared for visiting teams and reviewed the accreditation process. The team was divided into four committees one for each of the standards. Team members received the self-study in time to carefully review it including the recommendations from the 2004 visiting team.

Team members noted that the self study was comprehensive yet lacked appropriate supporting documentation that required the team members to first obtain evidentiary documents before judging the college's compliance with standards. It is common practice for colleges to cross-reference evidence in the body of the self study thereby allowing team members to review evidentiary documents prior to arriving on campus.

Although Antelope Valley College did not reference the documents within the body of the Self-Study Report, college personnel quickly provided team members the documents that were necessary to verify comments made in the self study. Team members commented on the lack of planning agendas even when the college self identified areas when additional work was planned. The college was well prepared for the visit and members of the college were readily available to respond to questions and actively participated in interviews with team members.

During the course of the visit team members met with over 140 faculty, staff, administrators, members of the Board of Trustees, and students. Additionally, team members visited the instructional site at Fox Field located to the north of the college where its Aviation Mechanics Program is operated and the Educational Center located in Palmdale, south of the main campus.

## **Recommendations of the 2010 Visiting Team**

### **Recommendation # 1**

In order to comply with the standards, it is recommended that the college modify its processes in a manner that creates documentation and other forms of evidence that can be used to reveal the college's progress toward implementation of Student Learning Outcomes and assessment of those outcomes. More specifically, the team recommends that to show compliance with the standards that the college:

- a. Develop a method to monitor progress made when implementing activities identified in program reviews to include listing steps in action plans, listing of individual student learning outcomes for each course and assessment activities matched against progress made to achieve assessment activities (I.B.3).
- b. Provide evidence in the form of documents or other deliverables to result from the operation of the integrated planning cycle. (I.B.3).
- c. Provide evidence that outcomes demonstrate the integrated planning cycle, from student learning outcomes to making budget decisions (I.B.5).
- d. Assess Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and provide evidence of program, student service and administrative changes and improvements as a result of changes made (II.A.1.a; II.A.1.c).

### **Recommendation # 2**

To meet the standards and to raise the quality of instructional programs and to instill a culture of evidence across the college the team recommends the following practices be institutionalized:

- a. To meet the standards, it is recommended that the college establish clear connections with and document the involvement of members of professions, associations and professional organizations when curriculum is being modified and at other appropriate points in time to demonstrate input from vocational/occupational advisory boards and experts in the field so that the College can verify the quality of educational programs is based on experts in the profession (II. A.2.b).
- b. To ensure each department is being consistently evaluated under the program review process it is recommended that the college develop a list of minimum areas considered to ensure a rigorous self examination is conducted consistently across the college (II.C.1).
- c. To meet the standards requirement that adequate resources be allocated to support the Library function of the college, it is recommended that the college conduct a comparative analysis against other similarly sized colleges to assess whether the amount of resources to meet the needs of students who rely on the Library to complete their educational goals (I.B.7).

- d. To meet the standards and to enhance the effectiveness of its technology, it is recommended that the college adjust its technology advisory committee structure to ensure that the needs of administrative and instructional computing are equally well addressed, and that this dialogue then results in equitable priorities, implementation and budget allocations for all technology needs (III.C.1, III.C.1.d.).

**Recommendation # 3**

To enhance the effectiveness of its technology, a variety of different levels of network security should be implemented to permit more flexible responses to instructional computing requests, while maintaining appropriate security for administrative data (III.C.1; III.C.1.d).

**Recommendation # 4**

To comply with the standards, it is recommended that the college, when making its short-range financial plan, e.g. the annual budget of the college, consider its long-range financial obligation to pay the cost of the GASB 45 - Other Post- Employment Benefits (OPEB) as the costs are incurred instead of delaying payment to some future date. Specifically, the college is encouraged to prepare a comprehensive plan to prevent disruption of services offered to students by paying the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) determined using generally accepted accounting principles into an irrevocable trust fund at the amount equal to the actuarially determined Annual Required Contribution (III.D.1.c).

*In addition to the findings expressed by the team, there were two noteworthy areas that the team concluded deserves special recognition. Those areas are described as Commendation # 1 and Commendation # 2.*

**Commendation # 1**

The team commends the work of the Director of Institutional Research and the work of his office by embedding data into the decision making processes. By using data to support institutional decision making, the director of institutional research and the staff of the office of institutional research have started actions that can lead to a culture of evidence that will yield tremendous benefits to the college and its students.

**Commendation # 2**

The team commends the leadership demonstrated by the individuals holding the following positions:

- The Board of Trustees
- Superintendent/President and the administrators who support him
- The Academic Senate President
- The Classified employee union president
- The Faculty union president

The team attributes the positive college atmosphere and the exemplary levels of cooperation to the leadership of individuals in senior leadership positions at the College.

Participatory decision making has been embraced by Antelope Valley College with the beneficiaries of this decision being the students and the employees who work in an atmosphere of respect and esprit de corps. Regardless of individual problems the college may continue to work on to meet provisions of the standards in different areas, the team members felt it was important to point out how the atmosphere at the college is an asset that will assist in solving any problem confronting the college.

## **Accreditation Themes**

### **Institutional Commitments**

Antelope Community College recognizes its responsibility of providing a supportive learning environment for its students and demonstrates its commitment in several ways. This commitment is stated in Board Policy 1200 and is also found in its Mission statement, Vision, Guiding Principles, and Educational Master Plan Goals. It also emerges in the following areas:

- a. The Program Review process
- b. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council
- c. The Educational Master Plan draft of 2010
- d. The Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment process
- e. Campus dialogue on the committees in the governance system
- f. Numerous flex activities conducted throughout the year

### **Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement**

The college has developed and begun to implement an integrated planning and budget process. The agency assigned to manage this process is the Strategic Planning and Budget Council (SPBC) which is constituted with a cross section of the campus community. The college develops a strategic Educational Master Plan (EMP), which is a three year plan that also has an annual and a long term (3 to 5 year) plan. Data are collected from the program review process, which is supposed to be conducted on a four year cycle with an annual review, and information from these program reviews are sent forward to the SPBC where it is used to develop the EMP. The EMP is also used to guide the development of plans for finance, facilities, human resources, technology, and enrollment management. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council reviews budget requests that have been forwarded from the Budget Subcommittee. Criteria have been established by this committee to guide decision making and the prioritized requests for additional funds are sent forward to the SPBC and the superintendent/president. This planning process has recently been developed and is being used and assessed for improvement.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Antelope Valley College uses a computer program called WEAVE to record assess and link student learning outcomes to program learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes. Using a mapping function available from WEAVE on line the college is able to map the curriculum to all learning outcomes. The college notes that for many academic programs the program learning outcomes are the next step in making Antelope Valley College an institution that connects assessment, student learning, and planning. According to college personnel discussions about SLO's are occurring on an ongoing basis at Faculty Senate meetings, during faculty development days, and during one-to-one faculty lunch conversations. In summary, discussion regarding student learning outcomes and operational outcomes are happening at several levels all across the college. In addition to the dialogue that occurs across the college

faculty members comment that questions about implementation is also ongoing as the college strives to identify ways to make connections between assessment student learning and planning.

### **Organization**

The team found that Antelope Valley College has a defined and efficient organizational structure that supports student learning. Since the 2004 team visit the college evaluated it's administrative, and governance structure. The Superintendent/President's cabinet consists of four vice presidents: Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Human Resources and Employee Relations, and Student Affairs. Most notably the following positions have been added: Dean of instructional resources and extended services, director of the Palmdale Center, three academic divisions: (Math, Science, and Engineering; Health Sciences; and Language Arts), and faculty identified to serve as department chairs/coordinators. The governance structure is orchestrated by the College Council that routes issues and process, the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee that is responsible for maintaining the college's Educational Master Plan along with five functional subcommittees: Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, Technology and Enrollment Management. The Mutual Agreement Council and the Academic Senate are the other two governance councils.

### **Dialogue:**

The team found the college has established opportunities for collegial, self-reflective dialogue at all levels of the institution starting from the Board of Trustees down to the Associated Students organization. The Superintendent/President encourages such dialogue by being approachable to faculty, staff, and students.

The Strategic Planning and Budget Development process originates at the program or department level with discussion at the lowest level about the needs for resources, staffing, and technology at the division levels. After prioritization at this level, the requests are forwarded to the appropriate vice presidents who take them to the Strategic Planning and Budget Council for review and recommendation to the Superintendent/President. At each level, discussion takes place that is designed to determine how the requests pertain to the college mission and institutional learning outcomes.

### **Institutional Integrity**

The evaluation team was warmly welcomed by the College community. The team experienced difficulty obtaining evidence needed to assess the self-study, but campus staff members were prompt to reply for requests for additional information. While some of the information needed was available electronically, team members had to spend precious time reviewing material that was located in the team room, and even more time making requests for material that had not been placed in the team room. The team was able to work around this problem and had adequate time to review evidence to support assertions made in the Self-Study. College personnel were available to answer team members' questions and to provide requested documentation.

## **Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation**

During the course of the team's visit the eligibility requirements necessary for accreditation were reviewed. Evidence was gathered to reach the conclusion that the college meets the eligibility requirements. A short description of action taken or documents reviewed to reach its conclusion are described below.

### **1. Authority**

The visiting team verified that Antelope Valley College is part of the California Community College System and is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

### **2. Mission**

Antelope Valley College's mission statement is reviewed annually by the Academic Policy and Procedures Committee, a sub-committee of the Academic Senate, and subsequently approved by the Academic Senate, Strategic Planning and Budget Committee, and Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees approved the most recent revision to the mission at the June 2010 board meeting and was verified by a review of the meeting minutes.

### **3. Governing Board**

Antelope Valley College has a governing board responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being carried out. The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide a sound educational program. Board policies are current and there is a process for review and update. The Board has a conflict of interest policy and a code of ethics.

### **4. Chief Executive Officer**

The visiting team verified that Antelope Valley College has a chief executive officer, appointed by the governing board in March 2004, whose full-time responsibility is to the institution, and who possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies and conduct the daily operations of the college. The Superintendent/President serves as the secretary to the Board of Trustees.

### **5. Administrative Capacity**

The visiting team verified that Antelope Valley College has sufficient staff, with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support its mission and purpose.

## **6. Operational Status**

Antelope Valley College offers a variety of educational programs and services including a range of transfer, skill development and vocational curricula. Offerings and programs change to reflect the needs of the students attaining their educational goals at Antelope Valley College.

## **7. Degrees**

There are 71 associate degrees – Associate of Arts or Associate of Science - available to students. Additionally, Antelope Valley College offers 59 certificates in 43 areas of study. The associate degree and certificate programs were developed to be in compliance with Title 5, California code of regulations.

## **8. Educational Programs**

As a college within the California community college system Antelope Valley College is obligated to comply with California code of regulations. Those regulations identify the types of programs that can be offered. Each college within the California has the flexibility of determining what programs are to be offered. AVC relies on work completed by a committee of its Faculty Senate to among other things ensure all new or modified programs are consistent with the College's mission.

## **9. Academic Credit**

Antelope Valley College grants academic credit consistent with Title 5 section 55002.58 of California code of regulations. The College catalog identifies the degrees and certificates available to students.

## **10. Student Learning and Achievement**

New programs, program revisions and programs undergoing review require the development of stated outcomes career and technical education programs develop mission statements and outcomes in conjunction with advisory committees formed to provide expert advice. In the goals and outcomes for all major and certificate programs are listed in the college's catalog.

## **11. General Education.**

General education programs and courses meet the requirements of Title 5 section 55806. The quality and rigor of general education regardless of the delivery mode or location where instruction was provided is consistent with the academic standards appropriate to higher education, providing breadth of knowledge, critical thinking skills within the disciplines, and promoting intellectual inquiry.

## **12. Academic Freedom**

The visiting committee verified that the academic freedom of all faculty members is ensured through Board Policy 4030 Academic Freedom.

## **13. Faculty**

Full time faculty develop new programs and courses, maintain quality in existing programs, conduct curriculum review, engage in departmental and strategic planning, serve in standing and ad hoc committees, act as department chairs and provide services to the community and college

outside of the classroom. All faculty employees meet the minimum qualifications for their disciplines as established by the Board of Governors for California community colleges. Faculty responsibilities are outlined and assurance of compliance with minimum qualifications is maintained.

#### **14. Student Services**

Services provided through student services include a wide range of services among them are: enrollment management, counseling, matriculation, financial aid, student development, and activities related to career selection. There is a career transfer center, veteran services, a disabled student services office, the Student Transfer and Academic Retention department (STAR) as well as an Extended Opportunity Program and Services department.

#### **15. Admissions**

The Antelope Valley College catalog, Vol. 3, Issue #3, clearly states the eligibility for admission for Regular Status, Special Admittance of Minor Students, Eligibility for International Students, and Residence Eligibility consistent with a philosophy of open admissions.

#### **16. Information and Learning Resources**

The evaluation team confirmed that Antelope Valley College provides long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and all of its educational programs.

#### **17. Financial Resources**

Antelope Valley College has financial resources and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services. Most of the College's funding is from state apportionment revenue. Copies of the College budget are available and are reviewed regularly along with the status of state resources. The College follows generally accepted accounting principles when processing accounting transactions and preparing financial reports.

#### **18. Financial Accountability**

Antelope Valley College is audited each year by an independent Certified Public Accountant licensed in California and makes available the external financial audit. The independent auditor report is presented annually to the Board of Trustees in public session. In all fiscal matters, Antelope Valley College adheres to board-approved policies and procedures, generally accepted accounting principles and the Budget and Accounting Manual published by the State Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges.

#### **19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation**

The Strategic Planning and Budget Council (SBPC) is the organizational entity responsible for planning activities at the college. The SBPC relies on with this college refers to as an educational master-plan that would be recognized by many colleges as a strategic plan as the foundation for planning efforts. Using the college mission as the major guiding document SBPC reviews institutional learning outcomes, the vision and values of the college to assess the effectiveness of institutional planning. The college uses a rigorous process that reviews all programs at least once

every four years and covers the academic student services and non-instructional service areas of the college.

Program review, and institutional systematic self-study process includes the peer review process to assess the effectiveness of existing programs. The program review and peer review reports are published on the college's website for the public and college staff to review as they choose fit. At the end of each annual planning process and annual report is prepared and communicated to the campus. An annual fact book is published by the Department of Institutional Research and is made available to college staff and the public.

## **20. Public Information**

The onsite team verified current and accurate information about the college, its programs, and services is available on the college's website and latest printed catalogue, Antelope valley College, 2010-2011 Catalog, Vol. 3, Issue #3 for the Antelope Valley Community College District.

## **21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission**

Antelope Valley College has submitted self-studies, midterm reports, and updates as required by the Commission and accurately states its accreditation status in the college's 2010-2011 catalogue volume 3, issue 3 on page 2, "Accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and reaffirmed fall 2004". An identical statement is published in other publications and the college's website.

## **Conclusions**

Upon thorough review of the conditions surrounding the 21 required minimum Eligibility Requirements the team concludes that Antelope Valley College does in fact meet the eligibility requirements as a necessary condition for accreditation.

