

# **EVALUATION REPORT**

## **College of San Mateo**

1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard  
San Mateo, California 94402

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited  
College of San Mateo on October 23-25, 2007  
Dr. Marie B. Smith, Chair

College of San Mateo  
Comprehensive Evaluation Visit Team Roster

Monday, October 22—Thursday, October 25, 2007

Dr. Marie Smith  
Former Vice Chancellor, Education  
& Technology  
Los Rios CCD

Ms. Barbara Blanchard  
Dean, Computer Science &  
Information Technology  
American River College

Dr. Celia Barbarena  
Vice President of Student Services  
Hartnell College

Ms. Becky Elam  
Vice President Administrative  
Services  
Riverside College

Mr. Laurence Fischer  
English Instructor  
Diablo Valley College

Paul Gomez  
Trustee  
Chaffey College

Ms. Kimberly Perry  
Vice President of Instruction  
Reedley College

Dr. Steve Reynolds  
Interim Dean, Liberal Arts & Sciences  
College of the Siskiyous

Dr. Mark Rocha  
President  
West Los Angeles College

Dr. Andreea Serban  
Vice Chancellor, Technology & Learning  
Services  
South Orange County CCD

### **III. Summary of the Report**

From October 22 through October 25, an eight-member team representing the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges visited the College of San Mateo for a comprehensive site team evaluation as part of the college's application for reaffirmation of accreditation.

College of San Mateo, established in 1922, is the oldest of three comprehensive community colleges within the San Mateo Community College District. The college is situated on a hill overlooking the city of San Mateo and the peninsula of the San Francisco Bay Area. The campus contains 36 buildings on 153 acres. The college serves a diverse community of approximately 11,000 students and provides a comprehensive array of academic and vocational/occupational programs to serve their academic needs.

The demographic history of the college's service area reveals that it is situated in an area of the San Francisco Bay Area that experienced population decline in the past, is currently stable, but is not expected to increase in the next 20 years. In 1968, the student population was over 17,795 students, in fall 2006 the enrollment was 10,634. This decline in enrollment is attributed to a variety of factors, e.g. the creation of two other colleges in the district, the general population decline, the changing enrollment patterns in higher education, and the proximity of other college districts to name some. CSM is challenged to find an appropriate approach to enrollment management that will chart a course for the future.

The use of planning and data to inform and drive decisions at CSM continues to be a concern. The college has made demonstrable progress since the last accreditation visit by creating a number processes for planning and some fairly recent planning documents. While plans exist, they are not yet fully integrated. Also, in some cases, the plans are missing the requisite data elements to provide for appropriate analysis for decision-making. CSM must act to improve this situation in order to improve its programs and services and institutional effectiveness.

The team was warmly received by the college and was provided with an appropriate team room containing all the materials required to conduct the visit. The team appreciated the assistance of the self-study co-chairs, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, and the president's staff, all of whom answered every request with grace, professionalism, and a smile.

Everyone at CSM was enthusiastic about the chance to discuss the college with the team and went out of their way to assure that the team understood how the college was achieving its goals

to educate students and serve the community. The candor of the college overall was extremely helpful in assisting the team to make a thorough assessment.

As a result of the time spent getting to know and appreciate College of San Mateo, the team wishes to offer the following specific commendations.

### **Commendations**

The college is to be commended for:

1. Its vibrant, enthusiastic, and dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators. The college fosters an extremely high degree of collaboration, cooperation and collegiality.
2. The leadership of the college, beginning with its president for their support of innovation. The team also commends the faculty and staff for embracing that innovative spirit on behalf of students. Specifically, the team recognizes the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Program for creating learning communities, the ePortfolio project, and the Writing Across the Curriculum program.
3. The team commends the leadership of the student body for its spirited participation in the governance of the college and for organizing activities that enrich college life and the co-curricular offerings.
4. The District Information Technology Services is commended for excellent service to the colleges, its support for innovative applications of technology to enhance instruction and services to students, faculty, and staff and its responsiveness to the college community.
5. The district sponsored College Vista housing program which supports the retention of faculty and staff in the high cost region of the Bay Area.

The team analyzed the self study report, examined all other evidence provided by the college, and interviewed college staff, faculty, students, and administration as well as district staff. After thorough examination of all the evidence, the team came to conclusions as to how this college met Accreditation Standards and/or Eligibility Requirements and provides the following recommendations.

### **Recommendations**

1. In order to improve planning, the College should:
  - a. Develop specific, measurable, realistic and time-bound objectives in relation to its stated goals, conduct consistent, systematic, and timely evaluations for all its plans

- based on analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data, and ensure that the results are communicated and understood by college constituencies. Further, in order to promote and sustain a culture of evidence and improve institutional effectiveness, the College should establish and implement a clear, systematic, consistent, and ongoing method of measuring and evaluating its effectiveness in achieving stated institutional performance, and student learning outcomes. (Standards I B.2 through 7)
- b. Integrate and align its various plans and ensure that they are fully implemented (Standards I. B. 2, III. A. 6, III. B. 2.b, III. C. 2).
  - c. Complete its Educational Master Plan expeditiously, no later than fall 2008. In addition, the college must demonstrate that decisions regarding building priorities result from the priorities of the Educational Master Plan. (Standard III.B.2.b)
2. The college should expeditiously complete the development of course, certificate, and degree student learning outcomes and expand the identification of assessment strategies for student learning outcomes, implement the assessment strategies, and use the results of the assessment for continuous quality improvement. This assessment should include quantitative and qualitative data including student success measures that are used for planning, program review, decision-making, resource allocation, and institutional improvement. (Standards II.A.1.a, c, 2.a,b,c,e,f,h,i, A.3, A.6, Eligibility Requirement 10)
3. In order to meet distance education accreditation standards and ACCJC distance education policy, the college must evaluate the educational effectiveness of electronically delivered courses including assessment of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction. As a result of the site visit, it was determined that the college may have several certificates and degrees where 50% or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning. The team recommends that the college notify the Accrediting Commission and submit a substantive change proposal which will validate the program's adherence to the accreditation standards. (Standards II.A.1.b,d, II.B.1, II.B.2, 2.a, II.C.1, II.C.2.c)
4. The team recommends that College of San Mateo utilize data on student achievement across all ethnic groups, design programs and services and assign the necessary resources to improve the retention of all students. (Standards II.B.3, II.B.4)
5. In order to fully meet Standard IIC, the college must complete a comprehensive evaluation of the learning support services provided to include Assistive Technology Center, Biology Computer Lab, Business Microcomputer Lab, Business Students Lab, Chemistry Study Center, Computer and Information Science Lab, English 800 Lab, Foreign Language Center, Integrated Science Lab, Math Resource Center, Multimedia Lab, Nursing Lab, Physical Education Lab, Reading and ESL Center, Speech Lab, and Writing Center. (Standards II.C.1.a, c, II.2.)

6. The team recommends that the district develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes. (Standard III.A.1.c.)
7. In order to ensure the sustainability of its infrastructure, the college must calculate the real costs of facilities ownership, including technology, over the next ten years and then identify a reliable and ongoing revenue stream that will fund the significant increase in the operating budget. (Standard III.B.2.a)
8. The College should establish a systematic, reflective process for, and a regular cycle of evaluation for its governance structures, processes, and committees to ensure that such organizational structuring continues to serve the needs of the College. (Standard IVA5)
9. In order to fully meet Accreditation Standards and improve effectiveness of evaluation in the college and district, it is recommended that
  - a. The board of trustees should regularly evaluate its “rules and regulations” and revise them as necessary. (Standard IV.B.1.e)
  - b. The districts and colleges should collaborate to implement a process to regularly evaluate the delineation of functions and widely communicate those findings in order to enhance the college’s effectiveness and institutional success. (Standard IV.B.3.g)
10. In order to fully meet Standards regarding district evaluation procedures, while the district has clearly defined rules and regulations for the hiring and evaluation of the chancellor, that same clarity of process should be extended to evaluating college presidents. Therefore, the district should develop rules and regulations for the evaluation of college presidents. (Standards IV.B, B.1.j)

## **IV. INTRODUCTION**

The College of San Mateo is a comprehensive community college, the oldest of the three colleges within the San Mateo Community College District. It is located on a hillside campus composed of 36 buildings of various age. The college is undergoing a major facilities expansion and renovation as a result of the successful passage of two facilities bonds by the voters of the district’s service area. Nearby the college, on district land, is an innovative housing complex, built and run by the district to provide affordable housing for faculty and staff. This facility is available to CSM employees as well as other district staff and is a creative approach to the retention of employees in a high cost area of the state. The team visited a developing center of CSM, College of San Mateo Coastside, in the city of Half Moon Bay. That center consists only of two classrooms and a computer lab and will be offering only a limited curriculum that does

not constitute 50 percent of any program at the current time.

The demographics of the college reveal it is a multicultural institution that mirrors its service area population with the exception of Hispanics and Caucasians that are underrepresented in the college as compared to the county's population. The student population has changed significantly since 1990 with the Caucasian population declining from 66 percent to 39 percent and the other ethnic groups increasing significantly, except African-Americans that held at a steady 4%. The ethnicity of the faculty, staff and administration has increased as well, but does not yet mirror the community. The gender composition of the student body is about equal whereas the composition of the employees is majority female.

Most students (43%) attend in the day, 38% at night and almost 19% attend both day and night. Almost 55% of students identify transfer as an educational goal, 11% wish to attain a degree or certificate, 16% have occupational goals, 10% attend for personal enrichment, and another almost 11% are undecided.

The college offers an array of both transfer and occupational-vocational programs that meet students' educational goals. These programs are supported by well-designed student services programs that assist students to be successful. The college is increasing its distance education program to meet student needs and has also created specialized programs to enhance learning such as learning communities, honors, and global studies programs. The college also contains a public safety training center.

