PALO VERDE COLLEGE

REPORT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

Submitted by:

PALO VERDE COLLEGE
One College Drive
Blythe, CA 92225

Submitted to:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

January 10, 2014

CERTIFICATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

January 21, 2014

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

FROM: Palo Verde College
One College Drive
Blythe, CA 92225

This Institutional Self Evaluation report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status.

We certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and we believe the Self-Evaluation report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

Dr. Don Wallace, Superintendent/President

Ms. Ermila "Millie" Rodriguez, President, Board of Trustees

Mr. Biju Raman, President, Academic Senate

Mr. Derek Copple, President, Faculty Association (CTA)

Mr. Rich Soto, President, Classified Association (CSEA)

Ms. Ariel Ramirez, President, Associated Student Government

Ms. Shelley Hamilton, Management/Confidential Representative

Mr. Brian Thiebaux, Accreditation Liaison Officer/Accreditation Team Chair

Our aim is to offer academic and vocational training which will fit our students for life in a specialized world, particularly as we know it in the Palo Verde Valley.

Palo Verde College Mission Statement, 1949

Palo Verde College is a California community college that supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services. The College promotes student success and lifelong learning for a diverse community of learners.

Palo Verde College Mission Statement, 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Palo Verde College has a rich history of providing educational and support services to the communities of Blythe and Needles, as well as surrounding areas, beginning in 1947 in Blythe, and expanding to Needles with the opening of the Needles Center in 1998.

The College offers a full curriculum of programs to meet students' educational needs, and is keeping pace with evolving trends affecting California community colleges. The focus on the Student Success and Support program, implementation of new associate degrees-for-transfer, emphasis on effective learning through the assessment of student learning outcomes and the development of alternative methods of course delivery are a few examples of the College's commitment to staying current.

The College is in the process of recovering from a major financial crisis that came to light in mid-2011. As a result, the College reduced staffing through voluntary separations, re-organized functions and responsibilities, cut expenses, and instituted more effective and transparent financial management practices.

Standard I—Mission and Improving Institutional Effectiveness: The Mission Statement, reviewed and amended periodically over the years, centers on student learning and serving the community. The Mission informs all practices and policies of the College. Faculty and staff seek excellence in their work by continuously evaluating and making improvements using data and collaboration. Examples of practices undergoing improvement are the integration of budget with program review and planning, faculty evaluations, SLO assessment and a defined process for collegial governance.

Standard II—Instruction, Student Support, Library and Learning Support Programs: In instruction, the College is expanding online course delivery, has developed new associate degrees-for-transfer, and is perfecting SLO assessment. In Student Support, the College is making the transition to the Student Success and Support Program and is re-thinking its current practices, in order to improve services, with greater emphasis on orientation, assessment and educational program planning. In Library and Learning Support, the former Learning Skills Center is being reinstated as the Student Learning Center with an emphasis on tutoring. Instruction and Student Support programs are continuously evaluated for improvement.

Standard III—Human, Physical, Technology, and Financial Resources: Human Resources ensures recruitment and hiring practices are conducted properly and that professional development opportunities are made known and are utilized. Physical Resources ensures a safe, clean, well-lighted and quiet learning environment. Technology Resources provides for the maintenance and upgrade of computers, classroom equipment, telephone, email and other communications and record storage systems, to support staff and students and to facilitate learning. Financial Resources provides for financial stability, effective financial planning, and transparent budget and fiscal management practices.

Standard IV—Decision-Making, Board and Administrative Organization: Administrative leadership is committed carrying out the policies of the College, emphasizing student learning, continuous evaluation of processes and practices, support for faculty, staff and students, effective fiscal management, and strategic planning. The Board of Trustees provides advice and support to the Superintendent/President and charges him with carrying out College policies. As a result of recent financial problems, the Board seeks to be better informed about the College's financial matters, and has formed the Audit and Finance Committee. Both the Superintendent/President and Board have established performance goals for themselves.

INTRODUCTION

History of Palo Verde College

Palo Verde College was founded on September 15, 1947 as part of the Palo Verde Unified School District. Its first home was with Palo Verde High School on a former Army Air Corp primary training base six miles from the center of Blythe known locally as Morton Air Academy. By 1950 the College's enrollment had reached 250 students.

In September 1958 the College moved to a Spanish-style building which had previously served as an elementary school and the high school on East Hobsonway in Blythe. At about that time athletics began to develop at the College. By 1966, the College's last year on East Hobsonway, enrollment had grown to 472 students.

In September 1967 Palo Verde College moved to a new campus adjacent to the high school campus on the corner of Lovekin Blvd. and Chanslorway. On July 1, 1973 the Palo Verde Community College District with its own five-member Board of Trustees came into being and the College separated from the Palo Verde Unified School District. About this time the instructional program expanded to include vocational-technical, developmental, and continuing education courses. Athletics remained an important part of Palo Verde College until 1978 when all sports programs were discontinued.

In 1998 the Palo Verde Community College District annexed the eastern part of San Bernardino County—an area coterminous with the Needles Unified School District—and added two seats to its Board of Trustees (bringing the total to 7) to represent the San Bernardino County section of the District. At that time, the college staffed a center on the Needles High School campus. In 2005 the College created School Facilities District Number 1 which encompasses the entire San Bernardino County section of the Palo Verde Community College District. The voters of SFID Number 1 approved the issuance of bonds to remodel a former retail building in downtown Needles to serve as a community college center. Shortly after that, the California Post-Secondary Education Commission officially recognized the College's Needles Center. The Center moved into its own facility in downtown Needles in Fall Semester 2008.

In Spring Semester 2001, the College began a partnership with Ironwood State Prison, located in Blythe to offer distance education instruction to incarcerated students.[1] Since then the College's correspondence program has grown. While most of those students are at Ironwood State Prison, the College's correspondence courses are now serving students at eleven other state penitentiaries.

In Fall Semester 2001, Palo Verde College moved to an entirely new campus six miles from the center of Blythe, its current location. In Fall Semester 2007, the College opened the Technology

[1] Then, as now, the instructional program offered to inmates, and others taking classes through this mode, is more accurately called "correspondence" education. At the time, however, the term "distance education" was used by the College. This report uses the term "correspondence" consistent with the definition used by the ACCJC and the U.S. Department of Education.

Building and in 2008, the Physical Education Complex. The Fine and Performing Arts Complex opened in October 2012. The facility includes a 400-seat theater, along with studios for music and art, and faculty offices.

Major Developments Since 2008

1. Implementation of Student Success Program: During 2013, the College began preparing for implementation of this program, transitioning from the former matriculation process. A committee has been formed and has been evaluating the College's current orientation, assessment and educational planning processes not only to come into compliance with the Student Success Initiative, but to use this opportunity to improve student services.

2. New associate degrees for transfer: In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year.

3. Revision of Program Review: Program review has long been a successful and effective mechanism for evaluating programs, instructional and non-instructional, and providing the basis for making improvements. The process has worked well, but now is in need of improvement. In 2012, the Program Review Committee began the process by increasing the frequency of reports, and providing training and data to divisions to assist in completing the reports.

4. Implementation of Datatel: The College's new data management system, Datatel, has had significant, positive impact on College operations including better information collection and reporting. Furthermore, with the implementation of Datatel, institutional research activity has improved as a result of enhanced access to data, with beneficial impact, for example, on the College's initiation of the Student Success and Support Program.

5. Substantive Change: In Spring Semester 2012, the College received approval from the ACCJC to offer programs of study consisting of courses 50% of which are offered in correspondence mode.[2] The College now offers several associates degrees and certificates which may be earned entirely in correspondence mode. The approval provides the College with opportunities to expand its correspondence program.

6. Title III Virtual Campus grant: Thanks to funding provided by the Title III "Virtual Campus" grant, in 2008, the College acquired considerable technology to aid in instruction, including the implementation of the Sakai course management system (referred to at the College as "the Bridge"), Smart Boards, and PolyComs to facilitate interactive television course transmission between the Blythe campus and Needles

[2] Substantive Change Proposal: Correspondence Education

Center. The grant also provided for training to faculty and others in the use of this technology.[3]

7. SLOs: The College has long been committed to student learning and to improving the processes that support learning, as evidenced in its Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan initiatives, and in student learning assessment requirements for course outlines-of-record, syllabi, and program review reports. The practice of systematically evaluating student learning for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support programs, as well as establishing institutional learning outcomes, has occurred relatively recently, in the past year. The College has established a three-year cycle of assessment, starting in 2012-13. SLOs and assessments are published on the College website.[4]

8. Financial crisis and re-organization of the College: The College is in the process of recovering from a significant financial crisis that came to light in mid-2011. These problems included: a) projected FTES shortfall; b) the prospect of large, ongoing debt repayments on certificates of participation; violation of the 50% law; c) overreliance on FTES from incarcerated students and from instructional services agreements; d) inadequate long-range budget planning; and e) a reserve fund under 5%. Once these conditions were disclosed, the College took swift action to address them, including changes in senior administration, creation of incentives to encourage early retirement and voluntary separations, significant reductions throughout the institution in expenditures, and the relocation of several student services personnel, possessing appropriate qualifications, into instruction.

9. Needles Center grand opening: In 1998, the College district annexed the eastern portion of San Bernardino County to establish an outreach center in Needles. The center operated in temporary buildings on the campus of Needles High School for ten years. In 2008, Needles Center moved operations into a reconstructed retail facility located in the center of town. The Needles Center serves approximately 60 students, generating 100 FTES. Classes are conducted by adjunct instructors, as well as by three full-time faculty members. Additionally, many classes are taught via interactive television link-up with the Blythe campus.

10. Fine and performing arts grand opening: In 2012, the College opened the Fine and Performing Arts Center, located at the center of the Blythe campus. The facility includes a 400-seat theater, along with studios for music and art, and faculty offices. To date, the College has hosted numerous successful performances at the Center including the Young Americans, Boar's Head Festival, Multicultural Festival and others. The events have attracted attendees from the Blythe community as well as from the College. In 2013, the College hired a full-time music instructor to help develop programs in music and performance.

[3] Title III Virtual Campus grant--summary
[4] PVC SLOs

Student Enrollment Data

The following table shows trends in unduplicated student headcount from Fall Semester 2009 through Fall Semester 2013 for each of the key locations where the College delivers instructional services: Blythe Campus, Needles Center, Spring Street campus, correctional facilities, and in-service training:

	Fall 09	Fall 10	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13
Blythe Campus	875	804	792	707	653
Needles Center	145	140	102	81	63
Spring Street Campus	17	23	2	9	9
Correctional Facilities	761	854	867	757	723
In-Service Training	1,755	1,790	1,495	1,827	559
Non-Local Online				13	1
Location Not Known	73	84	35	17	4
TOTAL	3,626	3,695	3,293	3,411	2,012

Source: Palo Verde College Office of Admissions and Records

The College delivers instructional services to inmates at a number of state prisons. The majority of these students are located at the Ironwood and Chuckawalla facilities within a few miles of the Blythe campus. "In-service training" refers to instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling, which the College delivers in areas outside the district, under an instructional services agreement, explained later in this report. The College's programs are operated with the approval of the community college districts served by these areas.

The Spring Street campus, located in downtown Blythe approximately five miles from the home campus, was formerly used for non-credit and ESL classes. The College sold the facility in 2013 and relocated courses and programs to home campus.

The College is concerned about the recent decline in students overall, a fact that is reflected in the FTES performance. The College is addressing this problem by pinpointing the reasons for the decline, and seeking ways to address it—expanded online sections, new programs, better outreach and recruitment efforts, to name a few.

U.S. Department of Education Requirements

1. Institution-set standards: The College acknowledges that it is now required to establish standards for various indicators of student progress and success, including course completions, licensure rates, job placement rates, program and certificate completions, and other indicators, in accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations. The College possesses the data, but has not yet established the required achievement

standards. The College will begin this process in Spring Semester 2014, recognizing the task will take time and must include broad institutional participation.

2. Accuracy of credit hours: The College, through its Department of Admissions and Records, follows strict procedures in making sure credit hours are consistent with the Carnegie Unit. Staff follows the Chancellor's office guidelines for calculating required class hours to justify units awarded.[5] Recently, however, Admissions and Records staff discovered a few instances in which insufficient class time was scheduled vis-à-vis the number of credits awarded. These discrepancies were quickly corrected.

3. Complaints filed with ACCJC: Recently, College staff inquired of the ACCJC whether any complaints had been filed against the College. ACCJC staff informed the College that there was no record of any complaints. The procedure for filing complaints is published in the College Catalog and on the College website.[6]

4. Achievement data: College personnel interpret this regulation to refer to standards of *learning* (as opposed to standards of *success*, such as course and program completion, as described in paragraph #1 above). College faculty and staff have established SLOs for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support programs, as well as institutional SLOs. The College will use the assessments of the SLOs as indicators of student achievement and learning, and the basis of improvement. Because the College is in the second year of a three-year SLO assessment cycle,[7] there is insufficient data at this time to adequately evaluate learning trends over time.

5. Distance vs. Correspondence Education: The College has developed a course outline-of-record template that distinguishes face-to-face, correspondence and distance education sections.[8] Each mode of delivery is reviewed and approved separately by the Curriculum Committee. Instructional standards are established by the academic division sponsoring the course; the individual instructor prepares his or her syllabus for the course as long as the instructional standards defined in the syllabus are comparable to that in the course outline-of-record.

   Verification of the identity of students enrolled in *correspondence* classes is handled by a) the College at the time admission and registration; or b) by the correctional facility in the case of students who are incarcerated. *Distance education* sections consist of interactive television (ITV) sections and online sections. ITV sections are defined as distance education; however, students attend class meetings in the College's facility (typically the Needles Center), so identity can be verified because the student is physically present in a classroom, similar to a face-to-face class. Students enrolled in distance education are required to provide personal identification information in the admissions and registration process. They are issued a student identification number and

[5] Calculating Class Hours (Student Contact Hours)
[6] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 59 and College website: main page > Accreditation > Filing a Complaint
[7] The SLO assessment cycle is more fully described in Standard I.B.
[8] Curriculum Committee forms, College website

password to gain access to courses taught the Bridge, the College's online management system.

6. Longitudinal data on fiscal condition/student achievement: The College's Business Services department maintains and evaluates longitudinal financial data in the form of historical budgets, projections and external audits. As discussed earlier in paragraphs #1 and #4, at this time there is insufficient student achievement data from which to develop longitudinal studies. The College expects that longitudinal studies will be feasible upon completion of the three-year SLO cycle.

Student Achievement Data

1. Student Success Scorecard[9]

   College commentary: The large proportion male students compared to female is attributable to the high percentage of incarcerated male students enrolled in the College, as well as the large portion of male students enrolled in the College's ISA courses. Ethnic representation of white (44.3%), Hispanic (28.9%) and African-American (9%) students is reflective of the communities of Blythe, Needles and surrounding areas. The comparison of persistence between "unprepared" (68.5%) and "prepared" (42.9%) students comes as something of a surprise, in that usually students prepared for college perform better in term of persistence than unprepared students. Nonetheless, the overall rate of 67% indicates the College could do better in encouraging students to stay with it. The new Student Success and Support Program being launched at the College, with its emphasis on orientation, assessment and educational planning, should have some beneficial impact on persistence.

2. Degree and Certificate Awards, 2010 to 2013[10]

   College commentary: The four AA degrees-with-emphasis are performing very well, along with the AS degrees, notably Business Management. It is encouraging that a significant number of students choose CSU-GE certification, indicating strong interest in transfer, particularly to the CSU system. The College expects to see positive results from the two new AA-for-transfer degrees, in psychology and sociology, in the coming year or two. In the vocational area, several certificate programs continue to do well, particularly, nursing, child development, computer science and welding.

3. Retention and Success By Instructional Mode, 2010-2013[11]

   College commentary: In each of the educational categories represented (basic skills, credit, degree applicable and transferable), students consistently perform better in face-to-

[9] Student Success Scorecard
[10] Degree and Certificate Awards, 2010 to 2013
[11] Retention and Success By Instructional Mode, 2010-2013

face ("Non-distance education methods") than other any other delivery mode, including online ("Delayed interaction"), correspondence ("Text one-way") and ITV ("Two-way interactive"). The College is introducing new orientation tutorials in the current term (Spring Semester 2014), which is designed to help students understand the challenges they may face by selecting sections taught other than face-to-face. The new Student Success and Support Program members will be examining these trends and making recommendations to the College to improve student performance in ITV, correspondence and distance education classes.

4. Enrollment Trends by Age, Gender and Ethnicity, 2010 to 2013[12]

   College commentary: The trends in gender, age and ethnic representation have remained fairly consistent over the past five years. In gender, the proportion of males to females is consistently about 70% to 30%, largely owing to the significant proportion of incarcerated students in the overall College student population (about one-third of the College's students are incarcerated). The large proportion of students in the 40-49 age range (about 25%) is also attributable to the incarcerated student population as well as students enrolled in courses through instructional services agreements. In terms of ethnicity, the representations are reflective of the communities the College services, as noted in paragraph #1 above.

Area Labor Market and Socio-Economic Trends

Blythe and vicinity:[13] Blythe, incorporated July 24, 1916, is located 227 miles east of Los Angeles, 626 miles south of San Francisco and 150 miles west of Phoenix in the Palo Verde Valley along the Colorado River.

Agriculture is the largest sector of employment in the economy. The second largest is in the service industry: motels, restaurants and campgrounds. Blythe is the second largest port of entry in California with well over one million motor vehicles entering the portal annually. Blythe is also located near the Colorado River and several facilities are available for river sports enthusiasts. The two state prisons west of the city have stimulated substantial growth in the non-agricultural sector of the local economy. Together, Ironwood and Chuckawalla State Prisons have approximately 2,096 employees.

The community area referred to below includes Blythe and surrounding unincorporated community of Ripley. There are three manufacturing plants in the community area. Leading group classes of products are ready-mix concrete and asphalt.

The largest manufacturing firms are:

[12] Enrollments by Age, Gender, and Ethnicity
[13] Blythe economic profile

Morgan Corporation, 231 employees, manufacturing
Hi-Value Processors, 120 employees, vegetable packing
HayDay Farms, 65 employees, feed processor
Crawford & Associates, 20 employees, Ready-mix concrete/concrete blocks
Modern Ginning Co., 20 employees, cotton ginning

The largest non-manufacturing employers are:

Ironwood State Prison, 1,302 employees, level III prison
Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, 794 employees, level II prison
Palo Verde Unified School District, 300 employees, public school system
Palo Verde Comm. College District, 209 employees, community college district
Palo Verde Hospital 150 employees, hospital
City of Blythe, 111 employees, municipality
Albertsons, 100 employees, supermarket
County of Riverside, 91 employees, public administration
K-Mart, 88 employees, retail
Palo Verde Irrigation District, 85 employees, public irrigation
Southern California Gas Co., 43 employees, public utility

Needles and vicinity:[14]

Needles is one of the oldest cities in San Bernardino County, founded in 1883 with the coming of the railroad. Needles incorporated on October 30, 1913 and became a charter city on January 28, 1959. The city is located in the heart of the lower Colorado River recreation area just across the bridge from Arizona and just minutes to Nevada.

The 2012 population of Needles was 4,954, with 50.5% male and 49.5% female. The median age in 2012 was 40.1 years.

In 1998, the College district annexed the eastern portion of San Bernardino County to establish an outreach center in the city of Needles. The center operated in temporary buildings on the campus of Needles High School for ten years. In 2008, the Needles Center moved operations into a reconstructed retail facility located in the center of town. The Needles Center now serves approximately 60 students, generating 100 FTES. Classes are conducted by adjunct instructors, as well as by three full-time faculty members. Additionally, many classes are taught via interactive television link-up with the Blythe campus.

The hospitality industry in and around Needles is forecast to increase during the next couple of years with the construction of the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe Casino/Hotel west of Needles on I-40 and the Holiday Inn Express. The College has long been considering the potential for educational programs in the hospitality industry for the Needles Center, and will continue these explorations as the market potential in Needles increases.

[14] City of Needles history and demographics; see also the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, 2009, page 10*ff*

The Colorado River and the I-40 highway influence the economy of Needles. More than one million vehicles pass through Needles each year, and the Colorado River attracts water sports and fishing enthusiasts. These economic conditions are reflected in the ten services stations, seven hotels, thirteen food outlets and ten automotive repair shops that serve Needles and the surrounding areas.

The largest employers in this area are the casinos in Laughlin, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad in Needles, the hospitals in Bullhead City, Fort Mohave and Needles, the municipalities within the area, the school districts in those municipalities, PG&E, Trans Western, So Cal, and Wal-Mart.

Interstate 40 traverses Needles east to west, with Highway 95 (the Trans-National Highway from Mexico to Canada) providing north-south access. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad has a hub at Needles. Amtrak provides two trains a day from Needles to Los Angeles, and Needles to Chicago. Local bus service is provided by the Needles Area Transit that runs at scheduled intervals throughout the City. The $10 million restoration of the historic El Garces Hotel/Santa Fe Depot in Needles will house an Intermodal transportation center for Amtrak, as well as regional and local bus lines.

Off-Campus Sites

The College conducts ongoing review of its learning support services for students at off-campus sites, including overall management of the correspondence and distance education program, staffing of the Needles Center, tutoring and support services at the correctional facilities and monitoring of specialized programs offered through instructional services agreements. Here is a review of progress in these areas:

The Needles Center[15] operates from a reconstructed retail facility located in the center of town. The Needles Center serves approximately 60 students, generating 100 FTES. Classes are conducted by adjunct instructors, as well as by three full-time faculty members. Additionally, many classes are taught via interactive television link-up with the Blythe campus. The Needles Center director recently hired an adjunct faculty member to provide tutoring in math. To address the need for tutoring in basic skills English, the Needles director is in the process of finding an adjunct English instructor, who would provide tutoring and teach face-to-face English sections as well.

Tutoring assistance for incarcerated students at each of the prison locations is provided by proctors who are employed in the education department of the prison, or inmates with associate's or bachelor's degrees who work under the direction of the proctor.

[15] Needles Center, on the College website

A variety of other academic services is available to incarcerated students through an agreement between Palo Verde College and the prison institutions.[16] The agreement enumerates the responsibilities of the correctional facilities in providing instructional support services, including testing, proctoring, tutoring and other services. Access to computer laboratories and tutors is limited due to the regulated environment for inmates.

The College also conducts a number of specialized instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district, with the approval of the community college districts serving these areas. The largest of the off-site providers is Industrial Emergency Council, or IEC. College officials inspect IEC facilities periodically, usually once per year to ensure the quality of the programs and facilities. ISA programs are managed by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. A counseling faculty member whose primary assignment is advising incarcerated students and students at the Needles Center is also available to provide counseling services to students enrolled in courses established through College's instructional services agreements.

[16] See agreement, Internal Operational Procedures of Incarcerated Individuals with State Participation, July 1, 2012, p. 1

ORGANIZATION OF THE SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS

The Self-Evaluation process began nearly six years ago, following the 2008 accreditation visit and report. The College was put on warning from June 2008 to January 2010. The College addressed all the recommendations of the visiting team and ACCJC through a series of follow-up reports: in 2008 (with team re-visit), in 2009 (with team re-visit) and in 2010. The financial crisis that came to light in mid-2011 also resulted in a series of special reports and site visits. The College was placed on probation from June 2012 to early 2013. The College has been involved intensively with accreditation issues throughout this time period, an experience that was part of the preparation for the present Self-Evaluation report.

Work preparing for the present report began about two years ago with the appointment of members of the Accreditation Team, popularly known as the "A-Team". Chaired by the Accreditation Liaison Officer, the Accreditation Team consists of 19 members representing all constituent groups: students, faculty, staff and administrators. The Accreditation Liaison Officer himself has served in that capacity since 2007, having chaired the accreditation process in 2008 and having participated on about a half-dozen visiting teams to other colleges.

The findings, assessments and objectives presented in the Self-Evaluation report are the result of discussions and recommendations of the Accreditation Team and from other members of the College community. Because of the College's small size, and in view of the interrelatedness of the accreditation themes, the Accreditation Team decided to work through the writing of the Self-Evaluation report as a group instead of breaking down into subcommittees.

The findings of the Self-Evaluation report are also the product of discussions and recommended actions generated in other College venues comprising all members of the College community. These venues consist of Flex Days, Institute Days, all-staff meetings, Academic Senate meetings, division meetings, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee meetings, and numerous other occasions—formal and informal—where dialog about the College and its future takes place.

In its final year of preparation, during 2013, the draft Self-Evaluation study was posted on the College website, and was continuously updated as revisions and corrections were made and new sections completed. The College community thus was provided the opportunity to observe the report as it was being created and to comment on it throughout its development.

Accreditation issues such as student learning outcomes and assessments, strategic planning and budget development were presented during various Flex Days, all-staff meetings and other committees such as the Budget Committee, Program Review Committee and the College Council Strategic Planning Steering Committee.[17] The Institute Day August 30, 2013 was, in part, devoted to accreditation issues, and was presented by the Accreditation Liaison Officer.

[17] Flex Day agendas and Institute Day agendas

The following are members of the College's Accreditation Team, with their constituent group and department affiliations identified[18]:

Brian Thiebaux, Faculty, ALO, A-Team Chair
Lupita Andrade, Management
Russi Egan, Administration
Sarah Frid, Management
Michael Gaubeca, Faculty
Adam Houston, Management
Sharon Jones, Administration
Diana Mendez, Management
Debbie Mitchell, Management
Carrie Mullion, Confidential Staff
Biju Raman, Faculty
Esther Rice, Classified Staff
Hortensia Rivera, Faculty
Rich Soto, Classified Staff
Stephanie Slagan, Classified Staff
Dan Spechtenhauser, Classified Staff
Sioux Stoeckle, Faculty
June Turner, Faculty
Dr. Don Wallace, Administration

[18] A-Team agendas

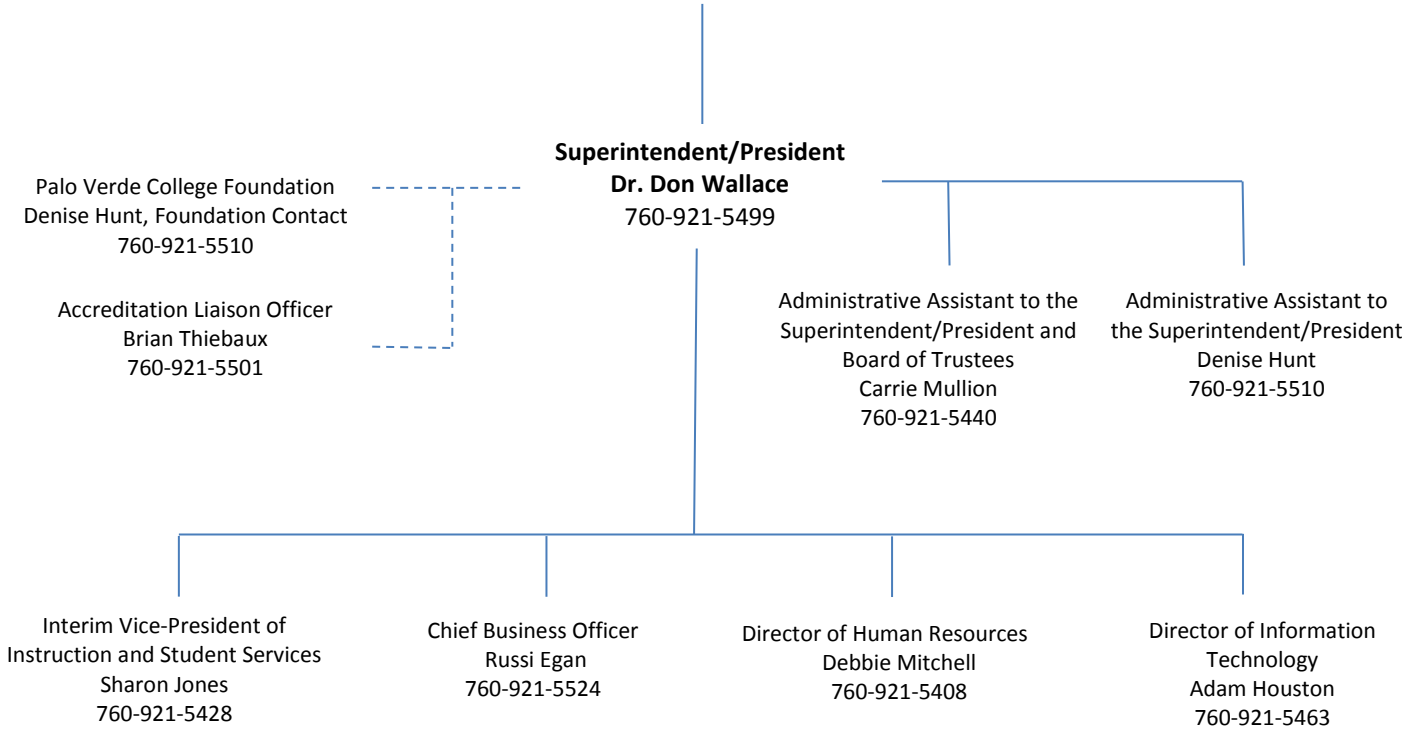
ORGANIZATION OF PALO VERDE COLLEGE

The charts on this page and on the following pages represent the College's key organizational functions and the individuals responsible for them, as of December 2013. A complete listing of college organizations and committees, together with meeting times and members' names is published annually and distributed to the College community.[19]

Board of Trustees and Key Administrators and Functions:

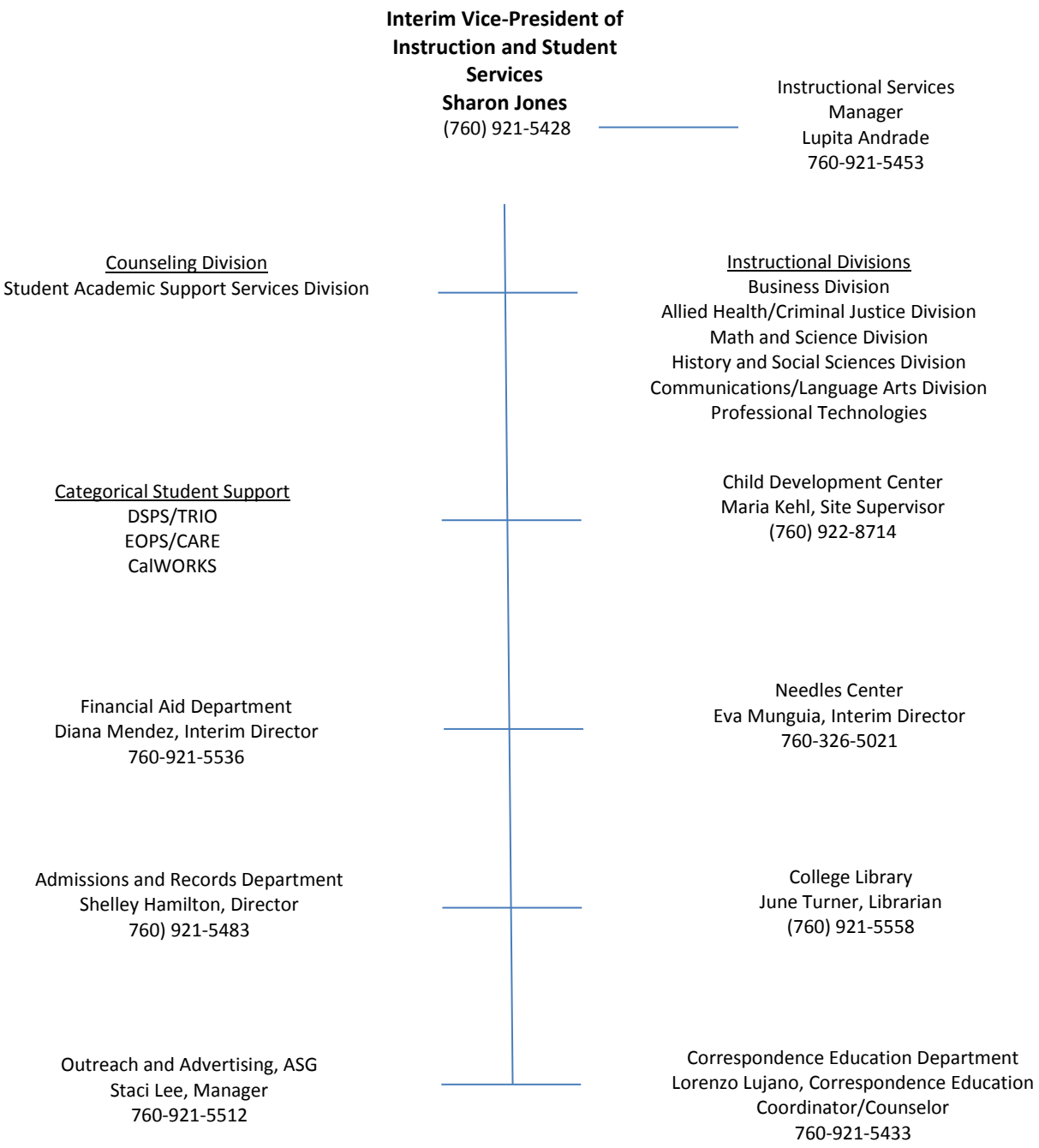
Board of Trustees

Ermila "Millie" Rodriguez, President
George Thomas, Vice President
Ned Hyduke, Clerk of the Board
Lincoln Edmund, Trustee
Ed Gonzales, Trustee
Ted Arneson, Trustee
Jerry Lewis, Trustee
Alex Munoz, Student Trustee