## **Major Findings and Recommendations of the 2004 Visiting Team**

Antelope Valley College has been actively engaged in modifying its planning, evaluation, budgeting and governance processes as a result of the six recommendations made by the visiting team in 2004. The recommendations remaining as of the 2008 Follow Up Report and visit were as follows:

### **Recommendation # 1:**

**The college must develop a complete blueprint for planning that includes a review of the mission statement, and the research, planning, and evaluation process and ensure that clear communication of these processes to faculty, staff, and the community. (Standards I.A.3, I.B, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6,)**

The follow-up visit evaluation report dated December 1, 2008 commented on three recommendations that remained outstanding at that time. The evaluation team concluded that the recommendation related to mission, research, planning and evaluation were implemented. During this team's review the same items were reviewed as a part of the comprehensive visit requirements. It is the conclusion of this team that this finding remains implemented.

### **Recommendation #3:**

**The college must develop and implement student-learning outcomes for all its courses, programs, services, and for the institution as a whole while linking the outcomes to planning and the budgeting process. Equally important, the college must develop mechanisms for measuring those outcomes and commit to using the findings to improve student learning for its diverse students. (Standards I.B, I.B.3, II.A.1c, II.A.2a, II.A.2d, II.A.2e, II.A.2f, II.B.3, II.B.4, II.C.2)**

The college has made progress in developing student learning outcomes at the instructional student services areas and at the program and institutional level. The assessment of these outcomes had also begun. There was discussion among team members about the progress or lack of progress made by Antelope Valley College in assessment of SLOs. The team concluded there was no justification to comment on the assessment phase since 1) it is not yet year 2012; the date when complete implementation is required, and 2) the college's own projections show that it will be fully implemented by 2012. Accordingly, this team concludes that the recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation #6 (2004):**

**The Board must review and develop (1) personnel policies and procedures, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, labor relations, classification, compensation, benefits, and staff development and training; (2) participatory governance policy (Board Policy 2051) with an eye to incorporate a directive to include data, both qualitative and quantitative, in participatory governance planning and decision making; and (3) program review reports must be prepared on a regular cycle, and the report findings and recommendations must be disseminated campus wide. Report recommendations must be actively incorporated into campus planning and decision making to enhance student learning. (Standards III.A.3, I.B.3, II.A.1a, IV.B.1b)**

(1) The 2008 follow up report noted that “The College established a process for maintaining board policies and administrative procedures. The process is implemented as soon as CCLC provides recommendations for campus consideration. The college is prompt in keeping up with recommended revisions, ensuring that the college has the tools necessary to best serve stakeholders.” The College Coordinating Council (CCC), a shared governance council, continues to monitor the board policy review and revision process. Board policies and administrative procedures are available on the Antelope Valley College Web site.

(2) The college has made significant progress in defining its participatory governance, planning, and decision making structure which incorporates qualitative and quantitative data in latest revision of Board Policy 2510 approved 5/12/2008. BP 2510 lists constituents in the college who shall participate as required by the decision-making process of the district: Faculty, staff, and students; collective bargaining groups, and the academic senate (A.3.I).

The team found evidence through its interviews that representative groups are involved in planning and decision making, and that qualitative and quantitative data are increasingly used for planning an decision making. The use of data is not at a mature level.

(3) Program review to incorporate data-driven analysis.

The program review process for instruction appears to be in place and ongoing. The college-wide decision to institute a four-year process, with an annual update, seems to have led to increased participation and relevance in response to a shorter timeline. There is an established cycle of review and increased linkages between the outcomes of the process and the actions and budget prioritization.

Student services have completed most of the program reviews relevant to their area (e.g., Cal WORKs, EOP&S, etc.). Non-instructional areas are well underway in completing self-studies and/or peer review processes.

The college uses the ACCJC Rubrics for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness. They note that “the points in the sustainable levels of each are specifically discussed as well as how the three areas interrelate” (p. 95). There is college-wide use of data to inform the Program Review process, including a standardized data list provided by the Director of Institutional Research and Planning. The calendar for submission appears to be well communicated and understood.

This recommendation remains implemented.

## **Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness**

### **Standard I**

#### **A. Mission**

##### **General Observations**

Antelope Valley College's mission statement describes the educational purpose of the institution as providing the following: educational offerings for student support, instructional support, transfer, basic skills, career technical education, workforce and economic development, and professional development and personal enhancement. The mission supports student success, student-centered learning, and identifies its intended student population as all members of the community. The mission is central to decision making and serves as the reference point from which planning efforts are considered (I, I.A, I.A.1, I.A.4).

Antelope Valley College has an organized approach to reviewing the college's mission statement. The Academic Senate charges one of its subcommittees, the Academic Policy and Procedures Committee (AP&P), with the annual review of the college's mission statement. The proposed revisions are reviewed and subsequently approved by the Academic Senate, Strategic Planning and Budget Council, and the Board of Trustees (I.A, I.A.2, I.A.3).

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

The team found evidence from interviews with faculty, staff, administrators and members of the Board of Trustees that there was broad informal and formal dialogue in conjunction with the annual review of the college's mission. Revisions to the mission have been initiated by changes in regulations, new college initiatives, and institutional reviews. Board Policy 1200 is the official statement of the Mission of the Antelope Valley Community College District. The Board of Trustees approved the most recent changes to the mission at the June 2010 meeting. Revisions to the college's mission in June were not current as published at the time of the visit on college's website. In other documents the mission statement posted was the one approved by the governing board in June 2010 (I, IA.2).

The mission statement of the college in part reads as follows:

“The mission of the Antelope Valley Community College District is to serve the community by placing student success and student-centered learning as our number one priority through higher educational standards and innovative programs and services in a professional, team-driven environment.”

The mission statement expresses the Board's emphasis on student learning. The mission statement is several paragraphs in length and includes degree areas and career technical programs offered by the college. As an illustration of what is included in the mission statement the evaluation team noted that the college predominately focuses on Associate Degree Programs and Career Technical Programs. The following excerpts from the mission statement provide a good overview of the approach used by Antelope Valley College when designing and implementing instructional programs and services:

“Antelope Valley College takes pride in providing a quality, comprehensive education for a diverse community of learners. We are committed to student success, offering value and opportunity to all members of our community.”

As related to degree programs the mission statement includes the following emphasis:

“Associate degree programs comprised of general education courses, proficiency requirements, designated courses in a specific major or area of emphasis. Associate degrees provide students with “the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.”

Career Technical training programs are also noted as an area when the college will offer services to meet its mission. The mission statement includes the following comment about the career technical courses offered by the college:

“Certificate and degree programs comprised of “essential career technical instruction” in a variety of business, technical, and occupational courses designed to enhance students’ knowledge and skills leading to employment, career advancement, certification, and state or federal licensure. We award both Chancellor’s Office approved Certificates of Achievement and locally approved Certificates of Proficiency.”

Finally, the mission statement includes comments about providing basic skills courses, personal enrichment courses and student and instructional support services that are offered to the students of AVC. The college has established a broad range of areas that it intends to offer educational services of the community served by the college. Antelope Valley College is a comprehensive community college that uses its lengthy mission statement to highlight areas in which it intends to offered services. The mission statement satisfies the two primary requirements of articulating a focus on student learning and in identifying the intended student population to be served by the college (I.A.1).

The college publishes its mission in official college publications, the AVC homepage, and publishes abbreviated extracts of the college’s vision on a bookmark with Mission, Vision, and Institutional Learning Outcomes. “We place student success and student-centered learning as our No. 1 priority through higher educational standards, innovative programs and services in a professional, team-driven environment” (I.A.1).

Current staff members made reference to the college’s mission being printed on their business cards. The statement taken from the full mission statement as printed on the back of business cards reads: “At Antelope Valley College we take pride in providing a quality comprehensive education for a wide variety of learners. We are committed to student success, offering value and opportunity for all members of our community.” While consistent with the language in the mission, such variations should not be referred to in a manner that creates confusion or implies they are the college’s mission statement (I.A.1).

The institution has developed an organized approach to reviewing the college's mission statement. The Academic Senate charges one of its subcommittees, the Academic Policy and Procedures Committee, (AP&P) with the annual review of the college's mission statement. The proposed revisions are reviewed and subsequently approved by the Academic Senate, Strategic Planning and Budget Council, and the Board of Trustees. The board approved the most recent mission June 2010 (I.A.2, I.A.3).

### **Conclusions**

The team concluded that the college meets the requirements of Standard I.A. The team verified that the mission is: reviewed routinely, central to planning, used to inform resource allocation decisions, and is used in guiding programs and services to support student learning. While Antelope Valley College revises its mission statement based on broad based informal dialogue, the process could be more defined, documented, and be directly linked to the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data (I, I.A.1, I.A.2, I.A.3, I.A.4).

### **Recommendations**

None

### **Commendation # 1**

The team commends the work of the Director of Institutional Research and the work of his office by embedding data into the decision making processes. By using data to support institutional decision making, the director of institutional research and the staff of the office of institutional research have started actions that can lead to a culture of evidence that will yield tremendous benefits to the college and its students.

## **Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness**

### **B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

#### **General Observations**

The integrated planning process appears to be strong, and is a commendable improvement over the system that existed at the last accreditation visit. The Self-Study describes the revised process for integrated budgeting and planning, and includes the development of a “Blueprint for Planning,” a “Cycle of Evaluation”, and the college strategic plan, the “Educational Master Plan,” along with five subcommittee plans for finance, facilities, human resources, technology, and enrollment management.

However, the Cycle of Evaluation does not show how material from Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment shapes the Educational Master Plan. In addition, the subcommittee plans shown in Figure 1 of the self-study do not link back to the EMP. The Cycle of Evaluation diagram shows a connection between Student Learning Outcomes/Operational Outcomes and Effectiveness Criteria. The college does not appear to have fully implemented the assessment and evaluation processes identified as one item within the Cycle of Evaluation. The self-study talks around this point by stating that the evaluation will be done as opposed to already occurring.

The expectation of the standards is that each institution will demonstrate continuous on-going improvement. AVC is making good progress on implemented student learning outcome assessment and should be able to incorporate the analysis of planning processes as the remainder of the student learning outcome assessment work expands to all areas of the college’s operations. The planning and evaluation processes should be evaluated and if appropriate modifications made.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The college has committed itself to improving communications. The Self-Study reveals several standard methods of achieving this goal, including the use of FLEX time, Welcome Back Day, “Dialogue with the President,” Early Alert, various committees that the Academic Senate oversees, and other various training events. Their “Notes From the Researchers” represents an important addition and is commendable for its intended goal which involves teaching people on campus how to more effectively use the data they collect (I.B.1).

The program review process calls upon faculty to review data and converse which indicates/suggests dialogue occurs at the level most immediately important to student learning. While the report does not always include quantitative data derived from measured assessments, clearly the college’s departments are exploring questions that focus on student learning. Communication with the Palmdale and Lancaster and other communities that AVC serves is not well documented. The recognition of problems of inconsistency in the reporting of agendas and minutes of campus wide committees and councils was reported as a concern in 2008 and the action taken to improve communication is commendable. Unfortunately documentation that

would capture the nature and content of the discussions were not developed and are therefore unavailable for review (I.B.1).

Some confusion arises in this section with regard to the goals and plans the college has developed. The Self-Study refers to annual goals set by the superintendent/president, the President's Executive Council, and goals established in the Educational Master Plan. There was universal agreement that the president sets the goals using information from planning documents as the basis for the goals. The goals established are in alignment with Educational Master Plan and other plans prepared across the college. Program Review has been revised since the last accreditation site visit and now provides a firm basis for planning and budget input. However, the entire campus does not participate in Program Review. A worthy goal would be to increase participation from 95.8 to 100 percent (I.B. 2).

The planning and budget process now in use is relatively new and it would be valuable to see minutes of the meetings where the new process is implemented. The Self-Study does not make clear if this is the work of the SPBC committee, the President's Council or both (I.B.3).

While the blueprint for planning looks strong and elements of it have been completed, the actual implementation of the entire process to include assessment and evaluation is not yet fully complete. AVC has developed its Blueprint Planning Graph and a Cycle of Evaluation Graph and the Self-Study of 2010 asserts and on-site interviews confirm that the college now has developed on-going, collegial dialogue. However, the collection of student learning outcomes and assessment data is not complete. Data are collected on outcomes for most of the programs in the program review process, but the development of assessments has only recently begun. Thus the flow of information from these efforts to the AVC Educational Master Plan has limited the college's ability to develop that plan based on assessments of SLO data collected (I.B.1, B.2, B.3, I.B.4).

The SPBC represents a cross-section of the campus and provides opportunity for input from all constituencies. The Budget sub-committee is assigned the task of allocating resources and the planning cycle and blueprint indicate that these decisions are made based on data that the sub-committee receives through a well-defined process for requests for funds. The plan also provides criteria for decision making that includes requirements that the budget requests are linked to the Educational Master Plan. This document in turn is informed by material sent forward from program review. At this time it has not been possible to document this link to assure that program review data are used (I.B. 4).

The Department of Institutional Research and Planning, which has developed considerably since the last accreditation visit, has developed strong efforts to provide the campus with data to make decisions. These include the Antelope Valley College Fact Book, the College Website, and other sources. These data do not include assessment data that can be used in the planning process (I.B.5).

The accreditation team found that AVC needs to demonstrate that they use data from program review and student learning outcomes as part of the assessment cycles and that this assessment is used in developing the Educational Master Plan and the subcommittee plans of the Strategic

Planning and Budgeting Council. The evaluation cycle indicates assessments of the processes will be completed although a full cycle with the assessments was not available. Additionally, the college used language that indicated the assessments were expected to be completed in the upcoming year's planning cycle (I.B.6).

The Strategic Planning and Budget process on paper provides for an ongoing process of planning and resource allocation. In addition, the decision to reduce the Program Review cycle from six to four years and to institute an annual review seems to have been effective. While the college has evaluated and modified its past planning processes, it is not clear whether process evaluation activities are occurring on a recurring basis (I.B.6).

AVC has made a commitment to improving communications on campus. The Self-Study reveals several standard methods of achieving this goal, including the use of FLEX time, Welcome Back Day, "Dialogue with the President," Early Alert, various committees that the Academic Senate oversees, and other various training events. The recognition of problems of inconsistency in the reporting of agendas and minutes of campus wide committees and councils which occurred in 2008 and the action taken is commendable. Unfortunately these records are not available for review. Discussion of this standard reports on the participation of campus members in the revision of goals but does not reveal where and how this occurs (I.B.7).

### **Conclusions**

The college has developed an effective plan for developing goals, evaluating effectiveness and allocating resources. The Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC), with its sub-committees, appear to provide an effective means for evaluating the effectiveness of their work. AVC has made noteworthy efforts to engage in effective enrollment management. However, the process used for assessment of learning outcomes is not as easy to evaluate. The Program Review materials that are reviewed include primarily qualitative data. The process for review of quantitative data is discussed with the material required to review this being made available through the college's WEAVE Online program. Team members were provided access to WEAVE before and during the site visit.

AVC meets the requirements of Standard I.B.1. Improvements can be made in the area of evaluation of assessment data of Student Learning Outcomes.

### **Recommendation # 1**

In order to comply with the standards, it is recommended that the college modify its processes in a manner that creates documentation and other forms of evidence that can be used to reveal the college's progress toward implementation of Student Learning Outcomes and assessment of those outcomes. More specifically, the team recommends that to show compliance with the standards that the college:

- a. Develop a method to monitor progress made when implementing activities identified in program reviews to include listing steps in action plans, listing of individual student learning outcomes for each course and assessment activities matched against progress made to achieve assessment activities (I.B.3).
- b. Provide evidence in the form of documents or other deliverables to result from the operation of the integrated planning cycle. (I.B.3).