## **V. Responses to Recommendations of the Previous Evaluation Team**

### **Recommendation 1: Institutional Planning**

*The college should develop a comprehensive strategic plan that incorporates the results of all campus planning activities.*

The college has made some progress in the area of strategic planning since the last accreditation visit. The college created in 2001 the Strategic Planning Committee, a committee of the College Council, the college's shared governance body. This committee developed the College of San Mateo Strategic Planning Model in 2002. The college has created a strategic plan that includes broad strategic goals and action steps. However, the plan does not articulate related objectives that are specific, measurable, time specific, attainable, and results-oriented. A large number of the action steps are "to explore" various aspects or activities or "to continue" current activities. Without measurable objectives and targets, it is not possible to assess whether the plan is actually making a difference in terms of institutional improvement. As noted in the report of the 2001 visiting team, broad strategic goals help provide a focus

on high priority goals. The addition of action steps has taken the effort a step forward, but the document is still not a full college plan. In addition, the link between the Strategic Plan and the other existing plans is not evident. The college has only partially responded to this recommendation. The college must refine its strategic plan to incorporate objectives that are specific, measurable, time specific, attainable, and results oriented and track its progress towards achieving these objectives through consistent and systematic evaluations based on qualitative and quantitative data. (See 2007 Recommendation 1)

### **Recommendation 2: Integration of Institutional Research, Planning and Evaluation.**

*The college should support the development of a “campus climate of evidence” in which institutional research supports planning and decision-making and yields fuller understandings of both the college and the community it serves.*

The college has a centralized office of institutional research which provides cyclical and ad-hoc reports and information. The dean of articulation and research is now reporting directly to the president. However, the problems identified by the 2001 visiting team are still not fully addressed. It is still not clear how the information and reports provided by the office are subsequently analyzed and used in support of planning and decision making. The college has not developed a set of core indicators of institutional effectiveness that are tied to the Strategic Plan, tracked, analyzed, and reviewed regularly. The college has only partially responded to this recommendation. (See 2007 Recommendation 1)

### **Recommendation 3: Program Review**

*The college should fully implement its self study plan regarding program review. Strong faculty and administration leadership is needed to ensure that all programs participate and do so in a timely manner. Also, a clear pathway needs to be established that links program review recommendations to the budgeting process.*

The college has made significant progress in the implementation of program review for instructional and non-instructional units. The college has established an annual instructional and student services program review approach. The October 9, 2007 update stated that sixty of sixty four instructional programs and all of student services annual program reviews were completed. While on campus, the team found that all academic programs except one had completed program review. In addition, a draft document has been created to provide program review guidance for the president’s office and business services with the goal of implementation during the 2007-08 academic year.

The college states that the budget process is now linked to program review, stating that instructional programs failing to submit program reviews did not receive funding for instructional equipment, nor were they granted full-time faculty positions. The 2006-07 program

review summary provided information by department on their requests for equipment, furniture, human resources, and facilities. The requests are combined, reviewed by deans and vice presidents, and then submitted to the College Council for approval. The current program review model does not contain student success data and is thus not able to provide data for improvement of the program as required by current accreditation Standards. The college has responded to this recommendation as written, but has only partially satisfied the intent of program review as currently interpreted. (See 2007 Recommendation 2)

#### **Recommendation 4: Enrollment Management**

*The college should develop and implement an effective enrollment management plan based on current and projected data about the college service area and students the college can serve. This plan should be addressed in coordination with recommendations relating to institutional planning. The plan should address declining student enrollments, changing demographics and current instructional needs of the community.*

The college has established an Enrollment Management Committee which developed a plan in May 2005. The May 2005 document attempts to provide direction and focus on meeting community and student needs, but it does not address the declining student enrollments and changing demographics. Similar to the Strategic Plan, the Enrollment Management Plan lacks objectives that are specific, measurable, time bound, attainable, and results-oriented. Rather, the objectives are too general and difficult to track in terms of measurable progress. The plan was supposed to have been developed based on data analysis; instead, several of the objectives in the plan call for engaging in data analysis. The college has continued to experience decline in enrollments, which is similar to the trend in place at the time of the 2001 accreditation team visit. It should be noted that the 1995 team also recommended the development of a comprehensive enrollment management plan to deal with the ongoing enrollment decline. While the college has responded by developing a plan, it may not be an effective one since it does not contain reliance on data and its analysis to inform decision making. In addition, although the plan was adopted in 2005, it is just being implemented in the current 2007-08 academic year. The college has not adequately addressed this prior recommendation. (See 2007 Recommendations 1 and 4)

#### **Recommendation 5: Technology Plan**

*The college should develop a long-range technology plan and a mechanism for periodic updating.*

The college created a standing Technology Advisory Committee (TAC). TAC developed a three-year technology plan for 2002-05. TAC has monitored the implementation of the plan through 2005. Team discussions with members of the TAC committee indicated that during 2006-07, the committee has lost momentum due to the departure from the college of the faculty librarian who chaired TAC and led the effort to create the 2002-05 technology plan. Although reference was made to a March 2006 update of the status of the plan, the team

was not provided with an updated version of the document; thus, it was unable to confirm that the implementation status has been reviewed. To date, the extent to which this plan has been implemented is unclear.

Discussions with TAC members have also indicated that the integration between the 2002-05 Technology Plan and the College Strategic Plan has not been achieved. While TAC submitted requests to the College Council based on the plan, TAC has not received a response to those requests. Thus, the 2002-05 Technology Plan has not been effective in driving college resource allocations related to technology. TAC has a new chair in 2007-08, and there are indications that the committee has started to meet regularly again in fall 2007 and intends to review the status of the implementation of the actions outlined in this plan and create a new version for the next three years.

Based on these findings, the team concludes that college did not fully respond to the previous team's recommendation. (See 2007 Recommendations 1, 5, and 7)

### **Recommendation 6: Diversity**

*The college should address the challenges of diversity not simply as a matter of recruitment and affirmative action, but more fully as an issue of campus climate.*

The college has done an excellent job responding to recommendation six from the 2001 accreditation report addressing the challenges of diversity. CSM has developed new mission, vision, and values statements all of which reflect a deep commitment to diversity, and the college has a separate diversity statement endorsing the importance of meeting the diverse needs of the campus community. These statements are well-publicized on the campus and on various critical published documents (e.g. the college catalog) and the college website.

Since 2001, in response to this recommendation, the college has added the President's Lecture Series, formed the College Diversity Advisory Committee, and the Faculty Senate in 2003-2005 has had as one of its goals to update the college's student equity plan.

In addition, the college responded to this recommendation in a number of other ways: it continues annually to send staff members (classified staff, faculty, and administrators) for training at the Museum of Tolerance; there is an active Diversity in Action Group (DIAG) which coordinates regular Campus Conversations on Diversity and are part of the President's Speakers Series on Diversity. Also, members of the district's Office of Human Resources have gone through the diversity awareness training program and awareness of issues of diversity appears to infuse the entire college community, and since the last self study, the college has increased the number of employees of color. The college has successfully met this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 7: Training related to employee evaluation procedures**

*The district should conduct regular trainings for supervisors of classified staff and meet the obligation to initiate and guide the staff evaluation processes so that they are timely and consistent, and the college administration should follow through in conducting those evaluations.*

The college has made significant progress on the 2001 recommendation that there be improvement in the evaluation procedures of classified staff in order to make their evaluations more timely and consistent. Since 2001, the district has updated its database records on classified staff and developed a simplified evaluation form, pared down from fifteen pages to two. Managers are sent timely reminders of who needs to be evaluated. The 2007 self study indicates general satisfaction with the evaluation process (64% deem it “fair and appropriate”). Approximately 50% of classified evaluations are being “completed in a timely manner” this year, and because the college has instituted a bi-annual calendar for evaluation, all classified employees will be evaluated by next year. This recommendation has been satisfied.

### **Recommendation 8: Financial Resources**

*The college should develop a long range financial plan (two to three years). The plan needs to reflect a realistic estimate of enrollment and estimate of resources. This planning should take place in coordination with the college’s overall planning activities.*

During the last six years, College of San Mateo has experienced enrollment growth of 111 full time equivalent students (FTES) or 1.2%. During this same six-year period, the operational expenses for CSM have dramatically outpaced enrollment growth resulting in financial hardship. The CSM ending balance for the fiscal year 2006-07 was zero (\$0). This included a one-time augmentation from the District of \$1,000,000.

CSM has experienced a budget crisis, stabilization funding, and relatively low enrollment growth since the last accreditation visit. This combined with turnover in key financial officer positions is cited as reasons why this recommendation was not implemented by the 2002 Interim Report or 2004 Mid-term Report. Beginning in early 2006, the development of a long-range financial plan began. A committee comprised of District and CSM representatives, including faculty, convened with the charge of developing a resource allocation model that included a long-range financial planning component. This allocation model was used as the basis for developing the 2007-08 final budget. The resource allocation model heightened the negative fiscal impact of the enrollment decline at CSM.

As a part of the ongoing assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the resource allocation model, the committee that developed the model built in a periodic review to analyze the impact of the allocation model and to make recommendations for improvement if needed. A long-range financial plan was presented to the college President's Cabinet in early summer 2007. This resource allocation model will continue to be used to project the financial impact of changing enrollment patterns in three-year increments and for financial decisions in the future. Consequently, if CSM enrollments continue to decline, the resource allocation model will reduce the CSM budget to reflect the decline.

Since the last accreditation visit in 2001, College of San Mateo has made progress in the area of strategic planning. In developing strategic objectives, the Strategic Planning Committee has attempted to link the formal planning to prioritized goals for funding consideration through the budget development process. Since the resource allocation model is relatively new, it has not been evaluated or assessed for effectiveness or resulting process improvement. The college has satisfied the majority of this recommendation, but the usefulness of this financial planning model is yet to be determined. (See 2007 Recommendation 1)

## **IV. Eligibility Requirements**

### **1. Authority**

College of San Mateo is a public two-year college operating under the authority of the San Mateo Community College District and its 5-member elected Board of Trustees. The college is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

### **2. Mission**

The team confirmed that the college developed its current mission statement in 2001, which was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2007. The mission statement contains all the information specified in the Eligibility Requirements and is used by the institution to guide its actions.

### **3. Governing Board**

The governing board is composed of five members, elected at large, and one student member. The team confirmed that the governing board makes policy for the college and exercises oversight of its operations through its delegated authority to the Chancellor and the President. The team found evidence that the board is responsible in its duties to ensure the quality, integrity and financial stability of the college as well as to provide a quality educational program.

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

The chief executive officer of the College of San Mateo, appointed in January, 2007, has the primary responsibility to provide leadership to the institution.

#### **5. Administrative Capacity**

The team determined that the college has sufficient administrative staff, all adequately prepared and experienced, to operate the college.

#### **6. Operational Status**

The team certifies that the College of San Mateo is fully-operational with students actively pursuing degree and certificate programs.

#### **7. Degrees**

80% of College of San Mateo programs lead to associate in arts or science degrees. A majority of CSM students, over 50%, are enrolled in these programs. The remaining students are either undecided, have a certificate goal, or are taking individual courses for enrichment. The majority of students (55%) report a goal of transfer upon entry to the college.

#### **8. Educational Programs**

The team certifies that the College of San Mateo offers a range of degree and certificate programs that are consistent with its mission and delivered in a manner conventional to community colleges and consistent with Eligibility Requirements. All associate degree programs are two years in length.

#### **9. Academic Credit**

College of San Mateo awards academic credit in a manner conventional for community colleges and consistent with accepted good practice in institutions of higher education as well as Title V of the California Code of Regulations.

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

College of San Mateo accurately described that it is currently in the process of defining and will publish student learning outcomes for each of its departments and programs as they are defined. The assessment of student learning outcomes occurs in some programs but has not started in others. Thus, the team believes that the college is in the development stage of fully meeting this eligibility requirement.

## **11. General Education**

College of San Mateo incorporated general education units (28 to 34) in its degree programs. The breadth of the offerings covers the topical areas required in accreditation standards. The graduation requirements of the college include mathematics and writing competencies. Since 2006 new general education courses are required to have student learning outcomes and be consistent with the institutional learning outcomes adopted in 2006. The pre-existing general education classes, however, may or may not contain learning outcomes, since the college is uneven in its progress with course and program level student learning outcomes. Thus, team believes the college minimally meets this eligibility standard and must complete all general education course student learning outcomes to be fully compliant.