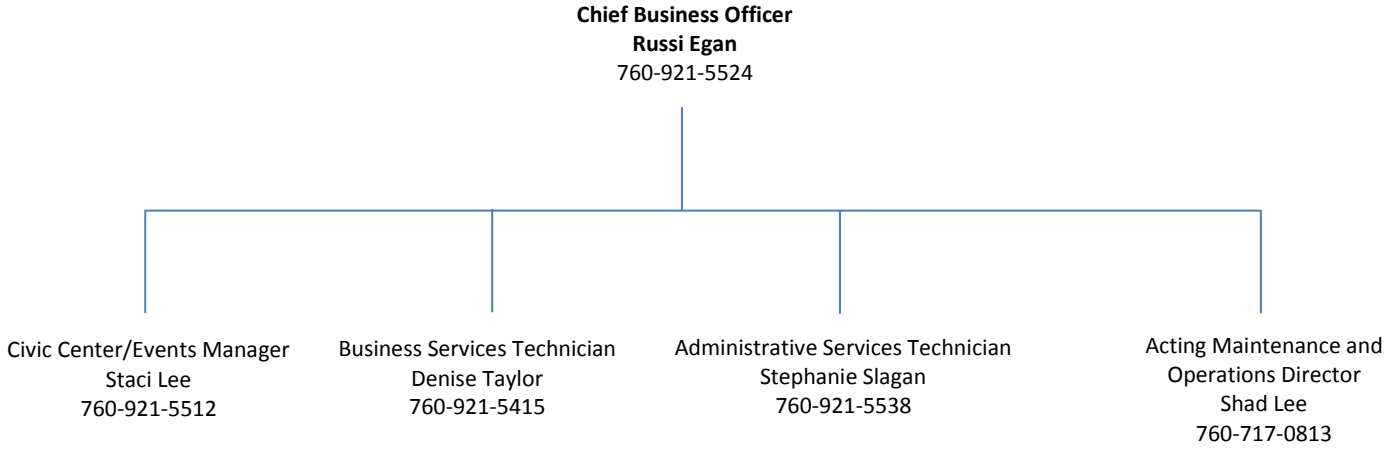


[19] College Organizations and Committees, 2013-14

Office of Instructional and Student Services:



Business Office:



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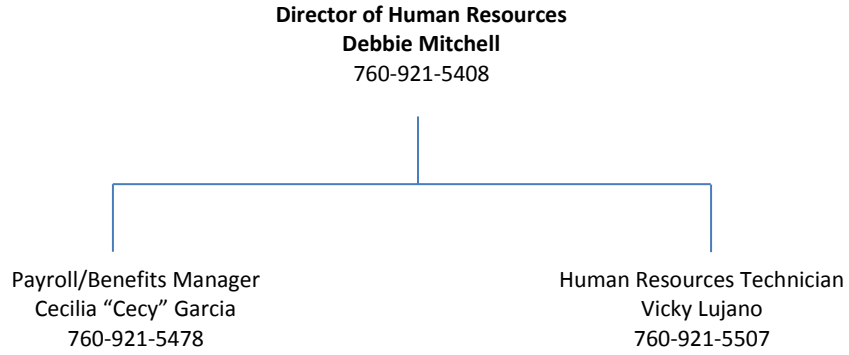
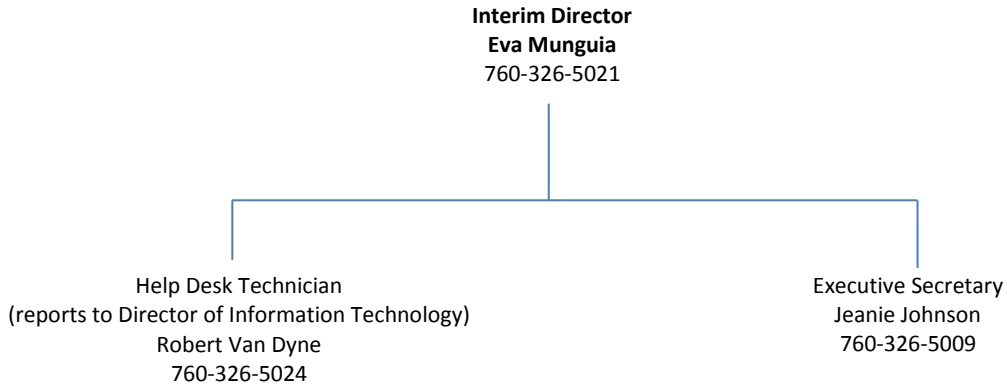
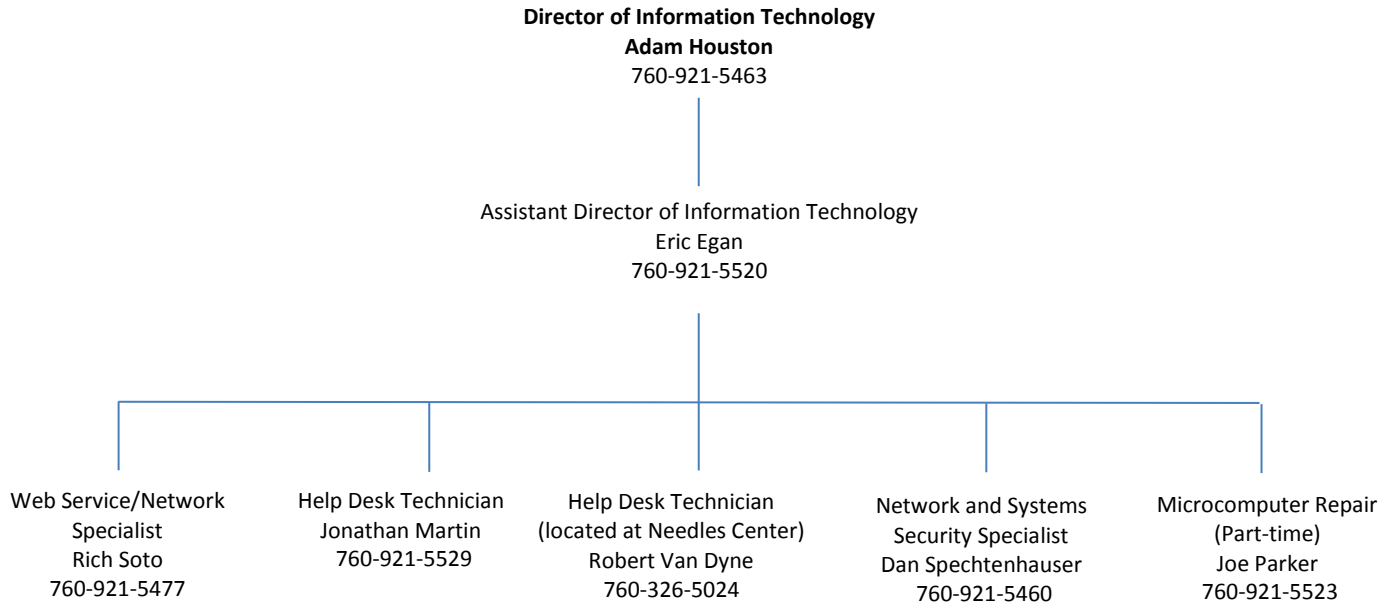


Needles Center:



Information Technology:



CERTIFICATION OF CONTINUED INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE
WITH ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Authority: Founded in 1947, Palo Verde College was originally accredited by the California Board of Education. In 1952, the College's accreditation was continued under the jurisdiction of the predecessor agency to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The educational facility in Needles, originally operated by the San Bernardino Community College District, was acquired by Palo Verde College in 1999 by agreement between the two districts. In 2006, the California Postsecondary Education Commission recognized Needles as an official outreach center.

   Palo Verde College District is regulated by the California Community College Board of Governors and is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

2. Mission: The statement of Vision, Mission, and Values and the Strategic Plan were developed by the College community in Fall Semester 2001 and subsequently adopted by the Board of Trustees. The Mission Statement has been reviewed by the College on several occasions since 2002, and was most recently updated in Spring 2013. The Strategic Plan was renamed the Integrated Strategic Plan in 2013.[20] The Statement of Vision, Mission and Values is published in the College Catalog.[21] The Mission Statement appears in the Schedule of Classes each semester.[22]

3. Governing Board (Board of Trustees): The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the College and of its student learning programs and services, to assure the financial stability of the institution and to select and evaluate the Superintendent/President are established and in effect in Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures.[23]

   To ensure that the Board of Trustees acts as an independent body, free of influence or economic interest in its decisions, members are required to file a conflict of interest statement in accordance with the provisions of Government Code of the State of California and restated in policy of the Board of Trustees.[24]

   Each member of the Board of Trustees is required to adhere to the provisions of the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which state, in part: "I am committed to serve the needs of the citizens of the District…I am responsible to all citizens of the District, and not solely to those who elected me. The authority delegated

[20] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16
[21] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 9
[22] Schedule of Classes, Spring Semester 2014, page 4
[23] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2431, AP 2431 and BP 2435, AP 2435
[24] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2710 and AP 2710

to me by the voters must be exercised with as much care and concern for the least influential as for the most influential member of the community."[25]

4. Chief Executive Officer: The chief executive officer of the College is Dr. Don Wallace, Superintendent/President. He is appointed by the Board of Trustees and his full-time responsibility is to the College. The Board of Trustees delegates to the Superintendent/President the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board requiring administrative action.[26]

5. Administrative Capacity: The College has sufficient administrative staff with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support its mission and purpose. Organization charts are found in this report in the section Organization of Palo Verde College.

6. Operational Status: The College is operational, with students actively pursuing its degree and certificate programs.[27]

7. Degrees: A substantial portion of the College's educational offerings are programs that lead to degrees, and a significant proportion of its students are enrolled in them.[28]

8. Educational Programs: All of the College's associate degree and certificate programs reflect the College's Mission Statement by providing quality educational programs in recognized higher education fields.[29]

9. Academic Credit: The College's semester units of credit vis-à-vis instructor-student contact hours are consistent with the California Education Code and policies established by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office.[30]

   For students intending to transfer credits to a four-year institution, the College publishes detailed information in the Catalog in the section Requirements for Certificates, Degrees and University Transfer.[31] The explanation pertains to transfer to California State University campuses, University of California and private colleges and universities.

   For students seeking to transfer credits from another institution to the College, the Catalog makes clear that students must submit transcripts to the Admissions and Records Director and that credits must be earned from an accredited institution. Furthermore, the College has procedures in place to facilitate transcript analysis, and this procedure is

[25] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715
[26] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2430
[27] Degree and Certificate Awards, 2010 to 2013; Schedule of Classes, Spring Semester 2014
[28] Degree and Certificate Awards, 2010 to 2013
[29] College Catalog, 2013-14, Programs of Study, page 71*ff*
[30] Calculating Class Hours (Student Contact Hours)
[31] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 63*ff*

provided to prospective students when they apply for admission to the College and seek to apply credits toward their degree.

10. Student Learning Achievement: Student learning outcomes for courses, degrees, certificates, and learning support programs, as well as institutional learning outcomes, were developed by faculty and constituent participation and are listed on the College website.[32] Student learning outcomes for degrees and certificates, as well as institutional outcomes, are listed in the College Catalog.[33]

11. General Education: General courses for all associate degrees offered by the College include learning outcomes in the areas of humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. General education includes outcomes in oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means. General education also includes outcomes in ethics, interpersonal skills, respect for cultural diversity, and the willingness to assume civic, political and social responsibility. Courses in each of these disciplines contain learning outcome requirements that are listed in the course outlines of record.

12. Academic Freedom: The College has Board of Trustees' policies on academic freedom for faculty as well as for students.[34]

13. Faculty: The College has a sufficient number of qualified faculty members with full-time responsibilities to the institution and with the credentials and experience to support the College's educational programs. Among the assigned faculty responsibilities provided for in the current CTA-District Agreement 2013-16 is "curriculum or program development and evaluation."[35]

14. Student Services: In keeping with its Mission Statement, the College provides "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."[36] The College offers instructional programs and instructional support services to all students able to benefit from its programs. These programs are diverse; they include preparation for transfer, as well as professional and personal enrichment: the College offers certificates and degrees that prepare students for productive careers and for transfer to four-year institutions, and offers opportunities for personal and professional enrichment in credit and noncredit courses and programs. The College offers its courses in correspondence, distance education and face-to-face modes to accommodate the life circumstances of its students, many of whom must balance the demands of family, work and school, and many of whom are pursuing their education while incarcerated.

[32] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[33] College Catalog, 2013-14, Institutional Learning Outcomes, page 10; Programs of Study, pages 71*ff*
[34] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4030, AP 4030-0, AP 4030-1
[35] CTA-District Agreement, 2013-2016, Article IV, Section 7, General Time Assignments
[36] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9

In light of the diversity of programs and opportunities available to prospective students, the College provides educational support services that evaluate students' needs, recommend appropriate educational pathways, encourage progress along those pathways, and provide appropriate assistance when it is needed to keep students on track.

The College has a well-defined Student Success and Support Program (formerly, Matriculation) described in the College Catalog.[37]

15. Admissions: Admissions and enrollment policies are published in the College Catalog and Student Handbook and describe matters of eligibility, residency, open enrollment, fees and factors that may limit enrollment, such as pre-requisites and co-requisites.[38]

16. Information and Learning Resources: The College supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and tutoring services to students. The College Library maintains print and online database research resources and offers services that are current and sufficient in quantity, depth and variety to support learning programs offered by the College.

    All students, including those enrolled at the Needles Center, have access to online research databases through the library page of the College website.[39] For incarcerated students, who are restricted access to online services by prison rules and policies, the College provides research assistance, when requested, through library personnel via correspondence.

17. Financial Resources: The College is in the process of recovering from a significant financial crisis that came to light in mid-2011. These problems included: a) projected FTES shortfall; b) the prospect of large, ongoing debt repayments on certificates of participation; violation of the 50% law; c) overreliance on FTES from incarcerated students and from instructional services agreements; d) inadequate long-range budget planning; and e) a reserve fund under 5%. Once these conditions were disclosed, the College took swift action to address them, including changes in senior administration, creation of incentives to encourage early retirement and voluntary separations, significant reductions throughout the institution in expenditures, and the relocation of several student services personnel, possessing appropriate qualifications, into instruction. The result was a greatly reduced, but very effective, workforce, a balanced budget, compliance with the 50% law and contingency plans to deal with the annual COP debt payment. The College also went into a stabilization process to protect against losses resulting from fluctuating FTES. At present, the College has resolved many of its financial problems, with the exception of FTES projections, which are lower than expected for 2013-14.[40]

[37] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 25*ff*
[38] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 16*ff*
[39] Library website
[40] ACCJC Letter, July 3, 2013

18. Financial Accountability: Each year the College arranges for an independent financial audit by a reputable CPA firm.[41] The independent audit report contains a Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs in which the auditor recommends changes in accounting and financial management procedures that will improve the accuracy and reliability of the College's financial statements. Each audit report also includes a follow-up on action taken by the College to resolve findings of prior years. The College systematically follows up on prior years' recommendations and has made changes that subsequently proved acceptable to the auditors.

    The financial crisis alluded to in ER 17 above resulted in substantial changes in the way budgeting and forecasting are handled. The Chief Business Officer and the Superintendent/President closely monitor the College's monthly expenditures and FTES projections as well as multi-year forecasts; Budget Committee meetings are announced to all members of the College community to encourage attendance and participation; and the College consults with a financial advisor with expertise with public finance, specifically COPs funding arrangements. The College also refined its budgeting procedure to integrate it better with program review and strategic planning.[42]

    In order to keep the Board of Trustees more informed about budget practices and the College's financial situation, the College formed, in 2012, the Board Audit and Finance Committee. The committee meets twice each semester, or as needed, to assess the College's financial condition.[43]

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation: The College is committed to continuous evaluation and improvement in its programs and services, a commitment that is evident in the revisions, currently in progress, of several important processes, namely, program review, budget cycle, learning outcomes assessments, and faculty job performance evaluations. These matters are discussed in detail in Standard I.B, Institutional Effectiveness and elsewhere in this report. To be successful in implementing such revisions, the College recognizes the importance of vigilant follow-up on what has been started.

20. Public Information: All items public information identified in this Eligibility Requirement appear in the College Catalog and on the College website.[44] See also the discussion of Standard II.B.2, regarding information provided in the College Catalog.

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission: In addition to working with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), the College works cooperatively with the accrediting agencies of specific programs, including nursing, administration of justice and alcohol and drug studies.

[41] Independent Audit Report, 2013 and Independent Audit Reports, 2009-2012
[42] Integrated Budget, Program Review, and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative
[43] Board Audit and Finance Committee, agendas and minutes, on the College website
[44] College Catalog, 2013-14; see also College website: www.paloverde.edu

That the College complies with accreditation standards, policies and guidelines, and ACCJC requirements for public disclosure, Self-Study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes is evident by a review of the College's history. Since the start of the current accreditation cycle in 2008, the College has participated diligently in the accreditation process, and has complied with all requests by the ACCJC, completing all Follow-Up Reports, Special Reports, Midterm Report and a Substantive Change proposal. The College has submitted other reports to the Commission in a timely manner and has worked diligently to resolve the recommendations that emerged from the in the 2008 comprehensive visit and report.[45]

[45] Self-Study Report 2008

CERTIFICATION OF CONTINUED COMPLIANCE WITH COMMISSION POLICIES

1. Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education

   See the following Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:

   Distance Learning, BP 4105
   Distance Education, AP 4105-0
   Distance Education Interactive Television (ITV) Courses, AP 4105-1
   Correspondence Education, AP 4105-2

2. Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV

   See the following Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:

   Financial Aid, BP 5130
   Financial Aid, AP 5130

3. Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

   See the following Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:

   Visitors on Campus, AP 3826
   Permanent Academic Employees: Recruitment and Hiring AP 7210-0
   Student Services Program Review, 2010
   College website: From main page > Accreditation > Accreditation Status

4. Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits

   See Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:

   Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates AP 4100

5. Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics

   See Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:

   Code Ethics/Standards of Practice, BP 2715
   Institutional Code of Ethics, BP 3050
   See also: College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

6. Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations

The College conducts a number of specialized instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district, with the approval of the community college districts serving these areas. The largest of the off-site providers is Industrial Emergency Council, or IEC.

The contractual relationship between the College and IEC is governed by "ISA Agreement Guidelines for Community College Districts and Public Agencies (2012)."[46]

The contractual agreement between the College and IEC is: Master Agreement between Palo Verde Community College District and the Industrial Emergency Council, December 12, 2012.

7. See also Palo Verde College District Board of Trustees: Accreditation Resolution on Governance

[46] Guidelines for ISAs

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE
2008 COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION[47]

1. Team Recommendation 1-1

The team recommends that the College engage in systematic educational program planning guided by strategic dialogue and data. This planning should include the following:

Planning course offerings so students can complete a program in a timely manner (II.A.2)

The class scheduling procedure initiated in 2008 has, over the years, proven to be effective in reducing scheduling conflicts and facilitating student progress toward achieving educational goals.

The procedure centralizes class scheduling in the Office of Instruction and Student Services, but still provides faculty members some latitude in choosing classes and sections they want to teach among the options provided to them. The procedure also provides for dialogue between faculty divisions and the Office of Instruction and Student Services when scheduling changes are needed.

Once such change took place in 2011 when the Communications and Language Arts division decided to re-join lecture and lab sections for basic skills English courses, enabling the lecture and lab components of each class section to be taught by the same instructor. The arrangement was discussed with the Vice President of Instruction and the change implemented. The arrangement has proven to be beneficial to students and has improved attendance and success rates.[48]

Class scheduling plans are derived from the analysis of "fill rates" of courses from prior semesters and from recommendations from faculty. Schedule planning also is based on an analysis of forecasted needs, particularly in terms of achieving optimal combinations of delivery modes and scheduling times and days.

While educational planning has long been feature of the College's counseling services, the implementation of the Student Success and Support Program will place even more emphasis on students' understanding of educational plans, and will assist students in planning their courses of study more effectively.[49]

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[47] Prior to the present Institutional Self-Evaluation, the most recent College responses to the 2008 recommendations are to be found in the Accreditation Midterm Report, March 15, 2011

[48] Basic Skills success rates compared between 2009 and 2013

[49] PVC SLOs, Learning Support, Counseling; the student learning outcome for Student Academic Support Services, Counseling states: "Students will formulate an educational plan to help them achieve their educational goal."

2. Team Recommendation 1-2

The team recommends that the College engage in systematic educational program planning guided by strategic dialogue and data. This planning should include the following:

Educational program planning based on data about community and student needs (II.A.2)

The College conducts ongoing research, assessment and dialogue about community and students' educational needs, discusses findings and takes appropriate action to address those needs. The research and assessment has taken various forms. Here are some illustrative examples of such activity:

1. Each year, College hosts Career Day, an event providing students with information and guidance for careers and transfer to four-year institutions. The event addresses an ongoing need for students to utilize their education for productive careers and further academic study.

   In Spring Semester 2013, the College sponsored a *combined* career and transfer day the general topics of which were: transfer to four-year colleges and universities, local career opportunities and College support programs.[50] The event drew approximately 150 high school students from Blythe and surrounding communities.

2. Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs each have an advisory group whose purpose is to provide recommendations to faculty so that they may improve programs to better prepare students for future employment in their chosen areas. Most CTE advisory groups are composed of community volunteers representing business and industry, as well as College faculty, and meet about every two years.[51]

3. In 2009, the College established and filled a new position in CTE counseling. The position had been requested by all the College's CTE programs, and was expressed in program review updates and comprehensive reports.[52]

4. In 2009, the College completed work on the Educational and Facilities Master Plan which evaluates future facilities' to meet future needs of the College's academic and CTE programs.[53]

[50] Day's Events, Combined Career and Transfer Day, March 25, 2013
[51] Advisory Committees, 2013-14
[52] Automotive Technology Program Review, page 12; Welding Technology Program Review, page 6
[53] Educational and Facilities Master Plan, 2009

5. In 2010-11, the College administered the Noel-Levitz surveys of students, and College staff. The results provided useful guidance as to future program needs.[54]

6. In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year. The AS-T Administration of Justice and the AS-T Early Childhood Education will be ready in the near future.

7. In 2012, the College received a grant from the Southern California Edison Company, to provide educational programs and events in the recently-opened Fine and Performing Arts Center. To administer the grant and help plan programs, the College formed the SCE Grant Committee, with College and community participation. The grant helped cover the costs of several programs including the Young Americans workshop and production, Multicultural Festival, and the Boar's Head Festival.

8. In 2013, as a result of assessment of faculty needs and dialogue among constituent groups, the College created a new position in music, which was filled for a Fall Semester 2013 start date, and reinstated a faculty position, in English as a Second Language, which will be filled for Fall Semester 2014.[55] The music instructor position helped fill a need for music and other program in the arts for the Fine and Performing Arts Center. The ESL position will help address the need for better English language training in the community.

[54] Noel-Levitz 2010 survey results
[55] Analysis of need for music instructor; analysis of need for ESL instructor

3. Team Recommendation 1-3

The team recommends that the College engage in systematic educational program planning guided by strategic dialogue and data. This planning should include the following:

Clearly disseminating information about procedures to approve and evaluate courses and programs (II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e)

The College's commitment to continuous improvement in its courses and programs is evident in the following new developments:

1. The program review process has for many years been a very successful component of quality improvement for courses and programs at the College. The key document in program review is the Program Review Guide, prepared in 2006 with subsequent revisions approved by the Board of Trustees in 2009.[56] The Guide has been used by all academic, vocational, administrative operations and divisions in preparing program review reports. The Guide and prior years' program review reports are posted to the College website.[57]

   While it has been useful over the years, the College, through its Program Review Committee, is currently revising the program review process and the instructional and non-instructional templates.

   Changes to the program review process that have already been implemented effective Fall Semester 2013 are:

   a. The College increased the frequency of comprehensive program review reports from every five years to every three years. This change applies to all teaching and non-teaching programs and operations; CTE or vocational programs are updated every two years (as before), with comprehensive reviews every four years.[58]

   b. The Program Review Committee now provides training and orientation to program review preparers in the form of workshops conducted by members of the Program Review Committee.[59]

   c. The Program Review Committee now provides financial and enrollment data to program review preparers to ensure uniformity in reporting standards.

[56] Program Review Guide, 2009
[57] Program Review Reports
[58] Program Review scheduling matrix
[59] Program Review workshop agenda

Revision of the instructional and non-instructional templates is currently underway with implementation expected Fall Semester 2014.

2. The Curriculum Technical Review Committee was formed in Fall Semester 2012 to help reduce the workload of the Curriculum Committee in reviewing new and updated course outlines of record. The Technical Review Committee screens all course outlines for completeness, grammar, and accuracy prior to Curriculum Committee review.

3. The template of the course outline of record has been revised and improved several times over the past few years, most recently in Fall Semester 2012. The most significant change in recent years provides for separate sections on the template for face-to-face, correspondence and online education modes of delivery for each course.

   Revisions made in the course outline of record have been communicated to College faculty through the Academic Senate. The use of the course outline-of-record has been the subject of various faculty meetings, including Flex Days.

4. Commission Recommendation 1

The college should analyze and discuss the impact of current enrollment patterns, specifically the overreliance on a single ISA, on the fiscal stability of the college and develop a contingency plan for fiscal stability should the ISA be reduced or lost.

The College continues to monitor all of its instructional services programs (ISAs) in terms of the quality of instructional services, enrollments and FTES production. The largest FTES producer among the College's ISA programs is the Industrial Emergency Council (IEC). College officials inspect IEC facilities periodically, usually once per year to ensure the quality of the programs and facilities. ISA programs are managed by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

The College has taken steps to reduce its dependence on the FTES produced by the IEC by expanding other delivery modes, including correspondence and online education, and by continuously seeking new, and diversified, sources of FTES.

1. In Spring Semester 2012, the College received approval from the ACCJC to offer programs of study consisting of courses 50% of which are offered in correspondence mode.[60] The College now offers several associates degrees and certificates which may be earned entirely in correspondence mode. The approval provides the College with opportunities to expand its correspondence program.

2. The College now has the technology in the form of the Sakai learning system to offer online courses and seeks to expand them into one or more online associate degrees, in order to expand and diversify its student base.

3. The College was recently selected by the California Department of Corrections to take the lead in training incarcerated students who are soon to be released from prison in essential work skills they must have to make the successful transition from prison to a productive work life in public. The College will hire a small instructional staff and a supervisor to run the program at one of the nearby correctional facilities.

4. The College is also engaged in a pilot project, effective Fall Semester 2013, with the California Department of Corrections to deliver courses to incarcerated students in online mode. The project is taking place at Ironwood State Prison, near Blythe, and has statewide implications if it proves feasible.

5. The College is exploring other opportunities for revenue production, including:

    a. Expanded solar energy classes

[60] Proposal for Substantive Change in Delivery Methodology: Correspondence Education

b. Hatch Program, proving technology training for child care operators and their staffs

c. Developing partnerships with the local school districts to provide education and training for adults, to address needs resulting from recent state legislative changes affecting state funding for K-12 districts for such programs.

6. The College currently negotiating with the California Employment Development Department to locate its Blythe office on the campus of the College. While this action in itself will not produce FTES, the increase exposure of the campus to the general public will indirectly benefit the College.

5. Team Recommendation 2-1

The team recommends that the College more systematically evaluate its processes using both quantitative and qualitative data. The following processes are especially in need of systematic assessment:

Professional development programs (III.A.5.b)

The Director of Human Resources has maintained reports on professional development programs and has been presenting them to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee for review.[61]

Despite the tight budget, the College recognizes the need for ongoing professional development for the faculty and staff, and has conducted many such training opportunities at comparatively little cost, as discussed more fully in Standard III.A.5.

Training and staff development take place in various campus venues and occasions, including all-staff meetings, Flex Days and Institute Days, and are planned to meet faculty and staff needs.[62]

The College implemented in Spring Semester 2013 a fee waiver program that encourages staff to take courses at the College to help fulfill their educational goals, an opportunity that has been pursued by many College personnel.[63]

As a result of the financial crisis that occurred over the past two years, the College has been understandably cautious in all expenditures, including professional development. Nonetheless, the College has found ways to maintain professional development training that is affordable.

[61] HR-Staff Development Process reports
[62] Flex Day agendas and Institute Day agendas
[63] Enrollment Fee Waiver agreements, CSEA and CTA

6. Team Recommendation 2-2

The team recommends that the College more systematically evaluate its processes using both quantitative and qualitative data. The following processes are especially in need of systematic assessment:

Effective use of human resources—allocation of human resources (III.A.6)

The fiscal crisis that came to light in mid-2011 resulted in an extensive reassessment of staffing needs, including consideration of reorganizing the College. The allocation of staff resources is discussed extensively in the College's accreditation Follow-Up Report, October 15, 2013.[64] The matter is also discussed later in the present Self-Evaluation report in Standard III.A.2.

The key changes in staffing that have occurred in the past two years are:

- Creation of incentives, in 2012, to encourage early retirement or voluntary separation from the College service, to reduce staff expense

- Moving several student services personnel into instruction, to bring the College into compliance with the 50% law (one of the compliance problems the College discovered in mid-2011)

- Creation of a new faculty position (in music), in 2013, and filling it, to address an instructional need and to comply with the 50% law

- Merging senior administrative oversight of instruction and student services into a single position at the vice-presidential level, to reduce personnel expense, in 2012

These and other changes were implemented after extensive collegial dialog among all College constituents. At the present time, the College has increased administrative support slightly over the past year. Nonetheless, the College is able to operate effectively with the staffing it has now.[65]

[64] Accreditation Follow-Up Report, October 15, 2013

[65] Accreditation Follow-Up Report, October 15, 2013, pages 8 and 15-16

7. Team Recommendation 2-3

The team recommends that the College more systematically evaluate its processes using both quantitative and qualitative data. The following processes are especially in need of systematic assessment:

Strategic planning and budgeting processes (I.B.6, III.D.2)

The fiscal problems that came to light in July 2011 forced the College to critically evaluate its processes in planning and budgeting, as well as financial management (as discussed under item 8, Team Recommendation 2-4, following) and to make improvements. The role of the Budget Committee (previously chaired by the then-Vice President of Business Services), was expanded by Interim Superintendent/President Denise Whittaker with full review of all budget processes and with attainment of greater transparency and greater constituent participation.

The result of the Budget Committee recommendations, with concurrence of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee was a program of cost-saving measures that included incentives to encourage early staff retirements and separations from service. The budget process that had been in place was temporarily suspended, and in its place the College implemented a strict rollover of the prior year's budget for all departments and divisions.

In 2012, the Budget Committee introduced an annual program review "snapshot" procedure that sought to strengthen the link between budget decisions and the program review process. Divisions and departments were asked to submit proposals for one-time-only and ongoing funding for uses that were outside their regular rollover budgets. The requests were tabulated and presented to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee for prioritization and funding, should funds be available.

The problem with the snapshot process was that it involved program review in name only. The Program Review Committee did not have the opportunity to review any of the snapshot requests and evaluate them on the strength of their stated justifications.