- c. Provide evidence that outcomes demonstrate the integrated planning cycle, from student learning outcomes to making budget decisions (I.B.5).
- d. Assess Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and provide evidence of program, student service and administrative changes and improvements as a result of changes made (II.A.1.a; II.A.1.c).

## **Recommendation # 2**

To meet the standards and to raise the quality of instructional programs and to instill a culture of evidence across the college the team recommends the following practices be institutionalized:

- a. To meet the standards, it is recommended that the college establish clear connections with and document the involvement of members of professions, associations and professional organizations when curriculum is being modified and at other appropriate points in time to demonstrate input from vocational/occupational advisory boards and experts in the field so that the College can verify the quality of educational programs is based on experts in the profession (II. A.2.b).
- b. To ensure each department is being consistently evaluated under the program review process it is recommended that the college develop a list of minimum areas considered to ensure a rigorous self-examination is conducted consistently across the college (II.C.1).
- c. To meet the standards requirement that adequate resources be allocated to support the Library function of the college, it is recommended that the college conduct a comparative analysis against other similarly sized colleges to assess whether the amount of resources to meet the needs of students who rely on the Library to complete their educational goals (I.B.7).
- d. To meet the standards and to enhance the effectiveness of its technology, it is recommended that the college adjust its technology advisory committee structure to ensure that the needs of administrative and instructional computing are equally well addressed, and that this dialogue then results in equitable priorities, implementation and budget allocations for all technology needs (III.C.1, III.C.1.d.).

## **Standard II**

### **Student Learning Programs and Services**

#### **A. Instructional Programs**

##### **General Observations:**

Since the last comprehensive visit, the college has changed in significant ways regarding student learning and services: more student graduates, a college-wide focus on student learning outcomes (SLOs), emphasis on using data to make decisions, changes in the program review cycle, initiation of the developmental stages of an integrated planning processes—from SLOs to an updated budgeting process—growth and enhancement of student services and actions that address diversity and access, and acknowledgement of the strengths and challenges in providing library and learning resources to a larger and more distributed population.

The college has developed an Educational Master Plan that serves as a strategic plan that guides and prioritizes the decisions made by the college. The Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC), in cooperation with the President, establishes the goals and priorities for the college. The process through which these priorities and goals are carried out and evaluated is illustrated through the “Cycle of Evaluation” that can be found in the Master Plan. The visiting team had the opportunity to see this process in action when it visited the Palmdale center. This served as an excellent example of the college’s capacity to identify and respond to the needs of the community by developing a high-quality educational facility

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

The college offers a wide range of programs and certificates at three major locations and online. The mission of providing consistent high quality education to a diverse community of learners is central and links the substantive processes to sustain change and improvement. The Educational Master Plan (three year cycle), Program Review (four-year cycle with annual updates), and Institutional Learning Outcomes (six, adopted in 2005) are the driving forces for instructional programs, services to students and college operations (II.A.1).

Antelope Valley College (AVC) serves a diverse population with substantial and wide-ranging educational needs. The first step is to ensure that students have appropriate assessment to be placed accurately and have a strong basis for learning success and achieving their specific goals. There is evidence that program pathways and assessment processes have been evaluated and improved. The Learning Center (tutoring, math and reading centers, etc.) and a breadth of other services support students with a wide variety of educational needs. This is particularly important given that the region has been hit with a high unemployment rate (nearing 17 percent) and has a significant need for post-secondary education. Areas of study relevant to the region are faculty initiated at discipline level, overseen by the AP&P Committee and verified through advisory committees required of all occupational programs. Access to excellent instruction in a variety of programs and providing opportunities for success is a combination the community needs and which AVC provides with pride and commitment (II.A.1; II.A.1.a).

Faculty provide primary oversight of the instructional programs and through the breadth of committees, ensures connection to the mission and discipline-specific requirements. There is also evidence that advisory committees provide input to ensure that technical, workforce development and career enhancement courses and programs are current and relevant. The college offers courses and programs through a 16 week semester and shorter sessions, as well as online and through hybrid offerings. The content is required to be consistent with the same measures and evaluations of learning. A study comparing online and face-to-face learning has occurred and revealed small declines in success and retention for online courses (II.A.1; II.A.1.b).

The college has clearly focused on SLOs over the past two years; a SLO spreadsheet indicates that nearly every course has approved SLOs (95 percent) and program learning outcomes (PLOs; 30 percent). Oversight by the Student Learning Outcomes Committee provides ongoing emphasis on achieving SLOs across the curriculum and sets the expectation of SLO assessment to comply with the ACCJC goal of proficiency by Fall 2012. Initial efforts are encouraging, but intense effort needs to occur to achieve this goal. Student services has identified and assessed student learning outcomes consistently and administrative services must meet the obligation to complete Operational Outcomes (OOs) per the timeline extended by the SLO Committee. Tracking SLOs and results are just now being included in the Program Review, SLO assessment and Action Plans processes and overseen by the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee. The linkages and changes that must occur to demonstrate proficiency on the ACCJC Rubrics must gain momentum (II.A.1; II.A.1.c).

Adopting WEAVE Online is a substantial investment—time and resources—by the college to track the progression of learning operational outcomes from development to justification for planning and resource allocation. The process has just been initiated in Fall 2010 to link SLOs, PLOs and ILOs; the next steps are to use data from analysis to create and implement action plans and drive budgeting decisions. While there is an institutional commitment to assess and use results to make program improvements, there is still significant and sustained work to be done to make sure the assessment cycle becomes part of the institutional culture. (II.A.1; II.A.1.c)

The college has developed an Educational Master Plan that serves as a strategic plan that guides and prioritizes the decisions made by the college. The Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC), in cooperation with the President, establishes the goals and priorities for the college. The process through which these priorities and goals are carried out and evaluated is illustrated through the “Cycle of Evaluation” that can be found in the Master Plan. The visiting team had the opportunity to see this process in action when it visited the Palmdale center. This served as an excellent example of the college’s capacity to identify and respond to the needs of the community by developing a high-quality educational facility.

The college has established a planning and program review process that is administrated by the SPBC. The process consists of two parts. The first element is a self-study, driven by the faculty overseeing the program; this is followed by a peer-review validation element. Having a consistent “due” date and spring deadline for peer review seems reasonable to ensure that outcomes can be part of planning for the next year. More evidence of the use of outcomes is encouraged. Developing a rubric for the peer review team would strengthen this part of the process and provide a consistent response to each criteria addressed by the self-studies (II.A.2).

The college's practice is at the developmental stages in using evaluation of courses and programs effectively for improvement. The team found evidence that some programs are making progress, such as changing SLOs and initiating program changes; however, the process of self-evaluation and consistent practice across instructional programs cannot be verified.

In order to meet the 2012 Standard of Proficiency on the ACCJC Student Learning Outcomes Rubric, the institution must clearly accelerate efforts to make greater progress in assessing and analyzing Learning Outcomes at every level, with particular emphasis on the following:

Achieve greater completion of assessment cycles on course-level outcomes, and engage the entire faculty in fully participating in the SLO assessment process.

Offer a broader array of assessment options to better meet specific course and program assessment needs.

Complete development of Program Learning Outcomes, and fully align program outcomes with course level outcomes.

Develop General Education Student Learning Outcomes and assessment strategies.

Develop a comprehensive, integrated assessment plan with associated timelines for accomplishment that articulates roles and expectations, policies guiding assessment, guidelines for evidence collection and analysis, and approaches to reporting and integrating changes to courses and programs, based on evidence and analysis.

Review the existing support resources offered on the SLO Committee website to ensure consistency of assessment expectations, and eliminate irrelevant or inaccurate information (II.A.2).

The Academic Policies and Procedures (AP&P) Committee has the primary responsibility of reviewing and approving new and revised courses, degree and certificate programs, as well as locally approved certificates. The committee also establishes and approves prerequisites, corequisites, advisories and limitations on enrollment through the content review process, as specified in the AP&P Standards and Practices Handbook, found online at the AP&P Website. Faculty have the role of introducing new courses and programs, as well as modifying existing courses and programs through participation in the AP&P Committee Curriculum review and approval process. The review process has been updated to require that all new or revised courses submitted for review and approval by the committee must be accompanied by approved Student Learning Outcomes. The SLO approval process requires that each SLO connects meaningfully with the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), thereby ensuring alignment with the college mission and purpose (II.A.2.a).

By requiring that all new and revised courses have approved SLOs, the college has laid the foundation for assessment of quality and continuous improvement of those courses, as determined by student achievement of the SLOs for a particular course. The faculty are responsible for identifying appropriate student learning outcomes, establishing assessment

guidelines appropriate to each outcome, and also linking each course outcomes with the appropriate corresponding Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO), aligning the course with the college's mission (II.A.2.a).

The college reports that approximately 95 percent of all courses have established Student Learning Outcomes, which have been reviewed and approved by the SLO Committee, a standing committee of the Academic Senate. Each submitted course SLO has been evaluated by the SLO Committee for consistency with course objectives found in the Course Outline of Record (COR), use of measurable language, assessment methods appropriate to the outcome, and alignment to the Institutional Learning Outcomes, thereby establishing an appropriate "fit" with the course (II.A.2.a).

Progress on Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) has lagged behind the development of Course SLOs, with approximately 30 percent of PLOs having been established. The SLO Committee Reviews PLO statements and methods of assessment, and acknowledges the submission of PLOs but does not approve them. PLOs are entered into WEAVE Online, and Division offices maintain hard copies of PLOs, though this has not been verified. Despite the statement that acknowledged PLOs for disciplines are posted on the SLO Committee webpage, at present only Student Service PLOs are found (II.A.2.a).

As specified previously, the process to approve SLOs for courses has been established by the SLO Committee, which has been effective in ensuring that approximated 95 percent of courses have assessable outcomes, which are aligned with Institutional Learning outcomes. At this time, however, just over 30 percent of courses have reported findings from the assessment of outcomes, as posted in WEAVE Online. Evidence of analysis, dialogue stemming from assessment, as well as evidence of changes resulting from analysis has not been widely observed. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the effectiveness of the processes governing course effectiveness at this time. Processes guiding the approval and administration of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) have lagged behind the progress made on course SLOs. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the effectiveness of Program Learning Outcomes Assessment at this time (II.A.2.a).

Course evaluation methods have been identified and approved through the SLO review process as governed by the SLO Committee. Competency levels and measurability of student learning outcomes are determined by discipline faculty and reviewed and approved by the SLO Committee. Guidelines on how frequently courses are to be assessed and evaluated based on student achievement of learning outcomes have not been found. Policies that govern assessment guidelines are not established, though a variety of training documents, including samples of SLOs, Assessment strategies, and tips on topics such as "Communicating SLOs to students" can be found in the Documents section of the SLO Committee Website. These documents, while offering advice, lack a unified, coherent approach to guiding and coordinating assessment efforts. A number of courses have adopted an achievement benchmark of 70 percent, in that "70 percent of students in a given course will achieve a level of 70 percent or better on the rubric." The basis for a 70 percent benchmark has not been formally established. One member of the SLO committee explained that the 70 percent criteria was determined based on the criterion that

students who receive a “C or better” in a course will receive credit for that course. This has not been formalized as a guideline for the campus (II.A.2.a; II.A.2.b).

A small number of courses have reported completing assessment of learning outcomes on the WEAVE Online for the previous Academic year (2009-2010). These appear to be “early adopters”, while the SLO Committee, with data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, put the number of courses that have reported assessment findings at 31 percent. The percent of 31 provided by the Office of Institutional Research was not verified and is accepted at the college’s stated level for purposes of this report (II.A.2.a).

At this time, there have not been documented improvements to courses or programs as a result of evaluation of SLO/PLO data, other than Career and Technical Programs. Evidence of improvements informed by learning evidence is absent from the self-study, aside from anecdotal evidence of a handful of programs, such as the college’s forensics program. At this time, while faculty have been involved in establishing SLOs and assessment methods for courses, their widespread involvement in assessment, analysis of evidence, dialogue about results and decisions regarding improvement have not been widely observed or documented. Interviews with members of the SLO Committee reveal that progress on assessment, and capturing results in WEAVE Online are ongoing, but that there are faculty constituencies on campus, namely, Visual and Performing Arts, as well as Physical Education, that have not been willing to participate in assessment efforts to date (II.A.2.a).

The self-study indicates the existence of Advisory committees consisting of community members and local businesses and organizations to advise career and technical programs, but evidence to substantiate these bodies has been scant. A request for minutes from the meetings of advisory committees turned up an incomplete record of these meetings taking place. The documentation provided did not provide a clear indication that the meetings played a significant role in indicating establishment of new courses or identification of learning outcomes (II.A.2.b).

In the areas of Career, Technical and Vocational programs, competency levels may be established by industry standards, licensing requirements, or standards established by external governing bodies. For instance, 80 percent is the minimum performance criteria for graduates of the Fire Technology courses, as determined by the California State Fire Marshall (II.A.2.b).

According to the self-study, the relationships between course SLOs and program competency levels for degrees and certificates are documented using WEAVE Mapping functions. However, according to the Research Analyst widely recognized as the WEAVE Online point person for the campus, this mapping has not yet occurred. These pathways have not yet been widely established at the college, particularly for Program level outcomes for degrees and certificates. The college has not established program level assessments for a majority of the degrees and certificates offered (II.A.2.b).

The quality, level, breadth and program sequencing are discussed as part of the Program Review process. With the addition of the annual review element, initiated in 2010, the unit will have an opportunity to have more frequent and substantive dialogue about program quality and the changes needed. Guidance from the AP&P Standards and Practice Handbook also provides clear criteria for each unit to reflect on and improve program quality in support of student learning.

According to the self-study, discussion regarding the overall quality of the program is addressed within each division, and through program review: “In addition to the curriculum review process, each division evaluates instructional quality, breadth, depth, and rigor through program review and program effectiveness by assessing learning outcomes at the program level.” (II.A.2.c)

The self-study cites the assessments performed by the Office for Students with Disabilities, and the efforts to accommodate students with identified disabilities. The Academic Skills Center is also mentioned as offering a battery of learning assessments that can identify learning styles, as well as preferred modalities and study habits. However, the study cites no evidence, nor can evidence be found online (II.A.2.d).

The self-study summarizes that faculty are primarily responsible for determining and implementing instructional methods and techniques for meeting the diverse needs and learning styles of students. The report identifies several avenues where faculty receive information about diverse learning styles and addressing student needs, which includes professional development presentations, departmental and division meetings, shared research, conferences and faculty meetings. The study further cites the Tenure and Evaluation procedure as another area where faculty are expected to “identify methods or techniques of instruction, assessments used, and how these pedagogical strategies help students learn or reach their goals.” (II.A.2.d)

The Learning Center offers academic support services for students, including students who have been identified by the Early Alert program as needing additional assistance. The Basic Skills Committee has developed goals and action plans to implement effective instructional strategies based on documented best practices, and targeting students in basic skills. One example of this that does not appear in the self-study is the AVConnect program, which provides at-risk students access to a variety of assistance programs to meet their needs. However, conversations with the Director of Basic Skills as well as the Dean of Instructional Resources, Extended Education and Language Arts reveal that there is a gap in communication and collaboration between faculty who teach basic skills courses, and the faculty who provide learning assistance services, which suggest at some level the faculty may not be completely aware of the learning needs of a significant population of the AVC student body (II.A.2.d).