## **12. Academic Freedom**

The college maintains an atmosphere of inquiry and academic freedom which supports the free exchange of ideas, knowledge, and disparate viewpoints of its faculty and staff.

## **13. Faculty**

The college employs a sufficient core of qualified faculty whose responsibilities include development, delivery, and support of academic programs and services. Faculty responsibilities are defined in job descriptions and the faculty handbook and include responsibilities for development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning.

## **14. Student Services**

The team reviewed the student services provided by the college and found them to be consistent with the needs of the student body and the college's mission statement. Student services was first to develop student learning outcomes for all of its services and is currently involved in assessment of those outcomes.

## **15. Admissions**

The College of San Mateo admission policies are published in the catalog and are consistent with the college mission by specifying the qualifications of students for programs.

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

The team verified that the College of San Mateo has a variety of information and learning resources to support its mission and instructional programs. Technological services are provided by both college and district. The library collection of print materials is adequate and is augmented by a district-wide contractual agreement with the Peninsula Library system which allows access to all public libraries in the county. There are a variety of computer

laboratories available throughout the campus as well as wireless hot spots for internet access. The college did not assess the learning laboratories and other learning support services in the self study, thus the team was unable to completely assess their sufficiency.

## **17. Financial Resources**

The college's funding base comes from the State of California and is augmented by a variety of other sources such as grants, federal and auxiliary funds. Budget development takes place at the district and college and has been recently redesigned with a new funding model, now in its first year of implementation. Although the college has suffered enrollment declines, the district has provided additional funds to cover any deficit and also maintains a healthy contingency reserve.

## **18. Financial Accountability**

The district and its colleges undergo annual certified audits by an external auditing firm using generally accepted audit standards. Any exceptions are responded to in a written report to the auditors and also to the Board of Trustees.

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

The College of San Mateo has developed numerous processes for planning and evaluation. The team verified through review of documents and interviews that college staff and faculty have regular and meaningful avenues of participation in these processes. The team also verifies the college's own description of the current state of planning and evaluation as lacking integration and means of assessment of effectiveness. While there are many planning processes, they are not organized in a way that provides data to make decisions regarding improvement. There is no systematic cycle of planning that has been tested nor are a sufficient number of student learning outcomes in place for courses, programs, and services to provide an assessment of student achievement of educational goals and student learning. The college will need to become proficient in its integrated planning processes before it will be able to provide sustainable and continuous quality improvement and enable the college to fully meet this eligibility requirement.

## **20. Public Information**

The College of San Mateo published a catalog which contains all of the requisite information to satisfy this eligibility requirement. The college also publishes a schedule of classes in print form and on the web which contains this information.

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

The Board of Trustees has provided documented assurance that the College of San Mateo adheres to the requirements, Standards and policies of the Accreditation Commission and describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes it makes and discloses information required by the Commission.

## **STANDARD I: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS**

### **Standard IA Mission**

#### **General Observations**

Overall, the response to Standard I shows involvement from faculty, staff and administrators and a reasonable attempt to grapple with the complexities of the standard. Each substandard is addressed in order, and, in most cases, references are cited appropriately in support of statements made. The college asserts that it has been actively using its Mission Statement to guide the decision-making and the team found evidence to support that statement.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The College has a Mission Statement along with a Vision Statement, Values Statement, and Diversity Statement that are intended to guide policies, procedures, and daily practices. The most recent version of the Mission Statement was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2007 and published in the College Catalog and on the college's Web site. However, the College web site indicates that the Mission Statement was revised by the College Council on February 2, 2005 and it does not indicate the approval by the Board of Trustees in 2007. (Standards (I.A.1 through 4).

#### **Conclusions**

The college has a board-approved mission statement that guides its development of programs and services. The statement is regularly reviewed and revised. The college meets the Standard. It is suggested that the college assure that all of the mechanisms used to publicize the mission provide consistent information.

#### **Recommendation**

None

## **Standard I.B: Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

### **General Observations**

Since the last accreditation visit, the college has developed a program review process which is a major indicator of effectiveness for academic programs and services. Most, but not all of the programs and services employ this tool, primarily for resource allocation. CSM has made progress on identifying student learning outcomes at all levels, but the process is not yet complete. The lack of consistent and systematic use of data and analyses to inform and guide planning and decision-making at the College is a problem identified by the 1995 and 2001 teams as well.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College views the program review process at the departmental and unit level as the most important avenue for dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. All academic and student support services undergo annual program review. After review of the program review process, the team suggests that the dialogue should become broader in scope to include student learning outcomes and student success indicators that are measurable and observable at the institutional level and should permeate the entire college. This includes more frequent, substantive dialogue about the quality of student learning and institutional effectiveness among and between faculty, staff and administration within and across different divisions of the College. A timeline should be developed for establishing student learning outcomes for all courses, programs and degrees. While the program review process is embedded at the College, it does not use qualitative and quantitative data to improve effectiveness of programs and services (Standards I.B.1, 2).

The College has provided opportunities for dialogue about student learning outcomes through the shared governance committee structure. The team reviewed minutes and visited several committees while on site and found it was not always clear to what extent the other groups engage consistently in a dialogue about improvement of student learning outcomes and institutional processes. One notable exception is the College Assessment Committee, which is in the midst of an energetic dialog about student learning outcomes and assessment. The process of identifying SLOs at the course, program, and degree levels at the College is uneven. Assessment strategies are not yet in place across the campus. It can be said that CSM is in the developmental stage of SLOs according to the Commission's Rubric for Institutional Effectiveness. Other planning activities are just being implemented (Enrollment Management Plan) or will be in the future (Educational Master Plan). There are numerous opportunities for dialog regarding continuous improvement. In fact, the challenge for this college is not to encourage the dialog about improvement of programs and services, but to provide clear action based on that dialog. (Standards I.B.1, B.4)

The College has made progress in the planning area. The College Strategic Plan for 2006-08 represents

progress compared to the previously used document, “On Going Ambitions and Institutional Goals.” However, as noted above, the plan does not articulate related objectives that are specific, measurable, time specific, attainable and results oriented. A large number of the action steps are “to explore” various aspects or activities or “to continue” current activities. Without measurable objectives it is difficult to assess whether the plan is actually making a difference in terms of institutional improvement. As noted in the report of the 2001 visiting team, broad strategic goals help provide a focus on high priority goals. The addition of action steps has taken the effort a step forward, but the document is still not a full college plan. Some of the actions are to create more plans (plan for planning) or refer to plans that do not yet exist (such as the Educational Master Plan). The college needs to refine its strategic plan to incorporate objectives that are specific, measurable, time bound, attainable and results oriented and track its progress towards achieving these objectives through regular evaluations which are based on analysis of qualitative and quantitative data (Standard I.B.3). While limited planning exists at the college, CSM has not yet achieved the development level on the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness.

The College has also developed an Enrollment Management Plan (May 2005), a Technology Plan (2002-05), a Facilities Master Plan (2001), and an FTES Growth Plan (2005-07). Since one of the main goals of an enrollment management plan is to increase enrollments, having both an Enrollment Management Plan and an FTES Growth Plan seems redundant. The Enrollment Management Plan should be updated and merged with the FTES Growth Plan and incorporate realistic, specific, measurable, and time bound objectives. More importantly, these plans should be tracked and evaluated regularly and implemented fully. At the time of the visit in October 22-25, 2007, the Enrollment Management Committee has not met at all during the fall 2007 term. The Enrollment Management plan has not been evaluated, and the College does not have a clear and current set of enrollment management objectives and associated strategies.

The 2004 Midterm Report noted that the College has not completed formal written plans for human resources and facilities. The report also noted that the development of a Human Resources plan was put on hold in 2003 due to a district wide hiring freeze and that the College would revisit such a plan in spring 2004. The self study notes that “Human resource planning is fully integrated with institutional planning through the program review process. While no formal written human resource plan exists, the college has a systematic process in place to help determine faculty and classified needs. While program reviews are valuable avenues for identifying unit level staffing needs, overall strategic institutional directions should be aligned with identification of associated human as well as other resources, as needed. In addition, a well developed human resource plan takes into account overall service area trends in terms of demographic, economic, and housing trends to determine the long-range institutional needs. The College would be well served by developing and implementing a comprehensive human resources plan. (Standard I.B.3)

The evaluation of the various existing plans is inconsistent, very limited, and not based on measurable performance indicators. The Office of Articulation and Research provides various reports and data. It is unclear how the data is being analyzed and subsequently used to evaluate the progress towards the goals and objectives included in the various plans, particularly in relationship to student achievement and student learning outcomes. The report on the 2005-06 college goals is not an evaluation based on data and analysis. Rather it is a brief narration of activities, some that are routine in a college such as “Monitor UC and CSU transferable course offerings so that they continue to be current and relevant” and “Continue to offer college-sponsored events and activities that focus on diversity.” The 2006-07 progress report towards the college goals is a list of very cursory and short sentences related to some actions that were taken without any analysis or discussion about their impact or outcomes. (Standards I.B.2, I.B.5, I.B.6, and I.B.7)

The College does not have a set of core indicators of effectiveness to gage the overall progress of the institution. Nor does it have a clear institutional research agenda to support and inform the various plans. Most of the research is ad-hoc and reactive rather than proactive. The Dean of Articulation and Research does not have a clear direction for inquiry into more analytical questions. Discussions with college administrators and the College Council indicate that the College acknowledges that much more work needs to be done in this area in order to meet the standard.

### **Conclusions**

The College only partially meets standard IB. While progress has been made in developing a College Strategic Plan and in attempting to integrate the various plans, there is still much work to be done to achieve a coherent and integrated planning approach based on appropriate data and analyses. The evaluation of these plans occurs in an unstructured fashion, it is mostly anecdotal, without a formal evaluation report being produced. The Strategic Plan is the only plan for which an annual status report is being produced. However, the Annual Report is a listing of activities or actions without associated measurable indicators or a sense of how far from achieving the stated goals the College is or what the desired level of success to be achieved is. The use of evidence throughout the campus and various programs is uneven and unorganized. Institutional research continues to not be integrated fully and consistently with planning and evaluation.

### **Recommendations**

1. In order to improve planning, the College should:
  - a. Develop specific, measurable, and realistic and time-bound objectives in relation to its stated goals, conduct consistent, systematic, and timely evaluations for all its plans, and its program review process, based on analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data, and ensure that the results are communicated and understood by

college constituencies. Further, in order to promote and sustain a culture of evidence and improve institutional effectiveness, the College should establish and implement a clear, systematic, consistent, and ongoing method of measuring and evaluating its effectiveness in achieving stated institutional performance, and student learning outcomes (I. B.2, I. B.3, I. B. 4, I. B. 5, I. B.6, I. B.7).