Prior to the introduction of the program review snapshot, budget requests for extraordinary items had been reviewed by the Budget Committee included in routine budget requests. Conversely, when budget needs were expressed in program review reports, such requests, together with Program Review Committee comments, were sent to the Budget Committee before recommendations were made to the Strategic Planning/Steering Committee. That procedure integrated program review with the budget process and with strategic planning. When the Budget Committee needed to, it could review past years' program review reports to find justification for extraordinary budget requests. The fact that program reviews, at that time, were conducted only once every five years, however, often resulted in fruitless searches for justification: budget needs of today may not have been considered five years earlier.

Having evaluated the annual snapshot process and recognized its shortcomings, the College has refined the process, combining elements of the previous budget system with a revised version of

the annual snapshot. The system was adopted by both the Budget Committee and Program Review Committee. To ensure continuity and coordination between the Budget Committee and Program Review Committee, one individual is a member of both committees. The Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart describes graphically how the system works.[66] The following is a narrative version of the flow chart.

Budget Route:

1. The budget process starts with the preparation of annual budget proposals by departments and divisions. Routine rollover requests are usually based on the preceding year's spending. Discretionary funding items (formerly the "snapshot") outside of rollover requests are also submitted by departments and divisions to the Budget Committee.

2. Rollover proposals are reviewed by the Budget Committee, and recommendations are transmitted to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee for review. Discretionary proposals are prioritized by the Budget Committee *in consultation with the Program Review Committee,* and Budget Committee recommendations are sent to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

3. The College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee makes recommendations on rollover and discretionary proposals and sends them on the Board of Trustees.

4. Board of Trustees' decisions are transmitted back to the originating departments and divisions.

Program Review Route:

5. Program Review reports are initiated by departments and divisions in accordance with procedures outlined in the *Program Review Guide*.

6. Program Review Committee reviews program review reports, engages in dialog with the originating division or department, as needed, to clarify program review reports. The Program Review Committee *consults with the Budget Committee, as needed, to address requests for discretionary funding*.

7. The Program Review Committee transmits program review reports with recommendations to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

8. The College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee makes recommendations on program review reports and transmits them to the Board of Trustees.

9. Board of Trustees' decisions are transmitted back to the originating departments and divisions.

[66] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart

8. Team Recommendation 2-4

The team recommends that the College more systematically evaluate its processes using both quantitative and qualitative data. The following processes are especially in need of systematic assessment:

Financial management practices (III.D.2g)

The fiscal crisis that came to light in July 2011 resulted in significant changes in College's financial management practices, more fully described in Standard III.D in this Institutional Self-Evaluation report. These changes include:

1. The College's Chief Business Officer and her staff continuously monitor key financial and compliance indicators, including the 50% Law ratio of teaching to non-teaching personnel expenses, reserve fund balance, cash flow, FTES forecasting, LAIF/COP capital fund balance and evaluation of the College's debt picture.

2. The Chief Business Officer makes herself available to make frequent reports to all College constituencies to ensure that faculty and staff are fully informed of the College's financial condition. Budget Committee meetings, held approximately every month, are open to all College personnel, not just committee members, helping ensure greater transparency in the College's financial practices.

3. The College is engaged in ongoing consultation with a financial consultant possessing expertise in public finance. The consultation ensures that the College is receiving the best advice on a timely basic particularly with regard to managing the College's debt obligation, the LAIF/COP capital fund and examining financing options such as refinancing the current debt and evaluating the potential for general obligation bond refinancing.

4. As described in the response to item 7, Team Recommendation 2-3 above, the College has refined the integration of budget, program review and strategic planning that had formerly been in place. The refinement combines elements of the previous budget system with a revised version of the annual snapshot. The process is represented graphically in the Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart, and accompanying narrative. The integration of these processes helps provide greater transparency, and makes for more effective decisions affecting the College.

9. Commission Recommendation 2

The College should provide evidence that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes (III.A.1.c).

The College has addressed this recommendation, through the collective bargaining process with the CTA faculty association for implementation for faculty scheduled for evaluation in Fall Semester 2013. The faculty evaluation process was amended to include wording calling for self-disclosure of the faculty member's completion of student learning outcomes assessments. The amendment appears in the Professional Self-Disclosure Statement both for teaching and non-teaching faculty and reads as follows:

> I adhere to established State, College and division academic standards and practices regarding course organization including preparation and distribution to students of course syllabi, inclusion in syllabi of basic information (such as course content, course organization, grading standards, and attendance requirements), regular assessment of student learning outcomes [emphasis added] and consistency with the College academic calendar, evidenced as follows: (Teaching Faculty Professional Self-Disclosure Statement)[67]

> I demonstrate professionalism as evidenced by: regular assessment of student learning outcomes [emphasis added], cooperativeness with the College community and the public; and punctual attendance at shared governance functions, student appointments, assigned committee meetings, and other relevant activities: (Non-Teaching Faculty Professional Self-Disclosure Statement)[68]

[67] Teaching Faculty Evaluation Procedure, Professional Development Self-Disclosure Statement, page 19
[68] Non-Teaching Faculty Evaluation Procedure, Professional Development Self-Disclosure Statement, page 4

10. Team Recommendation 3

As noted by the 2002 team, the College should ensure that the College catalog provides clear and precise program and course description information about their degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected SLOs (II.A.6, II.B.2, ER 20).

The College has made tremendous improvements in the College Catalog over the past several years, with clearer and more accurate course, program and support services information. The current College Catalog lists student learning outcomes for certificates and associate degrees.[69] Student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, associate degrees, learning support program and institutional outcomes are published on the College website.[70]

[69] College Catalog, 2013-14, Programs of Study, page 73*ff*
[70] PVC SLOs, on Accreditation page of College web site

11. Commission Recommendation 3

The College should ensure its compliance with standards relating to the evaluation of administrators. (III.A.1.b, III.A.5, IV.B.1.j).

Performance evaluations for administrators on track and are handled as follows:

1. The Superintendent/President is evaluated annually by the Board of Trustees. The procedure for the evaluation is spelled out in Board policies and administrative procedures.[71] The executive secretary to the Superintendent/President initiates the evaluation process; the process is handled by the President of the Board of Trustees.

2. Academic administrators, classified management and confidential employees are evaluated in accordance with Board policies and administrative procedures.[72] The process is initiated by the Director of Human Resources.

[71] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2435 and AP 2435
[72] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7262 and AP 7262

12. Commission Recommendation 4

The College should demonstrate that its Program Review processes are fully integrated with the budget and planning processes and at the proficiency level as described in the Commission's Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness Parts I and II (I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, II.A.2.e, II. A.2.f., III.A.6, III.B.2.a-b, III.C.2, III.D.3)

The College's midterm accreditation report, 2011, states that the program review process is fully integrated with budgeting and strategic planning in that all program review reports were reviewed by both the Program Review Committee and the Budget Committee.[73] Since that time the College has refined the process as explained in the response to items 7 Team Recommendation 2-3 and Team Recommendation 2-4, earlier in this Self-Evaluation report.

In Spring 2012, the College experimented with a program review "snapshot" that gave divisions and departments the opportunity to request funding for needs that otherwise remained unmet through the rollover budget process. Requests were then prioritized by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and funding decisions were made as far as available funds allowed. The snapshot process unfortunately left out the Program Review Committee in the process, and was subsequently revised.

The revised process has the Budget Committee review rollover as well as "discretionary" (unmet needs) requests, but with consultation with the Program Review Committee, as described in the Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and accompanying narrative.[74] A Program Review member also is a member of the Budget Committee, providing continuity and communication between the two committees.

The College believes it is at the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement level of the ACCJC rubric for program review.

SCQI Rubric Standard: *Program review processes are ongoing, systematic and used to assess and improve student learning and achievement.*

> College Response: The program review process has been in effect for many years, as evidenced by the production of reports, instructional and non-instructional, posted to the College website. The program review templates require each division and department to comment on their contribution to student learning and to student learning outcomes.

SCQI Rubric Standard: *The institution reviews and refines its program review processes to improve institutional effectiveness.*

> College Response: The College is presently refining its program review processes to include more frequent reporting. Changes implemented to date include: workshop

[73] Midterm Accreditation Report, March 15, 2011, page 18
[74] Integrated Budget, Program Review, and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative

training for divisions and departments conducting program review; a shorter program review cycle, from once every five years to once every three years

SCQI Rubric Standard: The results of program review are used to continually refine and improve program practices resulting in appropriate improvements in student achievement and learning.

College Response: Each program review report, among other things, is required to evaluate progress in achieving goals established in the previous report, thus maintaining a forward momentum in continuous quality improvement in all programs. Some examples of changes that have improved student achievement and learning are:

- Math and Science division faculty reported on the positive impact on student learning the Hawkes Learning Program that had been implemented two years earlier.

- College Librarian reported that she had improved the Library website, providing students and other users with better access to more research resources.

- Business division reported that the Computer Information Systems department had implemented new certificates in Graphic and Web Design, which have proven to be successful certificate programs.

- Communications and Language Arts division reported improvements to its basic skills lab arrangements and the addition of a work of fiction in its ENG 101 curriculum.

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION USING COMMISSION STANDARDS
2014

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

The institution demonstrates strong commitment to a mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning and to communicating the mission internally and externally. The institution uses analyses of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished.

Standard I.A Mission

The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.

College Response to Standard I.A.: Mission

Palo Verde College's Statement of Vision, Mission and Values was originally written, along with the Strategic Plan, in 2002 through the efforts of a team of College constituents led by an external consultant. Since 2002, these statements have been reviewed, and updated where needed, about every other year by College constituents, and changes were reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. The most current update took place in 2012-13, resulting in the following revised Mission Statement:

> **Palo Verde College is a California community college that supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services. The College promotes student success and lifelong learning for a diverse community of learners.**

Similarly, the Strategic Plan was revised in 2013 by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, to reflect structural and programmatic changes having taken place in the College in recent years. The title of the plan was changed to the *Integrated* Strategic Plan to reflect its inclusiveness and its role as a central planning document. The statements of vision and values have remained unchanged. The Integrated Strategic Plan, along with the revised Mission Statement was reviewed and approved by constituent organizations, and subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 25, 2013 regular meeting.[75]

[75] Board of Trustees' Minutes, June 25, 2013, page 24

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.A

The College has developed a Mission Statement that defines the College's broad educational purpose and emphasizes the College's commitment to quality education and learning. The Mission Statement was first written in 2002 and was subsequently reviewed with minor modifications over the years.

College Action Plan for Standard I.A.

The College demonstrates that it has achieved and has maintained this Standard.

Standard I.A.1

The institution establishes student learning programs aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.

College Response to Standard I.A.1

The Mission Statement demonstrates how the College's learning programs are aligned with its purposes, character and student population.

The first sentence of the Mission Statement remains largely unchanged from its previous version: the College supports an "exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."[76] The term "learning environment" stresses the College's commitment to student learning and to providing the facilities, instructional delivery modes (face-to-face, online, correspondence and ITV), counseling staff and administrative staff, curriculum and teaching faculty to support learning.

Educational programs and support services that constitute the College's learning environment are "high quality," as evidenced by the selection of a fully qualified teaching and support staff, periodic and rigorous performance evaluation procedures, and a program review system that evaluates and improves upon all College educational services, instructional and non-instructional. To maintain consistency and rigor in courses offered in various delivery modes, each course outline-of-record describes, as applicable, face-to-face, online and ITV, and correspondence components of each course. Each delivery mode component of each course outline is reviewed and approved by the sponsoring division and Curriculum Committee. Approved course-outlines-of-record are published on the College website. [77]

The College "promotes student success" through the efforts of a dedicated staff of teachers, counselors and support personnel, who, in their commitment to student learning, seek to

[76] The previous Mission Statement read as follows: "Palo Verde College is a California community college that provides an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services. The College promotes student success, lifelong learning and community development. Our goal is to create better futures for our students and our communities."

[77] Course outlines-of-record, Curriculum Committee website

encourage students to perform to their potential, and to help students, where possible, remove barriers that hinder academic success. The College's emphasis on "lifelong learning" refers to helping students acquire an appreciation for learning, intellectual curiosity and critical thinking that will remain with them for life.[78]

The phrase "diverse community of learners" refers to several ideas that constitute the College's learning environment.

One, the College provides instruction and support to students with a diversity of educational plans and goals, including the acquisition of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics to qualify for enrollment in college-level courses, completion of Career Training and Education (CTE) certificates and associate degrees, transfer to four-year institutions and personal enrichment.

Two, the College provides instruction in a diversity of teaching modes including face-to-face, online, correspondence and interactive television (ITV). The importance of maintaining quality and rigor in the various course delivery modes is evident the College's Integrated Strategic Plan.[79] Delivery modes are determined by faculty, in consultation with the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.[80]

Three, the College provides instruction and support to students in a diversity of locations and situations; these include community students in Blythe, students residing in Needles and attending classes at the College's Needles Center, students completing some or all of their coursework online, incarcerated students at several California correctional facilities who take courses at the College through correspondence education, and students located throughout California completing public safety coursework and training under the auspices of instructional services agreements between the College and training providers. The appropriate mix of courses offered in various delivery modes is arrived upon through analysis of prior semesters' enrollment trends and patterns, as well as anticipated future needs, and is accomplished by joint consultation between faculty and the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

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[78] The value of lifelong learning is incorporated into the College's Institutional SLO #4: "Personal and Professional Growth and Development: Students will develop personal, educational and career goals that promote self-reliance; lifelong learning; and physical, mental, and social well-being." See College Catalog, 2013-14, page 10

[79] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Objective 1.3

[80] In 2011, the two individuals serving as Vice-President of Instructional Services and Vice-President of Student Services, respectively, resigned their positions. In Spring Semester 2012, the two functions were combined into a single position, the Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Support Services, and the position was filled. The position remained as a combined function until June 2013, when the Board of Trustees approved the separation of the position back into two functions, and established revised job descriptions for a permanent Chief Instruction Officer and permanent Chief Student Services Officer. Recruitment for the two positions was initiated, then discontinued when, in September 2013, with the new Superintendent/President in office, the decision was made, and approved by the Board of Trustees, to re-combine the positions into a permanent Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services. A national recruitment is being conducted, and the position is expected to be filled by Spring Semester 2014.

Four, the College provides instruction and support to students representing diverse ethnicities and age groups.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.A.1

The Mission Statement broadly describes the College's purpose ("supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services"), character ("promotes student success and lifelong learning") and student population ("a diverse community of learners." College processes that support the College Mission take into account the various course delivery modes and provide an optimal mix in course offerings in such modes, based on student need, faculty recommendations, available resources and data evaluation.

College Action Plan for Standard I.A.1

Continue the process of systematic review of the Mission Statement as has been the practice, and revise the Mission Statement when needed.

Standard I.A.2

The mission statement is approved by the governing board and is published.

College Response to Standard I.A.2

The revised Mission Statement was approved by the Board of Trustees March 12, 2013 following review and approval of all College constituent groups. Each prior revision of the Mission Statement, similarly, had been reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees after constituent review and approval.

The Mission Statement is printed in several College publications, including the College Catalog and Schedule of Classes.[81]

The Integrated Strategic Plan, which includes the Mission Statement, was revised by College constituent organizations, and approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 25, 2013 regular meeting.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.A.2

The Mission Statement has been approved by the Board of Trustees, preceded by extensive review and approval by College constituencies. The Mission Statement is published in various College venues and is viewable by the general public.

College Action Plan for Standard I.A.2

[81] College Catalog, 2013-14 page 8; Schedule of Classes, Spring 2014, page 4

The College will continue to follow its established practice of review and publication of the Mission Statement.

Standard I.A.3

Using the institution's governing and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.

College Response to Standard I.A.3

The Mission Statement has been reviewed about every other year since 2002 by College constituent organizations, and revised when necessary. Reviews have taken place in venues where all constituents are either present or represented. These venues are College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee meetings and all-staff meetings (which include faculty, classified staff, administrators and students). The current Mission Statement was presented to the Board of Trustees for review, and was approved on March 12, 2013.

College Self-Evaluation of Standards I.A.3

The cycle of periodic review of the Mission Statement by constituencies followed by Board of Trustees approval is a customary practice of the College. The College meets the Standard by following a review and approval process that has long been in place.

College Action Plan for Standard I.A.3.

The College will continue the established process of review and approval of the Mission Statement.

Standard I.A.4

The institution's mission is central to institutional planning and decision-making.

College Response to Standard I.A.4

The inclusion of the Mission Statement as a key component of the Integrated Strategic Plan, as well as its inclusion in various College documents as described in the College Response to Standard I.A.2 above, reinforces the role of the Mission Statement as central to institutional planning and decision-making.

The program review templates for instructional and non-instructional services and operations, similarly, ask report preparers to demonstrate how the particular program in question supports or is consistent with the College Mission Statement.[82]

[82] Program Review Guide, pages 11 and 12

Furthermore, elements of the Integrated Strategic Plan (of which the Mission Statement is a part) are considered in the budgeting and planning processes, specifically when the Budget Committee considers funding requests for new programs and projects.[83]

The College had implemented in Spring 2013, on a pilot basis, the "Annual Program Review Snapshot," which was to provide faculty and program managers with a process to perform brief program review updates annually while making funding requests for new programs and projects apart from the routine departmental operating budget requests. The Snapshot required proposals to justify funding requests with references to the Integrated Strategic Plan. [84]

The Snapshot process was evaluated in Fall Semester 2013 by the Program Review and Budget Committees and determined to have less to do with program review than with budgeting. The consensus of the two committees was to remove the Snapshot process from the duties of Program Review Committee, and to turn it over to the Budget Committee. The Program Review Committee now concentrates on 2- 3- and 4-year program reviews, while the Budget Committee is responsible for funding routine annual budget requests, evaluating and prioritizing new proposals apart from routine requests, and formulating the annual College budget.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.A.4

The College Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan together form a central document for overall planning and decision-making. That the Mission Statement is incorporated into various College documents and is part of the program review process demonstrates that it is a living, often-cited document in College processes and decisions. That elements of the Integrated Strategic Plan must be cited as justification for funding new proposals demonstrates that the Integrated Strategic Plan plays a central role in planning and decision-making, including planning and decision-making affecting all modes of course and program delivery.

College Action Plan for Standard I.A.4

The College will maintain the centrality of the Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan in institutional planning and decision-making.

Standard I.B Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning

[83] Draft Budget request sheets and Budget enhancements request

[84] Pilot Program Review Annual Snapshot; see page 2 for references to Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16

College Response to Standard I.B Institutional Effectiveness

The College has always been committed to student learning, as evidenced by its Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 and in its ongoing practices: all course-outlines-of-record are required to list course objectives and outcomes[85]; program review reports are required to identify and assess program student learning outcomes[86]; and course syllabi are required to list student learning outcomes matching those in the approved course-outline-of record.[87]

There has been, moreover, considerable dialogue over the years among faculty and learning support staff about effective teaching methods to facilitate learning and student success. These discussions have taken place in various venues, including the Academic Senate, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and, most effectively, in Flex Day sessions.[88]

But starting in Fall Semester 2012, an institution-wide, systematic and data-driven system to measure and evaluate learning began. The progress the College has made in the past year is that faculty and student services personnel have begun to recognize the importance of learning assessment, and have begun to write down how assessments are accomplished and what the results of those assessments are. These efforts have applied to courses, certificates, degrees, learning support programs and institutional learning outcomes. The results of these efforts have been posted to the College's SLO website, where student learning outcomes, assessment methods, assessment findings, and action plans for improvement are recorded.[89]

Beginning Fall Semester 2013, student learning outcomes assessment has been incorporated into faculty and counselor job performance appraisals.[90]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B

The College has long been committed to student learning and to improving the processes that support learning, as evidenced in its Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan initiatives, and in student learning assessment requirements for course-outlines-of record, syllabi, and program review reports.

The practice of systematically evaluating student learning for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support programs, as well as establishing institutional learning outcomes, has occurred relatively recently, in the past year. The College has established a three-year cycle of

[85] Course outlines-of-record, Curriculum Committee website
[86] Program Review Guide, pages 11 and 12
[87] Sample course syllabi; Resolution on Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi, Academic Senate, 2006
[88] Flex Day agendas
[89] PVC SLOs on Accreditation page of College web site
[90] Faculty Evaluation Forms (teaching faculty), page 19; Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 4

assessment, starting in 2012-13.[91] The second year of the cycle, 2013-14, is devoted to refining SLOs, assessments and methodologies and implementing action plans for improvement. The third year of the cycle will be devoted to evaluating the results of action plans and making plans for the next three-year cycle.

College Action Plan for Standard I.B

The College will continue all the activities in which it is engaged as far as learning assessment is concerned: Flex Day discussions about student learning, program review assessments of SLOs, requirements for SLOs in course outlines-of-record and syllabi, inclusion of SLO assessment component in faculty job appraisals, refining student learning outcomes and assessments methodologies and evaluating action plans for improvement at the levels of courses, degrees and certificates, learning support programs and institutional outcomes.

Standard I.B.1

The institution maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.

College Response to Standards I.B.1

As for student learning subjects, self-reflective dialogue occurs in various ways at the College, including at division meetings, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee meetings, committee meetings, all-staff meetings and others. Perhaps the one venue, though, that offers the best opportunities for extended dialogue on learning is Flex Days, which are all-day events taking place on the campus three or four times per year, and are geared primarily for faculty members. The topics are usually presented by College faculty, although occasionally an outside speaker is brought in on special topics. Here is a selected list of topics on student learning that have been presented over the past few years on Flex Days:[92]

"What the Best College Teachers Do," November 27, 2013
"Technology and Teaching," November 27, 2013
"How to Teach Using Social Media," November 25, 2013
"Tips for Working with DSPS Students, April 20, 2012
"Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum," February 3, 2012
"Ten Ways to Get Students to Write Meaningful Papers," March 19, 2010

These presentations help promote self-reflective dialogue about student learning and provide ideas for faculty to try out in their teaching.

The College has also devoted considerable time and discussion to formulating a process for assessing degree and certificate SLOs. A Flex Day held February 1, 2013 was devoted to determining how to align, or "map," course SLOs to SLOs of programs and certificates. The

[91] SLO Assessment Plan
[92] Flex Day agendas

results of these discussions are found on the Accreditation web site where SLOs are presented for courses, degrees and certificates (aligned with specific courses), learning support programs, as well as for the institution.[93]

As for other institutional processes that have an indirect on student learning and that have been the subject of self-reflective dialogue, here are three examples of processes that have recently undergone revision for improvement:

1. Program review:

   The Program Review Committee has devoted the past year and a half to refining the program review process. While this process has long been a successful assessment tool at the College, the committee recognized that improvements were needed. The length of time between reports (five years) was too long to enable the College to evaluate and respond to goals and changes made by departments and divisions; this was particularly true in the area of new budgetary requirements: by the time a budget request was explained and justified in a program review report, funding opportunities had long passed. Also, the Program Review Committee noted an increasing unevenness in the quality of reports, not only as to thoroughness, but as well as to consistency in data reports (which included enrollment trends and financial information).

   Accordingly, the Program Review Committee, after considerable dialogue with its members and with College faculty and administration, implemented several changes this year: a) shortening the length of comprehensive program reviews from five years to three; b) centralizing data collection within the Committee itself, and disseminating data to the program review report preparers; and c) providing training to ensure that preparers were clear on how to proceed with the reports and on Committee expectations. These improvements were implemented in the current program review cycle, 2013-14. The Committee is still working on clarifying some aspects of the Program Review Guide, which has been in use since 2006, with an update in 2009.

2. Budget process and its integration with program review and strategic planning:

   After the fiscal crisis that came to light in mid-2011, the College understandably made changes in the budget process. Apart from staffing reductions and expense cutbacks that occurred in 2012, the College, through its Budget Committee, made a strong effort to increase transparency and participation among all constituents in budget planning. The key change was to clarify the integration of budget with program review and strategic planning.

   Budget, program review and strategic planning functions are handled by three separate committees: Budget Committee, Program Review Committee and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Prior to the recent change, steps were

[93] PVC SLOs on Accreditation page of College web site; see also Alignment of Institutional SLOs with Program SLOs

already in place to ensure that program review reports requesting funding for unmet needs were reviewed by the Budget Committee as well as by the Program Review Committee. The problem with that procedure was that program review was conducted once every five years (now once every three years) and did not provide for prompt consideration by the Budget Committee, which considers budgets annually.

The two committees recognized that budget requests outside ordinary rollover requests were still budget issues and needed to be treated as such. After considerable dialogue among the two key committees, the solution was to have budget proposals take two forms: a rollover from the preceding year, and a discretionary amount to fulfill unmet needs. The Program Review Committee would follow its own procedures, *but is available for consultation with the Budget Committee on any budget matter*, especially for budget proposals for discretionary funding. Also, one member serves on both the Program Review Committee and Budget Committee, providing continuity between the two committees. Both committees, after considerable dialogue agreed on a procedure, presented both in graphic and narrative form.[94] The function of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee remains as it had been: to review all budget requests and program reviews and to forward its recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

3. Mission Statement revision and update of the Integrated Strategic Plan:

During 2012-13, the College recognized that it needed to re-examine its Strategic Plan and to update it. The Strategic Plan was originally written in 2002, and revised several times over the years. One component that was conspicuously missing in the old Strategic Plan was an initiative on finance, an especially significant omission in light of the fiscal problems the College was facing. The revisions to the Strategic Plan, and the Mission Statement which is part of the Strategic Plan, were undertaken principally by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, representing all constituent organizations. The result was a revised, and renamed, *Integrated* Strategic Plan and a revised Mission Statement.[95]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.1

The College has demonstrated in its commitment to student learning outcomes assessments for courses, degrees and certificates, learning support programs and institutional outcomes that it considers student learning to be its mission. The College is committed to engaging in dialogue in its striving for continuous improvement in its learning approaches.

Similarly, in other institutional processes, the College is committed to continuous improvement, as in the examples cited: program review' budget, program review and strategic planning; and in the ongoing updated to its Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan.

[94] Integrated Budget, Program Review, and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative
[95] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16 and Mission Statement

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.1

The College believes this standard has been met and will continue its practice of self-reflective dialogue about continuous improvement in student learning and other College processes.

Standard I.B.2

The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. The institutional members understand these goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.

College Response to Standard I.B.2

Institutional goals are established for at least four levels: Board of Trustees Goals, CEO Goals, goals expressed in the Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, and institutional SLOs.

Board of Trustees' Goals: Each year, the Board of Trustees evaluates its own performance, and discusses the results of their evaluation in open session. Each goal is presented in terms of how the goal is measured, the current status of the goal and the self-evaluation of the goal in terms of "very good," "good" or "needs improvement."[96]

CEO Goals: The Superintendent/President also establishes annual goals. Because Dr. Don Wallace is new to the College, having started July 2013, he has established goals for his office, but has not yet conducted an evaluation of progress made to achieve them. The Superintendent/President devoted an all-staff meeting, November 19, 2013, to presenting his goals to College personnel and led a discussion on how the goals might be achieved and evaluated.[97] The evaluation of his goals is expected to take place in Fall Semester 2014.

Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16: The College also has it has established institutional goals in the form of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16. The body that periodically reviews progress in achieving Integrated Strategic Planning goals is the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The six areas of the Integrated Strategic Plan are:[98]

1. Instructional Programs and Student Success
2. Student Support Services
3. Organizational Effectiveness
4. Technology and Support
5. Financial and Operational Stability
6. Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability

[96] Board of Trustees Goals, 2012-13 and Board Self-Evaluation of 2012-13 Goals; see also Board of Trustees 2013-14 Performance Goals
[97] CEO Goals for 2013-14
[98] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16

In the budget process, budget preparers are asked to justify their requests by citing specific initiatives and goals from the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16. This practice was in effect for the pilot annual program review snapshot in 2013[99], and was retained in the successor budget request forms currently under discussion in the Budget Committee.[100] The connection between budget requests and elements of the Integrated Strategic Plan are evidence of the integration of budget planning and strategic planning, and help remind the College community that goals expressed in the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 need to inform budget proposals and decisions.

Institutional SLOs: The College, through the efforts of the SLO Committee has formulated student learning outcomes at the institutional level.[101] While this process is not a requirement of the accreditation standards, the College believes that institutional SLOs help established broad-based learning goals the College believes are essential for an educated graduate of Palo Verde College to possess. The College has begun discussions of aligning program level outcomes to institutional SLOs.[102]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.2

The College has demonstrated the importance of setting institution-wide goals and to encourage collaborative efforts in evaluating the extent to which goals are achieved. These efforts are evident in the Board of Trustees' Goals, Superintendent/President's Goals, Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 elements and goals and Institutional SLOs.

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.2

The College has been conscientious in setting institutional goals in various ways and has made deliberative efforts to publicize and discuss them. The College will continue to evaluate and re-evaluate its progress in achieving institutional goals

Standard I.B.3

The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. Evaluation is based on analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

College Response to Standard I.B.3

The College demonstrates that it engages in a systematic cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation in making decisions about institutional processes. This is evident in at least three

[99] Pilot Program Annual Review Snapshot, see yellow-highlighted area, page 2
[100] Draft Budget request forms for enhancement requests
[101] PVC SLOs, on Accreditation page of College web site; also, see College Catalog, 2013-14, page 10
[102] Alignment of Institutional SLOs with Program SLOs

areas previously discussed in the response to Standard I.B.1, above, namely, program review, budget development and mission statement and strategic planning revisions. For each of these processes, the College engaged in an evaluation of its effectiveness in light of changing College conditions, and the processes were, accordingly, improved.

Other processes, similarly, have undergone evaluation and are being changed for the better, as well. These processes include job performance evaluations of faculty, the faculty equivalency process and the reinstatement of the former Learning Skills Center to enhance tutoring support.

1. Job performance evaluations of faculty: With the increase in correspondence and online class sections (vs. face-to-face) it became clear during the past year or so the current system of evaluating faculty, both full-time and adjunct, needed to be improved to better accommodate this change. The College also realized that it needed to come into compliance with accreditation requirements that SLO assessment be incorporated into faculty job performance evaluations. The District and CTA reached agreement on these various issues,[103] and to date have implemented the requirement that SLOs be incorporated into faculty evaluations.[104] The revisions to the full-time and adjunct evaluation process are currently in negotiation.

2. Faculty equivalency process: A locally-established process for assessing equivalent qualifications had been in place for many years, but was recognized by faculty as being insufficiently rigorous to take into account the complexities involved in properly evaluating faculty equivalency. Because equivalency is an academic matter, the Academic Senate took responsibility in Fall Semester 2013 for developing better guidelines for this process. The Academic Senate reviewed drafts of work completed on equivalency during Fall Semester 2013, and is expected to adopt the revised equivalency procedure early in Spring Semester 2014.

3. Reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center: The Learning Skills Center had been an active function of the College for many years, providing tutoring and placement support services to students. With the retirement, in 2011, of the Learning Skills Center director, the vacancy was not filled. Furthermore, the financial problems that emerged at that time, together with the belief that many of the functions could be handled by other personnel, resulted in the temporary disbanding of the Learning Skills Center. The College managed to provide tutoring and placement services with a part-time staff member. Over time, however, it became evident that these services needed to be enhanced.

   As financial conditions began to show some improvement, discussions about reinstating the Learning Skills Center, perhaps in a modified form, began. At an Institute Day discussion of College needs, the topic came up and there was resounding support to bring back a modified version of the Learning Skills Center.[105] With approval of the College

[103] District-CTA Memorandum of Understanding, May 30, 2013
[104] Faculty Evaluation Forms (teaching faculty), page 19; Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 4
[105] Problem Areas for Accreditation, with comments, Institute Day, August 30, 2013, see item 13

Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Academic Senate, the plan is to reinstate the Learning Skills Center ("Student Learning Center" has been suggested as an alternate name) in Spring 2014 under the direction of the College Librarian, in a location adjacent to the Office of Correspondence Education. The plan will be implemented on a provisional basis, and will be evaluated in Fall Semester 2014.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.3

The process of planning, implementation and evaluation is not new to the College. It has long been the College's practice to plan major initiatives carefully, implement them, and establish provisions for evaluating their effectiveness. The examples cited in the response to this Standard, as well as the examples cited previously in Standard I.B.1, namely, program review, budget process, mission statement and strategic plan, faculty evaluations, faculty equivalency and Learning Skills Center reinstatement testify to the College's commitment to this important institutional process. In its development of the "Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook" draft, the College is writing up a formalized procedure describing planning, implementation and evaluation.[106]

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.3

The College will continue its long-standing practice of planning, implementing and evaluating College projects, and will formalize the process in a written document, tentatively titled "Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook".