The course outlines of record, as well as the course SLO plans identify a variety of methods for assessing student learning, which include tests, quizzes, writing assignments, projects, performance assessment, portfolios, etc. A review of selected SLO Plans as well as CORs suggests that faculty utilize multiple ways of assessing student learning. However, outcomes assessment has been demonstrated for a small number of courses, and assessment strategies have been focused primarily on a single method for the most part (II.A.2.d).

In a handful of interactions with faculty who have begun assessment of course outcomes, they have described a sense of discovery regarding the value of assessing student performance, and how it has informed their teaching. At this time, it appears to be a handful, in that the evidence suggests that the college has not fully embraced assessment or a culture of evidence, despite the dedicated efforts of individuals on the SLO Committee and others in positions of leadership.

Some have related that when SLOs were first introduced to campus, there was a posture of complete resistance, but this resistance has largely evaporated over time, with notable holdouts

in some areas of campus. However, while the self-study identifies that faculty utilize a variety of instructional modes, and have numerous opportunities to explore and discuss potential teaching approaches, evidence of how/when these dialogues take place are not easily found. The self-study references one particular department meeting in Child and Family Education where such a dialogue took place. It is not evident that similar dialogues have been widespread on the campus (II.A.2.d).

Formal assessment of the effectiveness of delivery modes has not been widely adopted. There is evidence that programs in Health Sciences, Fire Technology and Technical Education have formal review processes that directly inform the effectiveness of instruction in those specific programs. However, the college has begun the process of assessment of delivery modes and instructional methodologies in “pockets” on campus, and interviews of individuals on the SLO Committee have indicated that pockets of resistance exist as well (II.A.2.d).

The self study specifies program review as a key process where the college determines the effectiveness of its courses and programs. The program review process that the college currently conducts was established two years ago, and currently, documents from year one can be found on the Program Review website. The program review criteria includes all elements identified (e.g., “relevance, appropriateness, achievement of Student Learning Outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.”), and the process is consistent across instructional, student services, and non-instructional areas. Documents consist of two parts – the unit “Self Study,” submitted by the department to the committee, and the “Peer Review” which is a response by a four-member panel of faculty and staff, who read and respond to the unit self-study. According to the Accreditation self-study, the program review, and a review of available documents reveals that numerous units have yet to assess the achievement of student learning outcomes, and many units have yet to develop and identify Program Learning Outcomes (PLO). Interviews with personnel involved in the SLO Committee and the Program Review committee report that departments are working on developing PLOs, and will be including them with their documents as they are created. PLOs will be acknowledged by the SLO Committee, but not approved, as it was determined that each department was the best evaluator of the efficacy of each PLO. In the Peer Review portion of the program review process, there appears to be a lack of criteria to guide the evaluation of these elements in the program document. The peer review documents found in the website often summarize or restate the information found in the unit document, rather than providing a critical review of the efficacy of each criterion. In summary, while the college intends to evaluate course and program effectiveness via the program review, the college is in a very early stage of this process (II.A.2.e).

The planning process has recently been adopted to commence in the 2011-12 academic year, and is cyclical in nature. The budgeting of resources will occur in the submission of action plans that close the assessment cycle. In particular, units will identify program needs resulting from learning outcomes evidence, and specify budgetary expenditures tied to evidence-driven requests via WEAVE Online. The budgetary requests will also, as a matter of process, be aligned with one or more Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) (II.A.2.f).

Since the previous comprehensive self-study and site visit, the college has hired a Director of Institutional Research and Planning and established an Office of Research and Planning that

provides institutional data to the entire campus. The office provides a full range of data reporting, data analysis, and research support for the campus. The Director and the Research Analyst have also played a critical role in guiding and supporting faculty, departments and programs in the development and assessment of student learning outcomes. The office has been the primary driver for the effort to migrate all learning outcomes to WEAVE Online, and for establishing the software program as the primary tool for integrating outcomes evidence into the planning and program review process (II.A.2.f).

The Office of Research and Planning is seen as the primary resource for ensuring that all measures are valid and reliable. The self-study cites as an example the consequential validity study of the college's standardized placement assessment, and follow up conversation about suggested changes in placement policy, as evidence that the college ensures that assessments are fair, unbiased and reliable measures (II.A.2.g).

Presently, the college faculty use student learning objectives to develop assessment tools and measure student performance in a specific class and subsequently assign student grades. Programs in career and technical fields, such as health sciences, nursing, have external standards and outcomes that must be achieved in order to be licensed in those fields, and the evidence suggests that these programs are standards-based.

In a document titled "Communicating Outcomes to Students," faculty are advised to inform students of the goals and purposes of Learning Outcomes assessment. In addition to sharing the goals of outcomes as a means of course improvement, the document suggests that students be informed that "SLOs are not used to determine an individual's performance in a course or program." SLOs assessment compliments classroom assessment in order to form a complete qualitative and quantitative picture of student performance, and serves also as evaluation of the teaching method. At present, the college awards credits based on students achieving a grade of "C" or better, which is consistent with accepted norms in higher education.

Currently, the college has not established Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for nearly 70 percent of its degree and certificate programs. The 30 percent of programs that possess program outcomes are career-path programs, such as Health Sciences, that have industry-driven standards, and with criteria that must be achieved as a requirement for licensing. The college is in the process of establishing Program outcomes, and must continue this work in order to meet this accreditation standard (II.A.2.i).

The college meets Title 5 requirements that General Education (GE) be defined and included as a component in academic and vocational programs and this is stated in and communicated via the college catalog. The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee (AP&P) examines course objectives and SLOs for inclusion in GE requirements. The committee provides the college's curriculum function, analyzing courses for inclusion as general education as a result of review and use of the faculty expertise. The recommendation then moves to the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees for final approval. Student learning outcomes must be included in all new and existing courses in order to complete the AP&P approval process and this necessarily extends to GE courses. The GE philosophy is noted in eligible courses in Areas A through F (II.A.3).

The college strongly supports students gaining knowledge and shared understanding of basic principles, concepts and methodologies that are both unique to and shared across the scope of general education offerings. The GE pathways, including humanities, sciences and social sciences, are related to the college mission, monitored by the AP&P committee, and meet transfer obligations and articulation agreements. Students are required to complete at least 21 units of GE in the areas noted above and must demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing and math. The AP&P Committee has established clear guidelines for development and revisions of a course to be included in the GE area. This course approval process is critical in ensuring that content and methodology fit the definition of the GE curriculum; if the guidelines are not met, the course is sent back to the faculty proposing it. The SLO Committee reviews the SLOs and verifies that the course SLOs are congruent with the GE area being proposed. The Course Outline of Record (COR) serves to ensure that there is alignment between measurable student objectives and the measures of student performance in the class (II.A.3.a).

Accomplishing the skills, competencies and knowledge included in GE is the basis for lifelong learning. Course objectives in the COR include the expected skill levels and, as noted, the AP&P requires that SLOs are included in the GE courses. Multiple measures are employed in the GE coursework to provide feedback and make sure students can successfully transfer or complete their degree/certificate. Of concern is the Information Competency requirement which must be implemented as soon as possible, as this is a core skill necessary to be a successful student, graduate and employee (II.A.3.b).

The college values the core values of ethics, citizenship and diversity. Board Policies (BP) 4025 and 4400 both emphasize course work that includes ethical principles, citizenship and civility and an understanding of cultural diversity and having a larger social and political perspective. ILO #5 particularly emphasizes “good citizenship and teamwork through respect, tolerance, cultural awareness and the role of diversity in modern society.” Also, Area B (Social and Behavioral Sciences) requirements reflect the course/program learning that contributes to developing these qualities (II.A.3.c).

The degree programs offered include a major or area of emphasis and also the Certificate of Achievement. The Liberal Arts and Sciences Degree has three options: Math and Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences and Arts and Humanities. The AP&P Committee oversees the application of six criteria that must be addressed in all degree and certificate programs, one of which is transfer information (II.A.4).

Evidence that students who enroll in and complete vocational and occupational certificates and degrees have the requisite competencies is measured by the results of external exams (e.g., NCLEX-RN; Airframe, Powerplant and General Exams). The AP&P Standards and Practices Handbook also specifies requirements that must be addressed (all or some), including item # 4—recommendations from advisory committees, state regulation boards, or other outside agencies—and item #5—exit exams from outside agencies that have established validity and reliability. The Core Indicator Information for 2010-11 from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office show that college completion rates for certificates and degrees in the vocational, career and technical programs is 81.21 percent, slightly higher than the required level and for employment is 75.61 percent, slightly lower than the negotiated level (II.A.5).

The college provides clear and accurate information about its courses, programs and transfer policies in the printed college catalog and also in information available on the college website and in separate brochures available on campus. Course syllabi provided to students in class contain student learning outcomes and are monitored by submission to the appropriate division office. Both the faculty evaluation process and the student evaluation of instructors ensure that all instructors and sections are taught in accordance with the approved course outline of record.(II.A.6)

The college makes its articulation and transfer information available to students in the college catalog. It is also available in the statewide ASSIST and OSCAR databases. The Articulation Officer is responsible for establishing and updating articulation agreements with the UC and CSU systems which are reviewed on their annual schedule (II.A.6.a).

When necessary, the college follows Board Policy AP4021 Program Discontinuance Procedure which ensures that students have the opportunity to complete their programs in a timely manner. The college must clearly engage this process and, where possible, restructure weak programs to restore vitality in consultation with students and employers (II.A.6.b).

The college represents itself clearly, accurately and consistently and reviews this material in the annual catalog revision process that begins at the division level and proceeds through the governance structure to Academic Policies and procedures Committee and Strategic Planning and Budget Council. The college has hired a new webmaster to enhance electronic presentation of this information (II.A.6.c).

The college has a Board approved policy on Academic Freedom (BP 4030) that is also part of the faculty contract. In addition there is Board Policy BP 5500 on student standards of conduct and academic honesty (II.A.7).

The Faculty Handbook contains a Code of Ethics that includes a section on faculty rights and professionalism. The Tenure and Review Evaluation Process requires faculty to acknowledge and defend free inquiry. In addition when students evaluate their instructor they are asked two questions regarding mutual respect and an atmosphere of free discussion and inquiry (II.A.7.a).

The college has a Board policy (BP 5500) on student standards of conduct and a related policy (BP 5520) on procedures for discipline related to those standards. The student Code of Conduct is printed in the Student Handbook and is posted on the college website (II.A.7.b).

The college publishes its codes of conduct in the printed and online versions of the catalog.

### **Conclusions**

Except for the recommendations made to assist the College in meeting the standards, the team's conclusion is that Antelope Valley College meets Standard II- Student Learning Programs and Services by offering high-quality instructional programs in recognized fields of study that culminate in identified student learning outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, and transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with the College's mission as reviewed and updated annually. The College continues to make progress implementing Student Learning Outcomes and continues to develop assessment models to assess the effectiveness of SLOs on instructional activities.

Recommendations listed below are consolidated with recommendations from other parts of this report and are shown here to allow the College to use a comprehensive set of recommendations that it can address as related discrepancies that should be combined when developing implementation strategies to correct these exceptions from the standards. As a result of the consolidation some of the findings appear in the recommendation before they appear in the body of the report.

**Recommendation # 1** (Please see notes on page 4)

In order to comply with the standards, it is recommended that the college modify its processes in a manner that creates documentation and other forms of evidence that can be used to reveal the college's progress toward implementation of Student Learning Outcomes and assessment of those outcomes. More specifically, the team recommends that to show compliance with the standards that the college:

Develop a method to monitor progress made when implementing activities identified in program reviews to include listing steps in action plans, listing of individual student learning outcomes for each course and assessment activities matched against progress made to achieve assessment activities.

Provide evidence in the form of documents or other deliverables to result from the operation of the integrated planning cycle. An example may be a budget request form generated from program review that requests a new full time staff member. The request is documented evidence that can be traced into the planning cycle and ultimately into the college's budget.

Provide evidence that outcomes demonstrate the integrated planning cycle, from student learning outcomes to making budget decisions.

Assess PLOs and provide evidence of program, student service and administrative changes and improvements as a result of changes made (II.A.1.a; II.A.1.c).

To meet the standards and to raise the quality of instructional programs and to instill a culture of evidence across the college the team recommends the following practices be institutionalized:

To meet the standards, it is recommended that the college establish clear connections with and document the involvement of members of professions, associations and professional organizations when curriculum is being modified and at other appropriate points in time to demonstrate input from vocational/occupational advisory boards and experts in the field so that the College can verify the quality of educational programs is based on experts in the profession (II. A.2.b).

To ensure each department is being consistently evaluated under the program review process it is recommended that the college develop a list of minimum areas considered to ensure a rigorous self-examination is conducted consistently across the college (II.C.1).

To meet the standards requirement that adequate resources be allocated to support the Library function of the college, it is recommended that the college conduct a comparative analysis

against other similarly sized colleges to assess whether the amount of resources to meet the needs of students who rely on the Library to complete their educational goals (I.B.7).

To meet the standards and to enhance the effectiveness of its technology, it is recommended that the college adjust its technology advisory committee structure to ensure that the needs of administrative and instructional computing are equally well addressed, and that this dialogue then results in equitable priorities, implementation and budget allocations for all technology needs (III. C.1.; 1.d.).

## Standard II

### Student Learning Programs and Services

#### B. Student Support Services

##### **General Observations:**

Antelope Valley College provides comprehensive student support programs and services. Through the leadership of the Vice President and Deans of Student Services, attention is given to institutional effectiveness, dialogue, the cyclical process of assessment, analysis and change. Student Services programs are regularly evaluated through program review and annual updates (starting fall 2010), categorical program reviews and annual reports presented to the Board of Trustees. Program reviews list SLOs with reference to related ILOs. Student Services support staff are actively involved in the participatory governance process of the college. Continued progress in the utilization of technology for online services ensures delivery of those services and information, regardless of location. The Self Study report refers to a statement from the Educational Master Plan guiding principles regarding a Student Services one stop approach using technology for 24/7 online access. Sources of evidence include the college website, myAVC portal, the purchase of Degree Works (expected to be fully functional by 2013) and Higher One financial aid student payment system.

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

Antelope Valley College distributed the 2009 Accreditation Survey to faculty, students and the community to determine if students benefit from AVC's programs. Information on the accessibility of services collected in the survey indicates that AVC participates in ongoing dialogue about improvement and addresses the needs and expectations of students. Sixty two percent of campus respondents indicated that there is ongoing dialogue about improvement. Seventy eight percent of student respondents agreed that services and programs are adequate. Interviews with student leaders further confirmed that they are satisfied with programs, services and instruction. The student leaders also praised the administration, faculty and staff for supporting students. Several campus committees and advisory committees are cited as examples of discussions on student success. The Outreach staff engages in dialogue with local area high school counselors. Survey results indicate that online services of myAVC meet the expectations of 74 percets

Antelope Valley College uses data, surveys, independent audits, categorical program site visits, and program review as a means to evaluate programs and services. The program review process incorporates SLO assessment and identifies linkage to appropriate ILOs. Technological innovations have been added to several Student Services units. Enrollment Services has evaluated recruitment and registration strategies and strategies to improve student lines and direct students to services. The Student Services Division has established 11 goals that align with ILOs. Each program within Student Services submits goals that include timelines, milestones and plans for progress which align with the Student Services goals. The Student Services goals are submitted and may be incorporated into the President's goals (II.B.1).