- b. The College should integrate and align its various plans and ensure that they are fully implemented (I. B. 2, III. A. 6, III. B. 2.b, III. C. 2).
- c. The college needs to complete its Educational Master Plan expeditiously, no later than fall 2008. In addition, the college must demonstrate that decisions regarding building priorities result from the priorities of the Educational Master Plan. (Standard III.B.2.b)

## **STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **A. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

#### **General Observations**

The college's programs address the goals of the mission, values, and diversity of the college and the community, providing a wide range of courses, programs, and degrees. The college meets the educational needs of its students through both traditional and less traditional means including online and televised courses, learning communities, study abroad, the Middle College program, and by offering courses at the new CSM Coastside location. The college provides instructional support through a variety of labs and centers, many of which are discipline specific, as well as through Disabled Students Programs and Services. The college identifies a planning agenda to identify ways to strengthen distance learning, Honors, and Global Studies programs. It is recommended that this planning agenda includes a timeline for identifying, implementing and assessing the strategies for each. (Standards IIA.1.a, b, II.A.2.d)

Faculty have a central role in curriculum design, identification of student learning outcomes, course evaluation and the establishment of programs. The Committee on Instruction, a committee of the Academic Senate, approved a revised course outline form to include a section on student learning outcomes (spring 2005), and the Academic Senate approved a revised instructional program review document which includes a section on student learning outcomes that became effective in fall 2006. The faculty are carefully hired and well-suited to teach the wide variety of courses and programs that the college offers. A Center for Scholarship on Teaching and Learning has been recently established to support the integrated learning initiative that encompasses individual scholarly research focused on pedagogy such as Writing Across the Curriculum, learning communities, and e-portfolios. (Standards II.A.1.c, II.2.b, c)

The vocational programs are designed to prepare students for employment in specific occupations. This is accomplished through advisory committee input, faculty expertise, and outside certifications. The college identifies two planning agendas for this standard component, and it is recommended that these be strengthened to an action-oriented plan that includes a timeline for development, implement and assessment. (Standards II.A.4, 5)

The college represents itself accurately, clearly and consistently to the community in regards to courses, programs, program and course cancellation, transfer-of-credit policy, and, in general, all policies and philosophies. This information is communicated in the course catalog, on the web site, and via communication with faculty, counselors, and staff. (Standards II.A.6.a,b,c)

The college publishes policies on academic freedom and responsibility and student academic honesty in the college catalog, schedule of classes, and faculty handbook. (Standards II.A.7.a,b)

### **Findings and Evidence**

Enrollment in distance education courses increased 50 percent between 2001-2002 and 2005-2006. The retention and completion rates for distance education courses are less than that for face-to-face courses. The college utilizes three different platforms for managing on line courses. There is a Center for Teaching and Learning that provides faculty training on the development of on line courses. The Committee on Instruction separately approves distance education courses and includes an assessment of how information is delivered in a manner that is appropriate for the course and communication methods between instructor and student. Since there is no system for evaluating any aspect of on-line education from a student, faculty, or administration perspective, it would be difficult for the institution to assess whether these courses meet the mission of the institution or are appropriate to the needs of its students. The team agrees with the college stated planning agenda that there is a need to identify ways to strengthen distance learning. (Standards II.A.1.a,b)

According to the October 2007 update, the college has identified student learning outcomes for 369 of 1041 courses and 42 departments have developed department-level student learning outcomes. Programs are evaluated through an annual program review process that includes an analysis of program goals, student learning outcomes, enrollment data, curriculum recommendations, and projected needs in the areas of personnel, instructional materials, equipment, software, and facilities. The term “program” is used synonymously with department. A web site has been created where course and department student learning outcomes are posted. The college has developed competency standards for degrees and certificates which are published in the catalog. There is no evidence that a process for identifying and assessing student learning outcomes for certificates and degrees has been identified. Therefore, the college can be said to only partially meet these standard components. (Standards II.A.2.b,e,f,h,i)

In accordance with ACCJC guidelines, a program review consists of a description of programs and/or services as they exist, an evaluation of the sufficiency of them, planning for any needed improvement, implementation of those plans, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of any actions taken in achieving the desired results. Program review also evaluates the way in which student enrollment, student progress, and student learning are changing over time. The ACCJC guidelines delineate the type of data that should be part of this process which includes enrollment, course completion, retention, persistence, and success beyond college such as graduation, transfer, and job placement. The college's program review document includes only enrollment data, and, therefore, does not meet the ACCJC guidelines on program review. The ACCJC guidelines further state that the plans for improvement developed as a result of the program review process should be integrated with institutional planning. The team found no evidence that this integration was occurring. (Standards II.A.2,2.e, III.D.1)

The college has identified five institutional student learning outcomes each of which has two to four components. The college is in the process of completing a matrix whereby faculty are cross linking course student learning outcomes to the 15 institutional student learning outcomes. This analysis will be used to validate these 15 learning outcomes. In addition, there are student learning outcomes identified for each of the nine general education graduation requirements. The number of outcomes range from four to eleven per general education category. It is unclear how these student learning outcomes are integrated into course or institutional student learning outcomes, how they are assessed, or how this assessment is used to evaluate progress made towards achieving the outcomes. (Standards II.A.2.b, II.A.3.a,b,c)

The college's certificates and degrees are listed in the 2007-2008 college catalog and include the discipline course requirements, information about general education courses, and, as appropriate, transfer information. The college catalog does not describe the purpose, content or expected student learning outcomes. The college provided course syllabi, 50% of which had different student learning outcomes from those contained in the official course outline of record. The team agrees with the college's assessment that this standard is only partially met. (Standard II.A.6)

## **Conclusions**

The college only partially meets Standard IIA. The college offers a comprehensive educational program that includes developmental, degree-applicable, transfer, and occupational courses and programs which are delivered in a variety of instructional modalities. All of those interviewed expressed a great deal of satisfaction and pride with the programs and instructional support services provided at the college. The recently created Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning is emerging as a vibrant means by which faculty explore methodologies to enhance effectiveness. While progress has been made in the development of course and department student learning outcomes, there is still much work to be done in expanding this effort to include

the identification of certificate and degree student learning outcomes as well as the identification of assessment strategies for student learning outcomes, implementation of the assessment strategies, and the use of the results of the assessment for continuous quality improvement. The recently concluded annual program review process had nearly 100% participation by the instructional departments. The assessment of data should be expanded to include student success measures. In addition, the improvement goals developed as a result of the program review need to more explicitly integrated into the overall institutional planning process.

## **Recommendations**

2. The college should expeditiously complete the development of course, certificate, and degree student learning outcomes and expand the identification of assessment strategies for student learning outcomes, implement the assessment strategies, and use the results of the assessment for continuous quality improvement. This assessment should include quantitative and qualitative data including student success measures that are used for planning, decision-making, resource allocation, and institutional improvement. (Standards IIA.1.a.c, IIA.2.a,b,c,e,f, h, i, IIA.3, IIA.6, Eligibility Requirement 10)

3. In order to meet distance education accreditation standards and ACCJC distance education policy, the college must evaluate the educational effectiveness of electronically delivered courses including assessment of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction. As a result of the site visit, it was determined that the college may have several certificates and degrees where 50% or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning. The team recommends that the college notify the Accrediting Commission and submit a substantive change proposal which will validate the program's adherence to the accreditation standards. (Standards IIA.1b,d, II.B.1,II.B.2a, II.C.1, IIC.2.c)

## **B. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **General Observations**

The institution offers comprehensive services suited to the needs of its students. All of the services have assigned leads for quality assurance. Comprehensive services are offered at the main campus including those for special populations such as students who are low-income, under-prepared for college, student with disabilities, and high school students enrolled in the Middle College High School. Basic support services are offered at the Half Moon Bay extension.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The main vehicles for evaluating the quality of the student services are: program review and student surveys. A program review template was designed. Every unit fills this template to

assure the uniformity of all of the program review reports. Each unit addresses the questions in this template as it best fits each unit's mission and objectives. Needs identified for operating resources through program review are presented through the President's Cabinet. Needs for counseling faculty positions are presented and prioritized at dean's meetings. The Budget Subcommittee, a division of College Council, will begin to review these requests so that they go through the budgeting process. While survey research is utilized to assess student satisfaction, data that defines the needs of the current population is not utilized for program improvement. It was discussed at various forums and through various interviews that environmental scans will be utilized for program improvement. It was also stated at various forums and interviews that programs that address the needs of low income, under-prepared students, are under-funded and that this needs to be corrected. (Standard II.B.1)

Publications are accurate and user friendly. These include the web-site, the catalog, the schedule, and various brochures. (Standard II.B.2)

The Dean of Articulation developed a student on-line survey, the results of which he distributes to the student services units. Examples were given as to how these results are utilized for program improvement. When students declared through survey that they wished to have more on-line services, the units responded by expanding the number of services offered on line including all counseling, federal financial aid and fee waiver applications. EOP&S students can submit their required monthly progress report, on-line. An on-line, early-alert system has been developed and is beginning to be utilized yielding about 200 referrals made to counseling by faculty who have utilized this service. Because of referrals received through early alert, EOP&S students who were not doing well academically were sent a letter regarding EOP&S tutoring services available to them. Electronic advising is available to all students following a model established at a sister college. Other services offered on-line are: graduation application, petition for re-instatement, and transcript requests. (Standard II.B.3a)

There are ample opportunities for students to exercise civic responsibilities, such as, student life activities, intercollegiate sports, service learning through CSM Connects, learning communities and Co-op education. Student Government sponsors activities that challenge students to develop, evaluate, and coordinate co-curricular offerings. The Health Center provides various services that support the students' physical and mental health. (Standard II.B.3.b.)

Counseling services are offered in a variety of centers targeting students with special needs as well as mainstream students. Services are provided to clarify educational goals, stay on a transfer path, motivate, and support students in academic difficulty, and to add "above and beyond" services to students who are low income and under-prepared for college. Program review and student surveys are the main vehicles for evaluation. Through these evaluative tools, the college identified that the needs of evening students are not being fully met. The team agrees with the college's planning agenda that the needs of evening students should be addressed.

Students who respond to student surveys express a great deal of satisfaction with all of the services; however, the self-study and interviews declared that not many students participate. To elicit a higher level of response from students, an electronic method of surveying students called GUA e-mail is being utilized in fall 2007. Through this system, students receive an e-mail indicating that their opinions are requested regarding services. This approach is operational only with students who have submitted their e-mail address and who update them. The appropriate lead persons need to track the results of this new initiative and adopt the appropriate measures to collect more student responses. The team interviewed dozens of students during the visit. None of them expressed dissatisfaction with the services received, and some of them were enthusiastic about the good quality of the services provided. (Standard II.B.3.c)

The Diversity in Action group sponsors programs and events that promote an appreciation for diversity. In the past "Rising Scholars," a Learning Community, was created to increase the access and success of students from multi-cultural backgrounds. This learning community has dwindled because of the leader of this effort is no longer available. This learning community followed the design of the Puente programs. However, there is a re-kindled effort in expanding learning communities, such as the one developed for athletes. (Standard II.B.d.)