Standard I.B.4

The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

College Response to Standard I.B.4

There are several venues in which planning on critical College issues is conducted with broad, institution-wide participation: Academic Senate, CSEA, CTA, management/confidential and Associated Student Government. These venues include committees and organizations commonly referred to as "mutual benefit" committees.[107] The monthly "all-staff" meetings, similarly, are informal gatherings in which all College personnel have a voice on any issue raised.

The following are the mutual benefit committees of the College:

Accreditation Team ("A-Team 2014"): Meets monthly, and as-needed, to help plan the writing of the Self-Evaluation report.

[106] Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook, draft
[107] College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14

Budget Committee: Open to all College personnel, monthly meetings determine budget procedures and policies and to review and make recommendations to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee on annual budget requests from divisions and departments. The Budget Committee confers with the Program Review Committee on discretionary funding proposals. The Budget Committee has taken the lead in improving the budget process.

College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee: Reviews all major College initiatives, projects and reports and conveys recommendations to the Board of Trustees, through the Superintendent/President. The Committee serves as the key planning committee and decision-maker, prior to review by the Superintendent/President and Board of Trustees. Chaired by the Superintendent/President, the committee takes the lead on all major decisions as to policy, funding and other matters needing institution-wide participation.

Facilities Committee: Meets as needed to review and make recommendations regarding facilities and grounds. May be consolidated with the Safety Committee, since both have similar functions; this is more fully discussed in this report in Standard III.B.

Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee: Meets as needed to review diversity questions and concerns.

Program Review Committee: Meets monthly or as needed to review policies and processes governing program review reporting, and reviews and makes recommendations to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee on program review reports. The Program Review Committee confers with the Budget Committee on certain funding proposals. The Committee has taken the lead in revising and implementing improvements in the program review process.

Staff Development Committee: Considers and makes recommendations on proposals for professional development and training, including funding decisions, if applicable.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.4

The College has a substantial network of committees and organizations to ensure that everyone has a voice, and all ideas may be heard and considered.

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.4

The College believes in meets this standard and will continue its present practices in

Standard I.B.5

The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.

College Response to Standard I.B.5

The College is committed to the providing transparency, wherever legally possible, on all its decisions, findings and reports, many of which are posted to the College website, are discussed openly in all-staff meetings and other College meetings such as College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and others. Here are few examples in which the College makes known to the College community its own assessments, and thereby establishes standards of quality:

1. Board of Trustees' publishes the self-evaluation results of its preceding year's goals on the College web site.[108]

2. Board of Trustees' agendas, minutes, document packets for meetings,[109] as well as policies and administrative procedures, are published on the College web site.[110]

3. Program review reports are published on the College web site.[111]

4. SLOs for courses, certificates, degrees, learning support programs and institutional standards are published on the College web site; these include SLOs, assessment methods, assessment results and action plans for improvement.[112]

5. All accreditation reports, including ACCJC letters and reports of follow-up accreditation team visits are published on the web site.[113]

6. ARCC reports, the Student Success Scorecard, Noel-Levitz survey findings and other institutional research reports are published on the College web site. [114]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.5

Publishing on the College web site the results of College decisions, reports and policies is the way the College has established standards of quality. Reports include institutional research reports, program reviews, Board of Trustees' self-evaluations, Board of Trustees' policies, SLO assessments and others. These publications are transparent statements of the College's positions on the various issuers affecting the College, and they establish standards of quality on those issues.

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[108] Board of Trustees' self-evaluation of 2012-13 goals
[109] Board of Trustees' agendas, minutes and document packets
[110] Board of Trustees policies and administrative procedures
[111] Program Review Reports
[112] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[113] Accreditation web page
[114] Institutional Research

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.5

The College will continue its practice of communicating its decisions, reports, policies and other matters on the College website, as well as in meetings, formal and informal.

Standard I.B.6

The institution assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle, including institutional and other research efforts.

College Response to Standard I.B.6

Responses to various other standards in this Self-Evaluation report demonstrate the College's practice of reviewing all aspects of the planning and resource allocation cycle to ensure they are effective. Here are some examples in which the College re-evaluated parts of its planning and resource allocation decisions, found them needing improvement, and produced modifications:

1. Administrative re-organization: Combining the functions of instruction and student services into a single position at the level of vice-president was the result of the financial problems the College found itself in, and was a cost-saving move. An interim vice president position for instruction and student services was established in Spring Semester 2012.

   However, a year later, Spring Semester 2013, the CTA and Academic Senate voiced the opinion to the Interim Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees that the position should be split into two—one for instruction, the other for student services, as had previously been the practice. The Interim Superintendent/President and Board of Trustees consented, and the position was restructured as two positions.

   In early Fall Semester 2013, the College forecasted a significant drop in FTES with accompanying concern for a reduction in apportionment revenue. The new Superintendent/President (who started at the College in July 2013) and Board of Trustees decided at that time to retain the combined position and to recruit to fill it on a permanent basis.

   The process leading to the final decision was somewhat erratic, but in the end all parties agreed that, in light of newly-acquired information on the financial condition of the College, a combined position was the best solution.

2. Reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center: The need to re-establish the former Learning Skills Center to augment tutoring support services was recognized by the College during an Institute Day presentation on College accreditation needs.[115] The task to investigate a

[115] Problem Areas for Accreditation, with comments, Institute Day, August 30, 2013

location for the proposed center was assumed by a task force of the Academic Senate with review by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

The involvement of the latter committee broadened the scope of the search to include not just the location of the proposed center, but its functions, staffing and funding sources. The result of these discussions was the finding of a location adjacent to the Office of Correspondence Education, with the College Librarian providing supervisory oversight of the tutoring a placement functions, and the Basic Skills Initiative program providing funding support.

The process leading to the reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center (the alternate name is the Student Learning Center) was properly placed in the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee where broad input from constituent groups was available to for suggestions and guidance in accomplishing the task and locating funding resources.

3. Improvement of the program review process: The Program Review Committee recognized the need to revise the program review process that had been in effect for many years. The changes made as of Fall Semester 2013 include increasing the frequency of comprehensive reports from five to three years; providing better training to prospective preparers of program review reports; and providing enrollment and financial data to preparers from one central source, namely, the Program Review Committee itself.

   The Program Review Committee is still working on some changes to the Program Review Guide, which has been in effect since 2006 with a modification in 2009. The changes made to date, however, are expected to improve the quality and usefulness of program review reports.

4. Improvement of the integration of budget, program review and strategic planning process: This improvement required the coordination of efforts of two key committees, Budget Committee and Program Review Committee. The annual "snapshot" process that was launched in mid-2012, while effective in some ways, was judged to be too cumbersome and time-consuming given the results it produced. Both committees recognized the need to re-think the budget, program review, and strategic planning processes, and to ensure that these processes were integrated with one another.

   The result of the discussions in both committees is a process that entailed re-introduction of previous budget practices together with modifications to the snapshot process. The results are summarized in a budget, program review and strategic planning flow chart and accompanying narrative.[116]

5. Improvement of the curriculum review and approval process: The creation of the Technical Review Committee as a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee occurred in Fall Semester 2012 to help reduce the workload on the Curriculum Committee. The Technical Review Committee's tasks are to review each new and updated course outline

[116] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative

of record for completeness, clarity, grammar, and SLOs. Implementation of this additional step in the curriculum development process has helped expedite the work of the Curriculum Committee and produce better course outlines-of-record.

6. Improvement of the faculty evaluation process: The need to bring faculty and adjunct instructor evaluations up to date has been recognized by the CTA and by the Academic Senate. More faculty, full-time and adjunct, are now teaching correspondence and online course sections than before, while the current evaluation system is largely set up to evaluate instructors in the classroom for face-to-face sections. In agreement with the College administration, a faculty task force formulated recommendations to improve the process and to recommend changes to the College administration. The proposed changes will be bargained in Spring Semester 2014.

7. Development of the SLO assessment process: The College has long been committed to student learning and to improving the processes that support learning, as evidenced in its Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan initiatives, and in student learning assessment requirements for course outlines-of-record, syllabi, and program review reports.

   The practice of systematically evaluating student learning for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support programs, as well as establishing institutional learning outcomes, has occurred relatively recently, in the past year. The College has established a three-year cycle of assessment, starting in 2012-13.[117] The second year of the cycle, 2013-14, is devoted to refining SLOs, assessments and methodologies and implementing action plans for improvement. The third year of the cycle will be devoted to evaluating the results of action plans and making plans for the next three-year cycle.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.6

The College recognizes the need for smoothly functioning and effective planning and resource allocation processes. In the examples cited above, the College demonstrates that it can effectively resolve problems as they arise by reviewing systematically all parts of the planning and resource allocation cycle and making improvements where needed. The curriculum review process, for example, was very effective in reviewing new and updated course outlines-of-record. However, the Curriculum Committee was spending too much time correcting and revising course outlines during its monthly meetings; the Technical Review Committee was formed to relieve the Curriculum Committee from much of that burden.

Similarly, the program review process had been in place for many years, but the Program Review Committee found that, increasingly, it had to send reports back to the preparers because of incompleteness. The decision by the Program Review Committee to conduct pre-program review workshops resulted from the realization that program review preparers needed better training to complete the task.

[117] SLO Assessment Plan

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.6

The College will continue its efforts in reviewing the planning and resource allocation processes, and modify them where needed.

Standard I.B.7

The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.

College Response to Standard I.B.7

The most significant evaluation mechanisms for programs, student support services, library and other learning support services are the program review process and the SLO assessment process.

Program Review: Program review has long been an effective method for evaluating all programs, instructional and non-instructional, offered at the College, and program review reports are available for public view on the College website.[118] The process is undergoing changes to make it even better—by increasing the frequency of reports from five to three years, providing better training to program review preparers and providing data from a centralized source to ensure consistency among reports.

Here a few examples of accomplishments and goals achieved, excerpted from recent program review reports:

1. "Integrate[d] recently purchased iStart Smart by Hatch, a touchscreen computer learning system, with appropriate child development course curricula, assessments, and standards." (Child Development Program Review Update, 2012)[119]

2. The biology program "successfully accomplished the prior goal outlined in the previous program review of preparing the prospective students for employment. Case in point, 15 former Palo Verde College students upon successful completion of the LVN, RN, BSN and Dental Hygiene Programs are gainfully employed at Palo Verde Hospital, La Paz Regional Hospital in Parker, Arizona, Eisenhower Medical Center, in Rancho Mirage, Ironwood State Prison and Chuckwalla Valley State Prison in Blythe, California respectively." (Biology Program Review Report, page 4)[120]

[118] Program Review Reports, located on the Accreditation page of the College web site
[119] Child Development Program Review Update, 2012, page 10
[120] Math and Science Program Review, 2012, Biology Report, page 4

3. "In 2004, the College offered only one astronomy course, AST 101. Now three courses are offered: AST 101, AST 105, and AST 110." (Astronomy Program Review Report, 2012, page 2)[121]

4. "The previous [psychology] program review identified the need for a research methods course in psychology. This goal has been realized by the development and approval of PSY 150 (Research Methods in Psychology). A prerequisite of English 099 eligibility is in place for all psychology courses, and PSY 101 (General Psychology) is now a prerequisite for PSY 210 (Abnormal Psychology). We believe the implementation of prerequisites will improve student success rates in psychology courses." (Psychology Program Review Report, 2012, page 21)[122]

5. "Outreach & Events has collected and aggregated prospective student data using surveys across Career Day events. Data collected includes: Primary language, Educational Goals and preferred Program of study. This data has been disseminated and made available to the Instruction Office for planning and enrollment management needs, thereby meeting this goal." Student Services Program Review Report, 2010, page 23)[123]

6. "From academic year 2005-06 to 2008-2009, there has been a 113% increase in the number of students receiving formal library instruction. The librarian worked with several faculty members in order to promote the drop-in workshops to students in their classes, plus more instructors are requesting library instruction."(Library Program Review, 2010, page 11)[124]

SLO Assessments: In 2012, the College created the PVC SLOs web site within Accreditation web site. As SLOs were created, assessed and action plans formulated, the results were posted to the web site for public viewing. Here are two examples of programs, instructional (AA Liberal Arts, Business and Technology) and learning support (Career and Transfer), as they appear on the web site today[125]:

AA Liberal Arts, Business and Technology

Sponsoring Division: Business

SLO #1: See SLO for CSU-GE and IGETC

SLO #2: Acquire fundamental knowledge of the operations and technical support requirements of a business organization.

[121] Math and Science Program Review, 2012, Astronomy Report, page 2
[122] History, Social Sciences Program Review, 2012, Psychology Report, page 21
[123] Student Services Program Review, 2010, Counseling Report, page 23
[124] Library Program Review, 2010, page 11
[125] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page

Program assessment based on outcomes and assessments of these courses:

BUS 101: Identify management functions, styles, processes and the role of organized labor.

ACC 102: Demonstrate knowledge of accounting for corporations, limited liability corporations and partnerships.

CIS 101: Describe a real-world outlook on computers and information systems and their effects on society.

Action Plan: Encourage more writing exercises and opportunities for verbal expression on topics dealing with business organizations, practices and functions.

Career and Transfer

SLO#1: Acquire learning about possible careers to pursue

SLO#2: Acquire learning about potential for transfer to four-year colleges

Assessment Methods: Student learning evaluated during orientation and counseling sessions

Results: It is estimated that about 70% of students have a full understanding of the various career options available to them. It is estimated that about 80% of students who seek to transfer have a full understanding of the process involved in applying for transfer.

Action Plan: The career and transfer process has worked well but could be improved by: 1) having a full- or part-time position dedicated to these services; having a career and transfer center physical location on campus; and having students prepare a career portfolio as part of their studies in courses such as GES 115.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard I.B.7

The College demonstrates through two of its key evaluations mechanisms, namely, program review and SLO assessments, that its evaluation processes are effective and have a constructive impact in improving College programs.

College Action Plan for Standard I.B.7

The College will continue all its evaluation processes, including two key processes: program review and SLO assessments.

Standard II
Student Learning Programs and Services

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students

A. Instructional Programs

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions of programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all institutional activities offered in the name of the institution.

Response to Standard II.A: Instructional Programs

The College has made significant progress in identifying, assessing and making improvements relative to learning outcomes at the levels of course, certificates, degrees, learning support programs and institutional outcomes. These achievements are evidenced by work that has been posted to the College website.[126] The College is currently in its second year of a three-year cycle of SLO assessments, implementing action plans and evaluating the results.[127]

The College's program review and Curriculum Committee systems review all instructional programs rigorously and frequently and with a broad representation of constituents—division faculty, Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee, Program Review Committee, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and Board of Trustees—ensuring that all instructional courses and programs are consistent with the College's mission and that they uphold its integrity. All instructional (and non-instructional) programs are reviewed by the program review process every three years.[128] Course outlines of record must be updated every five years.

[126] PVC SLOs, Accreditation page, College web site
[127] SLO Assessment Plan
[128] In 2013-14, the Program Review Committee, in cooperation with the Academic Senate and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, implemented a three-year cycle of program review for most instructional and all non-instructional programs. Vocational programs are required to conduct program review updates every two years, with a comprehensive review every four years. See Program Review scheduling matrix.

A rigorous faculty evaluation system is in place to assess the quality of instruction. Because many faculty members, full-time and adjunct, may teach only correspondence and online course sections in any one or more term, the evaluation system is currently being revised to include evaluation approaches in addition to observation in face-to-face classes. The District and CTA successfully bargained for the inclusion of SLO assessments as a component of faculty, teaching and non-teaching, evaluations.[129]

The College ensures that all courses and instructional programs carrying its name are presented in a manner appropriate to an institution of higher learning and consistent with the College's mission. This includes college-level courses, pre-collegiate courses, courses offered face-to-face as well as distance education, correspondence and courses offered in various locations under the auspices of the College.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A

The College is making good progress in identifying and measuring learning at the course, certificate and degree levels. It has effective systems in place—review by division-level faculty, program review process, and Curriculum Committee oversight—that ensure consistent quality of its courses and programs. While the College has a rigorous faculty evaluation system in place, it needs to make sure all part-time faculty members are consistently evaluated.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A

The College will continue with the SLO assessment processes it has initiated, namely, identifying measuring and implementing improvements that produce student learning at the levels of courses, degrees, certificates, learning support programs and institutional outcomes.

Standard II.A.1

The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.

College Response to Standard II.A.1

The College's Program Review Guide, implemented in 2006 and revised in 2009, presents guidelines for the preparation of program review reports for all programs, instructional and non-instructional. In the template for instructional programs, Item 1, Support of the College Mission, asks that the program under review address three areas: a) State the purpose of the program; 2) Describe how the program supports the overall mission of the College as adopted by the Board of Trustees; and 3) Describe the unique institutional goal the program achieves.[130]

[129] Faculty Evaluation Forms (teaching faculty), page 19; Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 4
[130] Program Review Guide, page 12

Here are examples of how faculty members have addressed these areas in instructional program review reports[131]:

1. "[The accounting, business and management] program offers degrees and certificates in business and management to help upgrade skills, enhance opportunities for successful employment and apply toward transfer to four-year colleges consistent with the Mission statement and Strategic Plan elements." (Accounting, Business and Management Program Review report, 2013)[132]

2. Computer Information Systems degrees and certificates "fulfill the primary mission of the college by offering transferable courses for a degree or certificates as well as preparing students with skills in vocational and occupational fields needed to secure employment, retraining, and economic development." (Computer Information Systems Program Review report, 2013)[133]

3. "In keeping with the College mission, the [English] faculty strives to provide, 'an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services.' This goal is achieved by a process of continuous assessment and improvement of curricula, teaching methods, resources and learning outcomes." (English Department Program Review report, 2010)[134]

All College instructional programs—whether taught face-to-face, correspondence or distance education; offered credit or non-credit; taught at the Needles Center or at the Blythe campus; or taught under instructional services agreements—are required to address in program review how they support the mission of the College.

To ensure programs uphold the integrity of the College, they are reviewed by a broad-based representation of the College in program review every three years. Vocational programs are additionally reviewed as updates every two years and comprehensive reports every four years. All program review reports must first be reviewed and approved by the Program Review Committee, composed of representatives of key College constituents. Once approved by the Program Review Committee, the report is referred to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and then to the Board of Trustees at its regular meeting or study session for acceptance.[135] Once accepted, the report is published on the College website.

New, revised and updated courses and programs are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee to ensure they are academically rigorous and uphold the integrity of the College. The Curriculum Committee consists of representatives of the academic and vocational divisions, a representative

[131] Program Review Reports
[132] Accounting, Business, and Management Program Review, 2013
[133] Computer Information Systems Program Review, 2013
[134] English Department Program Review report, 2010, part of the Communications and Language Arts Division program review report, page 21
[135] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative

from the Associated Student Government, the College Librarian, Admissions and Records Director, and Articulation Officer. The Curriculum Committee is co-chaired by the Vice-President of Instructional and Student Services and a faculty member. The Curriculum Committee meets monthly.

Descriptions of courses, certificates and degrees are presented in the College Catalog. SLOs for certificates and degrees are published in the College Catalog as well.[136]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.1

The College's program review and Curriculum Committee systems, by virtue of the fact that they review all instructional programs—regardless of mode of delivery or location—rigorously and frequently and by a broad representation of constituents, ensure that all instructional programs are consistent with the College's mission and that they uphold its integrity.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.1

Maintain the existing processes of program review and Curriculum Committee oversight of all instructional programs.

Standard II.A.1.a

The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving student learning outcomes.

College Response to Standard II.A.1.a

The preparedness of students for college-level work varies considerably. To enhance students' chances for academic success, the College continuously examines its instructional programs and makes changes to improve them.

Here are some specific examples of educational programs and practices that address students' unique educational needs, as well as some of the changes made to improve their effectiveness:

1. Reinstatement of ESL instructor position: The position had remained vacant for approximately two years following the retirement of the faculty member who taught ESL classes. The College recognized that, as an Hispanic-serving institution, there was a tremendous need for an ESL instructor. Accordingly, the position was reinstated, and a recruitment will commence Spring Semester 2014 for a Fall Semester start.[137]

[136] College Catalog, 2013-14, Programs of Study, page 73 *ff*
[137] Analysis for a reinstated ESL instructor position

2. Creation new faculty position in music: With the completion and grand opening of the Fine and Performing Arts Center at the Blythe campus, the College recognized it needed to develop fine arts programs to fully utilize the new facility and to address students' education needs in the fine arts. Until then, the College had relied on adjunct instructors in art, theater, and music. The need for a full-time faculty member in the arts was evident, and data showed that music programs showed the greatest promise for success.[138] Following recruitment, a new music instructor started in Fall Semester 2013.

3. Reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center: At an Institute Day discussion of College needs, the subject of reinstating the Learning Skills Center to help expand tutoring services came up, and there was resounding support to bring this support service back, even in a modified form.[139] With approval of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Academic Senate, the plan is to reinstate the Learning Skills Center, renamed the Student Learning Center, in Spring 2014 under the direction of the College Librarian, in a location adjacent to the Office of Correspondence Education. The plan will be implemented on a provisional basis, and will be evaluated in Fall Semester 2014.

4. Creation of certificates in animation: With the hiring of a new faculty member in computer information systems in 2008, the College was fortunate to have acquired an instructor who was qualified not only to teach computer systems, but had a specialty in teaching computer animation. The courses proved to be immensely successful, and as a result, new certificate programs in animation were created, including 3D computer animation and graphic design and web content.

5. Creation of new associate degrees for transfer: In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year. The AS-T Administration of Justice and the AS-T Early Childhood Education will be ready in the near future. The new associate degrees will help facilitate the transfer of graduates to the California State University system.

6. Use of advisory committee resources for career and technical education (CTE) programs: Vocational, or CTE, program faculty look to many resources for advice on presenting the most effective programs in their areas. These resources include advisory committees chosen from persons from business and industry with expertise in the particular subject areas.[140]

7. Changes in lecture and lab arrangement for basic skills English: The English department faculty decided to modify its lecture and lab organization for basic skills courses in

[138] Analysis for a new music instructor
[139] Problem Areas for Accreditation, with comments, Institute Day, August 30, 2013, see item 13
[140] Advisory Committees for 2013-14

English in Fall Semester 2011 and to review the impact of the change on student learning. The change was to re-connect each lecture section with its corresponding lab, and to arrange to have the same instructor teach both the lecture and lab sections. The purpose was to provide better continuity between lecture and lab using the same instructor and thereby help students perform better. The results show that success rates during the trial two-year period improved measurably. [141]

8. Noel-Levitz 2010 survey results: Two surveys were administered to College personnel and to students. The results, presented in an all-staff meeting Spring 2012, showed that nearly half (47%) of student respondents favored Theater Productions and Musical Performances (*vs.* Art Exhibits, Film Series, Lecture Series, Other) in the Fine and Performing Arts Center.[142] The hiring of a new faculty member to teach music was partly attributable to this survey finding. The programs offered in the past year at the Fine and Performing Arts Center, including the Young Americans workshop and production, Multicultural Festival, and the Boar's Head Festival, are also ways in which the College is addressing this survey finding.

9. Implementation of distance education tutorials for online and for correspondence education: To help students acquire better facility in navigating around the College website, the College's Information Technology staff created new tutorials, implemented Fall Semester 2013, for students to view on the College web site. [143]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.1.a

The College takes great care to stay in touch with students, and to attempt, wherever possible, to address their needs, educational goals, and challenges in the educational programs and support services that can be offered. The examples cited above illustrate the variety ways the College helps to address students' diverse needs and interests.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.1.a

The College will continue its efforts to meet the various and evolving educational and support needs of its students.

Standard II.A.1.b

The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.

College Response to Standard II.A.1.b

[141] Basic Skills ENG success rates with revised lecture-lab arrangement
[142] Noel Levitz 2010 survey results
[143] Distance Learning Training Tutorials, or see College website: Future Students> Academics/Distance Learning

The College strives to deliver course sections in a variety of modes to meet the scheduling needs of students, in line with curriculum objectives and resources available. Accordingly, each semester, most degree applicable courses are offered in various modes, including face-to-face, online, interactive television (ITV) between the Blythe and Needles campuses, correspondence, and evening and daytime sections.[144]

Faculty and administrators recognize that there are many factors that influence how courses might be delivered. These factors may include: past practices (what has worked before; what hasn't); the subject matter of the course; external requirements, such as transfer and professional licensure; the academic preparedness of students; the unique circumstances of students apart from preparedness; and the teaching skills of the faculty member. Acknowledging these factors, the College encourages creativity and innovation in instruction.

Here are some examples illustrating the College's approach to each of these factors:

Past practices: The planning of the next schedule of classes almost always begins with an examination of the courses that were offered in the same semester one, or even two, years earlier. Based on this data, as well as a review of fill rates for course sections, the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services proposes a class schedule to each teaching division for review and discussion. Most assignments are accomplished by faculty themselves, with final approval by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

Subject matter of the course: While the majority of courses taught at the College are delivered in the traditional classroom lecture mode over an 18-week period, other programs by virtue of their subject matter are presented differently. Computer science courses, as well as many physical and biological science courses, are taught in a lab. Child development courses and nursing courses often require that a portion of instructional time be in a clinical setting. Courses in speech are delivered in an auditorium, enabling students to practice performing and speaking before an audience.[145]

External requirements: The College offers students the opportunity to complete the IGETC pattern of courses, as well as California State University general education requirements, as part of or in lieu of an associate degree.

The College has recently offered new courses resulting from AB 1440 which requires courses specifically tailored to enable transfer to California State University campuses. In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. [146] The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year. The AS-T Administration of Justice and the AS-T Early Childhood Education will be ready in the near future.

[144] Schedule of Classes, Spring 2014
[145] Schedule of Classes, Spring 2014
[146] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 88

Such transfer programs have specific requirements established by four-year institutions that influence how they are delivered. Similarly, the College's nursing program adheres to standards established by the state of California Board of Vocational Nurses as to the number of clinical and lecture hours required of certain courses.

Academic preparedness of students: Because many students arrive not fully prepared for college work, particularly in math, English and reading, they are required to take developmental-level courses in these areas. Faculty members in both fields, recognizing that students placed in these courses need practice in skill development, require that such practice include lab time as well as lecture. Developmental math, English and reading courses are all taught in a lecture and lab combination.

Unique circumstances and objectives of students: Approximately 700 students are taking courses while in prison. Courses are delivered to these students via correspondence education mode of instruction. Course materials are prepared by the instructor and are sent by courier to the inmate; completed work is returned to the instructor also by courier. Prison regulations prohibit the use of internet services, and because several of the prison facilities served by the College are outside the immediate geographic area, the correspondence mode prevails.

In Fall Semester 2013, the College entered into an agreement with Ironwood state prison to deliver online courses that allow limited internet access. The pilot program will be evaluated at the end of Spring Semester 2014 to determine the feasibility of this arrangement, and whether this mode of delivery might be replicated at other prison locations.

The College also delivers courses by via interactive television (ITV) between the Blythe campus and Needles Center. These courses originate at the Blythe main campus and are transmitted to the Needles Center, or vice versa.

Late-start semesters: The College launched pilot "late start" semesters in Fall Semester 2012 and Spring Semester 2013. These are semesters of approximately nine weeks in length beginning half-way through the regular semester. The purpose was to provide another option for students to complete their studies by compressing the length of the semesters. Research showed that the pass rates for these courses were comparatively low, so the College is discussing whether to continue to offer late-start classes in the future.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.1.b

The College, through its faculty and administration, takes into account many factors that determine how courses and programs should be delivered. Whether instructional methods are determined by past practices, course subject matter, external requirements, the academic preparedness of students, the unique circumstance of students (or combinations of these factors), the objective is to accommodate effectively the learning needs of students and enable them to complete their programs of study successfully.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.1.b

Continue utilizing various instructional methods that fulfill the objectives of the curriculum, accommodate students' learning needs and help them complete programs of study successfully.

Standard II.A.1.c

The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.

College Response to Standard II.A.1.c

As noted in the discussion of Standard I.B, the practice of systematically evaluating student learning for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support programs, as well as establishing institutional learning outcomes, has occurred relatively recently, in the past year. The College has established a three-year cycle of assessment, starting in 2012-13.[147] The second year of the cycle, 2013-14, is devoted to refining SLOs, assessments and methodologies and implementing action plans for improvement. The third year of the cycle will be devoted to evaluating the results of action plans and making plans for the next three-year cycle.

While the process is still relatively, many faculty members have implemented action plans for improving courses and programs. Here are some examples of these plans[148]:

1. CIS 123 Web Page Design Using HTML

   Action Plan:
   Revise activities leading up to/and or supporting assignments or assessment methods
   Increase student collaboration and/or peer review

2. CHE 101 Introduction to General Chemistry

   Action Plan: Hold all students to attaining minimum competency in the subject area, through the completion of assigned homework/projects before taking exams or quizzes

3. HEA 140 Health Education

   Action Plan: Give homework assignments during the semester that help students enhance their health and help them prepare for the term paper. Also, instructor will provide more personal examples of how he and family members have helped improve their health.

[147] SLO Assessment Plan
[148] PVC SLOs, on College website, Accreditation page

4. Certificate of Achievement Automotive Technology

   Action Plan: Students can improve their results by allocating more time to complete lab assignments. Students will obtain more experience by concentrating their efforts on lab and reading assignments, resulting in better successes.

5. AA Liberal Arts, Business and Technology

   Action Plan: Encourage more writing exercises and opportunities for verbal expression on topics dealing with business organizations, practices and functions.

6. Certificate of Achievement, Traditional Vocational Nursing

   Action Plan: Provide additional opportunities for students to remediate skills and theory concepts in a laboratory setting.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.1.c

The College is now in the second year of a cycle of SLO assessment. This year, 2013-14, and next, are devoted to reviewing and evaluating results of action plans, and implementing changes as needed.[149] While the College teaching and learning support faculty members have practiced SLO assessment in the past, the College is comparatively new to a systematic assessment process. Nonetheless, the College and its faculty are committed to completing SLO assessments and to achieve the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement level of the ACCJC rubric for SLOs.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.1.c

Continue efforts in SLO assessment at the course, degree, certificate, learning support and institutional levels at achieve the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement level for SLOs by the conclusion of the current cycle, which will be 2014-15.

Standard II.A.2

The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.

[149] SLO Assessment Plan

The College offers various kinds of instructional courses and programs. The following is a list of these programs, with explanations:[150]

Collegiate—These are college level courses and programs leading to associate degrees and certificates and are transferable to California State University and, in many cases, to University of California. They are also courses that qualify for IGETC certification and satisfy California State University general education requirements. The College also offers two associate degrees for transfer: AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology.

Developmental—These are basic skills courses in English, math and reading and are pre-requisites to certain college-level courses. Students assessed with deficiencies in any or all of these areas must pass the appropriate developmental course.

Pre-Collegiate—See Developmental, above.

Community Education—The College offers a limited number of community education courses in the form of noncredit Adult Basic Education and Noncredit Basic Education courses. Courses are offered at the Blythe campus and the Needles Center.[151]

Face-to-face—These are courses delivered in the traditional classroom and laboratory environment.

Correspondence Education—Correspondence courses are delivered in a mode in which class materials are delivered between students and faculty members via courier or through the Office of Correspondence Education.

Distance Education—Interactive television—A handful of course sections is offered via interactive television between the Blythe main campus and the Needles Center.

Distance education—Online—A growing number of course sections is being offered in online mode. The College is committed to increasing courses and programs via online delivery, and to eventually offering an online associate degree.

Specialized instructional services (short term programs): The College conducts a number of short-term instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district. Such programs are conducted under agreements requiring compliance with all requirements governing educational programs established by the California Government Code Title 5, California Education Code, and the College. The College's Chief Business Officer and Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services personally inspect each facility at least once

[150] Information on most of these types of courses and programs is available in the College Catalog, 2013-14 and the Schedule of Classes, Spring Semester 2014. Short-term training consists of public safety programs offered through instructional services agreements; these courses are listed found in the College Catalog, 2013-14, Fire Science Technology, pages 124*ff*

[151] Schedule of Classes, Spring Semester 2014, pages 33-34

each year. Such programs are operated with the approval of the community college districts served by these areas.

Study abroad programs or programs for international students are not offered by the College.