Antelope Valley College's catalog provides detailed information and includes the required elements for general information and requirements. The catalog is reviewed annually by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Faculty co-chair of Academic Policies and Procedures Committee, and area experts throughout the campus. Policies and other information not found in the catalog is easily accessed through the Student Handbook. Published by the Counseling and Matriculation Division, the Student Handbook is reviewed annually and has been converted into digital format, available on the college website. Records of student complaints and grievances are kept by the Vice President of Student Services and Vice President of Human Resources (II.B.2).

Antelope Valley College determines the support needs of its students through the assessment and analysis of SLOs, program review (including peer team review), surveys, data from the matriculation, the college assessment program, and ongoing dialogue within Student Services program staff. Through the assessment and analysis of SLOs, several programs have implemented changes: 1) Enrollment Services implemented an online class add system for students reducing student lines; 2) Counseling revised the online orientation, included a Spanish version and developed and implemented an online Human Development course. The Counseling Division also has developed an extensive Counselors Manual, accessible to counselors online in order to provide accurate and timely information to students (II.B.3).

Antelope Valley College assesses student needs through surveys and Program Review documents. As an example, through Program review EOPS identified the need for staffing at Palmdale Center and Counseling identified the need to provide online new student orientation in English and Spanish (II.B.3.a).

Antelope Valley College has identified themes within their Institutional Learning Outcomes regarding a learning environment that promotes personal and civic responsibility, intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development. Programs and services that promote these personal attributes include Human Development courses, Star/Trio program seminars, EOPS/CARE, Honors program, ASO and Student Development Programs and Activities. Interviews with student leaders indicate that they are very engaged and proud of their college (II.B.3.b).

Antelope Valley College evaluates Counseling services through program review and peer team review, and categorical program technical review and site visits conducted by the California Community College Chancellors Office. The college's collective bargaining agreement specifies time frames for evaluating all counselors. The Human Resources Division maintains an excel spreadsheet which tracks when counselor evaluations are due.

Counselors (full time and adjunct) attend weekly meetings to receive updates and training. Tenured counselors serve as mentors to new counselors. The Counseling Division holds weekly meetings and training sessions. Faculty are invited to attend to provide updates on their disciplines. An online Counselor's Manual is maintained for easy counselor access and updates are distributed electronically when appropriate. Counselors also participate in UC & CSU counselor conferences and other professional development activities (II.B.3.c).

Antelope Valley College sponsors many events that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity such as Cinco de Mayo, Chinese New Year, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Cesar Chavez Day and Native American Heritage Day. Events are scheduled at the

Lancaster campus and less frequently at the Palmdale campus (due to space limitations). Courses are also offered in many disciplines including: History, Anthropology, Business, Communications, Psychology and Sociology. The Office of Student Development and Activities also offers events such as HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, Coming Out Day and Tolerance Week. Each event is evaluated for effectiveness with the intention of planning for improvement for the following year. The Student Success and Equity Committee assisted by the Department of Institutional Planning and Research regularly reviews institutional data on access, course completion, grades, persistence and retention, and performance by gender, age, ethnicity and disability (II.B.3.d).

The Admissions and Records Department of Enrollment Services participates in Program Review and Peer Review to evaluate effectiveness. Students apply online for admissions using CCC Apply. The admissions application data elements are reviewed to ensure that appropriate information is collected for reporting to the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The college utilizes ACT Compass test for assessing student skills levels, an instrument that complies with the state Chancellor's list of approved instruments. The Department of Institutional Research and Planning assists the Assessment Center in evaluating disproportionate impact. The August 2009 validity study found accurate student placement with no disproportionate impact (II.B.3.e).

Enrollment Services and Counseling and Matriculation secure student records within a Fire proof vault or locked cabinets. Access to electronic records is monitored and requires enabled network accounts. Additionally, Information Technology Services backs up electronic files nightly. AVC adheres to Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Administrative Procedure 5040 and Board Procedure 5040 further ensure students rights. The college catalog also includes information on student's right to privacy (II.B.3.f).

Antelope Valley College provides for systematic and regular review of its student support services through Program Review, Peer Team Review, categorical program review, Student Services Goals and annual program achievements reported to the Board of Trustees. Student Learning Outcomes are incorporated into the program review process. As an example, EOPS identified the need to improve Title 5 compliance with student contacts. To address this need, they developed the 'Program Monitor Self Evaluation program. Program review is also used to evaluate service area needs, such as more office space (II.B.4).

### **Conclusions**

AVC meets the requirements of the Standard II.B Student Support Services. Students admitted to the college can benefit from instructional programs. The college provides a supportive learning environment and demonstrates a concern for students to access programs, to be able to progress through the learning programs and provides a pathway to success for students. Specialized student support services are offered to students who meet eligibility requirements. The college has begun the process of assessing how well it is providing services to students.

## **Standard II**

### **Student Learning Programs and Services**

#### **C. Library and Learning Support Services**

##### **General Observations**

The Library and Learning Support services include the Library, the Learning Center, and the Instructional Multimedia Center. All areas are bustling with students utilizing the services provided for computers, tutoring, and interactive study areas. There are print and electronic media, online and video resources and tutorials, podcasts, and tutoring services. Services are provided at the Palmdale campus 5 days a week. There is 24/7 remote access to electronic databases once you come to the reference desk to manually request the password as there is no authentication via a proxy server. Many of the resources and equipment are purchased with soft money and are not part of any line item in the college's budget. The Library has completed their most recent program review in 2007; the Learning Center in 2007; and the IMC in 2005. All Learning Support Services are scheduled to complete a program review every four years. The units report to the Dean of Instructional Resources & Extended Services.

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

The Lancaster library has a print collection that is old and insufficient to support a student population of 16,000 students. Fifty nine percent of the library collection is 20 years old or older. The holdings of 49,833 print volumes is 43 percent below the average of similar community colleges, and the materials expenditure is 51 percent below the average expenditures for colleges of its size. Thirty nine percent of students surveyed indicated that they used other libraries because those libraries had better collections.

The introduction of electronic information databases has provided some currency to the collection and the college is fortunate to be a member of the Community College Library consortium with its high quality electronic subscriptions. 8,842 NetLibrary, ebooks and 21,225 electronic serials titles help to augment the collection and serve the Palmdale and Distance Education students, but funding is not stable and has been dependent upon consortium discounts, grant funding, TTIP funds that are no longer available, Proposition 20 funds, and Title V monies. The library relies on donations from the Associated Student Organization and from the bookstore for textbooks for its high-use Reserve collection.

The head librarian position was dissolved and for the last two years, decision-making and planning is done by monthly library staff meetings. The faculty and staff are excellent yet they are hampered by a history of soft funding and provide service to the Palmdale site three times a week without additional staffing resources. Wireless access is not available in the Library or the Learning Center, though students have expressed a need for that service and often wait in line for one of 12 computers (II.C.1).

There are three full-time faculty, and seven adjunct faculty that primarily serve at the Reference desk and are subject specialists for collection development for approximately 80 hours per week. Librarians are involved with the Academic Policies and Procedures committee course approval process that gives input on resources necessary for the library. Faculty members are encouraged to recommend new resources. However, resources are not being consistently budgeted for nor

planned by the college. Funding for a major electronic resource that supports the instructional programs on both campuses and for students enrolled in distance education programs, is not budgeted but is dependent upon outside funding. The demand for IMC services continue to grow despite a lack of awareness of the services, according to the 2009 survey results. The college uses student and faculty surveys to evaluate satisfaction with the collection and services. 39 percent of the students surveyed in 2006 indicated they used other libraries because those libraries had better collections than what they found at the college (II.C.1a).

Librarians provide ongoing instruction for users of the library with credit classes in information competency, research method workshops, through 34 online LibGuides, 4 library tutorials, 4 video tutorials, and reference assistance in person and by email. They also provide one-on-one instruction at the reference desk, via email reference and by phone. Four library credit classes Lib 101 *Introduction to Library Research*, Lib 105 *Introduction to Libraries and Information*, Lib 107 *Information Competency*, and Lib 110 *Introduction to Internet Searching* are offered. Lib 107 is taught entirely online and can be taken by students at either campus.

The Learning Center provides workshops on citation sources as well as plagiarism and the IMC provides a lab for a select group of students (fulfilling PE, Music, ESL, Spanish, and Sign language curriculum requirements) where they are assisted in basic computer skills such as email, printing PowerPoint slides, the internet, and my AVC. The Learning Center has established assessment based upon CAS (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education) standards. Student Learning Outcomes for tutoring have been in place since 2005 and have used the data for improvement. Program review and rubric assessment documents validate the systematic evaluation of Learning Center services.

The Library has developed student learning outcomes for the credit classes and library tutorials. Student learning is measured by pre/post tests for instruction and usage statistics are used to evaluate library services. Credit classes have student learning outcomes with the analysis to be done in fall 2010. The library online tutorials have SLOs but to date, no assessment has been done for the credit classes or the tutorials. The IMC has developed 7 outcomes but has not completed a cycle of data collection. Program Learning Outcomes have not been developed in fall 2010, as stated in the Self Study. The Library and the IMC indicated a need to evaluate and tie their SLO data to planning and program performance (II.C.1b, II.C.2).

The Lancaster Library is open five days a week, 57.5 hours per week, including four evenings: Monday through Thursday - 7:30 am to 8 pm and Friday - 7:30 am to 3:00 pm. Saturday hours were discontinued due to low rate counts. The Palmdale Learning Center is open 57 hours per week: Monday to Thursdays 7:30 am – 8:00 pm and Friday from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm. The Reserve Book Room for textbooks is open from 10 am – 3 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Library instruction and reference services are provided Tuesdays from 8 to 1 pm, on Wednesdays from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm, and on Thursdays from 10 am to 1 pm. Students and faculty have 24/7 access to major electronic resources via remote access from both campuses. To gain access, students and faculty must request a password as there is no proxy server to authenticate an AVC member (II.C.1.c)

The Learning Center and the Instructional Multimedia Center is open 55 hours a week at the Lancaster site, Mondays to Thursdays – 8 am to 8 pm, and on Friday – 8 am to 3 pm. Tutoring is available at the Palmdale site 5 days a week at various hours. The Learning Center provides remote access to SMARTHINKING and Learning Express, two software applications to support learning assistance. Learning Express is web based, and is utilized for skill development in reading, writing, and math. SMARTHINKING is an online access tool that provides tutoring for writing assignments. Media boxes that include an LCD Projector, a computer, and VHS/DVD player are installed in 95 percent of all Lancaster classrooms. At Palmdale, media boxes are installed in all 11, or 100 percent of all classrooms (II.C.1.c).

Computer labs are available at both sites for open student computer use. All of the workstations have internet access but only some have word processing capabilities. There are 11 computers at the Palmdale site; 12 computers in the Lancaster Library with internet access only; 40 in the Learning Center for general use; 4 for Math tutoring; 6 for ESL tutoring, 5 for the Writing Center, and 28 for the Reading tutoring. There are 10 IMC computers; and 49 on the third floor of the BE building for a total of 154 computers for open use. Wireless access is not available in the Library or the Learning center despite a high number of student queries (II.C.1.c).

The campus contracts out security services to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office to regularly patrol the areas of the Library and Learning Services. The Sheriff is on site during all hours of the Learning Center at Palmdale (7:30 am to 10 pm) and is responsible for locking down the building. The Lancaster Library has an aging Knogo security system that fails to prevent theft of items in the library. This should be updated to provide adequate security for the collection (II.C.1.d).

The college maintains a contract with Horizon, a Sirsi/Dynix system for the provision of a library catalog database. Appropriate support and maintenance agreements are in place for Horizon. There are seven modules: Acquisition, Cataloging, Circulation, Horizon Information Portal, Inventory, Reserve Book Room, and Serials. There are formal consortia agreements through the Community College Library Consortium and online access to electronic resources for EBSCOhost, the Oxford Reference Collection, Encyclopedia Britannica, Books in Print, and NetLibrary. SMARTHINKING is available 24/7 via the Learning Center website since May 2009. While the Library and the Learning Center review the usage statistics to assess and evaluate whether the services are meeting the needs, there is no evidence that the performance of these services is being evaluated on a regular basis (IIC.1.e).

### **Conclusions**

The college partially meets this standard. Learning support services are insufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to support the quality of its instructional programs based on the budget and the inability to fill positions or to redirect positions to areas that have grown by necessity to support the technology needs on campus. The total number of open computers available for 16,000 students is only 154, and is inadequate. The lack of a head librarian, the reduction in staffing, and lack of consistency in budgeting for resources hamper the library's ability to meet student needs comprehensively. The library and the IMC should develop a plan for how faculty and staff will become fully engaged in student learning outcomes proficiency.

### **Recommendation:**

See Recommendation # 2.c

## Standard III

### Resources

#### A. Human Resources

##### **General Observations:**

Human Resources is overcoming obstacles mostly resulting from high turnover of the Vice President of Human Resources position over the past five years. Antelope Valley's current VP has been here since August 2009 and is implementing proactive changes. Staffing needs are identified through a number of processes, including program reviews, the Educational Master Plan, and annual budget request processes that meet the college's mission. Hiring policies and practices based on EEO policies, such as recruitment, screening, selection, and hiring of all personnel ensures fairness and compliance that results in high quality employees. Evaluation procedures based on collective bargaining agreement are clearly identified for faculty and classified staff. Administrators are evaluated on four criteria. Codes of ethics are established for all constituent groups. A strong commitment to diversity is demonstrated by the wide range of activities for all segments of the college and community. Staff development opportunities are provided; however, there is not equitability in funding sources or opportunities. General concerns throughout various sections of Standard III.A. are incomplete procedures and policies; uses of statistics that provide incomplete information; and low statistical percentages, yet few sections state planned agenda items for improvement.

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

The college employs personnel who meet the education and/or experience necessary. Faculty and education administrators meet the minimum qualifications set by the State of California. Needs for additional or new positions are established during program review, the Educational Master Plan update, and the annual budget request process; however many vacancies remain unfilled due to budget constraints. Vacant educational administrator positions were reevaluated and divisions and departments were reconfigured to save money. Guidelines for hiring faculty, classified, classified administrator and confidential positions, educational administrator positions, and part-time staff are identified (III.A.1a).

Needs for classified positions are prioritized by the superintendent/president, the vice president of administrative services, and the president of the classified union. The needs for classified administrator and confidential positions are prioritized by the Executive Cabinet as are the administrative positions. Job announcements include criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selecting personnel. Announcements are created for classified, confidential/management/supervisory positions and classified positions; however, jobs are only posted a minimum of two weeks. The college relies on the faculties' expertise for setting desirable qualifications as well as the interview questions for faculty positions that reflect the institutional mission and goals. The job announcement is developed by the faculty of the discipline/division, as well as other representatives and includes: most current minimum qualifications; academic senate approved equivalency; appropriate valid credentials; and desirable qualifications. Positions are widely advertised in a variety of sources and posted from two weeks to forty-five days (III.A.1a).