The basic skills initiative statewide is generating campus wide dialogue on the low level of attainment of basic skills students, including those who matriculate at the ESL level. A committee to address the needs of this diverse student group is in the process of development. While a plan to address student access and success is not fully developed, students participated in focus groups to identify barriers to student access and success. This is a laudable effort and the college should consider how to routinely collect this data and analyze it in order to meet the needs of students at risk. (Standard II.B.3.c,d)

Placement instruments used are reviewed and evaluated. Electronic methods of assessment are making its progression towards full implementation. Interviews revealed electronic methods of assessment, such as Compass and Accuplacer, are being considered for full implementation. (Standard II.B.3.e.)

Student records are kept securely stored in micro-film or in the Banner database. Procedures are followed to allow access to records as requested by students following FERPA guidelines. (Standard II.B.3.f)

Student Services SLOs are clearly stated. Each unit uses a template that describes clearly and concisely the skills and abilities that students learn while participating in the service as well as measures of success indicating that the student can demonstrate these knowledge and abilities. (Standard II.B.4)

## **Conclusions**

The college offers a wide array of student services to help students achieve their goals. Most of the students, faculty, and staff interviewed are satisfied with the quality and level of services provided. As revealed in the self-study and verified lately through interviews, a small percentage of students return evaluation surveys. The college needs to take steps to increase the number of students who participate in the evaluation of its services. The self-study indicated that evening students expressed an interest in seeing a wider variety of services. It is suggested that the college explore ways to serve this population.

Student services led the college in creating student learning outcomes for its services and programs, and several programs are utilizing assessment to improve their services. Program review for each unit is completed yearly.

While survey research is utilized to assess student satisfaction, community needs and student success data are not utilized for program improvement or to address the needs of underprepared students. In order to address the retention of students and improve the programs that serve them, student services should enrich its data sources to include environmental scan data plus its own data on student needs to make program improvements. Additionally, the plan should have measurable outcomes and timetables that would retool the institution to search for new students or to retain the current population.

## **Recommendation**

4. The team recommends that College of San Mateo utilize data on student achievement across all ethnic groups, design programs and services, and assign the necessary resources to improve the retention of all students. (Standard II.B.3, II.B.4)

## **C. LIBRARY AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **General Observations**

The College of San Mateo library offers a range of services including print and non-print materials, on-line databases and resources, e-books, microfilm/microfiche, audiovisual materials, reference desk, open-access computers, and a computer instructional classroom. The library participates in the Federal Depository Library Program and is a member of the Peninsula Library System. Library cataloging and circulation is supported by Innovative Interfaces' Millennium database. (Standard II.C.1.a,e)

The process for approving new courses includes a review by library faculty to ensure that the library's acquisitions support the curriculum and student learning. The library faculty have made

efforts to engage classroom faculty in the review of existing resources and the identification of new resources. This effort has met with minimal success with only 12 faculty participating in the activity conducted in spring 2006. The library faculty should work with the library advisory committee to renew these efforts so that resources are provided of sufficient quantity, currency and variety. (Standards II.C.1.a; C.2)

One of the college's institutional student learning outcomes is the ability of students to analyze information, reason critically and creatively, and formulate ideas/concepts carefully and logically from multiple perspectives and disciplines. The library supports this institutional student learning outcome by providing class and faculty orientations, online tutorials, and individual instruction by appointment. The library faculty teach seven different information competency courses all of which transfer to the California State University system. One of the courses is offered as part of a learning community. (Standard II.C.1.b)

### **Findings and Evidence**

The college identified staffing, age and sufficiency of the print collection, areas for students to meet and study, access for students with disabilities, completeness of the online catalog and hours of operation as areas of concern. There was a district Library Technology Plan which covered the time period 2001-2005. An updated plan incorporating the goals and student learning outcomes from the annual program review process should be developed. An assessment of the prior plan should be conducted as part of the development process for the updated plan. (Standard II.C.1.a,c)

Since the last accreditation visit in 2001, the college has moved from a centralized system of providing learning support services to a decentralized system. Learning support services are provided in a variety of labs and centers and include Assistive Technology Center, Biology Computer Lab, Business Microcomputer Lab, Business Students Lab, Chemistry Study Center, Computer and Information Science Lab, English 800 Lab, Foreign Language Center, Integrated Science Lab, Math Resource Center, Multimedia Lab, Nursing Lab, Physical Education Lab, Reading and ESL Center, Speech Lab, and Writing Center. The college failed to assess these labs and centers. (Standard II.C.1.a,c, C.2.)

The library program is evaluated through an annual program review process that includes an analysis of program goals, student learning outcomes, enrollment data, and projected need in the areas of personnel, instructional materials, equipment, software, and facilities. As part of gathering data to be included in the program review, a touch-screen survey was installed near the library reference desk. The library has only recently developed student learning outcomes and identified the need to design appropriate assessment measures. (Standard II.C.2)

## **Conclusions**

The college partially meets Standard IIC. The college should expand the identification of assessment strategies for program review, implement the assessment strategies, and use the results of the assessment for continuous quality improvement. This assessment should include quantitative and qualitative data that is used for planning, decision-making, continuous program improvement and resource allocation. (Standard II.C.2)

## **Recommendation**

5. In order to fully meet Standard IIC, the college must complete a comprehensive evaluation of the learning support services provided to include Assistive Technology Center, Biology Computer Lab, Business Microcomputer Lab, Business Students Lab, Chemistry Study Center, Computer and Information Science Lab, English 800 Lab, Foreign Language Center, Integrated Science Lab, Math Resource Center, Multimedia Lab, Nursing Lab, Physical Education Lab, Reading and ESL Center, Speech Lab, and Writing Center. (Standard II.C.1.a,c,II.2.)

## **STANDARD III: RESOURCES**

### **A. Human Resources**

#### **General Observations**

The human resource functions of College of San Mateo are a combination of both shared functions and primary ones held at either the college or the district. The primary district functions are the development of policies and procedures and acting as the custodian of records. The college has primary responsibility for the hiring and evaluation of faculty, implementation of policies and practices involving equity and diversity, professional development and, integrating human resource planning with institutional planning. All other human resource functions are shared between the college and the district.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The college demonstrates strength in hiring qualified faculty, staff, and administrators, utilizing job descriptions related to the college mission. The attention to equity and diversity in personnel procedures is evident and practiced in the daily life of the college. (III.A.1.a,b, III.A. 2.)

In addition, the college has responded to addressing the challenges of diversity in employment, treatment of students and staff, and developing a variety of programs related to diversity as documented in some detail under “response to previous recommendations” above. The team verified, through review of documents and interviews of faculty, staff and students that there is

an atmosphere of respect and fairness that is pervasive in the institution. The college has done an excellent job in creating a supportive climate for diversity in all its forms. (Standards III.A.4.a,b,c)

Personnel policies and procedures, developed and implemented at the district level, are available for public review. The team verified that these policies are fairly and consistently administered. Personnel records are maintained in a secure and confidential manner, and employees may access their files. (Standard III.A.3.a,b)

While the college keeps demographic and other diversity data and uses it to inform its staffing decisions, the district collects similar data, but does not analyze it. It is suggested that both the college and the district revisit this situation and find ways to analyze and use its own historical hiring data to inform the decision-making of the district. (Standard III.A.4.b)

At this point, faculty and others directly responsible for achieving SLOs are not evaluated using those SLOs, an accreditation standard since 2002. Currently, such an evaluation is not contained within the evaluation portion of the district-wide collective bargaining agreement. The college's institutional philosophy regarding SLOs – signed by the president of the college, academic senate, and classified union presidents as well as the vice-president of instruction – suggests a reasonable starting point regarding the discussion of faculty evaluation using SLOs as a “component” of faculty evaluation. The team urges the college to use its demonstrated ability for constructive dialog to address this issue in order to meet the Standard.

The college has a written code of ethics for faculty but not for other staff. There was a district-wide effort to create a code of ethics for all employees, but that effort stalled in 2006 and has not been completed. It is suggested that to fully meet this standard that the college move ahead to establish its own written code of ethics in the interim while also encouraging the district discussions to resume. (Standard A.1.d)

The college reported and the team verified that staffing levels are sufficient in administration and support staff, but there remains a need for full-time faculty. The college meets the standard of sufficiency in faculty, but there are college programs that are totally dependent on adjunct faculty, which causes issues in meeting all departmental responsibilities. (Standard III.A.2)

Although the self study indicates that the college meets the accreditation standards that address professional development, the team found little evidence to demonstrate an organized and documented professional development program exists. The team found evidence of many professional development opportunities for staff and many examples of professional development activities, but these were not organized or promoted by the college. Instead, faculty and staff are encouraged to initiate the activities individually. The district offers training in computer applications through the Center for Teaching and Learning as well as development and

training for classified staff on a request basis as well as scheduled training sessions. (III.A.5.a, b)

As far as systematic evaluation of the professional development program, beyond faculty submitting the required reports regarding their sabbatical projects, there is little evidence that any of these professional development activities are thoughtfully or systematically evaluated. The team agrees with the college's plan to "develop a mechanism to evaluate and ...improve the college's professional development programs". In the view of the team, the plan should include the designation of responsibility for professional development, and how the plan will be used "as the basis for improvement" for the college's professional development programs. (Standards III.A.5.a, b)

The college meets the accreditation standard for integrating and assessing human resource planning and using the evaluation as a basis for improvement. The college systematically monitors the need for staffing, uses a shared governance process for the hiring of faculty, and links human resource planning to program review for all staffing needs. (Standard III.A.6)

### **Conclusions**

The college meets partially meets Standard III A, with the exception of Standard III. A.1.c. The human resource functions are done well at both the district and college levels and support the staff and faculty in doing their jobs effectively. The college is to be praised on the amount and scope of work they have done in supporting diversity as an issue of college climate. The college encourages professional development but stops short of taking the affirmative action of presenting a well-planned professional development program. Individual administrators, faculty, and classified staff take advantage of going to conferences, sabbatical leaves, workshops, etc., but there is no systematic approach to professional development either in its programmatic features or evaluation. The college minimally meets the standard but could improve the situation by the creation, organization, and support of a more formal professional development program.

In order to meet accreditation Standard III.A.1.c the college must include effectiveness of producing student learning outcomes as part of faculty (and others') evaluations.

### **Recommendation**

6. The team recommends that the district develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes. (Standard III.A.1.c.)