All courses offered in the name of Palo Verde College—which include all courses and programs listed above—must be approved in the form of a course outline-of-record by faculty members from the division in which the course is taught, by the Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee and by the Board of Trustees. The Curriculum Committee, consisting of faculty representatives from all academic and vocational divisions, a representative from the Associated Student Body, the Librarian, Admissions and Records Director, and Articulation Officer, assures that courses meet consistent, high standards of academic rigor. The Curriculum Committee is co-chaired by the Vice-President of Instructional and Student Services and a faculty member, and it meets monthly.[152] Following Curriculum Committee approval, all course outlines are presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Course outlines must be written on the course outline-of-record template approved by the Curriculum Committee. The template incorporates face-to-face, correspondence and distance education (including online) modes of instruction. The Curriculum Committee requires that, at least every five years, all course outlines be updated and re-approved by the division, Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee and Board of Trustees. Courses not offered by the College for a period of five years are submitted to the Curriculum Committee and recommended for inactive status. All course outlines are published on the Curriculum Committee page of the College website.[153] A listing of all courses with their scheduled revision dates is also published on the Curriculum Committee page of the College website.

The College assures the improvement of all instructional programs by requiring that they be evaluated every three years in program review.

The College's Office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services requires that faculty members prepare a new course syllabus each time a course is taught and copies of syllabi be distributed to students and posted to the Bridge early in the semester in which they are taught; syllabi posted to the Bridge must be made accessible by the general public.[154]

To further ensure academic quality in courses offered in the name of the College, the Academic Senate adopted "Resolution on Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi," Resolution 05-06-02, February 14, 2006. The resolution establishes minimum essential information to be included in all course syllabi, including student learning outcomes consistent with those listed in the course outline-of-record.[155]

[152] College Organizations and Committees, 2013-14
[153] Curriculum Committee page, College website
[154] Course syllabi samples
[155] Resolution on Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi, Academic Senate, 2006

The College is currently revising evaluations procedures and forms for full-time faculty and adjuncts; the revisions include a close assessment of each faculty member's course syllabi.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2

The College offers courses and programs in a variety of ways to meet students' learning needs, and to live up to its Mission Statement. The quality of courses and instructional programs is monitored carefully by several levels of review and approval: division, Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee and Board of Trustees. Course outlines-of-record must be updated at least once every five years, and be presented on the most current outline template. Course outlines-of-record are posted to the Curriculum Committee website, and are available for review by the general public. These standards of quality apply equally to all modes of instruction—face-to-face, correspondence, and distance education.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.2

The College, through the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee is conscientious about ensuring the highest quality of instructional programs, consistent with the goals expressed in the Mission Statement. The College will continue its current practices to maintain, for all delivery modes, the academic standards it has achieved.

Standard II.A.2.a

The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.a

That the faculty play a central role in establishing quality and making improvements in curriculum is evidenced in "Resolution Recognizing the Central Role of Faculty in Developing and Assessing Student Learning Outcomes and Implementing Improvements," Resolution 05-06-01, February 14, 2006, by the Academic Senate. The resolution recognizes that faculty members play a key role in learning outcomes assessment and establishes accountability.[156]

Student learning outcomes at the course, degree, certificate, learning support program and institutional levels are published on the College website and are assessed. The College is in its second year of a three-year SLO assessment cycle and is in the process of assessing SLOs and evaluating action plans.[157]

The established procedures used by the College to develop, deliver and evaluate courses and programs are carried out by the academic and vocation divisions, Technical Review Committee

[156] Academic Senate Resolution Recognizing the Central Role of Faculty in Developing and Assessing Student Learning Outcomes and Implementing Improvements

[157] SLO Assessment Plan; see also PVC SLOs on the Accreditation page of the College website

and Curriculum Committee (approval of new and revised courses and new programs) and by the Program Review Committee (evaluation of existing and ongoing programs), and such procedures are codified in various documents, including:

Course Outline Template: Located on the Curriculum Committee page of the College website, the course outline template is the required form for proposing new courses to the Curriculum Committee. Approved course outlines are also posted on the Curriculum Committee page.[158]

Curriculum Resources: Included on the Curriculum Committee page is a list of curriculum resources including curriculum documents from the Chancellor's Office, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, Bloom's Taxonomy, references to UC and CSU campuses and curriculum of other California community colleges.

Program Review Guide: Provides instructions and approved templates for conducting program reviews. The Guide is located on the Accreditation page of the College website. Program reviews of instructional programs are prepared by division faculty members, reviewed by the Program Review Committee, the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and the Board of Trustees.[159]

Prerequisite Justification Statement: The statement, prepared by the faculty member according to established guidelines, provides justification for course co-requisites and pre-requisites and is submitted with the course outline to the Curriculum Committee for approval.[160]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.a

Faculty members play a central role in the development and assessment of student learning outcomes for instructional courses and programs, and the findings are published on the Accreditation page of the College website. The College is in the second year of a three-year SLO assessment cycle, having started a formal and systematic assessment process about one year ago. The College, through its Curriculum Committee, has all the tools and resources to effectively evaluate curricula, and has a well-established history in doing so.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.a

The College will continue the course and instructional program evaluation it has in place, with emphasis on the continuing assessment of SLOs at the course, degree, certificate and learning support levels.

Standard II.A.2.b

The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses,

[158] Curriculum Committee, approved course outlines-of-record
[159] Program Review Guide
[160] Curriculum Committee page, College website

certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress toward achieving those outcomes.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.b

As stated in the response to Standard II.A.2.a above, faculty members play a central role in maintaining the academic quality of courses and programs. Part of that role includes identifying desired competency levels and learning outcomes, and assessing student progress towards achieving those outcomes. Here are the various ways this is accomplished:

Division review: Prepared by individual faculty members, each new, revised and updated course outline-of-outline is reviewed by the division in which the course is taught. Courses are reviewed for several characteristics, including need, appropriateness for the college level, rigor of student learning outcomes, learning objectives, pre-requisites, currency of the recommended textbook, teaching methods, evaluation methods, and examples of assigned work. Once approved, the course is recommended for review by the Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee and then by the Board of Trustees.

Division faculty members have also taken responsibility for identifying and measuring student learning outcomes at the levels of certificates and degrees. The report, "Degrees and Certificates by Sponsoring Divisions," identifies the divisions to which degree-level learning outcomes are assigned.[161]

Faculty members from each division are asked to identify areas of knowledge and skill appropriate to the certificate or degrees awarded, and to perform assessments that measure the extent of such knowledge and skill. The results of assessments are used to evaluate learning and to development action plans for improvements in instruction. For examples of action plans for specific course and programs, see the responses to Standard II.A.1.c and Standard I.B.7 above. The results of assessments are published on the College website.[162]

Curriculum Committee review: Subsequent to division approval, all courses are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, consisting of representatives from each academic and vocational division, a representative from the Associated Student Body, the Librarian, Admissions and Records Director, and articulation officer.[163] The Curriculum Committee is co-chaired by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services and a faculty member. The Curriculum Committee examines each course for the same qualities the division does, but from a broader, College-wide perspective. The Curriculum Committee may approve a course, approve it with modifications or disapprove it and send it back to the sponsoring division for rework.

Program review: All programs are required to be formally reviewed once every three years.[164] The system, documented in the Program Review Guide, expects each program to demonstrate

[161] Degrees and Certificates by Sponsoring Divisions; see also Program SLOs Report with Sponsoring Divisions
[162] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[163] College Organizations and Committees, 2013-14
[164] Program Review Schedule Matrix

how and to what extent it promotes student learning.[165] Program review reports are prepared by faculty members and presented to the Program Review Committee, a mutual agreement committee consisting of representatives from each constituency. Reports are transmitted with recommendations to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and then the Board of Trustees for formal acceptance. In this process, the Program Review Committee confers with the Budget Committee in the event there is a request or need for funding beyond a rollover amount from the previous year. One member sits on both the Program Review Committee and the Budget Committee, providing some degree of continuity between the two committees. The process ensures that College programs are widely discussed and evaluated, and that the program review process is integrated with budget and strategic planning processes.

Advisory committees: For vocational and occupational programs the College looks to community members and experts outside the College for advice and guidance to supplement faculty oversight of these programs.[166] Programs with advisory committees are:

1. Business Division
2. Building Construction Trades
3. Child Development
4. Criminal Justice
5. Health Sciences
6. Welding

Articulation: The College aggressively pursues articulation with four-year institutions to ensure that students are given every possible opportunity to transfer course work beyond the associate degree. The College offers a broad range of courses that meet California State University general education requirements, IGETC requirements and transfer requirements of the University of California. When courses must be modified to retain transfer and articulation certification, faculty members from the appropriate division are responsible for making required changes. In so doing, the College maintains, through the efforts of its faculty, Curriculum Committee, and Articulation Officer, competency levels and learning outcomes in its courses and programs suitable to college-level work.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.b

The College has effective systems and resources in place to establish competency levels in courses and programs, and to measure learning. These systems and resources include faculty expertise and division review, Curriculum Committee, the program review process, advisory committees and articulation.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.b

Continue utilizing faculty expertise and, for vocational and occupational programs, the suggestions of advisory groups in identifying learning outcomes. Continue making progress in

[165] Program Review Guide: see templates for instructional programs, pages 12-13
[166] Advisory Committees, 2013-2014

measuring and assessing learning at the levels of courses, degrees and certificates. Continue the practice of incorporating into course and program requirements, where appropriate to accommodate transfer and articulation, academic standards established by four-year institutions.

Standard II.A.2.c

High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth and rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.c

Faculty members play a significant role in determining the breadth, depth and rigor of programs, and they draw ideas and guidance from various sources. Chief among them are: the academic expertise and professional judgment of faculty themselves; review of programs with fellow faculty members; course and program planning (including textbook selection) at division, Academic Senate, and Curriculum Committee meetings and in program review; knowledge and skills derived from professional development training; observation of the practices of other colleges with similar programs; recommendations of advisory committees (for career and technical education programs); articulation and transfer requirements of four-year institutions; California licensing boards; California Education Code; and the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

Commitment to high-quality instruction is evidenced by a rigorous faculty performance evaluation system. As part of the College's commitment to instructional quality, new faculty members are evaluated annually for the first four years of full-time teaching, and, following the granting of tenure, once every three years.[167] The system provides for peer evaluation (including classroom observation), student evaluations, faculty self-evaluation, administrative evaluation, and provision for remediation when necessary. Adjunct instructors are evaluated during the first or second semester of employment, and a minimum of every two years thereafter. The objective is to provide a well-rounded assessment of faculty teaching performance that enables each faculty member to build upon strengths and to improve in weak areas.

CTA and the District recently negotiated a commitment to review and revise the current full and part-time faculty evaluation process for updating. The changes specifically will provide for alternatives to classroom observations since part-time faculty often teach only correspondence and online sections.[168]

Appropriate breadth, depth, and rigor of programs are evidenced in the course outline, course syllabus and certificate and degree requirements. The College course outline template requires that the course initiator provide various indicators as to the breadth, depth and rigor of each course, and requires differentiating face-to-face, correspondence and distance learning modes of delivery for each course.[169] Pre-requisites, co-requisites and advisories must be substantiated

[167] CTA-District Agreement, 2013-16, Faculty Evaluation Procedure, pages 43*ff*
[168] CTA-District Memorandum of Understanding, May 30, 2013
[169] Course outline-of-record template, Curriculum Committee website

with the Pre-requisite Justification Form submitted along with the outline to the Curriculum Committee for review and approval. The course outline must also list, among other items, course objectives and student learning outcomes, an outline of topics, examples of writing assignments, assignments that demonstrate critical thinking and instruction and evaluation methods for face-to-face, correspondence and distance education sections. The course outline must also identify a representative textbook or other study materials appropriate to the course. Course outlines must be updated every five years, and be resubmitted for approval to the Curriculum Committee.

Course syllabi prepared by the individual instructor for each course each time it is taught are required by Academic Senate resolution to list, at a minimum: course description; content; student learning outcomes (consistent with the corresponding course outline); titles of textbooks or other learning materials; and assignments and projected due dates.[170]

Certificate program requirements are usually planned by division faculty in consultation with advisory committees, and are intended to address specific interests and needs among students. Many students complete one or more certificate programs while pursuing associate degrees.

In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year. The AS-T Administration of Justice and the AS-T Early Childhood Education will be ready in the near future.

Apart from the AA degrees for transfer described above, the College offers the AA degree in Liberal Arts, with the choice of four areas of emphasis: Business and Technology, Arts and Humanities, Math and Science and Social and Behavioral Science. Students may also choose one of two general education transfer options: CSU-GE (primarily for transfer to the California State University system); and IGETC (for transfer to University of California or California State University). The requirements of each of these programs are determined largely by articulation requirements, the California Education Code, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Apart from the AA degrees, the College offers several AS degrees. Associate of Science degrees are meant to provide students who do not intend to transfer to a four-year institution with the opportunity to earn an associate degree in an occupational area. Requirement of AS degrees are determined largely by the California Education Code, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. College currently offers these AS degrees:

Automotive Technology
Building Technology
Business Management
Child Development
Computer Information Systems

[170] Resolution for Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi, Academic Senate, 2006

Hazardous Materials Specialist
Welding Technology

Time to completion for most certificates is one to three semesters. For associate degrees, the time to completion is about two years. The actual time to complete these programs, however, is usually longer, for various reasons: many students must make up deficiencies by taking pre-requisite developmental courses, including reading, mathematics and English; many students "stop-out" from time to time from their academic work; many change their educational objectives; and scheduling of required courses sometimes causes conflicts with work or family demands.

Academic counselors take special care to help students plan their educational programs as part of the matriculation process. Educational course planning, along with counseling and orientation are among the top priorities of the College's student success initiative efforts

Synthesis of learning is, as the College sees it, deriving one or two learning outcomes out of several related courses within a program. In their work formulating certificate and degree-level learning outcomes, faculty members from each division are attempting to synthesize one or two learning outcomes out of several courses within their divisions.[171]

So, for example, faculty in the Language Arts and Communications division formulated this degree outcome for the AA with emphasis in Arts and Humanities, aligning several courses required for the major: *Acquire a broad understanding and appreciation of the arts and humanities* (aligned with SPE 101 and ART 110).

The Business division formulated this degree outcome for the AA in Business and Technology: *Acquire fundamental knowledge of the operations and technical support requirements of a business organization* (aligned with BUS 101, ACC 102 and CIS 101).

The History, Social and Behavioral Sciences division faculty formulated this degree outcome for the AA in Social and Behavioral Science: *Acquire fundamental knowledge and skills in various disciplines constituting the social sciences* (aligned with POS 145).

The criminal justice faculty formulated this degree outcome for the AS in Criminal Justice: *Acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills in law enforcement and corrections* (aligned with CRJ 103 and CRJ 220).

Although having "institutional outcomes" beyond degree and certificate learning outcomes is not required by accreditation standards, the College developed institutional learning outcomes and is working on aligning institutional outcomes with degree and certificate outcomes.[172]

[171] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[172] Alignment of Institutional SLOs with Program SLOs

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.c

The College establishes high standards for instructional programs and maintains those standards with a rigorous faculty evaluation procedure. For its degree and certificate programs, the College has established requirements that are formulated with faculty expertise and are consistent with articulation, California Education Code and Chancellor's Office standards and requirements. The College estimates the time for completion of programs, recognizing that personal demands on students outside of school, and beyond the College's control, often will delay completion. The College's faculty members understand the importance of synthesizing learning in all its programs and accomplish this by aligning program SLOs with the SLOs and action plans of selected courses that constitute the requirements for those programs.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.c

The College will continue in maintain this standard by following the practices described above.

Standard II.A.2.d

The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.d

As noted earlier in the discussion of Standard II.A.1b, the College strives to deliver course sections in a variety of modes to meet the scheduling needs of students, in line with curriculum objectives and resources available. Accordingly, each semester, most degree applicable courses are offered in various modes, including face-to-face, online, interactive television (ITV) between the Blythe and Needles campuses, correspondence, and evening and daytime sections.[173]

Thanks to funding provided by the Title III "Virtual Campus" grant, the College acquired considerable technology to aid in instruction, including the implementation of the Sakai course management system (referred to at the College as "the Bridge"), Smart Boards, and PolyComs to facilitate interactive television course transmission between the Blythe campus and Needles Center.[174] The grant also provided for training to faculty and others in the use of this technology.

The impact of this technology on student learning has been positive. One of the most successful instructional tools is the Bridge, an online course management system. Instructors use the Bridge not only for online courses, but for all courses regardless of delivery mode. Students use it extensively because they can easily keep up with the class progress and stay in touch with instructors via the email correspondence feature.

Other examples of instructional methodologies that enhance student learning are:

[173] Class Schedule Spring Semester 2014
[174] Summary of Title III Virtual Campus grant program

1. The math faculty acquired the Hawkes learning system that enables students to progress in math courses using online technology that incorporates multimedia content, interactive practice exercises, chapter quizzes and tutorials. The program is flexible to accommodate students' schedules. The math faculty incorporated this technology into their own program SLOs, namely, that students performed better with the new system: "In Spring Semester 2013 there was excellent improvement in student performance due to making completion of homework assignments mandatory, and providing review sheets."[175]

2. The College Librarian, in cooperation with faculty provides mini-seminars about library use, including online research methodologies, as described in Standard II.C.1.c. The Librarian also fulfills requests for research from students—mainly incarcerated students—who are unable to access the internet.

3. The English department faculty reorganized their basic skills lecture and lab combination to provide for the same instructor for students' lecture and lab sections. A preliminary examination of the success rates of students in these sections indicates they are performing better in this arrangement.[176]

College Self Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.d

The College encourages innovation and creativity to meet the diverse learning needs of its students. This is evidenced in the variety of teaching methodologies practiced by its faculty. The College recognizes that more work needs to be done to assess learning, particularly as it is affected by differing methods of teaching and course delivery.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.d

The College will continue to encourage innovation and creativity in teaching approaches and boost its efforts in researching the impact of different teaching methods on learning outcomes.

Standard II.A.2.e

The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.e

As testimony to the College's support for ongoing and systematic review, the text of this standard is quoted in the introduction to the College's Program Review Guide, the key document containing instructions and templates for the completion of all program reviews, instructional and non-instructional.[177] Program review is conducted every three years—every two for Career

[175] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[176] Basic Skills ENG success rates with revised lecture-lab arrangement
[177] Program Review Guide, page 2

Training and Education program updates, and every four years for comprehensive review of CTE programs—and is the major tool the College has to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of its learning programs.

In addition to the program review process, moreover, courses and programs are evaluated for relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans in other ways.

Relevance: The College defines *relevance* in this standard as the extent to which courses and programs are consistent with the educational objectives defined in the College's Integrated Strategic Plan and Statement of Vision, Mission and Values. Those objectives are to "deliver quality educational programs, emphasizing student learning and leading to certification, conferral of associate degrees, transfer to four-year institutions, and personal growth and career enhancement, defined by faculty and by advisory committees and assisted by student support services."[178]

All instructional programs are required, in program review reports to describe how the program and its courses are supportive of the overall mission of the College. Program review reports are examined and accepted by the Program Review Committee, the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Board of Trustees.

Additionally, courses and programs are reviewed continuously by division faculty and members of the Technical Review Committee and Curriculum Committee to assess their relevance to certificate and degree requirements and objectives. As requirements change that affect certificates, degrees and transfer, for example, changes are made, where needed, in courses and programs.

Courses and programs are also reviewed semester-by-semester and year-by-year to evaluate enrollment trends and numbers of certificate and degree awards. Courses that have either chronically low enrollments, or are rarely offered, are reviewed by division faculty in conjunction with the Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services; the decision is made jointly whether to recommend to the Curriculum Committee removal from the Catalog.

The process for terminating programs and degrees due to lack of enrollment or conferrals is similar to that for courses, but requires approval by the Academic Senate. All changes in courses and programs, including termination, are reviewed by the Board of Trustees.[179]

Appropriateness: The College defines "appropriateness" in this standard as the extent to which courses and programs are consistent with the educational *values* held by the College and its personnel. The statement of educational values is in the College's statement of Vision, Mission and Values. According to the statement, the College "maintains the highest standards of ethics and integrity [and] "demands respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs."[180]

[178] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 1
[179] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4020 and AP 4020
[180] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9

All instructional programs are required, in program review reports which are conducted every three years, to describe how the program and its courses are supportive of the overall mission of the College. Courses and programs are also reviewed by division faculty and members of the Curriculum Committee to assess their appropriateness vis-à-vis the overall mission and educational values of the College.

Achievement of learning outcomes: All program reviews must address the process by which learning outcomes are identified, measured and evaluated at the course, program and degree levels. Program reviews must also describe the process by which improvements are made and provide evidence that this process is being followed.[181]

The College recognizes that while program review is an essential tool in the review of program performance, the assessment of learning outcomes is a continuous process. The College, through its faculty and support staff, have developed program SLOs and have made considerable progress in the past year in assessing them.[182]

Currency: All course outlines must be updated every five years, a procedure that is monitored by the office of the Vice-President of Instructional and Student Services. Updating requires that faculty take a fresh look at the course outline, compare it to how changes have affected the way the course is actually taught, and make adjustments in the course outline accordingly. Updated course outlines-of-record are posted to the Curriculum Committee website.[183] Currency is also evaluated in program review and, additionally for CTE programs, by advisory committees.[184]

Future needs and plans: All program review reports are required to describe changes needed for improvement. Major changes, such as those involving hiring new personnel or purchasing equipment and materials, are considered "discretionary" funding requests and are reviewed by the Budget Committee and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee as part of the integrated budget, program review and strategic planning process.[185]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.e

The College has a satisfactory process for evaluating courses and programs in terms of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans. While program review accomplishes many of the objectives of this standard, the College has other systems in place—including review by division faculty, Technical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee, Office of the Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services, Academic Senate, advisory committees and the Board of Trustees—that achieve those objectives continuously.

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[181] Program Review Guide, page 12
[182] PVC SLOs
[183] Curriculum Committee website
[184] Advisory Committees, 2013-14
[185] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart, with Narrative to the Flow Chart

Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.e

Continue the existing evaluation process of courses and programs, with special emphasis on the examination of learning outcomes: focus on better methods to measure learning, and on steps taken to improve learning.

Standard II.A.2.f

The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.

Response to Standard II.A.2.f

That the College is engaged in systematic, integrated planning in the matter of evaluating and measuring student learning is evidenced in the program review process and through SLO assessments.

All campus personnel—faculty, administrators and staff—are required to conduct program review, following the guidelines established in the Program Review Guide. Everyone is required, furthermore, to address in the program review report how they promote and support student learning.

For non-instructional programs, such as student services and library, the following questions are to be answered[186]:

1. "Describe specific, documented accomplishments that support and facilitate the achievement and assessment of student learning outcomes, including measures employed to evaluate program effectiveness in achieving such outcomes."

2. "Describe specific professional development activities in which program members participate, and explain how such activities benefit or enhance the program and support and facilitate student learning outcomes."

For instructional programs, which include divisions engaged in teaching, the following questions are to be answered:

1. "Describe the process by which the program identifies measures and evaluates student learning outcomes at the course, program and degree levels, and provide evidence that this process is being followed."

[186] Program Review Guide, see templates for non-instructional and instructional programs, pages 11-13

2. "Describe the process by which program improvements are made, and provide evidence that this process is being followed."

Program review reports, instructional and non-instructional, are reviewed and discussed by the Program Review Committee, a mutual agreement committee consisting of representatives from all College constituencies prior to being referred, with recommendations to the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and to the Board of Trustees. This broad-based review helps provide an integrated perspective of the program, including its support of and contribution to student learning. Further evidence of the integration of budget, program review and strategic planning is evident in the flow chart and narrative defining this process.[187]

Approved program review reports are published on the College website and may be viewed by the general public.[188]

The College has also made progress in defining and assessing SLOs on the course, degree, certificate, learning support, and institutional levels. Assessment results are published on the College's website.[189]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.f

Recognizing that each division and department may have differing approaches to improving student learning, the College nonetheless can demonstrate that its faculty, staff and administration are committed to an integrated approach. This commitment is evident in the program review process, which evaluates all programs in terms of, among other matters, what they are doing to bring about or support student learning.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.f

The College will continue its present integrated approach to evaluating and planning, with ongoing emphasis on developing increasingly more effective assessments of student learning among all College divisions and departments, instructional and non-instructional.

Standard II.A.2.g

If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.g

There is only one area in which the College uses examinations or assessments outside of regular course-level examinations, and that is the basic skills placement test.

[187] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart, with Narrative
[188] Program Review reports, published on the College website
[189] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page

All first-time students are required to take a basic skills assessment exam which tests skills in English, mathematics and reading. The test results are the basis for placement of students in those subject areas. The College recognizes that placement exams must be reviewed and validated frequently to ensure that students are placed at the appropriate levels of English and mathematics, and whether they may be required to take courses in remedial reading.

The former Learning Skills Center Coordinator administered the test and conducted validation studies of the placement test every four years in cooperation with English, math and reading faculty and adjusted cutoff scores where necessary.

Since the retirement, in 2011, of the Learning Skills Center Coordinator, assessments were handled by a part-time staff member under the supervision of two academic counselors.

At present, the College is in the process of determining how assessment testing will be handled; the current thinking is that assessment and placement services will be administered by the Admissions and Records department.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.g

The basic skills assessment test is used to place new students in appropriate classes of English, mathematics, and reading. The assessment test is validated every four years in cooperation with faculty in English, math and reading.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.g

Continue the practice of validating results of the basic skills assessment test with participation of faculty members.

Standard II.A.2.h

The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.h

Units of credit in a course are awarded to students for completion of the requirements of the course as established by the faculty member, within the guidelines stated on the course outline of record; the course requirements, listed the course outline, include learning outcomes. Learning outcomes have been established for virtually all the College's courses, credit and noncredit. The College's semester units of credit vis-à-vis instructor-student contact hours are consistent with the California Education Code and policies established by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.h

The College invests authority in faculty members to award units of credit for the completion of requirements that are consistent with the course's stated learning outcomes. The College, through the office of the Admissions and Records Director, adheres to the policies of the California Education Code and the California Community College Chancellor's Office in terms of the awarding of units of credit.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.h

Continue the College's current practices in awarding academic credit.

Standard II.A.2.i

The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.

College Response to Standard II.A.2.i

The College awards certificates and degrees on the basis of students having completed the required courses for the program—as defined by units of credit earned from those courses—and by having achieved the minimum required grade point average, or higher. The College has established learning outcomes for virtually all courses it offers.

For certificate and degree learning outcomes, the College looks to the faculty to assess those outcomes and to implement changes in teaching or curriculum where appropriate.[190] This is a self-regulating process on the part of faculty. The College does not use exit or qualifying exams as a requirement to receive a certificate or degree.

The College, therefore, relies on the judgment and expertise of its faculty—in divisions, Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate—to determine what students are learning not only to pass their courses, but as well, to earn their certificates and degrees.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.2.i

The College awards its degrees and certificates on the basis of stated learning outcomes, relying on faculty expertise and judgment. The College has made good progress in identifying degree level learning outcomes—it needs to do the same for certificate programs—and it has more work to do to improve upon how it assesses degree-level learning and implementing procedures for making changes that improve learning.

[190] PVC SLOs; see also response to Standard II.A.1.c for examples of SLO assessments and action plans

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.2.i

Continue making progress in developing effective measures of degree-level learning outcomes. Apply the same efforts to developing effective measures for certificate programs.

Standard II.A.3

The institution requires of all academic and degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.

The general education components of the College's degree programs are based on the following philosophy of education, approved by the Board of Trustees[191] and reproduced in the College Catalog:

Our Philosophy of Education: The awarding of an Associate degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It is to symbolize a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics, to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems, and to develop the capacity for self-understanding. [192]

The College's philosophy of education is consistent with its statement of values:

"Palo Verde College facilitates lifelong learning and encourages scholastic achievement. The College believes that knowledge, understanding and their application are keys to a better future."[193]

While the AA degrees for transfer and the AA Liberal Arts degrees "with emphasis" satisfy transfer requirements of California State University general education courses, the AS prepares students primarily for specific occupations, not necessarily transfer to four-year institutions. Nonetheless, most of the general education core requirements of the AS degree are transferable, thus affording students with transfer options, even though transfer may not be their immediate objective. Requiring students to take general education courses, furthermore, helps promote learning in areas outside their occupational specialty, and gives them broader career choices and opportunities for better futures—educational principles consistent with the philosophy expressed in the College's philosophy of education, statement of values, and Mission Statement.

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.A.3

[191] Board of Trustees Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4025
[192] College Catalog 2013-14, Philosophy of Education, page 9
[193] College Catalog 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

The College has built into all associate degree requirements opportunities consistent with its educational philosophy, namely, to facilitate lifelong learning and encourage scholastic achievement. The College believes that knowledge, understanding and their application are keys to a better future.

Action Plan: Standard II.A.3

Continue the current practice with regard to associate degree general education requirements.

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:

Standard II.A.3.a

An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

Standard II.A.3.b

A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

Standard II.A.3.c

A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.

College Response to Standards II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, and II.A.3.c

General education courses for all associate degrees are identified as belonging to one or more "options" available to students, depending on their educational objective: Option A, AS General Education, is the general education component of the AS degree and is intended for student not necessarily seeking transfer; Option B, General Education CSU-GE Breadth, is the general education component for the AA Liberal Arts, intended for students seeking transfer to the California State University system; and Option C, IGETC, is the general education component of the AA Liberal Arts, intended for students seeking transfer to the University of California or California State University systems.[194]

Each of the disciplines and areas identified in Standards II.A.3.a, b, and c may be found in each of the general education options.

[194] College Catalog, 2013-14, Option A, page 72; Option B, page 84; Option C, page 88

SLOs and assessments for the general education components—Options A, B and C—have been completed, and are posted to the SLO page of the College website.

Each of the courses constituting each of the options has been assigned two or more SLOs. Each of the associate degrees, of which the three options are a component, has been assigned two SLOs: one is for the *general education component* of the degree; the other is the *major area or emphasis component* of the degree. For example, the two SLOs for the AA Liberal Arts, with emphasis in Arts and Humanities, are:

AA Liberal Arts, Arts and Humanities

Sponsoring Division: Communications

SLO #1: See SLO for CSU-GE and IGETC

SLO #2: Acquire a broad understanding and appreciation of the arts and humanities.

SLO #1 for the AA Liberal Arts, Arts and Humanities, is either the CSU-GE or the IGETC SLO, *which are identical*, and is as follows:

AA, IGETC (Option C)

Sponsoring Divisions: Communications, HSS, Math and Science

SLO #1 (CSU-GE and IGETC): Acquire fundamental grounding in communication, critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and quantitative reasoning, the arts, literature and humanities, social, political and economic institutions, and self-development.

SLOs are listed on the SLO page of the College website. The academic or vocational division sponsoring the particular associate degree is also identified in the SLO listings.[195]

College Self-Evaluation of Standards II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, and II.A.3.c

The College meets all of the discipline requirements identified in these three Standards. Each of the courses that constitute the general education and major emphasis components of each associate degree have published SLOs, evidenced in the College website.

College Action Plan for Standards II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, and II.A.3.c

Continue to develop effective measures of degree-level learning outcomes of courses that constitute the general education content areas, as well as areas of major emphasis, of the College's associate degrees.

[195] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page

Standard II.A.4

All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

All associate degrees offered by the College have a focused area of inquiry, or an established interdisciplinary core. The AA degrees, together with their areas of emphasis, are as follows:

AA Liberal Arts for Transfer in Psychology
AA Liberal Arts for Transfer in Sociology
AA Liberal Arts, with emphasis in Math and Science
AA Liberal Arts, with emphasis in Business and Technology
AA Liberal Arts, with emphasis in Social and Behavioral Science
AA Liberal Arts, with emphasis in Arts and Humanities

The AS degrees, together with their areas of emphasis, are as follows:

AS General Education, Automotive Technology
AS General Education, Building Technology
AS General Education, Business Management
AS General Education, Child Development
AS General Education, Computer Information Systems
AS General Education, Criminal Justice
AS General Education, Hazardous Materials Specialist
AS General Education, Welding Technology

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.4

All of the AA and AS degrees offered by the College include focused study in at least one area or inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.4

The College meets this standard, and will continue efforts to comply with SB 1440 in developing additional degrees for transfer. See further discussion in Standard II.A.1.b of this goal.