HR issues a handout explaining what employers can ask applicants and employees and a handout delineating the roles and responsibilities of serving on a hiring committee. Interview questions are developed to evaluate and determine whether the candidates possess the knowledge and experiences required of the position. One of the prepared interview questions includes diversity. Classified employee interview questions are based on AP 7120 Recruitment and Hiring and determined by the hiring committee. Additionally, the committee develops an instrument used for ranking applicants (III.A.1a).

The college determines an applicant is well qualified by first screening all application packets to ensure they meet the minimum qualifications. Hiring committee members only review applications packets that meet the minimum qualifications and select candidates for interviews. Part of the faculty evaluation process involves a teaching demonstration. The topic is determined by the discipline faculty; however, faculty can use any teaching methodology. Candidates are evaluated on content knowledge, ability to relate material to students, and communication style (III.A.1a).

Once the candidate is selected and approved, HR requires official transcripts and verification of prior work experience. The college checks the equivalency of degrees from non-U.S. institutions by requiring that applicants submit an evaluation of their foreign transcript with their application materials. The College's Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee utilizes and notifies the district of additional recruitment options that may draw a more diverse pool of applicants. All hiring committee members receive EEO guidelines and rules and complete EEO training. An EEO representative is assigned by Human Resources and monitors the committee's entire screening and interview process (III.A.1a).

The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities. Evaluating procedures are established through collective bargaining agreement Article VIII for faculty, classified collective bargaining agreement Article 10, as well as AP 7150 for administrator evaluations. Appropriate criteria are established for faculty, classified, and administrative evaluations. A systematic evaluation time line assesses effective work and efficiency of employees while providing feedback that encourages improvement. A draft was submitted for a new formalized evaluation process for Confidential/Managers/Supervisory employees. Classified evaluation of job performance includes: knowledge and quality of work, productivity, dependability, communication skills, initiative, interpersonal relations, professionalism, and safety practices. Classified staff ratings below "standard" require a developmental plan. Faculty evaluations focus on three general areas: effective job performance; effective interactions with students and evaluation of student work; and fulfillment of professional responsibilities. Administrative evaluations address four areas: leadership; communication, coordination, and collegiality; organization and management; and professional qualifications. Administrators prepare an evaluation questionnaire to assess their performance in the above areas that is distributed to those they supervise (III.A.1b).

Faculty develop SLOs for all courses based on the COR, gather data, and implement assessment. In the Faculty Self-Evaluation, faculty include specific examples of how they are personally

involved in the SLO process; reflect on their teaching methods; and indicate which methodologies are successful and helpful with students' learning. Additionally, faculty evaluate student progress, in particular, critical thinking (III.A.1c).

The institution has a written code of professional ethics for all its personnel. Four documents support a professional code of ethics for all personnel. BP 2715 establishes the Code of Ethics for Board members and BP 5500 addresses Standards of Conduct. The code of ethics for faculty is published in the Faculty Handbook (III.A.1d).

Criteria for identifying needs are stated and aligned with institution goals and available resources. The institution determines appropriate staffing levels for each program and service by using the Program Review process and Human Resources Staffing Plan. Both short term (3-5 years) and long term (10 year vision) provide for permanent positions and temporary employees. Human Resources needs more data to assist in prioritizing staff needs and determining work loads. Final hiring decisions are made by a group of representatives. AVC exceeds its established Faculty Obligation Number of 153 with 195 current full-time faculty. Collaborative efforts between numbers of representatives meet to finalize the list of full-time faculty positions as opposed to being made by one person (III.A.2).

The institution establishes and adheres to written policies for ensuring fairness in employment procedures by subscribing to the Community College League of California's board policy and administrative procedure service. A number of board and administrative policies are listed and hiring procedures for vacancies are stated. Working conditions for faculty, adjunct faculty, and classified staff are negotiated through the collective bargaining process. The results from the Accreditation Self Study Survey vary regarding personnel policies and procedures being fairly and consistently applied. Forty-nine percent of the classified staff agreed or strongly agreed with the statement; 56.3 percent of the faculty, and 59.2 percent of administrators. These scores and corresponding concern were verified through a team interview. The college understands this challenge and anticipates resolving this by consistent HR leadership (III.A.3).

The institution's provision for keeping personnel records secure and confidential as indicated by following the guides in Article VIII and Article X of the Faculty and Classified Bargaining contracts respectively. The institution provides employees access to their records. Physical security and picture identity are required for accessing records as well as a written log for viewing files (III.A.3.b.).

The institution fosters an appreciation for diversity. A high score of 94 percent of those surveyed agree or strongly agree that the college promotes diversity. The college creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel. AVC substantially increased the variety of activities that support and promote diversity that include all personnel, students, and the community. Four specific standards of practice are addressed for faculty: Faculty Academy; College Colloquia; governance and committees; and professional projects and activities. The seventy-five page Faculty Professional Development handbook provides clear procedures and forms for faculty and adjunct faculty. An academic year calendar and event descriptions helps faculty plan ahead for maximum participation (III.A.4.a.).

The institution designs programs and services that provide training for diverse personnel. The redesign of the professional development program was based on campus needs and the Chancellor's requirements. The twenty-member Faculty Professional Development Committee includes three administrators, six to ten faculty representatives; and other specific representatives. All committee members serve three years and meet twice a month during the academic year. Specific obligation hours for tenured, non tenured faculty, and adjunct faculty are clear and deadlines are stated. Failure to meet the obligations results in employees' docking or withholding of pay. Procedures for submitting proposals for new professional development activities are explained (III.A.4.a.).

The district is committed to providing an academic and work environment that respects the dignity of individuals and groups. The board adopted an Institutional Code of Ethics (AP 3050) to support its commitment to a high quality learning environment. Understandable guidelines for reporting without fear of retaliation or reprisal is addressed in BP 3430. Comprehensible statements and board policies reflect the college's integrity in the treatment of administration, faculty, staff, and students (III.A.4.b.).

The institution regularly assesses its records in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission. The Office of Human Resources and Employee Relations tracks voluntary demographic data provided by employment applications, analyzes its employment equity record, and compares the college's employment by race and gender to other California community colleges. Board Policy 7011 recognizes the importance of equal opportunities for individuals. Statements and board policies reflect the college's integrity in the treatment of administration, faculty, staff, and students. Academic Freedom polices are in place. Employees can grieve or appeal actions related to treatment encountered through employment through various policies and procedures. Certificated faculty and classified employees use negotiated grievance procedures based on their bargaining units. The college implements a three-level review process for employees who file a written grievance. A handful of grievances are dealt with annually although the district recently closed a number of discrimination cases from eight to ten years ago (III.A.4.c.).

The college provides equal opportunities for continual professional development, consistent with the college mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs as stated in Administrative Policies 7160: Professional Development. Orientations for new employees, the annual eight-hour Welcome Back day, the Faculty Professional Development Program, seminars and workshops allow for participation in professional development. Although there is concern about the long-term effects of eliminating \$75,000 for staff development over the past two years, AVC continues to support staff development in various ways. The AVC Foundation provides at least \$10,000 annually awarded through an application process. \$15,000 is allocated for CMS Professional Development as well as \$14,000 for classified employees. It is admirable that classified staff can receive up to \$100.00 per semester unit. Funding for required training or professional development is approved by the budget subcommittee for each fiscal year. Sabbaticals and Study Abroad Programs are available (III.A.5.a.).

The college shortened the instructional calendar by ten days so that faculty may participate in the institutional sponsored professional development program in agreement with the Chancellor's

Office conditions for Flex. Sixty hours are required for full-time faculty within a fiscal year distributed amongst four standards. Adjunct faculty obligation hours are determined by the total amount of lecture hour equivalents taught in a semester, with a minimum of three hours in Standard #1 per semester. Adjunct faculty now have more opportunities to participate in professional development programs since the college adopted online training through Annenberg Media (III.A.5.a.).

Through an annual employee evaluation, all employees and/or their supervisors identify professional development goals. The college systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results for improvement. The college revised the Welcome Back Day for 2009. The Confidential/Management/Supervisors Group issues a Training Needs Assessment Survey to all members to determine training schedules and content for professional development (III.A.5.a.).

A faculty member with forty percent release time per semester for three years serves as the Faculty Professional Development Chair and oversees a twelve member committee that provides administrative oversight and evaluation of its activities. After discussing concerns about the validity, anonymity, and accuracy of collecting results immediately after an activity by the presenter, the committee created an anonymous electronic survey for attendees to evaluate all activities. These results are used to plan future events. Based on the needs assessment by the program evaluations, a tremendous need was identified for workshops on SLOs as well as technical training, such as Blackboard, PowerPoint, and Gradebook. SLO workshops for 2010-2011 include: *Learning Outcomes Analysis and Evaluation* and *Learning Outcomes Update* (III.A.5.b.).

Evidence supports that the institution bases its human resource decisions on results from the evaluation of program and service needs. Planning for human resources is integrated with institutional planning and systematically evaluates the results which are used for improvement. Staffing needs are collected in a Human Resources Staffing Plan. This plan is accessed for short, intermediate, and long-term plans. Budget requests are prioritized. Funded requests are incorporated into the tentative budget for the Board's approval in June. The program review process allows for assessment of staff needs at a strategic level in intermediate range planning. Developing staffing requests are based on program level goals and objectives through program reviews that are completed on a four-year cycle. The Educational Master Plan is used for long term planning as it takes a ten-year look at the strategic direction of the district. Each division or department identifies anticipated changes and resources needed to continue their strategic goals. The Staffing Plan is updated annually. The overall satisfaction scores for the Human Resources Department indicated that 81.4 percent of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied (III.A.6.).

**Conclusions:**

The College meets the requirements of Standard III.A Human Resources.

**Recommendations:**

None.

## **Standard III Resources**

### **B. Physical Resources**

#### **General Observations:**

Antelope Valley College has worked closely with its communities to anticipate future educational facilities requirements and to create a structure for addressing them through the acquisition of land for a branch campus, as well as the development of a Facilities Master Plan that is supported by a successful bond act. The aggressive positioning by the District for state construction funding has made some key campus capital projects possible, and judicious use of additional local and scheduled maintenance funding has created a strong foundation to support student academic success at the institution.

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

Antelope Valley College has a Safety Committee with representation from constituent groups at the Lancaster campus and the Palmdale Center. The committee serves as a hub for coordinating college safety-related matters ranging from the management of staff-initiated requests for maintenance, safety planning from a preventative and crisis response perspective, and the promotion of safety awareness (III.B.1).

Safety criteria are established by internal committees and groups as well as external agencies. Internal committees include the District Safety Committee and the Facilities & Campus Development Workgroup. Departments include Maintenance & Operations. External agencies include the college's liability insurance and worker's compensation carriers. The processes used include inspections conducted by both internal and external groups, Incident Report Forms and calls submitted by the campus community, and discussions and recommendations from the College Safety Committee (IIIB.1).

The college has a Facilities Master Plan, titled "2003 Facilities Master Plan Update" that was developed as a foundational facilities planning tool for all educational sites and campuses within the college. Data that was used to assist in development of the Facilities Master Plan prepared in 2003 includes demographic and economic forecasts as well as division and campus-specific trends, goals, and needs. This big-picture work is operationally complemented by on-going dialogue and coordination efforts under the auspices of the Strategic Planning & Budget Council. As part of the strategic plan update, facility improvement objectives are outlined with periodic status reports provided (III.B.1).

The college's Information Technology team interacts with operational services leaders to chart and prioritize technology upgrades needed in classrooms and related infrastructure support for current and future operations. Technology resources are managed through Information Technology Services which is responsible for networking, communication, and enterprise resource system infrastructures, and the Instructional Multimedia Center, which is responsible for all multimedia tools and technologies as well as training facilities for faculty, staff, and administration (III.B.1).

Currently, the college is undergoing an extensive upgrade to the technology infrastructure system. A set of technology related standards for infrastructure in classrooms has been drafted by

the college to use as a facilities planning and upgrading tool. All new construction is incorporating this standard, and classrooms are being converted as funding allows. The design teams meet with users to identify program facility needs including equipment (III.B.1).

The institution works effectively to meet its facility needs by coordinating facility development work across the college. In November 2004 the college was successful in passing a \$139 million bond (Measure R) for the renovation of the Lancaster campus, and development of a second campus in Palmdale. In compliance with Proposition 39, the college has created a Bond Oversight Committee to ensure that all resources are appropriated according to the provisions of the November 2004 ballot measure. The Board of Trustees regularly approves related reports, contracts, and other facilities-centered contracts, studies, and agreements. Although the main campus and the off sites blend owned facilities with leased facilities, for purposes of addressing safety issues, all assessment and response is channeled through the main campus to expedite response time and ensure as much college wide involvement as the different sites allow (III.B.1).

Antelope Valley College conducts regular facilities evaluations and has a process through which college programs can request improvement ranging from requesting new construction to minor facilities remodeling. These requests move from the department to the Facilities Subgroup and then to the Strategic Planning & Budget Council where priorities are established and resources allocated. The safety of equipment is monitored at the program or unit level and a similar request process is in place (III.B.1).

Antelope Valley College has experienced some growth in distance education enrollment and is mobilizing resources to ensure the success of this growing cohort of students. The Academic Senate Distance Education Committee is responsible for identifying the computer hardware and software and other technology needs for the effective delivery of distance education. This includes the Blackboard Learning System and other online teaching materials. The college is making progress in addressing the equipment needs of distance education and campus-based education, but lacks the funding needed to fully address equipment needs college wide at the present time (III.B.1).

In addition to its Facilities Master Plan, the institution has a number of planning documents that chronicle priority projects College wide and document the allocation of state and local resources to those priorities. The first is the Five Year Maintenance Plan, encompassing the period from 2011-2015 which details projects funded and anticipated throughout the college utilizing dollar for dollar matching resources for scheduled maintenance, instructional equipment, and library materials. The second is the Five Year Capital Construction Plan encompassing the period 2011-2015 which details capital projects funded and anticipated throughout the college showing both state and local funding sources.

Leased facilities generally meet the same standards as on-campus locations. Emergency facility situations are handled by the lesser as part of the terms of the lease. Other emergencies are handled by staff contacting the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. The College contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Departments for police and security services at all sites. The institution ensures access to its facilities by meeting all federal accessibility regulations and by making additional improvements as scheduled maintenance and bond funding allows (III.B.1.b).

The institution assesses the use of its facilities on a regular basis, with a process for prioritizing room assignments that is designed to maximize their effectiveness. This process is grounded in the academic and student services divisions and centered on the type of instruction or services planned. College employees conduct an analysis of classroom utilization data to maximize the College's eligibility for state facilities construction subsidies (III.B.2).

Antelope Valley College presently uses a combination of internal planning mechanisms at the program and unit level combined with demographic forecasting data and consultant analyses of opportunities to acquire, renovate, update, and construct facilities to create long-range capital improvement plans for the College. These plans encompass the strategic assessment of assets as well as regional needs across the College (III.B.2.a).