## **B. Physical Resources**

### **General Observations**

The facilities that comprise the College of San Mateo sit atop a hillside overlooking the city of San Mateo and the San Francisco bay area beyond. The facility consists of buildings that date back to the opening of the college in 1963 and new ones, just opened in the past year. CSM has made significant progress in facility renovation and improvement since the 2001 accreditation site visit. With the passage of two consecutive general obligation bonds, the district has the financial resources available to improve and upgrade aging facilities while developing long-range plans for new facilities. The district holds the primary responsibility for facilities construction and planning and has created a Master Plan to guide the development of the 400 million dollars of improvements slated for College of San Mateo. Developed through a collaborative process with broad-based input, the Facility Master Plan (FMP) includes facility development in support of student learning programs and services. The FMP was developed and was accepted by the Board of Trustees in 2006 as the basis for future development of facilities and capital projects.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College of San Mateo has adequate facilities to serve students at the present time. These facilities are maintained by the district, but the college feels that maintenance is not adequate in some portions of the college. Thus, in its self study, the college asserts that it only partially meets the standard to “assure that physical resources are constructed and maintained appropriately to assure a healthful learning and working environment.” The college also provided evidence through surveys that there is dissatisfaction with the maintenance of the facilities. In contrast, the accreditation team in its numerous walks on campus, through buildings, and in classrooms found the campus in relatively good condition. However, given the wide-spread dissatisfaction, it is suggested that the college develop a planning agenda, to include dialog with the district, to address this concern. (Standard III.B.1.b)

College of San Mateo’s Facility Master Plan 2006 is intended to provide the long-range capital plan for CSM to support programs, services and institutional improvement goals. However, the accreditation team was not able to validate that this long-range capital plan reflects projections of total cost of ownership. The financial resource planning focuses on the maintenance and operations staffing and supply needs. The team did not find evidence, however, that future technology replacement or operational functions and costs were identified in the plan. Resource requirements are, however, a part of the annual program review process and could be used for identifying and defining operational needs in new facilities. This is another example of the pressing need for the integration of planning to assure effectiveness. (Standards III.B.2.a,b)

As described in the district's function map, the college's building program is almost entirely directed by the District Office. While the college president, administration, faculty, and staff have some input into the Facilities Master Plan, it is the District Office that controls and allocates the budget and runs the construction program. This creates some efficiencies and aids in more rapid project completion, especially with the design-build program. The function map also puts primary responsibility on the college to assure that its physical facilities support programs and services and also requires the college to plan and evaluate its facilities regularly. The challenge is to ensure that decisions made about facilities have strong participation from the college and are built on planning and evaluation of college programs and services. (Standards III.B.2.a,b)

The college has a Safety Committee that meets at least twice each year and is comprised of classified staff and administrative personnel. Concerns addressed by the CSM Safety Committee for the physical plant include disaster preparedness, night lighting, emergency communication systems, and evacuation signage. Items are brought for corrective action, then monitored and tracked to resolution by this committee. (Standard III.B.1.b)

The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) makes reference to an Educational Master Plan (EMP), but that master plan was not in place in the development, sequencing, or implementation of the FMP. As a result, the Facilities Master Plan is not fully integrated with institutional planning. Without an EMP, it is not clear what criteria have been used in approving current and future projects. Educational program decisions should be in place to guide facilities planning to be fully effective and provide for maximum improvement. The self study describes the situation at CSM as just the opposite. A planning agenda item states that the college should "Develop a long-term educational master plan that is linked to the college's facilities plan." An explicit planning connection between the college's priorities and the building program must be developed and widely understood. It is imperative that the college adopt an educational master plan which will guide the next generation of buildings on the campus. (Standards III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a,b)

## **Conclusions**

The team concludes that the college does not fully meet Standard III B in that there is no specific plan that prepares for "the total cost of ownership" of the capital improvement plan. This constitutes an unfunded future liability in the form of the increased maintenance, operating, staffing, and utilities costs that new construction will bring. The college is hard-pressed to maintain its facilities properly now, thus without a provision for increasing the operating budget as new facilities come online, the college will face serious budget constraints. There is also a serious concern that the costs of continuing instructional technology and IT maintenance and operations have not been provided for. The college needs to develop a reliable revenue stream that must be more than the aggregation of categorical budgets, but a realistic plan for increased real enrollment growth or, failing this, some other yet unidentified source of revenue. (Standard III.B.2.a)

In addition the college does not fully meet this standard because there is no evidence that, “physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning,” as the standard requires. Because of the absence of this essential planning document, there is no clearly integrated planning process at the college. (Standard III.B.2.b)

### **Recommendations**

7. In order to ensure the sustainability of its infrastructure, the college must calculate the real costs of facilities ownership, including technology, over the next ten years and then identify a reliable and ongoing revenue stream that will fund the significant increase in the operating budget. (Standard III.B.2.a)

Also see Recommendation 1.c, Educational Master Planning

## **C. Technology Resources**

### **General Observations**

The college has a strong technology infrastructure, and the college’s operation, facilities, instruction, and student services have been greatly enhanced by the ongoing introduction of new technology. Two facility bond measures in 2001 and 2005 have funded numerous technology-based enhancements: SMART classrooms with wired and wireless network connectivity, VGA projectors, laptop computers, and VCRs and DVD players; faculty laptops; a new telephone system; and substantial improvements to the campus and college district network such as implementing Gigabit Ethernet and upgrading to Cisco-managed switches.

### **Findings and Evidence**

San Mateo County Community College District’s Information Technology Services (ITS) provides all technology-related support for College of San Mateo. ITS and the colleges coordinate with each other in making decisions about technology support whenever district-wide consensus is needed. ITS has put in place a very sound and comprehensive technology infrastructure in terms of both applications and hardware. ITS supports all administrative applications used for all transactions and operational services, web-based applications that allow students, faculty and staff to conduct various transactions with the college, and network and Voice Over IP telephone infrastructure. (Standard III.C.1.a, III.C.1.c)

ITS provides offsite backups for administrative systems such as student, financial, and human resources data. An emergency generator was acquired to provide backup electrical power for at least 36 hours. Through an ongoing commitment to use document-imaging

technology, a significant amount of paper records has been preserved and indexed. The digitized documents, including admissions and records, as well as financial aid documents, are saved on a variety of magnetic media, and duplicate copies are stored at a remote location.

ITS has installed wireless internet connectivity in some of the buildings on campus. An ongoing plan to add Wi-Fi capabilities to all college facilities was begun in 2004. The newest building and two remodeled buildings are equipped with wireless technology. There are numerous other wireless hot spots throughout the campus. Through the Facilities Master Plan, all new and renovated buildings will be equipped with wireless technology. (Standard III.C.2)

In 2002 the district's phone system was upgraded. As part of the roll-out of the district's new unified-messaging, IP-based telephone system, numerous training sessions were held, and the vendor was contracted to conduct these sessions as no college staff had sufficient experience with the new system to provide the necessary training. The initial training was adequate for introductory purposes. Subsequent to the initial training, the college created a web-based telephone training module.

Hardware and software have been adopted to meet the needs of students, faculty, and support staff. SMART classrooms have enhanced audio/visual support for lectures and presentations. (Standard III.C1.d)

ITS has put in place firewall technology to protect the system from unauthorized intrusion. Sensitive documents accessible online are password-protected and are only available after successful completion of a log-on process. Software to filter out computer viruses is used at both the server and desktop levels. An increasingly sophisticated spam filter greatly reduces the amount of unwanted email. In all instructional laboratories, the college employs backup technology that provides images of computer configurations to refresh computers to their original configuration each semester or as needed.

In 2002, a web-based interface was added to the college's Banner administrative system called WebSMART. Since its creation, it has been enhanced many times to include numerous self-service functions for both students and faculty. Students can conduct basic registration functions such as enrolling in classes and paying fees. Recent additions and improvements have also allowed students to request official transcripts and view detailed course information. Faculty use WebSMART to obtain class lists, enter grades, provide census information, and obtain student contact information.

The ITS Help Desk provides effective support for technology issues. A web-based interface was introduced in 2003 which allows administration, faculty, and staff to communicate their problems quickly and receive a quick response and resolution.

Discussions with various administrators, faculty, and staff have confirmed that the ITS Help Desk is very responsive and that the technicians are knowledgeable and always ready to help. Faculty have also commented on the support for innovation in terms of using technology to enhance instructional delivery. For example, recently, the District has provided approximately 40 iPods to faculty in order to experiment with podcasting. (Standard III.C.1.a)

The college has 16 Macintosh and PC computer-based labs for students and faculty, most of them with access to printers. Faculty and students can obtain information about the computer-based labs at College of San Mateo's website. Full-time faculty have been provided with laptops through bond funding. District-wide, over 400 new desktops were purchased and installed. However, the college still does not have an ongoing funding mechanism to replace the technology infrastructure as it becomes obsolete, nor does it have an established replacement cycle. This issue has been also identified by the 1995 and 2001 visiting teams, and both teams recommended that the college take action to resolve this problem. The self study also includes a planning agenda. The 2007 team agrees with the college planning agenda and urges to the college to implement an ongoing funding mechanism to replace its technology infrastructure. (Standard III.C.1.c)

The colleges and the District ITS have recently made a decision to implement Moodle and eCollege as platforms for delivery of online instruction. While faculty currently using other modalities and platforms for their online classes can continue to do so, the decision on a unified platform will improve the college online instruction in the long run.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), also staffed by District ITS, provides technology related training to faculty and staff. CTL conducts workshops on a variety of topics. Faculty and staff training have been conducted mostly on an ad-hoc basis. (III.C.1.b)

## **Conclusions**

The District IT provides excellent technology support for the college. The college has a solid technology infrastructure in terms of administrative and instructional applications and hardware. However, the lack of an ongoing funding mechanism to ensure the cyclical replacement of its technology infrastructure continues to be a serious concern that the College must finally address. (III.c.1.d)

## **Recommendation**

See Recommendation 7

## **D. Financial Resources**

### **General Observations**

The College of San Mateo has sufficient resources to support programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The mission statement of the college and strategic objectives are relied upon for financial planning which is done through a shared governance process, led by the College Council. The district provides sound financial management of district resources and has recently initiated a financial planning model that will provide for future financial solvency. While the college has made progress in strategic planning, integration of financial with institutional planning is still in a developmental stage as is the assessment of the use of financial resources to improve effectiveness.

Financial information is accessible and communicated in a timely fashion and with easy access to online information. There are many ways for faculty and staff to learn about the resource allocation model through the district's final budget document, Budget Committee minutes and agendas, and through the various financial resources posted to inform the community. The financial disclosures on the bond are also easily accessible on the district website.

The self study and interviews conducted during the visit indicate that the assessment of the effective use of resources is achieved through the program review process. Instruction and Student Services areas use the annual program review process as the means to evaluate and assess respective programs and identify resource needs. The institutional support areas have recently completed a draft of a program review model. The program review for institutional support areas will begin this fiscal year.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The Budget Committee at CSM is responsible for budget development and includes representation from faculty, staff, students and administration. Budget Committee actions are posted on the college's website, and recommendations from the Budget Committee are forwarded to College Council throughout the year. The district resource allocation model recently developed and used for the 2007-08 budget was developed with college fiscal officers, faculty and district fiscal officers. The district chief financial officer made over twenty presentations to college staff to explain the model and answer questions. The College Council considers the college mission, strategic goals and objectives as well as existing plans when reviewing and recommending budget augmentation or reduction decisions. (Standards III.D.1.a,d.)