Standard II.A.5

Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.

College Response to Standard II.A.5

Here are the vocational degrees and certificates offered by the College and the means by which each program enables students to demonstrate competencies that meet employment and external licensure requirements. Most programs have local advisory committees, many require review by the Region 9 Occupational Deans' Consortium and others require program review by an external—that is, statewide or national—organization, such as the California Board of Vocational Nurses:[196]

AS Degree	Sponsoring Division	Advisory Group
AS, Automotive Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; ASE
AS, Building Construction Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; ASE
AS, Business Management	Business	Business Advisory
AS, Child Development	HSS	Child Development Advisory
AS, Computer Information Systems	Business	Business Advisory
AS, Criminal Justice	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; POST
AS, Hazardous Materials Specialist	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory
AS, Welding Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; AWS

CA = Certificate of Achievement	Sponsoring Division	Advisory Group
CA, Alcohol and Drug Studies	HSS	CAADE
CA, Automotive Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; ASE
CA, Building Construction Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; ASE
CA, Business Management	Business	Business Advisory
CA, Child Development--Teacher	HSS	Child Development Advisory
CA, Criminal Justice	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; POST
CA, Fire Science Technician	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CA, Hazardous Materials Specialist	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CA, Traditional Vocational Nursing	Allied Health	Board of Vocational Nursing
CA, Welding Technology	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; AWS

[196] Advisory Committees, 2013-14; see also College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 71*ff*

CP = Certificate of Career Preparation	Sponsoring Division	Advisory Group
CP, 3D Computer Animation	Business	Business Advisory
CP, ADS Specialist I	HSS	CAADE
CP, ADS Specialist II	HSS	CAADE
CP, Automotive Fabrication	Professional Tech	Career Tech Advisory; ASE
CP, Business Literacy	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Certified Nursing Assistant	Allied Health	Board of Vocational Nursing
CP, Child Development--Assistant	HSS	Child Development Advisory
CP, Child Development—Assoc Teacher	HSS	Child Development Advisory
CP, Computer Applications	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Computer Maint & Help Desk Supp	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Emergency Medical Technician	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CP, Fire Instructor I	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CP, Fire Instructor II	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CP, Firefighter I	Allied Health	Career Tech Advisory; CA Fire Marshall
CP, Graphic Design and Web Content	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Information Technology Literacy	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Management Information Systems	Business	Business Advisory
CP, Phlebotomy	Allied Health	Board of Vocational Nursing

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.5

The College ensures that its vocational programs are preparing students with competencies that meet employer standards and make students competitive for jobs. It accomplishes this by requiring active advisory committees for each of its vocational degree and certificate programs, by consulting with the regional vocational consortium where necessary, and by ensuring program compliance with standards established by statewide, national and industry trade organizations.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.5

The College will continue its current vocational practices in teaching students technical competencies that will prepare them for employment and external licensure and certification.

Standard II.A.6

The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course

syllabus that specifies learning outcomes consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline.

College Response to Standard II.A.6

Information about educational courses and programs is provided under the Programs of Study and Courses of Instruction sections, respectively, of the College Catalog.[197] Each certificate and degree program lists all courses and electives required for completion. SLOs are listed for each certificate and degree program.

Courses are listed in alphabetical order by discipline under Courses of Instruction. Each course entry includes the course title, description, number of units, number of laboratory and lecture hours, and transferability. There is not sufficient room in the College Catalog to list the SLOs for every course. Readers are directed, by reference in the College Catalog,[198] to the College website where course SLOs are listed.

Policies governing transfer, including CSU-GE and IGETC, as well as other transfer requirements, are discussed in the section Requirements for Certificates, Degrees and University Transfer.[199]

A sampling of course syllabi is provided to demonstrate that most faculty members list SLOs in their course syllabi.[200] Academic Senate resolution, "On Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi," 2006, establishes minimum requirements for course syllabi content. These requirements include learning outcomes consistent with those in the officially approved course outline.[201]

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.A.6

The College believes it meets this standard, namely, that educational courses and programs and transfer policies are clearly explained in the Catalog

Action Plan: Standard II.A.6

The College will continue its current method of explaining courses and programs and transfer policies in the Catalog. The College will list learning outcomes for all degrees and certificate programs.

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[197] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 71-88, and 89-175
[198] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 89
[199] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 63-70
[200] Course Syllabi Samples
[201] Resolution on Including Critical Information in Course Syllabi, Academic Senate, 2006

Standard II.A.6.a

The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.

For students intending to transfer credits to a four-year institution, the College publishes detailed information in the Catalog in the section Requirements for Certificates, Degrees and University Transfer.[202] The explanation pertains to transfer to California State University campuses, University of California and private colleges and universities.

For students seeking to transfer credits from another institution to the College, the Catalog makes clear that students must submit transcripts to the Admissions and Records Director and that credits must be earned from an accredited institution. Furthermore, the College has procedures in place to facilitate transcript analysis, and this procedure is provided to prospective students when they apply for admission to the College and seek to apply credits toward their degree.[203]

The evaluation of credit is assessed, where possible, by matching the learning outcomes of the incoming course with a comparable existing course at the College. Because course outlines for courses from other colleges are not always available, it is often necessary to evaluate such credit on the basis of other criteria, such as course description, pre-requisites, comparable courses from other California colleges identified on ASSIST. College faculty members, who teach in the discipline, are often called upon to examine an incoming course to assess its comparability with an existing College course. To make the course review process more efficient and consistent, counseling faculty implemented a shared file system that maintains an ongoing record of their decisions; if a course from a particular institution has been accepted, that decision is made part of the shared file and is honored by subsequent reviewers.

The College works with other community colleges in the Region 9 in compiling annual updates to the Region 9 Community College Course Grid. This document lists courses taught at each of the participating colleges, and shows comparability of those courses, by discipline, among the different colleges.[204]

The College Articulation Officer works closely with counseling faculty to assure that articulation agreements are in place with institutions to which the majority of students transfer. Articulation agreements with campuses of California State University and University of California, and selected majors offered by those institutions, are available for review by anyone on the ASSIST website.

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[202] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 63-70
[203] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 19
[204] Region 9 Community College Course Grid

Transfer-of-credit policies and practices are reviewed frequently by the Student Success and Support Program (formerly the Matriculation Committee), a regular committee of the College that meets monthly.

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.A.6.a

The College is thorough and detailed in developing, communicating and evaluating its policies and practices with regard to transfer-of-credit to and from the College.

Action Plan: Standard II.A.6.a

Continue with the current practice in transfer-of-credit practices and policies.

Standard II.A.6.b

When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

Response to Standard II.A.6.b

When programs are eliminated or substantially changed, the College ensures that students are guaranteed catalog rights as of the semester they were initially enrolled, provided they remain continuously enrolled through the completion of the program.[205] Exceptions to this would be changes beyond the control of the College, such as changes in articulation and transfer requirements established by four-year institutions.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.6.b

The College guarantees catalog rights to students adhering to the enrollment requirements specified in the College Catalog at the time they began their studies.

Action Plan of Standard II.A.6.b

The College will continue to abide by its policy on catalog rights when programs are terminated or substantially changed.

Standard II.A.6.c

The institution represents itself clearly, accurately and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs and services.

[205] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 9 and 65

There are two key resources that contain most of the College's essential information about its courses, academic calendar, personnel, programs and services. These are: the College Catalog and the College website.

The College Catalog is published annually, under the direction of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, with recommendations from the Catalog Committee[206]. Changes in courses, program requirements, and key policies take place first in the Catalog draft templates, which are reviewed for accuracy and subsequently reprinted in other College publications. Policies that appear in the Student Handbook, likewise, are reprinted from the Catalog so that the policy language of one publication matches the policy language of the other.

The Catalog reflects curriculum changes resulting from the previous year's meetings of the Curriculum Committee.

A Schedule of Classes is produced several weeks prior to the start of classes for Fall and Spring Semesters, and for Summer Session. It is produced in paper form, and published on the College website.[207]

As the College has transitioned to online registration, students also have access to PVC Services, a listing of all courses offered during the term, along with continuously updated enrollment data. Students use PVC Services as part of the online registration process. The College also recently implemented various tutorials online to assist students in understanding the matriculation process, as well as counseling and support services available to them.

Other information published on the College website, such as the Mission Statement, Board of Trustees' agendas, minutes and policies, course outlines-of-record, and SLO information, are reviewed periodically to ensure they are timely and accurate.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.6.c

The College takes great care to ensure that it represents itself, both in print and on the website, in a manner that is clear, accurate and timely. The central resources for the College are the College Catalog and College website; they are the sources from which other key publications, such as the Schedule of Classes, student educational plans, and Student Handbook, are drawn. The website, similarly, is monitored periodically to ensure that its content is timely and accurate.

Action Plan: Standard II.A.6.c

The College will continue its current practices in the way it represents itself to students, current and prospective, and to the general public.

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[206] College Organizations and Committees, 2013-14

[207] Schedule of Classes, Spring 2014

Standard II.A.7

In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board-adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or world views. These policies make clear the institution's commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

College Response to Standard II.A.7

The Board of Trustees adopted policies on academic freedom both for faculty and students, in 2008.[208]

The College Catalog contains a section titled Student Rights and Responsibilities.[209] The section clearly defines two acts of academic dishonesty, namely, cheating and plagiarism, and sets forth the consequences of being found committing these acts. The section also enumerates specific examples of unacceptable student conduct, and describes the steps the College will take to fully investigate, review and act upon violations. The section describes the Complaint Procedure/Due Process and explains the procedures for filing complaint pertaining to general complaints, as well as complaints pertaining to discrimination and sexual harassment.

The College does not adhere to or espouse a particular belief or world view; however, it does demand "respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs, professional interactions and community relations," and so states in the Statement of Mission, Vision and Values.[210]

That the College is committed to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge is evidenced in the opening statement to the Complaint Procedures/Due Process section of the Catalog:

> The student is encouraged to pursue course work and other college-sponsored activities that will promote intellectual growth and personal development. In pursuing these goals, the students should be free of unfair and improper action by any member of the academic community.[211]

The College's commitment is also evidenced in its institutional values, expressed in the Statement of Vision, Mission and Values:

> Palo Verde College facilitates lifelong learning and encourages scholastic achievement. The College believes that knowledge, understanding and their application are keys to a better future.[212]

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[208] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4030, AP 4030-0, AP 4030-1
[209] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 57*ff*
[210] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, , page 9
[211] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 59
[212] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.7

The College assures academic integrity though many of its expressions, the College Catalog, College website and Board of Trustees' policies and administrative procedures.

Action Plan for Standard II.A.7

Continue the College's current policies and practices with regard to academic freedom, students' rights and responsibilities, and student conduct. Maintain a continuing commitment to the free pursuit of knowledge.

Standard II.A.7.a

Faculty distinguishes between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.

Response to Standard II.A.7.a

The Board of Trustees' policy and administrative procedure, referenced above in Standard II.A.7, states, addresses the question of a faculty member's expression of personal conviction both in and outside of the classroom. The policy addresses the need that information be presented fairly and objectively:

> Under the principles of academic freedom, the Professor has the right to discuss in the classroom all issues, however controversial, that the Professor considers relevant to the nature of the course. This right carries with it the responsibility of considering controversial issues objectively. While the Professor has the right to present conclusions to which the evidence points, the Professor has the responsibility of acknowledging the existence of and showing respect for opposing opinions.
>
> Outside the classroom, the Professor has the right as a private citizen to speak and act freely on controversial issues. The Professor has the responsibility of avoiding the association of a personal viewpoint with the name of the college.[213]

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.A.7.a

The College looks to the integrity and professionalism of each faculty member to present information in the classroom fairly and objectively. The College recognizes, furthermore, a faculty member's right to speak as a private citizen outside the classroom on controversial issues, and that right carries the responsibility to be accurate, to exercise restraint, to show respect for the viewpoints of others, and to make every effort to indicate that he or she is not speaking for the College.

[213] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4030, AP 4030-0, AP 4030-1

Action Plan: Standard II.A.7.a

The College will continue its policies and practices in the areas of academic freedom and faculty objectivity.

Standard II.A.7.b

The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.

Response to Standard II.A.7.b

The College Catalog clearly defines two acts of academic dishonesty, namely, cheating and plagiarism, and set forth the consequences to students of being found committing these acts. The section also enumerates specific examples of unacceptable student conduct, and describes the steps the College will take to fully investigate, review and act upon violations. The section describes the Complaint Procedure/Due Process and explains the procedures for filing a complaint pertaining to general conduct, as well as complaints pertaining to discrimination and sexual harassment.[214]

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.A.7.b

The College has a policy governing student academic dishonesty, publishes the policy in the Catalog, and outlines the consequences of being found committing identified acts of academic dishonesty.

Action Plan: Standard II.A.7.b

The College will continue with its current policies and practices in the area of published expectations of student academic honesty and consequences for dishonesty.

Standard II.A.7.c

Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or world views, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.

College Response to Standard II.A.7.c

While the College does not require conformity to a specific code of conduct, it demands "respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs, professional interactions and community relations," as stated in the Statement of Mission, Vision and Values.[215]

Moreover, the Board of Trustees approved two resolutions governing codes of conduct.[216] One, BP 2715, Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, applies specifically to members of the Board of

[214] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 57*ff*
[215] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

Trustees and addresses their unique responsibilities as Board members. Here is an excerpt from that policy:

> As a member of the Palo Verde Community College District Board of Trustees, I will perform my duties in accordance with my oath of office. I am committed to serve the needs of the citizens of the District. My primary responsibility is to provide learning opportunities to students regardless of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, national origin, or handicap.

The other, BP 3050, Institutional Code of Ethics, applies to Board members as well as all College personnel. Here is an excerpt from that policy:

> All trustees, officers and personnel of the Palo Verde Community College District are committed to serving the needs of the citizens of the District. Our primary responsibility is to provide learning opportunities to students regardless of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, national origin, or handicap.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.A.7.c

The College, through its Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, published in the College Catalog, as well as through particular Board of Trustees' policies, addresses this standard calling for full disclosure of expected codes of conduct for all Board members and all employees of the College.

College Action Plan for Standard II.A.7.

The College meets this standard through published Board policies and administrative procedures and the College Catalog

Standard II.A.8

Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with Standards and applicable Commission policies.

College Response to Standard II.A.8

The College does not offer curricula in foreign locations.

Standard II.B Student Support Services

The institution recruits and admits students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes,

[216] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715 and BP 3050

faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.

College Response to Standard II.B

In keeping with its stated mission, the College "supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services. The College promotes student success and lifelong learning for a diverse community of learners."[217] It offers instructional programs and instructional support services to all students able to benefit from its programs. These programs are diverse; they include preparation for transfer, as well as professional and personal enrichment: the College offers certificates and degrees that prepare students for productive careers and for transfer to four-year institutions, and offers opportunities for personal and professional enrichment in credit and noncredit courses and programs. The College offers its courses in correspondence, distance education and face-to-face modes to accommodate the life circumstances of its students, many of whom must balance the demands of family, work and school, and many of whom are pursuing their education while incarcerated.

In light of the diversity of programs and opportunities available to prospective students, the College provides educational support services that evaluate students' needs, recommend appropriate educational pathways, encourage progress along those pathways, and provide appropriate assistance when it is needed to keep students on track.

The College has a well-defined matriculation program, re-named the Student Success and Support Program, as described in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. [218] The process is reviewed at meetings of the Student Success Committee (formerly, the Matriculation Committee), Distance Education Committee, Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, as well as in program review.[219] These committees and organizations are staffed variously by teaching faculty, counseling faculty, staff and administrators—affording broad College input into the review and assessment of support services.

Here are examples how the College provides a supportive learning environment that encourages student success. The same or comparable programs are available to students at all locations where the College's instructional services are provided, and to students taking courses in all instructional modes.

Student learning outcomes for student support programs: Student support faculty and staff have long recognized that student learning is as important for student services programs as it is for instructional programs. Accordingly, the key learning support programs have developed SLOs, assessed them and formulated action plans for them.[220]

[217] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 9
[218] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 25-27; Student Handbook
[219] Student Services 2010 Program Review
[220] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page

Outreach program: The College makes a concerted effort to reach out and make known its educational programs to the communities of Blythe and Needles and surrounding areas, including the incarcerated students at several California state correctional facilities, two of which are near Blythe. As part of its effort to attract students and to make them feel welcome, the College sponsors an annual Career Day in Fall Semester and Transfer Day in Spring Semester.

In Spring Semester 2013, the College sponsored a combined career and transfer day the general topics of which were: transfer to four-year colleges and universities, local career opportunities and College support programs.[221] The event drew approximately 150 high school students from Blythe and surrounding communities.

Access and admissions policies: Admissions and enrollment policies are published in the College Catalog describe matters of eligibility, residency, open enrollment, fees and factors that may limit enrollment, such as pre-requisites and co-requisites.[222] In Fall Semester 2014, the College will have amended its priority registration, consistent with Board of Governors' regulations, to include students who have completed orientation, assessment and education plan counseling, consistent with the Student Success and Support Program.

Beginning Spring Semester 2014, the College implemented an extensive orientation system accessible to students online. The system assists in applying for admission, registering for classes understanding various degree and certificate programs, understanding what to expect in online course sections and other important information.[223] The new system is expected to greatly improve students' access to, and understanding of, the College's programs and services.

Orientation: Once admitted, new students are encouraged to attend an orientation session, take the assessment test and meet with a counselor or advisor. The orientation workshop, with presentations by College faculty and staff provides students with important information regarding the services, programs and courses available through the College. New, returning and continuing students are encouraged to attend orientation. The dates of orientation sessions are published in the Schedule of Classes, which is provided to students at the time of admission.[224] In addition, one-on-one orientations may be provided to the student during counseling sessions.

The College website also features assistance to students considering taking online courses, providing them with tips on taking distance learning classes as well as tutorials on using the Bridge, the College's online course management system.[225]

Assessment and placement: To ensure proper class placement and promote academic success, students who plan to take courses requiring reading, mathematics and writing are directed to take an assessment test that measures those skills and recommends placement at specific course levels.

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[221] Day's Events, Combined Career and Transfer Day, March 25, 2013
[222] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 16-21
[223] College website for online orientation
[224] Schedule of Classes, Spring 2014, page 5
[225] College website, online tutorials

Counseling and student educational plans: Once students have attended orientation and completed the assessment test, they are scheduled to see a counselor to discuss their goals and formulate an educational plan. The educational plan represents a schedule of courses required of a particular degree or certificate program. The College Catalog and Student Handbook explain what an educational plan is, its value, and how to prepare one with the advice of a counselor.[226]

Financial aid: The financial aid system was developed to increase access to higher education. Financial aid intends to meet the gap between students' income and the overall cost of attending college. Upon successfully completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), students can apply for the following Federal financial aid: The Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work Study. California residents can also apply for the following: The Board of Governors' Fee Waiver, Cal-Grants, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) and CalWORKs. Many students receive assistance from a combination of the aforementioned programs. The College Catalog and Student Handbook provide descriptions of the major aid programs available at the College. Students are encouraged during orientation and registration to discuss their financial needs with a counselor or advisor, if applicable, so they may be directed to the appropriate financial aid program for consideration.[227]

Scholarships: There are many scholarship programs available to students at the College. Scholarships are awarded primarily on the basis of financial need and academic excellence. All students are encouraged to apply for scholarships. Students receive this information through handouts, flyers, mailings, or counselor advisement.

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS): EOPS assists students at the College who are affected by language, social, and economic challenges by providing essential tools to successfully complete a two-year program and transfer to a four-year institution. EOPS encourages the enrollment and retention of students who have unfavorable factors such as low success with prior educational experiences.

Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE): Students who are at the time of acceptance into CARE are recipients of TANF and CalWORKs. Through CARE, eligible EOPS students receive supplemental educational support services, such as counseling, advisement, classes, workshops, peer support, and networking activities. In addition, grants and allowances for child care, transportation, books and supplies are provided.

CalWORKs: CalWORKs is a program for parents receiving cash aid, attending college and working. CalWORKs can pay for childcare expenses for children up to 11 years of age, textbooks and required supplies for classes and job placement.

[226] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 26, and Student Handbook
[227] College Catalog, 2013-14, page 28*ff*, and Student Handbook

Academic progress follow-up procedures: The 2010 Noel-Levitz student satisfaction survey disclosed student concern for early notification of academic performance. Every effort is being made to contact students with academic deficiencies in a timely manner.[228]

While students are encouraged to stay in touch with their counselors during the semester, the College nonetheless has several systems in place to monitor students' academic progress. For example, any student receiving a grade of D or F by midterm is identified by his or her instructor and reported to the office of Admissions and Records. A deficiency letter is mailed to the student, instructing the student to make an appointment with the counseling staff or the student's instructor to discuss various possibilities for improvement.[229] Apart from withdrawing from the course, the student can attend tutoring sessions. The academic progress of students receiving financial aid, likewise, is followed by counseling faculty. When the grade of a student receiving financial aid falls below a C in any course, the counselor notifies the student and arranges for a meeting to plan ways to improve the student's academic performance.

Tutoring: Tutoring services are available to any enrolled student and are provided to students at the newly reinstated Learning Skills Center, now called the Student Learning Center, under the direction of the College Librarian. Tutoring support is also provided by the TRIO grant program (specifically for DSPS and TRIO-eligible students), and through the support of the Basic Skills Initiative grant program for students in English, reading and math. Tutoring covers work in virtually any course taught at the College. Students may be referred to tutoring by counseling faculty to remedy a grade deficiency, or they may refer themselves for assistance.

Disabled Students Program and Services (DSPS): DSPS provides support services to students with a verifiable physical, learning or psychological disability. The program emphasizes independence and self-reliance while providing necessary support to help students achieve their educational goals.

Transfer and Career Advisement: Transfer and career advisement is handled by the various counseling faculty. Counselors offer workshops that advise students about the transfer requirements of the University of California, California State University, and other institutions, and sponsor field trips throughout the school year to selected UC and CSU campuses. As part of its effort to expand career guidance services and to address a student concern found in the 2010 Noel-Levitz survey[230], the College sponsored the combined transfer and career conference Spring Semester 2013, designed to help students consider various career and educational options.

Library: While library services are more fully described in the response to Standard II.C, the library deserves attention in the response to this standard as well, since it provides a vital support service to students and faculty, and is an important part of students' college experience. Library holdings consist of 19,000 books, videos and DVDs, as well as current journals and newspapers for reading and research. The library provides access to extensive online databases, and staff provides seminars for faculty and students on how to use them for research.

[228] Noel-Levitz, 2010
[229] Student Academic Progress Follow-up Documents
[230] Noel Levitz, 2010

Student activities: Apart from academics, the College supports various programs offering students opportunities to develop leadership skills, prepare for civic responsibility, explore diverse cultures, and help build a strong sense of engagement with college life. These include: ASG activities; student clubs, such as those that sponsor Women's Conference, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month and the Multicultural Festival; student government; and outreach activities such as the Blythe Christmas Parade and the AVID Middle School Visit.

The College's Student Development & Civic Center/Events Manager, who also advises ASG, has also played a major role in planning and coordinating programs in the recently opened Fine and Performing Arts Center, including the immensely successful workshop and performance by the Young Americans, in November 2013. The College supports College Hour on Tuesday, 11 a.m. to noon, to enable time for ASG and other organizations to meet; most classes and faculty and staff meetings are not held during this time.

GES 115 The Master Student: The course, GES 115 The Master Student, provides students with better understanding of College policies and processes, and provide students with guidance, early in their college careers, that enhance their chances for academic success. Topics covered by both courses include but are not limited to matriculation process of administration, orientation, assessment and advising, academic policies/procedures, written definitions of students rights and responsibilities, campus resources, programs and services, introduction to the California system of education, formulation of student educational goals, programs of study and career planning.

Student support services are regularly reviewed and assessed for effectiveness by counseling faculty, teaching faculty, staff and administrators, at meetings of the Student Success Committee (formerly, the Matriculation Committee), Academic Senate, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and through program review[231]. Here are a few recent examples of improvements that have been made as a result of these review processes.

1. Reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center, renamed the Student Learning Center, principally for tutoring services, Spring Semester 2014

2. Reclassification of the CalWORKS and ASG coordinator to the position of Student Development & Civic Center/Events manager to handle a broader range of student support duties, 2013

3. Designating a student support staff member to manage the Student Success and Support Program, 2013

4. Implementing an extensive orientation system accessible to students online, Spring Semester, 2014

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.B

[231] Student Services Program Review, 2010, discussion of the achievement of goals, pages 16-28

The College strives to live up to the opening sentence of its Mission Statement, namely, to support "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services." It seeks to accomplish this goal with various services and activities that support students as they embark upon and proceed along in their college careers. The College's matriculation process is well-publicized in the College Catalog and Student Handbook, is supported by written procedures, and is periodically reviewed for effectiveness by various College committees, consisting of counseling faculty, teaching faculty, staff and administrators, as well as in program review. Student support faculty and staff have implemented many changes and improvements, such as online tutorials regarding College processes, to increase students' potential for success. The student support departments are fully engaged in writing student learning outcomes and assessing their results and formulating action plans for improvement.

Action Plan: Standard II.B

The College, through its student services personnel, will continue improving its services to students, evaluating the results of those services, through committee deliberations, SLO assessments, program review and other processes, and will make improvements where they are needed.

Standard II.B.1

The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.

Response to Standard II.B.1

As described in the response to Standard II.B., above, the College assures the quality of student services through a process of continuing assessment by counseling faculty, teaching faculty, staff and administrators. Assessments come in the form of program review[232], well as in discussions and actions in various committees, including the Student Success and Support Program (formerly, the Matriculation Committee), Distance Education Committee, Academic Senate, and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

As for providing quality support services regardless of location or means of delivery, the College strives to ensure that all locations receive the levels of instructional support they need. All students enrolled at the following locations, or taking courses in correspondence or distance education sections, receive the benefits of orientation, assessment and placement, counseling services, financial aid, educational plan development, tutoring and follow-up on academic performance:

Distance education and correspondence education—community students[233]: Counseling faculty maintains ongoing contact with community students through one-on-one meetings, telephone,

[232] Student Services Program Review, 2010

[233] The term "community students" refers to students enrolled in correspondence classes who are not incarcerated.

the Bridge[234] and email to ensure they receive levels of service comparable with those of all students. Students enrolled in distance education and correspondence education sections (as well as students enrolled in face-face-courses) have access to online orientation and support that help explain various College processes, including registration, orientation, counseling and other support services.[235]

Correspondence education—incarcerated students at Chuckawalla and Ironwood: Counseling faculty make periodic trips to the two major prisons (approximately 15 miles from the Blythe main campus) for registration, counseling, education plan review, and follow-up in case of academic deficiency. Tutoring services are provided by the educational support staff employed by the prison system

Correspondence education at other prison locations: Counseling and other student support services are provided to students incarcerated at locations other than Chuckawalla and Ironwood by counselors on staff at the College and by prison proctors and counselors, specifically trained by College personnel. A variety of academic support services is available to incarcerated students through an agreement between Palo Verde College and the prison institutions. The agreement enumerates the responsibilities of the correctional facilities in providing instructional support services, including testing, proctoring, tutoring and other services.[236]

Although inmate access to the internet is restricted, in Fall Semester 2013, the College entered into an agreement with Ironwood state prison to deliver online courses that allow limited internet access. The pilot program will be evaluated at the end of Spring Semester 2014 to determine the feasibility of this arrangement, and whether this mode of delivery might be continued and replicated at other prison locations.

Needles Center[237]: The Director of the Needles Center, in addition to her administrative duties, provides academic counseling services to students enrolled in classes there. Additional support services and advisement is also provided to Needles Center students by counselors located at the Blythe campus. Such advisement takes the form of face-to-face contact either in person or via interactive television transmission. The Needles Center director recently hired an adjunct faculty member to provide tutoring in math. To address the need for tutoring in basic skills English, the Needles director is in the process of finding an adjunct English instructor, who would provide tutoring and teach face-to-face English sections as well.

Access to College Library resources is available to all students enrolled at the Needles Center.

Noncredit programs: With the sale of the Spring Street campus facility in 2013, the noncredit courses that were offered at that location were relocated to the Blythe campus. Students enrolled

[234] The Bridge is the College's name for the Sakai online course management system. Although the Bridge is designed for online courses, it is used by faculty for all class sections, including correspondence and face-to-face.
[235] College website for online orientation
[236] See agreement, "Internal Operational Procedures of Incarcerated Individuals with State Participation," July 1, 2012, p. 1
[237] Needles Center, on the College website

in noncredit programs are eligible to receive the same level of student support services as other students.

Specialized instructional services: The College conducts a number of instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district. The College's programs are operated with the approval of the community college districts served by these areas. Such programs are conducted under agreements requiring compliance with all requirements governing educational programs established by the California Government Code Title 5, California Education Code, and the College. While the College provides support services to students in these programs, it is continuously evaluating the support needs for this student population and addressing them accordingly.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.1

The College effectively utilizes its counseling and staff resources to provide quality support services to students regardless of the mode of course delivery or the location of the courses: credit, noncredit, Blythe campus, Needles Center, inmates at the Chuckawalla and Ironwood prisons, and inmates in other California locations and students taking courses through instructional services agreements at locations outside the district.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.1

The College will continue its current practices in the area of providing quality support services regardless of the location or mode of course delivery.

Standard II.B.2

The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information concerning the following:[238]

a. General Information

i. Official Name, Address, Telephone Number and website Address of the Institution, page 1
ii. Educational Mission, page 9
iii. Course, Program and Degree Offerings, pages 71*ff*
iv. Academic Calendar and Program Length, pages 5-7
v. Academic Freedom Statement[239]
vi. Available Student Aid, pages 34-40
vii. Available Learning Resources, pages 28-31
viii. Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty, pages 178-180
ix. Names of Governing Board Members, page 3

[238] Page numbers appearing after each item refer to the College Catalog, 2013-14

[239] The academic freedom statement does not appear in the College Catalog. It may be found in Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4030, AP 4030-0, AP 4030-1

b. Requirements

i. Admissions, page 16-21
ii. Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations, pages 22-24
iii. Degree, Certificate, Graduation, pages 63-70

c. Major Policies Affecting Students

i. Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty, page 57
ii. Nondiscrimination, pages 8 and 60
iii. Acceptance and Transfer of Credits, pages 18 and 69-70
iv. Grievance and Complaint Procedures, page 59
v. Sexual Harassment, page 59
vi. Refund of Fees, page 21

d. Locations or Publications Where Other Policies May Be Found, pages 13-14

College Response to Standard II.B.2

The College Catalog lists all the information required in this Standard, except for the academic freedom statement, which is stated in Board of Trustees policies and administrative procedures.[240]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.2

The College meets the requirements of this Standard, with the exception of including Board policy on academic freedom in the College Catalog.

College Action Plan for Standard II.B.2

The College will state the Board policy on academic freedom, in next year's College Catalog, 2014-15.

Standard II.B.3

The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.

Response to Standard II.B.3

The College engages in ongoing discussions and research that examine student learning support needs and provides services and programs to address those needs. Here are some examples of

[240] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 4030, AP 4030-0, AP 4030-1

what the College has done to assess learning support needs and the programs and services that were implemented to address those needs:

Student success support program and full-time manager: While educational planning has long been feature of the College's counseling services, the implementation of the Student Success and Support Program will place even more emphasis on students' understanding of educational plans, and will assist students in planning their courses of study more effectively.[241]

Reinstatement of the Learning Skills Center: As the College's financial conditions began to show some improvement in Fall Semester 2013, discussions about reinstating the Learning Skills Center, perhaps in a modified form, began. At an Institute Day discussion of College needs, the topic came up and there was resounding support to bring back a modified version of the Learning Skills Center.[242] With approval of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Academic Senate, the plan is to reinstate the Learning Skills Center (renamed the "Student Learning Center") in Spring 2014 under the direction of the College Librarian, in a location adjacent to the Office of Correspondence Education. The plan will be implemented on a provisional basis, and will be evaluated in Fall Semester 2014.

New and reinstated faculty positions: In Spring Semester 2013, as a result of assessment of faculty needs and dialogue among constituent groups, the College created a new position in music,[243] which was filled for a Fall Semester 2013 start date, and reinstated a faculty position, in English as a Second Language, which will be filled for Fall Semester 2014[244]. The music instructor position helped fill a need for music and related programs in the arts for the Fine and Performing Arts Center. The ESL position will help address the need for better English language training in the community.