The physical resources development process begins at the department level. Regional demographic and economic analyses are evaluated along with the department-specific requests to formulate the plans included in the Facilities Master Plan. Through the Planning and Review process, College departments have the opportunity to identify space needs. These requests are aggregated at the unit and division level and are prioritized by the vice presidents in conjunction with program leaders in their units. Final recommendations for space allocation, renovation, and other physical resource needs are made at the Strategic Planning & Budget Council level through dialogue among the facilities department and the division planning councils (III.B.2.b).

**Conclusions:**

The team concluded that AVC meets the requirements of Standard III.B in that physical resources support student learning programs and services and improve institutional

Although the college as a whole meets the requirements of the Standards, the team noted that the college does support technology equipment at the same levels at each location. As an example, the Distance Education equipment needs are different and more substantial than other departments. However, the college does not have enough resources to meet all of Distance Education's needs at the present time and continues to add equipment as funds are identified.

Given current economic conditions the college is encouraged to strive to ensure resources available in support of students is comparable at each location. The college identified the different resource allocation condition and is working to balance out resource needs in a manner that provides equal access to technology across the college's instructional sites.

**Recommendations:**

None.

## C. Technology Resources

### **General Observations**

Antelope Valley College, like most California community colleges, has insufficient resources to meet every conceivable technological desire. The planning and prioritization process is therefore particularly important. The relationship between academic and administrative computing at the college seems somewhat uncomfortable, in part because of a legacy single network structure that places the highest priority on system security.

The college has invested heavily in major administrative software systems: Banner, myAVC, WEAVE Online, CurricuNET, Blackboard and Ad Astra that have contributed to the effectiveness of coordinated assessment and planning. Faculty appear to still voice the concerns documented in the 2009 Academic Senate resolution regarding lack of flexibility and responsiveness to instructional computing needs and requests.

The team was surprised by the lack of technology for instructional purposes. There were few computer labs for students, very few technology enhanced class rooms, no wireless system and very little interest in development of on-line instruction. The extent of the technology used is a college decision and our review of the standards results in a conclusion that the college complies with the standards regarding technology. However, the team suggests that as resources increase the college should reexamine its technology plan and determine if additional technological applications will provide students with the skills necessary to compete in today's workforce.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The college identifies its technology needs as part of the four year program review process with offices, divisions, departments and areas all participating. The identified needs are then submitted through the annual budget process using identified learning outcomes and operational outcomes. Systematic evaluation of technology occurs as part of the program review process. In general, technology needs are based on the strategic goals of the college (III.C.1).

The college Educational Master Plan is used to develop a Computer and Information Technology Plan. Information Technology Services analyzes various options and ensures software and hardware consistency. Other college committees contribute expertise as appropriate, for example, the Distance Learning Committee (Blackboard) or the Student Learning Outcomes Committee (WEAVE). Distance learning offerings are generated at the department/discipline level when a department decides to offer a course in this mode. There is no central planning process that generates a coordinated college-wide distance learning program. Recent local bond funds have been used to enhance system availability and reliability. Redundancy in the Banner system prevents data loss (III.C.1.a).

There was no specific mention in the self study of how training needs are assessed, but Information Technology Services (ITS) provides a wide variety of workshops and Flex activities. Training for specific software packages is provided for faculty and staff by ITS. Students receive training through appropriate classes. The Accreditation Survey indicated that only 40% of respondents feel that training meets their needs, while 25% indicated that it did not (III.C.1.b).

The college uses California Community College Chancellor's Office total cost of ownership model for analysis purposes, even though adequate implementation funding is not available.

Without that funding, upgrades and replacements are driven by the need to upgrade software. The responsibility for planning in this area is unclear. In addition, bond measure funds have been used to enhance systems security and reliability (III.C.1.c).

Technology oriented planning committees such as the Distance Education Committee and the Information Technology Committee identify needs, and present them to the Strategic Planning and Budget Council. However, the provision of instructional computers and services does not seem to be as high a priority as one might expect – in contrast to enterprise system software systems. Open access computer resources for students in the library and learning center areas seem inadequate for the number of students (see also Standard II.C).

In addition, there is an ongoing history of faculty dissatisfaction with technology services and reliability as expressed in a series of Academic Senate actions and resolutions. Faculty concerns include both support response for office and classroom technology, and restrictions on the ability and flexibility to install or access a wider range of instructional material.

The responsibility for planning discussions in this area is unclear. The Director of Information Technology feels that the Information Technology Committee – a participatory governance committee - addresses this entire area. Faculty seem to feel that this is a committee primarily concerned with administrative computing needs. However, the only relevant Academic Senate Committee is the Distance Education Committee which has a rather narrowly focused mission, and therefore seems to leave other instructional computing needs largely without an effective advocate (for example: student open computer use in library and learning center, wireless access for students, faculty classroom use, support for hybrid courses, hardware replacement schedule, and faculty office needs).

The 2008 consultant report from Strata Information Group made some recommendations in this area including the formation of a Educational Technology Committee with a broader mission. The Academic Senate preferred the creation of an Academic Computing and Technology Team that has recently been formed to address technology issues, and its faculty chair and the Director of Information Technology both felt that this was a promising approach to the resolution of outstanding faculty concerns.

The reason provided for many of the problem configurations and inability to respond to faculty requests was that security is the primary concern because of the network infrastructure shared by administrative and academic computing. It should be possible to address this with different levels of security and access in different user areas.

Faculty access and ability to sustain programs is described in the self study as a challenge. Some software and hardware upgrades are centrally budgeted by Information Technology while others are generated and funded at the department level. Although the self study indicates that all hardware purchases are approved by ITS, the team was told that this process is not always followed. The distance education program has been reduced in size in recent years and is monitored by the Distance Education Committee. Separate course approvals flow through the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee. Faculty who teach distance education classes receive training in Blackboard (III.C.1.d).

The college's Computer and Technology Plan is derived from the college Educational Master Plan. Assessment occurs through program review for academic departments and for Information Technology Services. This process does not seem to address the relative balance of direct student and faculty needs for instructional computing versus administrative needs. Neither does this wider conversation seem to be addressed in the discussions of the Information Technology or Distance Education Committees. Technology acquisition needs are evaluated using the college Program Review process. Other needs emanate from governance committees such as the Distance Education Committee (Blackboard) or the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee (CurricuNet). Coordination is overseen by the Strategic Planning and Budget Council.

It's not clear how competing needs for computer resources are prioritized and resolved – for example equipment renewal or provision of services to Centers or instructional software upgrades. The implication is that requests are generated in all program reviews and prioritization happens during the budget process with the Strategic Planning and Budget Council. It's not clear how effective this is. In addition, the provision of comprehensive technology resources at the growing Palmdale location is somewhat problematic. However, classrooms are better and more uniformly equipped at Palmdale than at the Lancaster site, and a computer lab has been established there (III.C.2).

### **Conclusions**

The advisory committee structure in the technology area seems fragmented, and in particular lacks an overall advocate for instructional computing. This was recognized in the 2008 Strata Information Group recommendation of an Educational Technology Committee. This lack results either in an actual imbalance in favor of administrative computing resources, or at least a serious faculty perception of such an imbalance (including the faculty perception that the Information Technology Director and the Information Technology Committee are both advocates for administrative computing resources). “Security” is perceived by faculty as an excuse for not responding to requests for greater flexibility for instructional computer resources. The college partially meets the requirements for Standard III.C. The team makes the following recommendation for improvement.

### **Recommendation # 2.d**

To enhance the effectiveness of its technology resources, the college should adjust its technology advisory committee structure to ensure that the needs of administrative and instructional computing are equally well addressed, and that this dialogue then results in equitable priorities, implementation and budget allocations for all technology needs. (III.C.1, III.C.1.d)

### **Recommendation # 3**

To enhance the effectiveness of its technology resources, a variety of different levels of network security should be implemented to permit more flexible responses to instructional computing requests, while maintaining appropriate security for administrative data (III.C.1, III.C.1.d).

## STANDARD III

### Resources

#### D. Financial Resources

##### General Observations

The college's final budget for FY 2009/2010 estimates total revenue of \$56,872,328 in the unrestricted general fund at the end of the fiscal year. Expenditures and transfers out total \$58,257,566 and when subtracted from expected revenue results in a deficit of \$1,385,238 for FY 2009/2010. The unrestricted general fund balance, commonly referred to as the "reserve" is expected to be \$3,507,153 or 5.54% of expenditures and transfers out. A fund balance of more than 5% indicates that the college is financially stable.

Planning processes are used at the department, division and college level to identify priorities which are evaluated by the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee for inclusion in the annual budget. The use of the planning processes provides opportunities for faculty, staff, students and administrators to participate in the resource allocation decisions. Resource allocation decisions are made collaboratively with all constituency groups participating in the process that leads to the recommendations to fund various initiatives and priorities of the college departments. The resource allocation process used by the college effectively links priority needs identified through planning processes to resource requests. The recommendations are submitted to the college president for consideration and with final action being taken by the Board of Trustees.

##### Findings and Evidence

The ending fund balance of Antelope Valley College is 5.54% as stated earlier in this section. This is an adequate amount to respond to unexpected expenditures or decreases in revenues which is an event that has occurred over the last two years. The college has sufficient resources to support educational improvements however, many of those improvements would need to be one-time improvements as the ending fund balance is a cash or cash equivalent amount of money that can be appropriated. It is not an on-going revenue and once expended there is nothing available to pay on-going future year costs (III.D).

The team received a few comments that the college's reserve was 10%; a level that some considered to be too large. The 10% reserve is reached only when the unrestricted and restricted general fund account balances are combined. The restricted fund is money restricted by law to be used to pay for specific types of expenditures. For analysis purposes the team has not included the restricted general fund amounts as these funds are not available to support the overall operations of the college (III.D).

The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBC) is the committee the college relies on to allocate resources. SPBC's primary guiding document in the resource allocation process is the Educational Master Plan. Interviews with college personnel from all constituency groups stated that the SPBC is where the resource allocation process is conducted with recommendations about proposed allocation of resources then being forwarded to the president who in turn makes his recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The Educational Master Plan was developed with consideration of the College's Values and Practices, mission statement and both short and long term plans developed for each program. The process starts at the program level thereby helping to ensure that the Education Master Plan is a bottom up developed planning document reflective of department level requirements necessary to support the educational programs of the college. Antelope Valley College considers the Educational Master Plan to be its strategic plan. The Educational Master Plan is updated annually. The mission statement is a central part of the plan and is evaluated on a regular basis (III.D.1.a).

The College describes the process it uses to complete the strategic plan and budget development process in a handbook of the same name. The team verified through interviews and a scan of documents produced that the process promulgated in the handbook is being used. Annually the college president identifies his goals for the year. The goals are broadly disseminated and reflect global activities that are not specific to any one department but instead are broad college level activities. As an illustration, the goals for 2010-2011 were:

- Ensure that the district's accreditation self-study is completed, approved, and submitted in accordance with ACCJC deadlines.
- Continue to implement enrollment management plan that will generate a maximum of one percent above allowable funded growth.
- Develop and implement a strategy to reduce expenditures and increase revenue.
- Complete the district's annual strategic facilities plan that will identify capital outlay projects, including improvements to existing facilities, required to satisfy projected enrollment growth and maintain a high quality learning environment.
- Continue to increase enrollment at the Palmdale site to meet requirements to establish a separate center.
- Maintain staffing sufficient to meet funded enrollment growth, ensure adequate student support services and sustain facilities and operations.
- Support and maintain a college culture of collegiality where all constituent groups are mission driven.
- Enhance and expand relationship and collaborative partnerships with the external community.
- Continue to develop programs, courses, technical services that meet the changing needs of students, business, industry and the community and adhere to minimum conditions of the California Community Colleges System Office.
- Continue to improve communication between the Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees.
- Continue to concentrate efforts on current strategy to maintain or grow fiscal solidity of bookstore and cafeteria. Evaluate and report on alternatives.

- Strengthen collaboration with Antelope Valley College Foundation to increase financial support for the district’s mission through private gifts and community partnerships.
- Complete the examination, evaluation, and clarification of all standing committees in order to improve the efficiency of college operations.
- Complete the implementation of department chair structure to reduce the workload of deans who have assumed duty for more than one division.

Updates are tracked throughout the year and discussed at the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee and the College Coordinating Council. Through interviews the team learned that the goals are developed and presented by the college president. The goals are representative of the areas identified by the department plans and are global in nature (III.D.1.a).

The college requires each department to prepare either an annual update to the department plan or it is required to complete a program review. Program reviews are completed on a four year cycle. Departments prepare a list of necessary resources that will support the department needs. A department that has not completed its required program review or annual plan will not receive consideration for additional resources by the SPBC. The approach used by the SPBC has been effective in motivating departments to participate in the planning process as this is the most effective way to ensure resources can be allocated to achieve department goals. Annually the college prepares a “Planning Timeline” to guide the review, assessment and updating of all plans leading toward the development of the allocation of resources in the college budget (III.D.1.a).

College governance committees receive accurate financial information from the Vice President of Administrative Services. The SPBC is actively involved in resource allocation decisions and prepares recommendation allocations based on a review of requests submitted by departments in support of department plans. Making those decisions requires that accurate budget projections be provided. The extraordinary circumstances affecting California community college funding has been difficult to accurately project thereby forcing the college to take the approach that until funds are received from the state, the funds will not be used for college budget projections. This conservative approach was adopted by the governing board and has been effective in preventing the college from over expending actual funds received from the state. The SPBC uses the President’s Goals as a major factor when determining what items are going to be recommended for funding. The departments complete program reviews every four years and an annual update in between the comprehensive program reviews (III.D.1.b).

The planning documents prepared by the college are long range plans that include short term annual priorities and recognize that multiple year planning is necessary to accomplish certain activities or to achieve specific goals. Annually, the Superintendent/President presents a draft list of goals that are obtained as a result of a review of department plans and other information that comes to him reflecting the needs of areas at the college. The president prepares a draft list of goals for the college to work on over the course of the year. It is these goals that become the short term tactical plan with other plan initiatives remaining for consideration in future years. The team could not identify a written procedure or process to determine the criteria or methodology used by the president to establish the goals. However, the goals are consistent with goals in the Educational Master Plan and department plans and no changes to the goals stated

were warranted when the team compared department goals to the goals being pursued by the college under the president's goals for the year (III.D.1.b).

The college is using the Pay-as-You-Go approach to pay for retired employees health benefits. The cost of retired employee health benefits is about \$500,000 per year. An actuarial study completed in 2009 projects total liabilities as \$13 million with the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) calculated as \$1.3 million per year. The Annual Required Contribution is the current year cost of retired employee benefits of \$500,000 plus an amount equal to the total actuarially determined liability of the unfunded obligation amortized over a period of up to thirty years. Now that GASB 45 has been implemented as generally accepted accounting principles applied to all governmental agencies, colleges are going to see how the unfunded portion of the Annual Required Contribution appear as an expense in the current year. As the unfunded liability increases, the college's unrestricted general fund balance will decline. In the case with Antelope Valley College, it is paying approximately \$500,000 of the ARC amount leaving an unfunded liability of \$800,000. The unfunded liability will be reported on the Balance Sheet as an increase in the liability with a corresponding decrease occurring in the Unrestricted General Fund balance. The college has not yet established a plan to address this obligation and therefore does not meet the requirements of the standards (III.D.1.c).