CSM has made progress since the last accreditation visit on the strategic planning process. A Strategic Planning Committee develops the college's strategic plan with the consideration of the technology, enrollment management, growth, and facilities plans. The budget development

process attempts to align the strategic objectives with budget requests; however, it appears the program review process used to forward resource allocation requests may lack the global perspective of integrated planning. The college is in the development stage of the strategic planning process and has the beginning framework for integrated planning. Integrated planning with assessment of outcomes will strengthen the strategic planning process as it continues to evolve and improve. Funding constraints have imposed pressure on CSM and limited the ability to fund requests for staff or program improvement. (Standards III.D.1.a,b,d)

The college lacks an Educational Master Plan. Without an updated Education Master Plan, it is possible that other plans (e.g. the Facility Master Plan and the Technology Plan) may have an inappropriate influence on resource allocation decisions when educational priorities are not available for consideration. The college should assure that programming decisions are at the heart of the college's fiscal management decisions. (Standards III.D.1.a,b.)

Until June 2007, a long-range financial model was not used at the college. Long-range financial projections using realistic enrollment levels and corresponding revenue forecasts was not a component of the budget development process. As such, the impact of enrollment decline on the fiscal operation at the college level was not readily apparent. Tracking enrollment data at the college level for financial decision making was not performed. The district does, however, exercise strong fiscal oversight in managing the financial resources. The expert financial oversight by District Finance combined with the benefits associated with the General Obligation Bonds funds have softened the impact of enrollment decline on CSM operations. (Standard III.D.1.c.)

A review of the evidence and interviews with staff during the site visit reflect that the financial resource monitoring, reporting and regulatory compliance are performed in accordance regulations and policies and follow conservative budget practices. Audit findings have been corrected and the district financial statements reveal a consistent ending balance well in excess of a prudent 5% reserve. This is due in large part to the positive impacts from the two consecutive general obligation bonds. The annual audit also includes grants, contracts, auxiliaries, and categorical programs. Findings and recommendations in these areas are addressed and responded to by the District. Financial systems and procedures are in place to provide for checks and balance and appropriate oversight of financial transactions processed for grants, contracts, and auxiliaries. (Standard sIII.D.2.c,d)

As indicated in the self study and validated through a review of the adopted budget and annual state reports, over ninety percent of the CSM budget is allocated to instruction and student services. Annual audits by independent CPA firms verify the stable financial position of the District. Audit findings have been minimal and recommendations corrected in a timely manner. This information is all accessible on the district website. (Standard III.D.2.a.)

CSM uses the Banner system for financial transaction processing and reporting. Information is available and accessible in a timely manner for financial decision making. Financial information is available to the campus community throughout the year with significant changes or updates available online in various forms such as CSM Budget Committee and District Committee on Budget and Finance minutes and agendas. (Standard III.D.2.b)

The district has a plan in place for dealing with post-retirement benefit liability as required by GASB 45. Contributions to the fund are consistent with the plan, and the fund balance is currently in excess of \$30 million. The District manages risk with appropriate levels of insurance. Construction-related risk is covered at appropriate levels. Systems are in place for the financial transaction processing that provide for appropriate internal control and oversight. The district oversight and review of contractual agreements with external entities as well as the annual independent audit of contractual agreements are performed to verify institutional policies are followed. District policies and procedures for purchasing and contract requirements are well-defined and easily accessible. (Standard III.D.1c, III.D.2.c.d,e,f,g)

Communication of financial information has improved since the previous 2001 visit. Budget Committee minutes and agendas are posted online. In addition, college publications such as the CSM Internal and the District Sharepoint site allow internal and external members of the college community the opportunity to view budget and financial information in an easily accessible and timely manner. In addition, the interaction between college and district financial operations is inclusive and provides for collaboration. (Standards III.D.2.c,d)

Evaluation and assessment of the financial management process occurs at the district level with input from the colleges. Items identified through the evaluation process emerge as action items for improvement or change. The regular assessment of the process has resulted in change to strengthen or improve the overall process. Examples include the recently added paperless accounts payable process as well as the various improvements cited in the self study. (Standard III.D.2.g)

The program review process is the method used at CSM for assessment and evaluation of the effective use of financial resources. Currently used by Instruction and Student Services, this annual process is completed in the fall semester. Interviews during the site visit indicated that the program review process has a data review element that includes enrollment information although it does not include student success data. It is not clear whether the process is used as a means to identify program improvement or the need for change.

The institutional support services of CSM have recently completed a draft program review instrument to be used in the future; however, the process for this had not been completely developed at the time of the site visit. In the interim and since the last accreditation visit, there has not been an alternate method of assessing or evaluating instructional support services or the

effectiveness of resource allocation. (Standard III.D.3)

It was noted during the visit that 92% of the CSM budget is for salaries and related fixed costs. The remaining 8% is used for operating costs such as services, supplies or equipment. The opportunity for funding program improvement comes primarily from growth funds, which are scarce. CSM has experienced low enrollment growth since the last accreditation visit in 2001. If this trend continues, it will be difficult for CSM to implement program improvement without decreasing existing expenses. The enrollment decline and resulting budget reductions have created an environment where class sections have been reduced and positions eliminated or left vacant in order to balance the budget.

## **Conclusions**

The college meets the accreditation standards in financial resources with the exception of those involving integrated planning and assessment of effective use of resources. (Standard III.D.1.a, III.D.3)

There have been many planning activities since the last accreditation visit: strategic planning processes are in place and committees established, plans have been developed, and goals have been set. Operational tasks have been assigned and implemented; however, the team did not find sufficient evidence that all of this planning is integrated and used for subsequent resource allocation. It is essential that the college take the next step in the strategic planning process to clearly and strongly link institutional planning and financial planning.

The college recently completed the development of the long range financial plan and used it in development of the 2007-08 final budget; the model is so new there has not been time to evaluate its effectiveness.

Evaluation and assessment of the financial management process appears to be in place and effective. In concert with the theme of a culture of evidence, this process should be clearly documented for evidence of continuous improvement and evaluation. (III.D.2.e)

The program review process is in its early stages of development and has not progressed to the point of assessing or evaluating measured review as outcome for discreet, well-defined measures which would then be the basis for improvement. Because this process is not fully developed, the standard regarding assessing the use of financial resources and using the results for improvement is only partially met. (Standard III.D.3)

Financial conditions resulting from declining enrollment has placed severe strain on program development and improvement at CSM. Budgetary cuts have been in the form of course reductions or position elimination. The further development and implementation of an effective

program review process that is in alignment with the overarching institutional strategic plan will be useful for CSM during times of either enrollment decline or growth.

The college should document and clearly define the relationship between planning and budget development and should embrace the theme of “a culture of evidence” to improve the documented evidence of progress or achievement of the accreditation standards.

## **Recommendations**

See Recommendation 1

## **Standard IV – Leadership and Governance**

### **A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

#### **General Overview**

College of San Mateo developed collaborative governance structures under stable leadership. The former president recently retired, and the new president assumed office in January 2007. Over the past ten months, the leadership team has changed, but the transition has been smooth, in part because the leadership team has come from within the college and/or district and also because the institution believes these new leaders will honor the governance system in place. The college fosters a culture of collaboration and inclusive governance structures that involve members of all the constituent groups. District policies are established in support of participatory governance and decision-making processes.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

Evidence abounds that institutional leaders create an environment that empowers constituent groups and fosters innovation and institutional excellence.

One example is the faculty initiated project of Learning Communities, which are collaborative efforts between Instruction and Student Services to link courses together and to link courses to learning support services for target populations. Other innovations fostered within the last few years include Writing Across the Curriculum in conjunction with the Carnegie Academy of Scholarship on Teaching and Learning, e-portfolios as an assessment method, and an early alert system for quickly identifying students at risk and providing interventions to promote their success. Faculty and staff projects for improvements to programs and services reflect that the institution encourages and supports the initiative of college personnel. (Standard IV.A.1.)

The team confirmed by interviews with the Faculty Senate, College Council, and Student Council that their roles in leadership are clearly defined in writing and provide appropriate input into the college's decision-making structure. Board policies are in place that delineate responsibilities for all groups. Those roles are also defined in college documents, such as the College Council, repeating the fact that faculty have primacy on issues of curriculum and academic standards and establishing the importance of student participation on decision making, especially on matters that directly affect students. (Standards IV.A.2.a, b.)

Committee structures at the College are comprised of diverse members. The district's Shared Governance Council and College of San Mateo's College Council are the two district-wide and campus-wide governing groups composed of representatives from all constituent groups in the district and on the college campus respectively. These bodies serve as the primary advisory groups for decision-making at the district and at the college. Other committees whose work has broad impact across the whole campus, such as the Strategic Planning Committee and the College Council's Budget Subcommittee, also have broad representation from all constituent groups. Committees that have a specific purpose that affects a more narrow segment or function of the campus, such as Committee on Instruction or Associate Student Senate, are composed of members from the constituents group their work most affects, although they often also contain representatives from other constituent groups that are affected by the work of the committee, whether directly or indirectly. Membership of each of the governing groups and committees at the college is outlined in the Compendium of Institutional Committees. (Standard IV.A.2.a.)

In all cases, governance groups and committees work for the good of the institution. Organizational charts delineate lines of communication as initiatives move forward from the unit level to divisional and institutional levels. Interviews with members of the various constituent groups reveal that communication of ideas across the campus is facilitated by the governance structures. Several of the committees enhance efforts to share ideas through publishing minutes from meetings online where all members of the campus community can access them. (Standard IV.A.3.)

In all matters it is evident that these committee structures, their purposes and processes, all work for the good of the institution. The description in Standard IV is a description without the identification of a single benchmark or outcome measure by which the Board, the Administration and Governance Leaders have measured its progress towards its own goals since 2001. Without such self-evaluation metrics in place, the District and the college will be unable to effectively evaluate itself and chart its progress.

The hallmark example of the need for developing a culture of evidence through evaluation is CSM's key institutional challenge cited in the 2001 Recommendation Four: an enrollment decline that has been the essential fact of the college's history since it opened in 1968. More recently, since 2003, enrollment has declined by over 15%. Yet there is barely a mention of this

challenge in the self study. There are the proper processes in place at the district and the college, but there is no evidence that the Board, district, and college have enacted these processes to evaluate and identify the problems and then take decisive action. The college does have an “Enrollment Growth Plan” cited in the self-study, but there is, for example, no evidence to indicate that this plan is based upon any planned analysis. Collegiality surely exists at CSM, and there is no general strife or conflict that would prevent progress on this matter or any other. CSM should take pride in this. But collegiality is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the action that is required under Standard IV to address college goals. (Standard IV.A.3)

The team observed a related controversy that is testing decision-making structures and is causing some unease in the institution. District leadership, responding to Board goals, has taken strong positions on future district directions, such as developing concurrent enrollment and increasing distance education. Both of these would address the goal of increasing enrollment. These goals also occur in the college’s plans, but are being characterized by some within the college as district directed and not supported by the college. This situation underscores the need for leadership, at both the district and college levels in order to reach resolution. The team saw evidence that college leadership was addressing this issue through established governance procedures and honoring constituent roles, in the case, that of the faculty. The team suggests that the college continue to employ its obvious strength in constructive dialog to reach consensus about future directions and take definitive action that meets both college and district goals. This will require leadership at all levels and within all constituencies, and, the team believes, the College of San Mateo is capable of achieving this goal. (Standard IV.A.2.a, b, 3)

College of San Mateo demonstrates honesty and integrity with external agencies, including the Accrediting Commission. The college meets deadlines and submits its reports to ACCJC in a timely manner. However, analysis of the college’s responses to the recommendations from the 2001 visit reveals that the college has not responded to some of the previous visiting team’s recommendations adequately or in a timely manner. College of San Mateo must act expeditiously and with a sense of urgency to fully address Commission recommendations that will enable the college to meet Standard IV.A.4 by reporting completed actions.