College Library support services: In Fall Semester 2013, the Librarian conducted a survey of faculty and students regarding library services. The findings were that the faculty believed there were sufficient print and electronic resources. Similarly, students who stated they used print or electronic library resources stated the resources were sufficient.

In response to students' needs to acquire better research skills, moreover, the College Librarian conducts workshops and mini seminars. During the semester, the Librarian arranges with faculty to conduct short, hands-on seminars for the benefit of students on the use of the library's online research services.[245] The library recently subscribed to an online information literacy program called Research Ready, which consists of several information literacy modules which can be revised to suit the needs of students. One module has been tested in a few face-to-face courses and will be revised again before being placed in online courses.

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[241] PVC SLOs, Learning Support, Counseling; the student learning outcome for Student Academic Support Services, Counseling states: "Students will formulate an educational plan to help them achieve their educational goal."

[242] Problem Areas for Accreditation, with comments, Institute Day, August 30, 2013, see item 13; also, see A-Team discussions on ELS and LSC, October 11, 2011

[243] Analysis of music instructor position

[244] Analysis of ESL instructor position

[245] Library workshop-GES; and Library workshop-Ebsco

The College Librarian also works continuously to fulfill research requests from incarcerated students (whose access to internet resources is restricted). With budget reductions, and the impact on library staffing, the Librarian is seeking assistance from tutors and others assisting in the new Student Learning Center, to help in processing research requests.

New classroom technology and training: Thanks to funding provided by the Title III "Virtual Campus" grant, the College acquired considerable technology to aid in instruction in all delivery modes, including the implementation of the Sakai course management system (referred to as "the Bridge"), Smart Boards, and PolyComs to facilitate interactive television course transmission between the Blythe campus and Needles Center.[246] The grant also provided for training to faculty and others in the use of this technology. The grant also helped pay the development cost of an online student orientation and training program on the College website.[247]

AA degrees for transfer: In 2010 and 2011, the College created two new associate degrees, in response to requirements of SB 1440, namely, the AA for Transfer in Psychology and the AA for Transfer in Sociology. The AS for Transfer in Business Administration was just approved by the Chancellor's office Fall Semester 2013, and will be offered for the 2014-2015 academic year. The AS-T Administration of Justice and the AS-T Early Childhood Education will be ready in the near future. The new AA degrees will help facilitate the process for students to transfer to the California State University system upon graduation from the College.

Career and transfer day: In Spring Semester 2013, the College sponsored a combined career and transfer day the general topics of which were: transfer to four-year colleges and universities, local career opportunities and College support programs.[248] The event drew approximately 150 high school students from Blythe and surrounding communities.

These are examples of some of the programs and services the College has initiated in response to research, studies, and discussions among counseling and teaching faculty about improving learning support services. The College places great importance on *supporting "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services*," as is expressed in the Mission Statement, and effective learning support programs and services are part of creating that environment.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3

The College demonstrates a strong commitment to the continuing examination of student learning support needs and the implementation of programs and services that address those needs. As the College increases its activity in identifying and assessing student learning outcomes, particularly in the area of student support services, it expects to increase understanding of the effectiveness of learning support programs and acquire additional tools to improve them.

[246] Summary of Title III Virtual Campus grant program
[247] College website for online orientation; see also College website, online tutorials
[248] Day's Events, Combined Career and Transfer Day, March 25, 2013

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3

The College will continue the process of researching student learning needs, and taking steps to address them.

Standard II.B.3.a

The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.

College Response to Standard II.B.3.a

The College is committed to providing equitable access to all of its students through comprehensive and reliable services regardless of service location or delivery method. As stated in the response to Standard II.B.1, all students enrolled at the following locations, or taking courses in distance education or correspondence sections, receive the benefits of orientation, assessment and placement, counseling services, financial aid, educational plans, and follow-up on academic performance:

Distance education and correspondence education—community students: Counseling faculty maintains ongoing contact with community students through one-on-one meetings, telephone, the Bridge[249] and email to ensure they receive levels of service comparable with those of all students. Students enrolled in distance education and correspondence education sections (as well as students enrolled in face-face-courses) have access to online orientation and support that help explain various College processes, including registration, orientation, counseling and other support services.[250]

Correspondence education—incarcerated students at Chuckawalla, Ironwood and other prison locations: Counseling faculty make periodic trips to the two major prisons (approximately 15 miles from the Blythe main campus) for registration, counseling, education plan review, and follow-up in case of academic deficiency. Tutoring services are provided by the educational support staff employed by the prison system

For prison locations other than Chuckawalla and Ironwood, counseling and other student support services by prison counselors and proctors, specifically trained by College personnel. A variety of academic support services, including testing, proctoring, tutoring, is available to incarcerated students through an agreement between Palo Verde College and the prison institutions. [251]

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[249] The Bridge is the online course management system used at the College. Although it is designed for online courses, it is used by faculty for all class sections, including correspondence and face-to-face.

[250] College website for online orientation

[251] See agreement, "Internal Operational Procedures of Incarcerated Individuals with State Participation," July 1, 2012, p. 1

Although inmate access to the internet is restricted, in Fall Semester 2013, the College entered into an agreement with Ironwood state prison to deliver online courses that allow limited internet access. The pilot program will be evaluated at the end of Spring Semester 2014 to determine the feasibility of this arrangement, and whether this mode of delivery might be continued and replicated at other prison locations.

Needles Center: The Director of the Needles Center, in addition to her administrative duties, provides academic counseling services to students enrolled in classes there. Additional support services and advisement is also provided to Needles Center students by counselors located at the Blythe campus. Such advisement takes the form of face-to-face contact either in person or via interactive television transmission. The Needles Center director recently hired an adjunct faculty member to provide tutoring in math. To address the need for tutoring in basic skills English, the Needles director is in the process of finding an adjunct English instructor, who would provide tutoring and teach face-to-face English sections as well.

Access to College Library resources is available to all students enrolled at the Needles Center.

Noncredit programs: With the sale of the Spring Street campus facility in 2013, the noncredit courses that were offered at that location were relocated to the Blythe campus. Students enrolled in noncredit programs are eligible to receive the same level of student support services as other students.

Specialized instructional services: The College conducts a number of instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district. The College's programs are operated with the approval of the community college districts served by these areas. Such programs are conducted under agreements requiring compliance with all requirements governing educational programs established by the California Government Code Title 5, California Education Code, and the College. While the College provides support services to students in these programs, it is continuously evaluating the support needs for this student population and addressing them accordingly.

The College has an effective job performance evaluation system in place for non-teaching faculty. The evaluation system applies to counseling faculty, advisors, and other faculty members whose primary job assignment is in student support services. The non-teaching evaluation, like the teaching faculty evaluation, consists of the following components: peer evaluation; professional self-evaluation; discussion of SLO assessment; student evaluations; administrative evaluation; and, if needed, remediation plan. The job performance evaluation process is reflective of the College's commitment to assessing the effectiveness of its student support services.[252]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.a

The College believes that its student services support function is living up to the objectives of this standard. It monitors the quality of access to its programs through discussions among counseling faculty, advisors, other faculty, staff members and administrators. The College has in

[252] Non-teaching faculty evaluation

place an effective performance evaluation system for counseling faculty and advisors, and others who are part of the student support effort to help ensure quality in the services provided.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.a

The College will continue its current practices in maintaining equitable access for all students to support services regardless of location or mode of delivery through its monitoring

Standard II.B.3.b

The institution provides and environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

Response to Standard II.B.3.b

The College, through its various services, offers students a well-rounded education that includes more than classrooms and textbooks. Student activities are coordinated by a full-time staff person, the Student Development & Civic Center/Events Manager, who provides leadership and guidance to students in these programs. The activities offer a diverse range of opportunities from which students may choose and which help encourage their personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development. These opportunities are consistent with several of the College's objectives expressed in the Mission Statement, Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Statement of Values, and Institutional SLOs:

1. "The College promotes student success and lifelong learning for a diverse community of learners." (Mission Statement)[253]

2. "Increase college visibility and community involvement by publicizing the College's educational programs and services, ASG activities, and cultural events in the Fine and Performing Arts Center." (Objective 2.2, Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16) [254]

3. "Invite participatory governance in planning and decision-making by encouraging constituent representation on committees, and promoting effective dialog among constituencies and the Board of Trustees." (Objective 3.3, Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16)[255]

4. "Palo Verde College supports the continuous development of civic responsibility." (*from* Statement of Values)[256]

[253] College Catalog 2013-14, page 9
[254] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16
[255] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16
[256] College Catalog 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

5. "Community and Global Awareness—Students will understand and empathize with diverse cultural, social, religious and linguistic differences within and across societies." (*from* Institutional SLOs)[257]

6. "Personal and Professional Growth and Development—Students will develop personal, educational and career goals that promote self-reliance; lifelong learning; and physical, mental, and social well-being." (Institutional SLOs)[258]

There are many activities in which students may participate and which help encourage personal and civic responsibility. These include participation on constituent-based College committees and organizations, including serving as the ASG representative on the Board of Trustees; participation in ASG and student government; and participation in community outreach activities such as the Blythe Christmas Parade, Adopt-A-Family, and AVID.

Other activities that help promote intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development are Phi Theta Kappa, Astronomy Club, Genealogy Club and Pirates' Jazz Ensemble.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.b

The College provides students with many opportunities to encourage personal responsibility. A full-time staff person provides leadership and guidance for these programs.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.b

The College will continue with its current efforts maintain this Standard.

Standard II.B.3.c

The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

Response to Standard II.B.3.c

The College takes great care to ensure that its counseling and advising procedures are effective and that its staff is adequately prepared to provide quality advising services.

The Student Academic Support Services division, consisting of counseling and advising faculty as well as other student services staff, is required, as are all instructional and non-instructional programs, to conduct a program review of its services every three years. The most recent program review in student services was in 2010, in which counseling provides updates on sixteen goals it had established in a previous program review report. [259]

[257] College Catalog 2013-14, Institutional SLOs, page 10
[258] College Catalog 2013-14, Institutional SLOs, page 10
[259] Student Services Program Review, 2010, counseling goals, page 22*ff*

In an effort to ensure counseling faculty are informed in current trends in academic advising, they are encouraged to attend at least three professional development conferences, workshops, or in-service programs each year:

> "Attends a minimum of three professional development conferences, workshops, courses or in-service activities each academic year…" (Item 1, Professional Development Self-Disclosure Statement, Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Procedure)[260]

The College has an effective job performance evaluation system in place for non-teaching faculty. The evaluation system applies to counseling faculty, advisors, and other faculty members whose primary job assignment is in student support services. The evaluation template asks each counseling faculty member to report on their progress in assessing SLOs. The job performance evaluation process is reflective of the College's commitment to assessing the effectiveness of its student support services, specifically counseling.

With the implementation of the Student Success and Support Program, the College will place greater emphasis on students' understanding of educational plans, and will assist students in planning their courses of study more effectively, consistent with the learning support SLO established for counseling services.[261]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.c

The College continuously assesses the effectiveness of its student support programs through program review and periodic examination of its matriculation services, through expectations that counseling faculty and advisors stay current in the field as determined in job performance evaluations and through the efforts of the new Student Success and Support Program.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.c

The College will continue with its current practices in evaluating and continuously improving student support services.

Standard II.B.3.d

The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Response to Standard II.B.3.d

That the College is supportive of programs and services that enhance students' understanding and appreciation of diversity is evident in its Statement of Vision and Institutional SLOs:

[260] Non-teaching faculty evaluation

[261] PVC SLOs, Learning Support, Counseling; the student learning outcome for Student Academic Support Services, Counseling states: "Students will formulate an educational plan to help them achieve their educational goal."

"Palo Verde College celebrates diversity in its students, in its faculty and staff, and in its community, as a quality that enriches and strengthens us all."[262] (*from* Statement of Mission, Vision and Values)

"Community and Global Awareness—Students will understand and empathize with diverse cultural, social, religious and linguistic differences within and across societies."[263] (*from* Institutional SLOs)

The Board of Trustees, similarly, expresses support of diversity in Board policy.[264]

The College lives up to these commitments in various ways. The Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee, an ad hoc committee comprising faculty, staff, administrators and students, is charged with planning and sponsoring the annual Multicultural Festival on campus and for advising College personnel of opportunities, such as conferences and training, in the area of multicultural instruction and programs.

The Multicultural Festival is a daylong tribute to diversity—within the College, in the local communities and throughout the world. Past events have featured ethnic-centered dance, food, booths and special presentations on various cultures, such as those of Thailand, Scotland, Germany, the Aztecs, Japan, India and migrant families of the American Southwest.

The College's support of diversity is further evidenced in its support during the year of various programs and events:

1. Cinco de Mayo—Sponsored annually by the EOPS and ASG
2. Women's Conference—Sponsored annually by faculty, staff and administrators
3. Black History Month—Sponsored annually by EOPS and ASB.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.d

The College demonstrates its commitment to students with programs, practices and services that support diversity, as is evident not only in its stated policies and objectives, but as well in the programs and events it sponsors, including the Multicultural Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Women's Conference and Black History Month.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.d

[262] College Catalog 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9
[263] College Catalog 2013-14, Institutional SLOs, page 10
[264] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7100, Commitment to Diversity

The College will continue with its current practices and policies to support students' understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Standard II.B.3.e

The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.e

Admissions and placement instruments and practices are continuously evaluated by the Student Success and Support Program (formerly, the Matriculation Committee) to ensure they are effective, accessible, meet the needs of students and are free of bias. The Student Success and Support Program consists of key personnel associated with all aspects of student support services, including student representatives from the ASG; it is a critical forum for the discussion and resolution of problems related to all aspects of the matriculation process, including admissions and placement procedures.

Admissions procedures and assessment and placement policies are described in the Student Handbook and College Catalog.[265]

The Matriculation Plan, adopted by the College in 2010, identifies the activities, goals and staffing for all components of matriculation, including admissions.[266] The following are the goals for the admissions component of the matriculation plan:

1. All students, regardless of previous academic preparation and primary language, will find the admissions process accessible.

2. All records will be accurate and accessible.

3. The admissions component is expected to operate with a maximum efficiency.

4. Student history, assessments, and needs will determine the counseling services provided to new and continuing students.

5. Priority registration will continue to be provided to DSP&S, EOPS and Veteran students.

6. The majority of non-English speaking students are Spanish speakers; therefore Spanish speaking personnel and Spanish language admission applications are made available to students when needed.

[265] College Catalog 2013-14, page 26
[266] Matriculation Plan, 2010, pages 3-6

7. Continue to utilize American Sign Language Interpreters and TTY line for hearing impaired students.

8. Written instructions exempting students from matriculation services will continue to be provided to students (in the catalog, in the admissions application, and other documents). The online admissions application process will identify students that are exempt from matriculation services according to the District policy.

9. Students exempt from the matriculation process will continue to be monitored and informed that they still may participate in all matriculation components.

10. Improve the new online admissions process to better serve our students.

The College recognizes that its assessment and placement exams must be reviewed and validated frequently to ensure that students are placed at the appropriate levels of reading, English and mathematics. The administration of assessment testing is the responsibility of the Admissions and Records department, which will also conduct validation studies of the placement tests in cooperation with reading, English and mathematics faculty members, and will adjust cutoff scores where necessary.

Admissions and placement policies and procedures are also evaluated in program review every three years as part of the student services program review report.[267]

With the implementation of the Student Success and Support Program, it is expected that greater emphasis will be placed on orientation, education plans and counseling as part of the matriculation process.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.e

The College regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its admissions and placement policies and procedures. It is making progress in achieving the goals established for the admissions component of the Matriculation Plan and is readying for implementation of the Student Success and Support Program.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.e

Continue the current practice of evaluating admissions and placement policies and improving upon them.

Standard II.B.3.f

The institution maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are

[267] Student Services Program Review, 2010

maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for release of student records.

College Response to Standard II.B.3.f

The College maintains all student records permanently, securely and confidentially, under the direction of the Admissions and Records Director and the Information Technology Director. The College adheres to the policies of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in establishing, maintaining and releasing student records. In cooperation with the College Admissions and Records Director, the Informational Technology department continuously backs up student records information, and stores the data at various locations on campus. The College recently contracted with an off-campus company to image selected student enrollment records.

The College publishes College policies, which are based on FERPA rules, in the College Catalog[268] and the Student Handbook. Policies of the Board of Trustees policies pertaining to FERPA are incorporated by reference in these two publications.[269]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.f

The College adheres to FERPA rules having to do with establishing, maintaining and releasing student records. It publishes summaries of College policies based on FERPA rules in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. The Admissions and Records Director maintains all student records permanently, securely and confidentially, with reliable electronic backups stored at various locations on campus.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.3.f

By virtue of its adherence to FERPA rules and guidelines, and in light of its data backup procedures, the College complies with this standard and will continue its current practices in this area.

Standard II.B.4

The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

The College continuously evaluates the effectiveness of student support services through various means, including:

1. Meetings and opportunities for dialog and problem-solving: This would include meetings of the Student Academic Support Services division, Student Success and Support Program (formerly, the Matriculation Committee), Distance Education Committee, Academic Senate, and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering

[268] College Catalog 2013-14, page 61

[269] Board of Trustees policies and administrative procedures, BP 5040, AP 5040, and AP 5045

Committee. These committees and organizations are staffed by teaching faculty, counseling faculty, staff and administrators—affording broad College input into the review and assessment of support services.

2. Matriculation Plan preparation and follow-up: The 2010 Matriculation Plan is an extensive review of student support services with emphasis on each component of matriculation: admissions, orientation, assessment, counseling/advisement, follow up, coordination and training, research and evaluation, and pre-requisites, co-requisites, and advisories on recommended preparation.[270] Each component is described and evaluated in terms of its adherence to applicable Title V guidelines and regulations. Matriculation Plan goals are listed above in Standard II.B.3e.

3. Learning outcomes assessment: SLOs for learning support programs are established and are being assessed. SLOs for learning support programs are published on the College website.[271]

4. Program review: All College programs, instructional and non-instructional, are evaluated through the program review process every three years. The most recent program review by the student services area was in 2010 and includes program reviews of admissions and records, CalWORKS, counseling, DSPS, EOPS, financial aid, outreach and events, and transfer and career.[272]

5. Categorical program assessment reports: The College, through its various support services departments, regularly prepares required reports, apart from program review, for the purposes of funding renewal, re-certification, program evaluation and, where applicable, site visitation. These programs include EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKS, Student Success and Support Program (formerly, Matriculation), and financial aid.

6. Job performance evaluations: The procedure applies to counseling faculty, advisors, and other faculty members whose primary job assignment is in student support services. The non-teaching evaluation, like the teaching faculty evaluation, consists of the following components: peer evaluation; professional self-evaluation; student evaluation, administrative evaluation; and, if needed, remediation plan. The job performance evaluation process exemplifies the College's commitment to assessing the effectiveness of its student support services.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.B.4

The College has several processes in place that regularly evaluate the effectiveness of student support services: regular matriculation and counselors' meetings for discussion and problem-

[270] Matriculation Plan, 2010
[271] PVC SLOs, located on College website, Accreditation page
[272] Student Services Program Review, 2010

solving; Matriculation Plan preparation and follow-up; learning outcomes assessments; program review; categorical program assessment reports; and job performance evaluations for non-teaching faculty.

Action Plan for Standard II.B.4

The College will keep the various processes in place that regularly evaluate the effectiveness of student support services, emphasizing the ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes in all aspects of student services

Standard II.C Library and Learning Support Services

Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.

Response to Standard II.C

The Harry A. Faull Library, located on the second floor of the CS Building, provides important support services to students in support of the College's Mission, namely, to support "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."

The College Library is charged with providing various student support services, including providing knowledgeable responses to requests for research assistance; providing research assistance and materials that support the curriculum of the College; encouraging and facilitating information competency among students regardless of their educational goals; providing instruction in the use of information resources; promoting the library as the focal point of quality information resources regardless of the format; protecting each individual's right to privacy with respect to information requests; acquiring and maintaining a viable library collection of books, electronic databases, and other materials; and ensuring a comfortable and safe learning environment with quiet areas for study, computer work, and conferencing.[273]

Staffing for another learning support service, namely, the Learning Skills Center, which provided tutoring, testing and placement services, was reduced in 2011 as a result of the College's financial problems that surfaced at that time. The Center had one full-time faculty coordinator, who retired in 2011. At present, the College maintains one part-time staff who handles testing, placement services and limited tutoring, and who reports to the Vice President of Instruction and

[273] Program Review Report, College Library 2010

Student Services. The services offered by this office are monitored by two full-time counselors to ensure quality of services.

As a result of a re-examination of students' needs, the College, through an ad hoc committee of the Academic Senate, reconsidered, in Fall Semester 2013, the feasibility of reinstating the Learning Skills Center, recognizing that the staffing and array of support services may be different from what they were, to meet evolving student needs within available financial resources. The ad hoc committee's recommendation was presented to the College Council and Superintendent/President during the Fall 2013 Semester, and the decision was to reinstate the Learning Skills Center, renamed the Student Learning Center, on a trial basis under the direction of the College Librarian.

The library strives to make learning support services, including tutoring, accessible to all students, regardless of location or mode of instructional delivery, including Needles Center students and incarcerated students.[274]

The Needles Center director recently hired an adjunct faculty member to provide tutoring in math. To address the need for tutoring in basic skills English, the Needles director is in the process of finding an adjunct English instructor, who would provide tutoring and teach face-to-face English sections as well.

A variety of academic services is available to incarcerated students through an agreement between Palo Verde College and the prison institutions.[275] The agreement enumerates the responsibilities of the correctional facilities in providing instructional support services, including testing, proctoring, tutoring and other services. Access to computer laboratories and tutors is limited due to the regulated environment for inmates.

The College Librarian consults with faculty about the kinds of materials to present for workshops, which are often presented with pre- and post-tests to evaluate student learning. [276] Additionally, the Librarian provides resources needed to support their class assignments. In response to faculty requests, the librarian has designed online "InfoGuides," research guides to supplement workshops and class materials. InfoGuides are the College Librarian's term for such customized reports that utilize LibGuides software. The software enables the librarian to assemble various library materials (books, videos, websites) and to organize them with tabs for pages. The instructor is provided the URL to put on the Resources page of the Bridge, which is the College's online course management system. Students can then access the InfoGuides source materials from anywhere, on or off campus. Examples of InfoGuides developed to date are MLA and APA guides and materials to support the study of the novel *Sula*, required for ENG 101.

[274] Tutoring support is also provided by the TRIO grant program (specifically for DSPS and TRIO-eligible students), and through the support of the Basic Skills Initiative grant program for students in English, reading and math. These services are also discussed Standard II Student Learning Services and Support.

[275] See agreement, "Internal Operational Procedures of Incarcerated Individuals with State Participation," July 1, 2012, p. 1

[276] Examples of library workshops: workshop in Ebsco; workshop in GES

The Librarian conducts systematic assessments of its services through program review.[277]

In Fall 2013, the Librarian conducted a survey of faculty and students regarding library services. The findings were that the faculty believed there were sufficient print and electronic resources. Similarly, students who stated they used print or electronic library resources stated the resources were sufficient.

The Librarian is a full-time faculty member and, in this capacity, participates in Academic Senate and other campus organizations and committees, which bring her into discussions with other faculty, staff, students and administrators.

College Self-Evaluation: Standard II.C

The learning support services of the College library provide students with a broad range of learning assistance—research in the form of print and database resources, personal assistance in research and academic guidance, assessment testing for placement in English, math and reading courses, tutoring assistance, quiet places to work, and technology support in the form of computers and other learning technologies.

The Library is expanding its services Spring Semester 2014 by reinstating the tutoring services provided under the former Learning Skills Center, renamed Student Learning Center, which will be under the overall direction of the College Librarian.

Other tutoring assistance for incarcerated students at each of the prison locations is provided by personnel who are employed in the education department of the prison, or inmates with associate's or bachelor's degrees who work under the direction of the proctor.

Action Plan: Standard II.C

The College will continue to provide learning support services to students through the library regardless of location and will continue to assess the effectiveness of these services and make changes and improvements in accordance with changes in students' learning support needs. With the variety of environments through which services are offered, the College will continue to evaluate new methodologies and technologies to expand and improve instructional support services.

Standard II.C.1

The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.

Response to Standard II.C.1

[277] Program Review Report, College Library 2010

The College supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing the library resources to operate effectively and meet students' learning needs. As a result of budget and staff reductions during 2011-12, the library does not have the level of staff and student-worker support it had in the past. These conditions have placed an additional work load on the College Librarian who processes all of the inmate student research requests herself. [278]

To make time for these additional duties, the College Librarian necessarily has had to cut back on some committee participation, including the Program Review Committee and others. These measures were taken with the objective to preserve satisfactory levels of student services support from the library.

The library maintains print and online database research resources and offers services that are current and sufficient in quantity, depth and variety to support learning programs offered by the College. Students enrolled at the Needles Center have access to all online research databases through the library page of the College Website. For incarcerated students, who are restricted access to online services by prison rules and policies, the College provides research assistance, when requested, through library personnel via correspondence.

The Librarian assesses the library collection on an ongoing basis by staying closely in touch with current curriculum, by reading class assignments and by discussing library practices and policies with other faculty and with students.

As a member of the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate and other campus organizations, the Librarian keeps apprised of issues pertaining to students' learning support needs, and has established SLOs and performed assessments for the College Library.[279]

Tutoring services for incarcerated students at each of the prison locations are handled by agreement between Palo Verde College and the correctional facilities. Tutors for incarcerated students at prison locations are personnel employed in the education department of the prison, or inmates with associate's or bachelor's degrees who work under the direction of prison education department personnel.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1

The College Library is highly responsive to the learning needs of students and provides services that address those needs, regardless of location or method of delivery.

Action Plan: Standard II.C.1

The College will continue providing academic support to students and continue evaluating and improving these services in step with changing conditions and student learning needs. The recommendations of the Academic Senate ad hoc committee assigned to evaluate support

[278] Program Review Report, College Library 2010, pages 8-9
[279] PVC SLOs, Learning Support SLOs > Library

services previously provided by the Learning Skills Center are forthcoming in the Fall 2013 semester.

Standard II.C.1.a

Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.

Response to Standard II.C.1.a

The Librarian continuously evaluates equipment and educational materials needs, and discusses such needs with staff, faculty, administrators and students. Because of budget constraints the Librarian has, of necessity, focused acquisitions on electronic research resources, which provide maximum research value to students, and are accessible 24/7 from anywhere, at affordable prices. Examples of such electronic resources are Opposing Viewpoints, CQ Research, and Facts on File.

The library provides storage and safekeeping space for most of the audio-visual equipment associated with learning support for the Blythe main campus. These include overhead projectors, visualizers, TV monitors and other equipment. The library also has numerous workstations with computers available to all students and other College personnel.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1.a

The Librarian maintains ongoing contact with faculty and other learning support professionals in ensuring the Library is adequately meeting the learning needs of students

Action Plan for Standard II.C.1.

The College librarian will continue current practices in maintaining ongoing contact with faculty and other learning support professionals in the acquisition and use of educational support materials and equipment.

Standard II.C.1.b

The institution provides ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency.

Response to Standard II.C.1.b

Instruction enabling students to develop skills in information competency is handled by the Librarian. Such instruction is handled in various ways. Here are some examples:

Library staff conducts workshops and mini seminars. During the semester, the Librarian arranges with faculty to conduct short, hands-on seminars for the benefit of students on the use of the library's online research services. The library recently subscribed to an online information literacy program called Research Ready, which consists of several information literacy modules which can be revised to suit the needs of students. One module has been tested in a few face-to-face courses and will be revised again before being placed in online courses.

Descriptions of library, as well as tutoring services are provided in the College Catalog,[280] Student Handbook and Library website.[281] The Librarian periodically conducts campus-wide presentations on Flex Days. Such presentations deal with new and ongoing information competency services and are intended primarily for faculty and staff members.[282]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1.b

The library provides valuable learning support to students and faculty. Ongoing instruction of students and others in the use of their information competency services is conducted in various ways, including student orientations, workshops and mini seminars, publications, and Flex Day presentations.

Action Plan for Standard II.C.1.b

The College, through its library services will continue to provide ongoing instruction to students and others in information competency.

Standard II.C.1.c

The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.

Response to Standard II.C.1.c

The College Librarian strives to make library services accessible to students for all students, regardless of location. The library, for example, has extensive online databases providing virtually all students unlimited access to research materials. The Needles Center, while it does not yet have a print collection, nonetheless offers students access to the College's online research databases. Incarcerated students whose access to all online service is prohibited by prison rules and policies are assisted in their research requests by library personnel via correspondence.

[280] College Catalog, 2013-14, pages 13 and 42
[281] Library website
[282] Flex day agendas, see presentations for Aug. 28, 2008; Feb. 3, 2012; and Nov. 27, 2013

Tutoring services for incarcerated students at each of the prison locations are handled by agreement between Palo Verde College and the correctional facility. Tutors are usually personnel employed in the education department of the prison, or inmates with associate's or bachelor's degrees who work under the direction of education department personnel.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1.c

The library provides instructional services support for to all students, regardless of location or means of delivery of such instructional services. The library utilizes its online research database extensively, for students at the Blythe campus and Needles Center. The library staff assists incarcerated students in library research via correspondence. Tutoring is available to all students, regardless of their location, including the Blythe main campus, Needles Center, and prison locations.

Action Plan for Standard II.C.1.c

The College understands the importance of ensuring that support of instructional services is available to all students regardless of their location, or the means by which such services are delivered. The College will continue to evaluate the needs of all students and will continue to improve the quality and extent of learning support.

Standard II.C.1.d

The institution provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services.

Response to Standard II.C.1.d

The College has a major investment in its instructional support equipment and takes special care in that such assets are secure, well-maintained, and replaced when needed.

The library maintains a collection of some 19,000 books, videos and DVDs, as well as current journals and newspapers for reading and research. To protect the collection from theft, the entryway to the library has a security gate, and a student worker or College employee is on hand at the counter near the entryway during library hours.

The library provides storage and safekeeping space for most of the audio-visual equipment associated with learning support for the Blythe main campus. These include overhead projectors and other kinds of equipment, which are stored in a secured area. The library also has numerous workstations with computers available to all students and other College personnel.

The College also provides security personnel to the all College buildings after hours.

No student records are stored at the library. The library does retain records of student research requests; however, such requests are maintained in a secured area and are destroyed at the end of each semester.

Testing and placement documentation is stored on the College's secure server, which is maintained by the College's Information Technology personnel.

All equipment on the campus, including equipment assigned to the library, is maintained and serviced by the Information Technology department, some of whose staff is, coincidentally, housed in the library.

All College equipment is tagged and inventoried, and records are maintained in the office of Business Services.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1.d

The College has a significant investment in the equipment used to assist in instruction and is committed to keeping such equipment well-maintained and secure.

Action Plan for Standard II.C.1.d

The library, together with other departments, such as Information Technology, will continue their current practices in maintaining and securing instructional materials and equipment under their control. The Librarian is now reviewing the equipment inventory and may decide to surplus some equipment that is older an unused.

Standard II.C.1.e

When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.

Response to Standard II.C.1.e

All College contracts and agreements, including those involving the library, with external suppliers and vendors are documented and processed by the College's office of Business Services using purchase orders. The process requires that contracts or agreements be incorporated with the purchase order documents and maintained in the Business Services office.

College departments, including the library may also maintain copies of such contracts and agreements.

The library also contracts with the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a worldwide library cooperative, to provide cataloging records for its collection.

The Librarian periodically reviews contractual agreements to ensure that the services provided are adequate for the College's intended purpose and are utilized.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.1.e

All agreements and contracts, including those involving the library, with external suppliers and vendors are documented and maintained in the office of Business Services.

Action Plan for Standard II.C.1.e

The College's library will continue its practice of documenting, maintaining and periodically reviewing all contractual agreements.

Standard II.C.2

The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Response to Standard II.C.2

The library conducts systematic assessments of its services. The assessments include program review, which is now conducted every three years for all instructional and non-instructional programs. The library is due for a program review report in Spring 2014, and periodic surveys of users, including faculty and students.[283] The Librarian is full-time faculty member and, as such, participates in Academic Senate and other campus organizations and committees that bring her into discussions with other faculty, staff, students and administrators.