The college has an open budget development process that allows all constituencies to be involved in establishing the college's budget. The largest group involved in budget development process is the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee. This committee reviews and monitors the development of the budget over the life of the budget calendar. Objective information such as the apportionment reports prepared by the State Chancellor's Office is provided to the SPBC so all representative groups can make their own assessments of the assumptions. This is provided by the administration to the constituent groups so that they are well informed of the college's financial position and are active in processes that are used to allocate resources (III.D.1.d).

As cash payments to colleges from the State were deferred, Antelope Valley College participates in a Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) program. In November 2004, a voter-approved general obligation bond, Measure R for \$139 million, was passed and has augmented the College's resources to allow for the renovation and improvement of the facilities of the Lancaster campus and to begin development of a new campus in Palmdale (III.D.2.a).

A summary of the outstanding college supported debt according to the June 30, 2008 audit report is as follows:

The District entered into two loan agreements with the California Energy Commission during 2002 and 2003 to finance energy conservation projects. The original loans were for \$1,696,227 with an interest rate of 3.00%. The balance at June 30, 2009 is \$262,560.

The District entered into a Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan (SERP) with Faculty, Classified, and Unrepresented groups effective July 1, 2008. The District total SERP liability was \$1,935,565 with five (5) equal annual payments of \$387,113. The balance at June 30, 2009 is \$1,161,339.

In addition to the District locally supported debt service, the District also received voter approval for a \$139 million general obligation bond (Measure R) in November 2004. The funds are to be used to allow for the renovation of the Lancaster campus, and begin development of new campus in Palmdale. In April 2005, the District issued General Obligation Bonds, Election of 2004, Series A in the amount of \$30,000,000 with interest rates ranging from 3.0% to 5.0% for the length of issuance. In August 2006, the District issued general obligation refunding bonds in the amount of \$24,336,792 to, with the exception of \$5,105,000, refund the 2004 Series A issue. The bond interest rates range from 3.65% to 4.22% for the length of issuance. In August 2007 the College issued two series of bonds from the 2004 election. Series B, in the amount of \$52,536,256 with interest rates ranging from 5.25% to 5.67% and Series C in the amount of \$56,460,276 with interest rates ranging from 4.00% to 5.63%. As of June 30, 2009 the total 2004 election series A through C principal is \$113,397,154 (III.D.2.a).

The Independent Auditor's Report for the years ending June 30, 2007, 2008, and 2009 note that the College has received an "unqualified" report, that there were no "material weakness(es) identified" although there were "significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weakness", and that the report issued on compliance for major programs was "unqualified." The audit report is submitted to the Board for acceptance. Copies of the audit report are sent to bargaining unit managers and to individuals upon request.

Budget updates are provided to the SPBC during the year. Financial activity reports are sent to managers during the course of the year. The college participates in the Los Angeles County Office of Education Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS) program to meet its immediate cash flow needs. TRANS are short term (less than one year) debt that allows the College to borrow against expected tax receipts which are collected in different amounts over the course of a year. The self study does indicate however, that if needed, the District can borrow from the County Treasury (III.D.2.a and III.D.2.b).

The college participates in three Joint Power Authority (JPA) organizations to manage its risk. The Self Insurance Risk Management Authority (SIRMA) JPA provides one fund for employee health benefits and another for liability and property insurance. The Protected Insurance Program for Schools (PIPS) JPA provides Worker's Compensation coverage. These JPAs are not component units of the institution for financial reporting purposes. The JPAs are governed by boards consisting of a representative from each member district (III.D.2.c).

The Antelope Valley College Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors and is a legal entity separate from the College. However, as funds contributed by the Foundation are significant to the college's financial statements, the Foundation is considered a component unit and the College's financial statements. The Foundation is also independently audited annually by an external auditing firm. The Foundation has received unqualified opinions for the two years ending in December 2008 and 2009. The Foundation's total assets as of June 30, 2009 are \$1,869,793 (III.D.2.e, 2.f).

The Antelope Valley College Associated Student Government (ASO) is an agency fund of the College. The College Bookstore and Cafeteria are enterprise funds. The financial activity for all three is maintained by the College in separate funds of the College. The funds are independently

audited each year and are included in the College's financial statements and annual audit report (III.D.2.e, 2.f).

The College relies primarily on the financial software provided by the PeopleSoft system through the Los Angeles County Office of Education. The system provides the necessary analytical tools (III.D.2.g).

The self study states the institution uses the Strategic Planning and Budget process to ensure that the use of financial resources effectively supports the institution's educational mission. Budget requests are processed through one of five subgroups. Each subgroup prioritizes the input from its area. The results are then reviewed, prioritized and recommended to the Strategic Planning and Budget Council. However, it is not clear how the College establishes its funding priorities. No assessment of previously allocated expenditures has been conducted to determine if the resource allocations have achieved the desired objectives. Additionally, there is no evidence to verify how resources were evaluated and then whether any evaluations were used as a basis for improvement (III.D.3).

**Conclusions:**

Antelope Valley College's financial resources are adequate to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Resources are allocated in a manner that includes broad participation by constituency groups across the college and are allocated in support of the development, maintenance and enhancement of the college's programs and services. There are sufficient resources available to maintain both short term and long term financial stability although the college is lacking a plan to address the long term obligations resulting from Other Post Employment Benefit implementation of Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncement # 45. In summary, Antelope Valley College meets the requirements of Standard III with the exception of development of a plan to address its long term debt resulting from the unfunded liability related to retired employee health benefits earned and vested by qualified retired employees of the college.

**Recommendation # 4**

To comply with the standards, it is recommended that the college, when making its short-range financial plan, e.g. the annual budget of the college, consider its long-range financial obligation to pay the cost of the GASB 45 - Other Post- Employment Benefits (OPEB) as the costs are incurred instead of delaying payment to some future date. Specifically, the college is encouraged to prepare a comprehensive plan to prevent disruption of services offered to students by paying the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) determined using generally accepted accounting principles into an irrevocable trust fund at the amount equal to the actuarially determined Annual Required Contribution (III.D.1.c).

**Standard IV  
Leadership and Governance**

**A. Decision Making Roles and Processes**

**General Observations**

Antelope Valley College has successfully implemented a shared decision making process that is described in the following documents: Blueprint for Planning, the Cycle of Evaluation and the Strategic Planning and Budget Development Process Handbook (Draft – undated). There are several committees established as sub-groups to provide greater access to the number of stakeholders involved in the planning and decision making processes and to provide guidelines to the primary committees of Coordination Council and the Strategic Planning and Budget Development Committee. The college has effectively utilized a continuous self-improvement process motivated in part as the result of a requirement by the Commission that the college develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. The planning process currently in use was developed and implemented in response to the 2004 recommendation. The 2008 Follow-Up Report indicated the recommendation related to planning was implemented. This team’s review of the planning activities showed that the college has made changes to reflect its current practices and has continued to encourage active participation by constituency group representatives in decisions made.

**Findings and Evidence**

There is an effective planning process in place at the college. During interviews with employees in several settings ranging from committee to one-on-one interviews it was apparent the employees were very positive and upbeat about their level of involvement in the college’s decision making processes. Employees stated they felt empowered and knew the manner in which their individual activities made a difference in providing services to the assist students. A survey to establish how the faculty felt about their involvement to “create an environment of empowerment, innovation, and excellence” suggested there was need for more work in this area. The college is planning on conducting another survey to learn more about changes that may be needed to further improve the working environment (IV.A 4.1).

AVC has developed Board policy to define institutional governance. This section introduces the College Coordinating Council, but its role and relationship to other planning groups is not defined. This relationship needs to be clarified to establish if the lines of authority are clear. The Student Learning Committee offers to address the expectations set for the development of student learning outcomes and the assessment of these across the campus, at the course, program and institutional level.

The faculty role at the college has been agreed upon to be the areas known as the 10 + 1 areas that is used in California to ensure that there is faculty involvement in decisions made regarding professional and academic matters. The college and the Faculty Senate have agreed to use legislation approved and known as Assembly Bill 1725, or more commonly, AB 1725 when deciding the appropriate level of involvement in the decision making processes. Although the areas of involvement established in the California legislation are not authoritative when considering the Standards set by the Commission, the roles set by this legislation provides a

consistent reference point that works well in determining what role the faculty serves in the college's decision making processes (IV. A., IV.A.4.,IV.A.2a, IV. A.2.b).

On paper there appears to be collaboration occurring and in interviews team members confirmed there was collaboration occurring however, no evidence to show what happened at them. There is also evidence to suggest that the communication has not always been clear. There seem to be a number of events that bring people together, but it is not clear that productive communications is the outcome of these events (IV.A. 3).

The Self Study references the submission of a substantive change report to reflect the increase in on-line course offerings. This indicates to the team that the college has only recently begun to be involved in on-line instruction or is only now expanding its offerings in a manner that triggered the requirement to submit a substantive change report (IV.A.4). The team did not conduct any follow up work related to the college's substantive change request.

Administrative Procedure 2510, established a requirement that each committee annually review its activities and submit a report to the appropriate reporting body. The inclusion of this procedure as a part of the operational requirements of the college makes having written documentation produced to record what occurred during committee meetings. The team's global assessment of the planning process and record development and retention is that the college meets the minimal level of requirements to comply with the standards however the team also felt it necessary to recommend the college begin capturing the nature and content of committee meetings as early as possible. Without the documentation the college lacks the ability to verify the outcomes of these meetings (IV.A.5).

### **Conclusions**

The college meets the requirements of these standards.

### **Recommendations**

None.

### **Commendation # 2**

The team commends the leadership demonstrated by the individuals holding the following positions:

- The Board of Trustees
- Superintendent/President and the administrators who support him
- The Academic Senate President
- The Classified employee union president
- The Faculty union president

The team attributes the positive college atmosphere and the exemplary levels of cooperation to the leadership of individuals in senior leadership positions at the College.

Participatory decision making has been embraced by Antelope Valley College with the beneficiaries of this decision being the students and the employees who work in an atmosphere of respect and esprit de corps. Regardless of individual problems the college may continue to work on to meet provisions of the standards in different areas, the team members felt it was

important to point out how the atmosphere at the college is an asset that will assist in solving any problem confronting the college.

## **Standard IV: Leadership and Governance**

### **B. Board and Administrative Structure**

#### **General Observations**

Antelope Valley College has a seasoned, committed, and fully functioning Board of Trustees with a positive relationship with the Superintendent/President. The board has formalized the process for updating and revising board policies and administrative procedures since the last accreditation visit in 2004. Also since 2004 the college has evaluated its administrative structure, governance committees, and implemented changes that are viewed as positive by the college community.

#### **Finding and Evidence**

The visiting team confirmed that Antelope Valley College's governing board is of sufficient size and composition with six elected members. Three of the members are officers including president, vice president, and clerk. Members of the board are elected by qualified voters of the district and serve a four year terms. Terms are staggered so that no more with the intent that one half of the trustees shall be elected at each trustee election. The sixth trustee/student trustee is elected for a one year term and has the privilege of casting an advisory vote (IV.B.1).

The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the interest of the college constituents and public interests. The board adheres to a conflict of interest policy (Board Policy 2710) that promotes disclosure of personal conflicts, if any, and encourages board members to refrain from interfering with the impartiality of governing body members. Members are required to act in the best interest of the district and through compliance with the conflict of interest policy are to act for greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution (IV.B, IV.B.1, IV.V.1.a).

The district subscribes to the California Community College Leagues' policy service and has an on-going process for the review and revision of their board policies and administrative policies. Discussion of policies appeared in the minutes of the governance councils of the college and again on the board agendas prior to action being taken by the board. Board Policy 2200 Board Duties and Responsibilities states it is the responsibility of the board to represent the public interest; establish policies that define institutional mission and set prudent, ethical and legal standards for the college operations; hire and evaluate the CEO; delegate power and authority to the chief executive to effectively lead the district, assure fiscal health and stability; monitor institutional performance and educational quality; and advocate and protect the district.

During interviews with evaluation team members, board members demonstrated an understanding of student learning occurring at the college. Board members stated that the presentations at the Board meetings and through regular reports from the president and other administrators was the source of much of their information and that they knew additional detailed information was available whenever they requested it. Board members have worked

with the Superintendent/President to review and improve the board orientation, increase board development, and to improve the board self-evaluation process (IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.f).

The Superintendent/President is the title of the chief executive officer of Antelope Valley College. The Superintendent/President was hired as a result of an open and competitive recruitment process. The appointment was completed in 2004 through an employment contract that currently ends on June 30, 2012. The chief executive officer of Antelope Valley College authority is clearly outlined in Board Policy 6100 with authority to supervise the general business procedures of the district to assure the proper administration of property and contracts; the budget, audit and accounting of funds; the acquisition of supplies, equipment and property; and the protection of assets and persons. The chief executive officer is required to make appropriate periodic reports to the board and keep the board fully advised regarding the financial status of the district (IV.B.1.j).

The Superintendent/President formulates goals from formal and informal interaction with the campus, community and board. These tentative goals are then communicated and constituents are given the opportunity to comment. The annual goals are the basis of the chief executive offers annual evaluation. To some extent, the CEO's goals serve as goals for the Board of Trustees and are somewhat tied to the larger overarching college goals created as part of the college Educational Master Plan. The board members interviewed appeared to have an understanding of the college planning and budget processes and the related roles of the administration and governance committees.

The institution has a defined administrative structure that provides the administrative services necessary to support the main campus and auxiliary sites of Antelope Valley College's mission and purpose. The academic and professional preparation of experience of the leadership team was confirmed through a review of current resumes and transcripts (IV.B.2).

Since the last self study the institution evaluated, changed its administrative structure, and reviewed its board policies (IV.B.2.a). After conversations at the college, the following organization changes were implemented at the college:

- Dean of Instructional Resources and Extended Services

- Director of the Palmdale Center

- Three academic divisions: Math, Science, and Engineering; Health Sciences; and Language Arts.

- Faculty identified the need for faculty department chairs/coordinators

Additionally:

- Title change for Vice President of Business Services to Vice President of Administrative Services more reflective of the scope of responsibility.

- SPBC completed the first staffing plan in June 2007.

- Fully functioning office of human resources and department of institutional research.

- Documented board policies updated and expanded under the California Community College League policy.

- Formation of the Mutual Agreement Council.

Since the last accreditation visit in 2004, the college has increased the use of data in making decisions and allocating resources. Significant effort has been demonstrated toward maturing the program review function and creating a culture of evidence largely due to the high level of support by the Office of Institutional Research. The Director of Institutional Research and Planning reports to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and appears to have access directly to the president. The Director of Institutional Research and Planning is responsible for supporting the data needs of the student learning outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, and program review in addition to providing information for planning. The college community states a high level of satisfaction with the services.

### **Conclusions**

The college is well organized and functioning at a high level of efficiency. Constituents are informed about actions and conditions of the college. Many of the faculty and staff interviewed indicated that over the past few years there has been a shift toward more open dialogue, the promotion of development of a culture of evidence, and the cultivation of a climate to support a higher level of inclusion and participation in decision. The board functions at the policy level and relies on the Superintendent/President to administer the college.

The Board is knowledgeable of the range of duties and obligations assigned to it and as individuals the members continually work to comply with its responsibilities to the district and maintain a positive working relationship with the Superintendent/President. The Board receives regular reports from the Superintendent/President and representatives of the college community about the programs and services offered at the college (IV.B.1; IV.B.2.e).

### **Recommendations**

None.