Although the college has many appropriate committees and governance groups to ensure the continuous functioning of college operations and to design innovative solutions to the college’s challenges, the College does not have in place any mechanisms or procedures for regular, ongoing evaluation of the efficacy of these committees and governance groups. Individual faculty leaders, managers, and administrators are evaluated. And the District Governing Board conducts a self-evaluation, but other committees and governance structures are not systematically evaluated. Some committees continue in existence from tradition. Some committees appear on an as-needed basis and disappear when a particular task is complete. Operations of standing committees are not regularly evaluated to determine strengths and weaknesses and to propose changes should weaknesses be identified. Review of documents and

interviews with staff, faculty, and administrators reveal that the college does not have in place systems for regular evaluation of governance structures. The use of such evaluations to determine effectiveness may assist the college in determining necessary changes in governance structures to meet changing needs of the college in all areas. (Standard IV.A.5)

### **Conclusions**

The college meets the accreditation Standards described under IV.A, Decision-Making Roles and Governance, with the exception of Standard IV.A.5 regarding evaluation of governance and decision-making structures.

The visiting Team recognizes the passion of the staff, faculty, and administration for the mission of the college and acknowledges that this passion fuels the innovations of the college's personnel. This passion results in a college culture that fosters an extremely high degree of collaboration, cooperation, and collegiality. However, the team also observed that the staff, faculty, and personnel do not evaluate and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the institution and its governance structures for the purposes of ensuring the quality of programs and services. This observation reaffirms other observations in the team's report that the college has not yet developed good habits of evaluation and assessment. Without such self-evaluation metrics in place, the college will be unable to effectively evaluate and chart its progress.

### **Recommendation**

8. It is recommended that the College establish a systematic, reflective process for, and a regular cycle of evaluation for its governance structures, processes, and committees to ensure that such organizational structuring continues to serve the needs of the College. (Standard IV.A.5)

## **B. Board and Administrative Organization**

### **General Observations**

The description sections of the Standard IV.B portion of the self study report were developed by a district-wide committee comprised of steering committee members from each of the three colleges and representatives of the district, as needed. However, the self evaluation and planning agenda portions of the report were developed by the college's Standard IV committee. The team verified through interviews at both the college and district that the report is a candid response to address each sub-portion of the Standard. The Board of Trustees of the San Mateo District is a stable board that takes great pride in all colleges in the district. They are knowledgeable about programs and services offered by the College of San Mateo and are committed to institutional effectiveness and improvement. The district offers centralized services in the areas of business,

facilities planning and operations, human resources, educational services and planning, information technology services, and community and governmental relations. The district underwent a mapping project as part of the accreditation process which outlined the delineation of responsibilities.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The governing Board of Trustees for the San Mateo Community College District is composed of 6 members, 5 members elected at large for four-year terms and a student member elected for a one-year term by students from all three colleges. The board has established policies that set direction for effective operation of the colleges and assure their financial stability. The board designates appropriate authority for management of the district to the Chancellor. Through review of documents and a meeting with the governing board, the team found ample evidence that the board understands its role of assuring quality and integrity of academic and student support programs. (Standard IV.B.1)

In a meeting attended by members of all three visiting teams, the board provided evidence that it understands its responsibility to act as an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interests of its service area. The board has been proactive in setting goals that they believe will move the district forward while protecting the autonomy of the colleges. The board also understands that it must act as a whole in making these goals and other decisions. The board also demonstrated knowledge of the college's mission and recognized its ultimate responsibility to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of college programs and services through its stewardship. At its meetings and study sessions, the board learns about specific academic programs, supports services, reviews college plans, and has directed that they be integrated into a strategic master plan. (Standard IV.B.1a, b, c)

The board policies and procedures are published and also are on line and specify all required elements of the standard (board size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. The board acts within these policies but reports that it only evaluates them "as necessary" and not on a regular basis. (Standard IV.B.1d, e)

The board has been quite stable over time and provides board orientation for new members and development for long-time members through retreats, workshops and attendance at conferences. The Board is to be commended for encouraging attendance of new board members at the CCCL's New Trustee Orientation. It is encouraged to adopt a formal Trustee Education and Development Program that would provide continuous, measurable evidence of board development. (Standard IV.B.1.f.)

The governing board has a published self-evaluation process that assesses board performance, and the board members report using it to improve their performance as a board. (Standard IV.B.1.g)

The board also has a published ethics policy that includes a provision for violations of the code. (Standard IV.B.1.h)

The team verified through examination of board minutes and the board interview that the board of trustees was quite knowledgeable about the accreditation process and had participated in regular board reports by the colleges about the process. (Standard IV.B.1.i)

The governing board has established policies and procedures for the selection and evaluation of the chancellor of the district. The board demonstrated high regard and confidence in the chancellor and has delegated appropriate authority to him for the management of the district without undue influence by the board. While the procedures for evaluation of the chancellor are clearly defined, that is not the case regarding the evaluation of college presidents. This clarity of evaluation procedures should be extended to include the college presidents. (Standard IV.B.1.j)

The evidence provided by the college regarding the leadership provided by president of the college focused on the previous president. The self study cites the “exemplary leadership” of the previous president who was instrumental in promoting the collegial atmosphere of the college and the governance processes that are in place today. The new president has been in the job for ten months, but at the College of San Mateo for several decades. He understands the institution and also states that the college must integrate its activities, particularly to improve institutional effectiveness. The team found evidence that he is performing the duties expected of the president and is effectively leading the college to improve teaching and learning. He has maintained the collegial processes set in place by the previous president; he has put more of a focus on research by having the research director report directly to him; he is supporting the program review process to link resources to student learning; and he is attempting to put new plans in place that will improve planning. In addition, the management team is changing because of vacancies, and the new president is establishing his new team with enthusiasm to improve planning and institutional effectiveness. This creates a genuine opportunity for the president to lead CSM forward to vigorous action on the 2001 Recommendations as well as the 2007 Recommendations. (Standards IV.B.2.a, b)

The president is an effective liaison between the college and the district and board of trustees. He assures that the CSM practices are consistent with the mission by being an active member of both college and district governance bodies. The president controls budget and expenditures through his work through his active participation at the college and district levels. He was actively involved in creating and implementing the new financial model which will lend multi-year stability to financial planning (Standards IV.B.2.c, d)

The new president is just beginning to make community contacts. He is developing a strong relationship with the area high school principals as an example of his outreach efforts. The team has no reason not to expect him to expand these efforts as time goes on. (Standard IV.B.2.e)

The San Mateo Community College District Board of Trustees set annual goals which set expectations for educational excellence and future directions for the district. The chancellor operates the district through his staff, in accordance with those goals. As part of the self study process, the district and its colleges defined roles and responsibilities for both the colleges and the district through a mapping project. As is often the case, the project shed light on functions that were not well understood and, as a result, roles have been clarified. Conversations with district staff confirmed that the function map reflects the reality of the district. In particular, the chancellor delegates appropriate responsibility to the college president and gives him latitude to operate the the college within the parameters of district policies and procedures. However, the team found evidence that the college staff were not all of one mind when it came to the functions delineation. Either the staff was unclear on responsibilities, or, in some cases (e.g. the capital projects, or the district initiatives), felt that the district influence was too great. This mapping project offers an opportunity to clearly define roles and responsibilities and how the those responsibilities are implemented. The team agrees with the college's planning agenda to increase communication about these issues and further suggests that the district and college explore these differing perceptions about their roles. (Standard IVB.3.a, e)

The team found solid evidence through interviews and review of documents to support the fact that the district provides effective services to the college and involves the colleges in the deployment of those services at the college site. The team observed that district personnel are permanent members of some committees and/or regular guests at others. The communication between district and College of San Mateo is certainly adequate, and in some cases, exemplary. An example of the latter category is the attendance of district financial staff at over 20 college meetings during the time the new financial model was under development. The staff demonstrated its real commitment to provide clear information during the creation of an important policy that affected the future of College of San Mateo. (Standard IV.B.3.b, c)

The new financial model may require staffing reductions or other cuts in resources to CSM. The district, with college input, has demonstrated its commitment to be fair about the distribution of resources throughout the district while still providing adequate resources to support the colleges. As described in Standard III, the district has effectively controlled its expenditures overall and is financially sound. This new financial model is an extension of that fiscal control and accountability. (Standard IV.B.3.c, d)

The team found evidence through interviews with the chancellor, the president, and staff at the college and district that the chancellor gives full authority to the president to operate the College of San Mateo. The president is accountable for the operations of the college and provides regular updates to the district through district meetings of presidents and chancellor's staff. The team observed good communication occurring in both directions and a rapport that seemed to be positive and constructive at all levels. (Standard IV.B.3.f)

The mapping study is recent and is just now being widely communicated. In discussions with district staff and the governing board, there appeared to be no regular evaluation schedule of the roles and responsibilities neither of the district nor of the governance structure overall. In order to fully assess the delineation of roles and responsibilities, and the decision-making structures of the district, to assure that they assist the colleges in meeting educational goals, a regular evaluation schedule should be put in place. In addition, the results of those evaluations should be widely communicated to enhance understanding and improvement in the San Mateo district. (Standard IV.B.3.g)

## **Conclusions**

College of San Mateo is governed by an independent policy-making board of publically elected members. They are guided by written rules and regulations that specify appropriate policies and operational procedures. The district has developed a functional map that spells out the various roles and responsibilities of the colleges and district.

The governing board and district administration are committed to the success of the College of San Mateo and the district as a whole. The board of trustees understands its stewardship role and displays knowledge of proper conduct as a board. By establishing strategic planning process and annual goals, the board sets the agenda for the chancellor and the college presidents to operationalize these directions. Relationships between the college and the district are built on a solid foundation of good communication and mutual regard to improve programs and services for students. The district and the College of San Mateo meet Standard IV with recommendations that will improve the evaluation process in the district, of the college presidents, the board rules and regulations and the functional map.

## **Recommendations**

9. In order to fully meet Standards and improve effectiveness of evaluation at the College and district, is it recommended that,

- a. The board of trustees should regularly evaluate its policies and practices and revise them as necessary. (Standard IV.B.1.e)
- b. The districts and colleges should collaborate to implement a process to regularly evaluate the delineation of functions and widely communicate those findings in order to enhance the college's effectiveness and institutional success. (Standard IV.B.3.g)

10. In order to fully meet Standards regarding district evaluation procedures, while the district has clearly defined rules and regulations for the hiring and evaluation of the chancellor, that same clarity of process should be extended to evaluating college presidents. Therefore, the

district should develop rules and regulations for the evaluation of college presidents. (Standards IV.B, B.1.j)