As for measuring and evaluating student learning outcomes, the Librarian conducts pre- and post-test assessments of learning resulting from information literacy workshops provided by library personnel for students in cooperation with faculty. The Librarian also conducts surveys of students and faculty that evaluate satisfaction with library services; the most recent survey of both students and faculty was administered Fall Semester 2013.

[283] Program Review Report, College Library 2010 Recently, the Program Review Committee, with approval of the Academic Senate and College Council, changed the frequency of program review reports from once every five years to once every three years.

As mentioned earlier, the College through an ad hoc committee of the Academic Senate, and with recommendations from the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee recommended that the Learning Skills Center be reinstated on a pilot basis, under the direction of the College Librarian. The service was renamed the Student Learning Center.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard II.C.2

The library and related learning support services, including tutoring, meet the needs of students and faculty by periodically reviewing the effectiveness of their services. The Librarian conducts program reviews every three years, and is a full-time faculty member who participates in Academic Senate and other faculty organizations. The Librarian has identified student learning outcomes and assesses them, and she conducts periodic surveys, formal and informal, of library users to evaluate the effectiveness of its services.

Action Plan for Standard II.C.2

The Librarian will continue current practices in evaluating the effectiveness of learning support services, will continue to measure and evaluate student learning outcomes, and will use the results of such evaluations to continuously improve services.

Standard III
Resources

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

Standard III.A Human Resources

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Response to Standard III.A

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services. The Director of Human Resources verifies, prior to Board approval, that all new hires meet minimum qualifications. Personnel policies and procedures are in place to ensure that employees are treated fairly and equitably.

Classified employees (per the CSEA-District agreement), managers, administrators, and the Superintendent/President are evaluated annually. Tenured faculty (per the CTA-District Agreement 2013-16 agreement), are evaluated on a 3-year cycle. New faculty members are evaluated annually until tenured, and after tenure is granted, every three years. CTA negotiated with the District in Spring 2013 to review, update, and revise the evaluation procedures for full and part-time faculty.

Although the College operates a tight budget, faculty and staff do have some opportunities for continued professional development through fee waivers, release time, and other incentives.

Consistent with its mission, the College demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage diversity.

Although there is presently no document titled "PVC Human Resources Plan," the College engages in on-going, thoughtful, and conscientious deliberation and discussion regarding staffing levels to ensure that students are receiving quality education and support consistent with accreditation standards.[284] The Human Resources department is currently preparing a 3-year program review report which serves as a human resources plan. The College has been careful to plan for staffing levels that were within tight budget limits but which were consistent with the College's mission and with the goals of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16.[285]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.

The College is in the process of rebounding back from the fiscal crisis that was first disclosed in mid-2011 and addressed fully in 2012 with incentivized staff reductions. Gradually, the College is gaining back personnel that provide critical instructional support functions. The administrative re-structuring problem has been resolved by staying with the combined instructional and student support administrative function at the vice-president level. The College has maintained its ethnic and gender diversity and has maintained a systematic employee performance evaluation system for faculty, administrators, classified staff and management. Human resource planning is integrated with instructional planning through the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, and the presence of the Director of Human Resources as a member of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Action Plan for Standard III.A

The College will continue to evaluate staffing needs, recognizing that it must provide sufficient support services while abiding by strict budget limits.

Standard III.A.1

The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.

College Response to Standard III.A.1

The College establishes and publicizes clear and rigorous criteria for all of its positions.[286] Classified and faculty position descriptions and announcements are reviewed by the appropriate employee association, the area management and the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Position standards, coupled with a competitive recruitment and selection process, ensure that the College hires the most highly qualified personnel.

[284] The results of human resources planning is more fully discussed in the College response to Standard III.A.2

[285] See further discussion of the relation between human resources planning and the Integrated Strategic Plan, under the College's response to Standard III.A.6.

[286] Sample job announcements

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.1

The College meets this standard, by ensuring that the standards of its positions are reviewed by qualified personnel, that position announcements are circulated widely, and that recruitment and selection is competitive.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.1

The College meets this standard and therefore no further action is anticipated.

Standard III.A.1.a

Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.

College Response to Standard III.A.1.a

The College lists the criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel on all job announcements, whether in brochure or paper form, on the CCCC Registry, in ads, or on the web. All vacancies take into consideration meeting the College mission. Classified job descriptions are discussed with CSEA and accurately reflect position duties, salary placement, responsibilities, and authority. A generic faculty job description, negotiated with CTA, reflects position duties, salary placement, responsibilities, and authority.

Management and administrative job descriptions are developed in consultation with the area manager and reviewed by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and accurately reflect duties, salary placement, responsibilities, and authority.

Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching as demonstrated by a teaching demonstration, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the College. College faculty, classified employees and managers are represented on all hiring committees in compliance with CTA contract provisions and Board Policy and Administrative Procedures 7120 dealing with Recruitment and Selection. Faculty play a primary role on faculty selection committees and include the chairperson of the appropriate academic

division as well as other faculty appointed by the Academic Senate. Faculty roles in the hiring process for faculty and administration are negotiated as part of the CTA contract.
The Director of Human Resources verifies that all new hires meet the minimum qualifications as posted. All degree requirements specify that they are acquired from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if evaluated by an approved external agency

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.1.a

The College meets this standard. The College follows a systematic and effective process in establishing qualifications and in recruiting and selecting applicants qualified to perform the jobs, whether faculty, staff or administrative, that support the College's Mission, Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, and purpose.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.1.a

The College meets this standard and therefore no further action is anticipated

Standard III.A.1.b

The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely and documented.

College Response to Standard III. A.1.b

The College evaluates classified employees annually in accordance with the provisions of the CSEA-District agreement.[287] Managers are also evaluated annually as provided for in the Management Handbook, which applies to management/confidential employees.[288] Tenured full-time faculty members are evaluated no less than every three years per the provisions of the CTA-District agreement. New non-tenured faculty members are evaluated annually until tenure is attained.

CTA and the District recognize that the evaluation process for part-time faculty needs to be annually conducted and improved upon. When new leadership came to the College in Spring 2012, it was discovered that evaluations for part-time faculty were sporadically conducted and

[287] CSEA-District Agreement, 2012-2015, Evaluations, Probation, Personnel Rights
[288] The Management Handbook is currently undergoing revision by the Superintendent/President and management staff.

the first Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Services[289] began addressing the issue in accordance with the terms of the CTA-District Agreement 2013-16. This effort was suspended with the second Interim VPI/SS due to the inefficiency of the part-time evaluation process.

CTA and the District recently negotiated a commitment to review and revise the current full and part-time faculty evaluation process for quality improvement.[290] An effort will be made to continue part-time faculty evaluations under existing CTA-District Agreement 2013-16 provisions until the revised procedures have been finalized.

Discussions regarding the effective evaluation of employees have occurred at management meetings to emphasize personnel and encourage improvement. Formal evaluations are conducted as required and personnel being evaluated are informed of the results. All documents pertaining to evaluations are maintained by the office of Human Resources. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III. A.1.b

The College meets this standard. The College regularly evaluates all administrators, classified staff and faculty on established time schedules.

The College is currently revising its evaluating procedures for part-time and full-time faculty primarily to adjust to changes in teaching modes that have evolved over the years. Many faculty members, for example, teach principally correspondence and online courses, thus eliminating the possibility of a classroom observation. Alternative evaluation processes are being developed and formalized for faculty who may not be teaching face-to-face at the time of their evaluations. Such alternative evaluation methods will likely include review of course syllabi and other teaching materials, including the effective use of the Bridge for online courses.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding between the District and CTA, revisions to the adjunct faculty evaluation process will be completed December 2013, and the revisions to full-time faculty evaluation process will be completed December 2014.[291]

Action Plan for Standard III.A.1.b

Fulfill the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the District and CTA, by making revisions to the adjunct faculty evaluation process by December 2013, and the revisions to full-time faculty evaluation process by December 2014.

[289] Dr. Kay Ragan served as Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Services from April 2012 to October 2012, and resigned due to a conflict with her retirement plan. Ms. Sharon Jones has served in the same position from October 2012 through the date of this Report.
[290] CTA-District Memorandum of Understanding, May 30, 2013
[291] CTA-District Memorandum of Understanding, May 30, 2013

Standard III.A.1.c

Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those outcomes.

College Response to Standard III.A.1.c

In Spring 2013, the CTA and the District agreed to include, as a component of teaching and non-teaching faculty evaluations, language defining faculty responsibility to develop and assess student learning outcomes. This component has been integrated into the existing faculty evaluation system, has been implemented and applies to all full-time teaching and non-teaching faculty, beginning with those scheduled for evaluations in Fall Semester 2013.[292]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.1.c

The College meets this standard. The faculty evaluation system includes a component having to do with student learning outcomes assessment and has been implemented Fall 2013.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.1.c

The College meets this standard and therefore no further action is anticipated.

Standard III.A.1.d

The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.

College Response to Standard III.A.1.d

The College has two Board policies addressing a code of professional ethics: Board Policy 2715, Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which addresses the ethics standards to which members of the Board of Trustees are expected to adhere, and Board Policy 3050, Institutional Code of Ethics that applies more broadly to "each Trustee, officer and employee of Palo Verde College…"[293]

Additionally, integrity and ethics are part of the College's Values Statement: "Palo Verde College maintains the highest standards of ethics and integrity. The College consistently demands respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs, professional interactions and community relations."[294]

College Self-Evaluation: Standard III.A.1.d

[292] Faculty Evaluation Forms (teaching faculty), page 19; Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 4
[293] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715 and BP 3050
[294] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values Statement, page 9.

The College meets this standard with a professional code of ethics in place that addresses the unique ethical standard to which members of the Board of Trustees are expected to adhere, and a broader code of ethics that applies to all College personnel, including members of the Board of Trustees. The College also incorporates ethics and integrity in its Values Statement.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.1.d

The College meets this standard. No further action is required.

Standard III.A.2

The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes

College Response to Standard III.A.2

Following the disclosure of multiple financial problems in mid-2011, the College was forced to cut back on all expenses, including human resource expense. The College managed to accomplish staff cutbacks without layoffs, but with incentivized retirements and separations from service. A great deal of dialog and planning occurred during 2012, with emphasis on human resources planning. The following discussions summarize the results.

Faculty Resources Planning

The Academic Senate was significantly involved in the identification and prioritization of new faculty hires based on the Snapshot Program Review information. Priorities were in the areas of computer information systems, alcohol and drug studies, and music. As of this Report, one of the three areas—music—has been hired. The Academic Senate recommended to the College administration the creation of a new position, namely, an instructor in alcohol and drug studies and sociology. Recruitment for the computer information systems instructor resulted in a failed search.

Classified Employees Resources Planning

As provided in the October 24, 2012 Follow-Up Report, the College's administration and Board of Trustees understands that the 32.5 classified support staff number now serves as the "base" minimum and any vacancy is being replaced commencing with Spring 2013.

Analysis of Changes in Classified Employee Levels,
Full-Time Only: Fall 2012 vs. Fall 2013 and Spring 2014

Classified Employee List	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	
	Classified Staffing Summary	Classified Staffing Summary	Classified Staffing Summary	
			PERM	TEMP
Admissions and Records	2	2	**0**	2
Business Services	2	2	**3**	0
Child Development Center	5.5	10	**10**	2
Disabled Students	1.5	3.5	**2.5**	0
Distance Education	1	1	**2**	0
EOP&S	1	1	**1**	1
Financial Aid	3	2	**3**	1
Information Technology	4	4.5	**4.5**	0
Instructional Services	1.5	2	**4**	0
Library	0	0	**0**	0
M & O	4.5	5	**5**	0
Student Services	3	2	**1**	0
Title III	2	1	**Grant ended 9/30/13**	
Needles Center	1.5	2	**2**	1
	32.5	38	**38**	7

As of the Fall Semester 2013, the College is in the process of working back up to prior levels of classified staff from the base minimum of 32.5 to its current level in Fall 2013 of 38.

Based on the information submitted in the Snapshot Reports and through the presentations justifying the unmet needs, College Council prioritized of classified employee needs as follows:

Prioritized List of Classified Staff Needs

Priority Order	Average Score	Position	Status as of 11/1/13
1	4.5	Instructional Services Secretary/Clerk – Correspondence Education Office	Position filled
2	4.3	IT Technician FT-Needles Center	Reclassified current P-T employee to F-T
3	3.4	Fiscal Services Technician	Position filled
4	3.2	Custodian PT-Blythe	Position filled
5	2.8	Human Resources Technician	Positions combined and filled
6	2.4	Insurance Clerk PT-HR	
7	2	Tutor-Needles Center	Students, as needed
8	1.7	Library Clerk PT	Librarian is using student employees
9	1.2	Tutor-Blythe	Student, as needed
10	0.8	Grant Writer	No action

Management Resources Planning

Based on the information submitted in the Snapshot reports and through the presentations justifying the needs, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee prioritized the management needs requests as follows:

Prioritized List of Management Needs

Priority Order	Average Score	Position	Status as of 11/1/13
1	3.6	Director/Coordinator Distance Ed	Reclassified faculty counselor to Correspondence Education Counselor/Coordinator
2	0.9	Public Information Officer PT	No action
3	0.5	Foundation Director	Hired P-T temporary (retiree) Director
4	0.4	Manager of Institutional Effectiveness	No action

Administrative Resources Planning

The structure for the senior level administration was a topic of college discussion for the majority of 2012-13. Many options were discussed during this time, and for comparative purposes, the administrative structures of other community colleges of comparable size were

examined. The administrative structure in 2012-13 consisted of the Superintendent/President overseeing the Chief Business Officer, Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Director of Information Technology and Director of Human Resources.

The Academic Senate had made the recommendation to the Interim Superintendent/President and to the Board of Trustees in late Spring 2013 to replace the position of Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services with two positions: a Chief Instructional Officer and a Chief Student Services Officer. This recommendation was accepted, and in anticipation that the College would attain its FTES and budget targets, both positions were advertised in early summer 2013.

However, because the target FTES was not restored, the District determined that it was in the best interest of the College to retain the two functions, instruction and student services, as one position at the vice-president level, namely, Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services. The recruitment for this position has begun as of this Report and is expected to be filled by the end of the 2013 calendar year.

Here is a summation of how various needs are addressed by existing personnel:

The Correspondence Education Counselor/Coordinator, serving in both a managerial and counseling capacity, reports directly to the Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. Combining managerial responsibilities with counseling duties is also in practice with the EOPS and DSPS directors.

The Superintendent/President oversees the areas of Public Information, the College Foundation, and institutional effectiveness (accreditation, program review, SLO and assessment, integrated strategic planning, advancement, and grants) to provide ongoing leadership and direction.

The Accreditation Liaison Officer is monitoring all aspects related to accreditation compliance, as well as overseeing research, instructional program review and institutional SLOs and assessment.

The Director of Human Resources now assumes the majority of the responsibility for personnel operations, relieving the Superintendent/President of this additional responsibility.

As noted in the Follow-Up Report, October 15, 2013, to the ACCJC,[295] and as shown below, the College asserts that it has sufficient full-time teaching faculty and support staff to provide quality instructional and support services to students:

[295] Accreditation Follow-Up Report, October 15, 2013

Comparisons of Palo Verde
and Other Colleges of Comparable Size, Fall 2011and Fall 2012

	Palo Verde	Barstow	Copper Mountain	Feather River	Lake Tahoe
FTES					
Fall 2011	762.87	675.15	790.96	710.64	618.01
Fall 2012	666.98	1,090.89	831.48	767.66	540.32
Enrollment					
Fall 2011	3,144	2,289	2,149	1,453	3,015
Fall 2012	2,704	3,051	2,142	1,527	2,566
Full-Time Faculty					
Fall 2011	37	37	33	23	40
Fall 2012	34	34	36	24	39
Part-Time Faculty					
Fall 2011	62	104	94	59	127
Fall 2012	58	97	116	51	129
Full-Time Educ Admin					
Fall 2011	5	10	9	4	5
Fall 2012	4	8	9	2	5
Full Time Classif Admin					
Fall 2011	1	11	0	14	1
Fall 2012	10	11	0	5	11
Full Time Class Prof					
Fall 2011	1	0	5	7	4
Fall 2012	0	0	6	4	0
Full-Time Classif Support					
Fall 2011	62	55	50	54	73
Fall 2012	39	57	49	66	75
	Source: Data Mart, California Community College Chancellor's Office				

Although additional staff would be helpful in high-volume work areas, the total number of employees as shown below is sufficient to meet the instructional and administrative support necessary to support the institution's Mission. There also has been discussion of using "floaters"—personnel with training in various areas assigned to different offices at certain times during the semester, depending upon where the needs are.

Summary of Employees by Category, Fall 2013

Full-Time Faculty	Part-Time Faculty	Classified Employees	Managers	Administrators
34 permanent 2 interim	33 estimated for Fall 2013	39 permanent 14 permanent PT 12 temp/sub	11 Managers 2 Confidential	2 permanent 2 interim (1 with a start date of 9/1/13)

Source: Palo Verde College, Office of Human Resources

The institution's 2012-13 FTES is 1,592. Although FTES is down from prior years, the College anticipates that it will be able to serve approximately 2,000 students per semester at approximately 1,800 FTES annually. This observation is borne out by the results of the 2010 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, showing continuing student satisfaction with the College's instructional and support services.[296] As a small college, the number of full-time faculty, classified, and management staff are currently sufficient to maintain accreditation standards and Eligibility Requirements.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.2

The College meets this standard by staffing a sufficient number qualified, full-time faculty members required to provide adequate teaching and student support services to students, and by staffing enough classified, management and administrative personnel for administrative and staff support.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.2

The College meets this standard. No further action is required.

Standard III.A.3

The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

College Response to Standard III.A.3

Policies and administrative procedures of the Board of Trustees, including policies governing human resources, are available for review on the College website.[297] Policies are reviewed periodically and updated to ensure consistency with accreditation standards, Education Code rules, and other applicable rules and policies

[296] Noel-Levitz, 2010
[297] Board of Trustees Policies and Administrative Procedures

College personnel policies are administered equitably and consistently by the Human Resources Director. As a member of the College's Full Administrative Council, the Human Resources Director is independent from faculty and classified staff and reports to the Superintendent/President in the performance of her duties.

As for the development and review of personnel policies, there are various places in which personnel policies and practices are available for information and review. These are: CTA-District Agreement 2013-16, CSEA-Agreement, 2012-2015, and Board policies and administrative procedures governing human resources administration, which are published on the College website. [298]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.3

The College, through its human resources and other departments, makes policies and procedures governing human resources administration available to employees for information and review. Human resources policies are administered by the Human Resources Director under the direction of the Superintendent/President.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.3

The College will continue its current practices in administering human resources policies equitably and consistently and in making such policies available to employees.

Standard III.A.3.a

The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

College Response to Standard III.A.3.a

Palo Verde College establishes, adheres to, and updates written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures, evidenced by CTA and CSEA agreements, the Management Handbook, and related District policies and procedures. These various agreements and policies provide for a fair, equitable and consistent hiring process.

The College has written policies that govern human resources administration. The policies ensure against unfairness in all employment procedures, including recruitment and selection, discrimination, sexual harassment, release of confidential information, performance evaluations and other areas.

[298] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, for example: BP 7100, BP 3410, AP 3410, BP 3420, BP 3815-PVC, AP 3815-PVC

College Self-Evaluation: Standard III.A.3.a

The College seeks to be fair in all human relations procedures, as is evidenced by the availability of written procedures governing all aspects of human resources—recruitment and selection, discrimination, sexual harassment, release of confidential information, performance evaluation and other areas. Certain policies, such as those pertaining to discrimination and sexual harassment are published in the Board of Trustees policies and procedures. Complaint procedures are explained in the College Catalog [299] and on the College website.[300]

The College, moreover, continuously updates all policies and administrative procedures, including those governing human resources, to ensure consistency with standards recommended by the Community College League of California, applicable rules of Title V, the California Education Code, accreditation standards, other federal and state regulations, as well as best practices of the California Community College system. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are published on the College website.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.3.a

The College will continuously review and update all College policies, including policies governing human resources administration, and continue to publish them on the College website.

Standard III.A.3b

The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

College Response to Standard III.A.3b

Personnel records for all College employees are maintained in a secure file under the control of the Human Resources Director and the Superintendent/President. Personnel records are considered confidential and are governed by the provision of Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 7145, Personnel Records, which states, in part:

> The Superintendent/President or designee may release classification, salary, employment date and/or employment status of employees upon the employee's request. All requests for confidential information contained in personnel, medical, or similar files shall not be released without the express written authorization of the employee involved. Written authorization shall be submitted to the Superintendent/President's Office. The Superintendent/President's Office shall administer the release of all confidential employee information.[301]

[299] College Catalog 2013-14, page 59
[300] www.paloverde.edu > Accreditation > Filing a Complaint
[301] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7145 and AP 7145

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.3.b

The College meets this standard. The College is respectful of the confidentiality of all employees' personnel and other information and has established policies governing the release of such information, in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, the California Education Code and best practices of the California Community College system.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.3.b

The College will continue its current practices in maintaining the security and confidentiality of employee personnel and other information.

Standard III.A.4

The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.

College Response to Standard III.A.4

Palo Verde College is committed to providing a diverse learning environment, evidenced by several College publications and policies, including the Statement of Mission, Vision and Values and Institutional Learning Outcomes.[302] Concern for diversity is also incorporated in Board Policy 7100, Commitment to Diversity, Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3420, Equal Employment Opportunity.[303] The College will continue to recruit statewide and throughout the Southern California region to improve its management and faculty diversity.

The College uses advertising media, including electronic media, to ensure that qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities are reached and given the opportunity to apply. The list of potential interviewees is reviewed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer (also the Director of Human Resources) and certified to ensure that a diverse pool of applicants has been assembled prior to beginning the screening process. If the list does not reflect a diverse pool, the position is re-advertised.

The College uses interview panels representative of campus constituencies to screen applicants and to interview all qualified candidates. The Equal Employment Opportunity Officer reviews and certifies the interview questions. Each candidate is asked the same questions by the hiring panel, which makes recommendations for hiring.

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[302] College Catalog 2013-14, pages 9-10: *Mission Statement*: "…promotes student success and lifelong learning to a diverse community of learners; *Statement of Values*: "…celebrates diversity its students, in its faculty and staff and in its community"; *Institutional Learning Outcomes*: "Community and Global Awareness—Students will understand and empathize with diverse cultural, social, religious and linguistic differences within and across societies." See also *Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16*, Initiative 2, Student Support Services: "Provide quality student support services to a diverse student population, providing opportunities for student success."

[303] Board of Trustees Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7100 and BP 3420

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.4

The College meets this standard. Through its policies and practices, the College demonstrates an appropriate concern for the issues of diversity and equity.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.4

The College meets this standard. No further action is anticipated.

Standard III.A.4.a

The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

College Response to Standard III.A.4a

The College lives up to its commitments to diversity in various ways. The College sponsors the annual Multicultural Festival on campus. The Multicultural Festival is a daylong tribute to diversity—within the College, in the local communities and throughout the world. Past events have featured ethnic-centered dance, food, booths and special presentations on various cultures, such as those of Thailand, Scotland, Germany, India, the Aztecs, Japan, and migrant families of the American Southwest.

The College's support of diversity is further evidenced in its support during the year of various programs and events:

1. Cinco de Mayo—Sponsored annually by the EOPS and ASG
2. Black History Month—Sponsored annually by EOPS and ASG
3. Multicultural Festival—Sponsored by the entire College
4. Women's History Conference—Scheduled for Spring 2014

The College also supports the principles of diversity in its hiring practices and policies as evidenced in recruitment and hiring practices. Job descriptions for each position list among the minimum qualification that candidates demonstrate "sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, and ethnic backgrounds of community college students."

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.4a

The College recognizes the importance and value of diversity in its faculty, staff, and students, and lives up to its commitment to diversity through its various programs, events and services.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.4a

The College meets this standard and will continue its present course in supporting and maintaining programs, practices and services that support its diverse personnel.

Standard III.A.4b

The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

College Response to Standard III.A.4b

The Director of Human Resources prepares annual reports to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office detailing its record in diversity of students and personnel. The tables below display staff diversity data by ethnicity and gender for Fall 2013.

College Personnel: Gender and Ethnicity Fall 2013

Full-Time Faculty Ethnicity by Gender

American Indian		Black		Hispanic		White		Other	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	1	1	0	8	4	13	6	1	1

Classified Employee Ethnicity

American Indian		Black		Hispanic		White		Other	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	0	0	0	6	18	5	9	0	0

Management and Administration Ethnicity Gender

American Indian		Black		Hispanic		White		Other	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	0	0	0	1	4	3	9	0	0

Source: Data Mart, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.4b

The College meets this standard. The College regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity by reviewing applicant pools prior to interviewing, by selecting screening panels representative of College constituencies, by periodically reviewing hiring trends, including trends in the hiring of personnel from underrepresented groups and by reviewing annual hiring and staff diversity information reported to the California Community College Chancellor's office

Action Plan for Standard III.A.4b

The College will continue to assess regularly its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its Mission and other College policies and practices.

Standard III.A.4c

The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students

College Response to Standard III.A.4c

The College is committed to and advocates for the fair and respectful treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students through its various Board policies and administrative procedures, which include recognition of the principles of collegiality and civility.[304] These principles encourage interaction among employees and students to be fair and respectful. Posters reflecting this commitment are located in meeting rooms and other places on campus where people congregate.

Similarly, College administration and management are committed to resolving employee and student complaints or grievances promptly, whenever possible. There have been few employee grievances filed within the past 18 months and these have been resolved without incident. There continues to be a college-wide endeavor to communicate prior to issues escalating to the grievance level.

College Self-Evaluation of Standards III.A.4c

The College meets this standard, as evidenced by its policies and practices.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.4c

The College demonstrates its commitment to diversity through its Board policies, fair employment practices and collegial approach to addressing College business.

Standard III.A.5

The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.

[304] Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 3050 Institutional Code of Ethics and BP 3410 Discrimination and Other Complaints

College Response to Standard III.A.5

The financial problems the College has had to deal with since Summer 2011 resulted in a reduction of funds available for conference attendance. Efforts have been made, however, to ensure that faculty, staff, and management maintain networking connections, particularly for conferences and meetings held at other community colleges. College vans have been provided to any employee requesting attendance to area meetings. In 2011-12, employees who traveled to conferences and other training events volunteered to pay their own costs due to the initial financial challenges facing the institution. Skype, Webinars, list-serve discussions and phone conference calls continue to be utilized to ensure that employees remain current in their field and informed of how other colleges handle similar problems facing Palo Verde.

Both CSEA and CTA have specific professional development provisions within their contracts.[305] To address classified employee and management professional development needs, the Board recently approved an Enrollment Fee Waiver program, encouraging employees to complete associates degrees, and to advance themselves educationally.[306]

Categorical funds remain available for the primary areas of student support, such as BSI and TRIO, ensuring staff is current on state and federal policies and regulations. The Staff Development Committee approves all requests for conferences, in-service training and professional development in accordance with the CTA-District agreement.

Staff development often has direct benefit to the College. One faculty member in English, for example, is pursuing a second master's degree in theater, with the expectation that eventually she will be able to teach theater classes and manage productions in the College's Fine and Performing Arts Center.

Although limited, funds have been made available for Board members, faculty, staff, and managers to attend high-profile and required meetings within the State.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.5

Despite budget constraints, the College meets this standard. The College is encourages wherever possible to pursue professional development opportunities. The Fee Waiver agreement is a significant benefit to assist employees in pursuing educational goals (while helping the College increase FTES).

Action Plan for Standard III.A.5

The College will continue to provide professional development opportunities within the limits of the budget.

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[305] CSEA-District Agreement 2012-2015, pages 14-15; CTA-District Agreement, 2013-2016, page 31

[306] Fee Waiver Agreements, applying to faculty, staff and administrators

Standard III.A.5

The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel

Although the College is operating under a tight budget, the College recognizes the need for professional development. The College convenes monthly "all-staff" meetings to promote discussion of College and statewide issues. The meetings serve as professional staff development activity since they provide opportunities to learn about College finance, accreditation issues, strategic goals, decision-making processes and other topics.

Four Flex Days are held throughout the academic year, principally for professional development of faculty. Examples of Flex Day topics include:[307]

"Scientific Teaching: Active Learning, Assessment and Diversity," April 19, 2013
"Learning Styles," February 1, 2013
"Teaching/Learning Styles," November 20, 2012
"The ABCs of Stress and Stress Reduction in the Work Place," October 5, 2012
"SLO Assessment Workshop," April 20, 2012
"Student Retention Data and Discussion," February 3, 2012
"Institutional Learning Outcomes," April 21, 2011
"Assessments and Interventions," March 19, 2010
"Research Findings on Success Patterns of Basic Skills Students," August 21, 2009
"New Online Library Resources," August 20, 2008

Two Institute Days are held during the year. One, presented near the beginning of the academic year, consists of presentations and discussions on such topics as accreditation, institutional research findings, financial issues, and organizational restructuring—topics that have relevance to the entire College community.[308] The second Institute Day, held in June, is Commencement Day, to which the entire college community is invited.

Additionally, the College has provided training, as needed, to address expressed training needs:

Galaxy Training: In 2012, the College's Business Services department provided training to faculty and staff on the use of the Galaxy financial records program, enabling College personnel to access budget information about their own areas and the College as a whole.

IT Training: The IT department sponsors periodic training for faculty and staff on the use of various technologies, including the Bridge

Datatel Training: The College engaged the services of a consultant in Spring 2013 for two weeks to provide Datatel training to all staff, as needed.

[307] Flex Day agendas
[308] Institute Day agendas

Fee Waiver: In Spring 2013, the College initiated a fee waiver program, enabling faculty, staff and administrators to take courses at the College for no fee. The idea is to encourage personnel to pursue coursework to improve skills, earn degrees and advance in earnings.[309]

Other training topics include**:**

Management/Confidential employees of the College have completed training in the following areas in the last 18 months:

Completing Classified Employee Evaluations
Exempt Employee Classification and Status
Budgeting and Finance
Time Card Verifications
Attendance Issues and problem solving
Short-Term and Long-Term Disability
FMLA for Your Employees

Keenan & Associates, the College's insurance administrator, also provides on-line training for all employees. Each employee is required to take the Sexual Harassment training, and most are required to take FERPA training. Any employee can choose to take any of the many other training courses listed on the Keenan & Associates web site.[310]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.5a

The College meets this standard. Despite the scarcity of funds for professional development, the College does an effective job in planning, prioritizing and implementing professional development opportunities for its personnel.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.5a

The College will continue with its current practices in professional development programs and opportunities.

Standard III.A.5b

With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

[309] Fee Waiver Agreements, applying to faculty, staff and administrators
[310] Keenan & Associates may be found at www.keenan.com > Quicklinks/Webinars

College Response to Standard III.A.5b

The professional development programs described above are continuously evaluated for their effectiveness in assisting employees who seek professional advancement. The Professional Development Committee, for example, reviews the program to ensure that it remains consistent with the policies and intent of AB 1725. The CSEA Professional Growth Committee also reviews its funding procedures to ensure they are consistent with the intent of the program and to ensure that funds are used judiciously. The Flex day Committee, similarly, assesses the effectiveness of its programs to ensure they are beneficial to the participants as well as consistent with the objectives established for Flex days by the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.5.b

The College meets this standard. The College, through its programs, committees, and divisions, reviews its professional development programs to ensure such programs are effective for the participants, live up to the College's value of improvement and lifelong learning, and are consistent with the policies and intent for which such programs were established.

Action Plan for Standard III.A.5.b

The College will continue its practices in evaluating the effectiveness of its professional development programs

Standard III.A.6

Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

College Response to Standard III.A.6

The College's Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 , originally written in 2002, has been updated and revised through the collegial governance process frequently over the past 10 years, with the most recent revision in Spring 2013. Human resources planning is fully integrated into the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 , as evidenced in the excerpt below in the Board Goal and Objectives 3.2, 3.5, and 3.6.

Strategic Initiative 3:	**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**
GOAL:	***Create and sustain an institutional environment of transparent collegiality in which College personnel have an understanding of the functions, roles and responsibilities of their colleagues and College organizations and committees which support the Mission of the institution.***

BOARD GOAL 10: Ensure the effective and efficient provision of instructional, student support, and operational programs and services by qualified faculty, staff, and managers, through a deliberate model of human resource management.

Objective 3.1 Review and update the collegial governance chart annually.

Objective 3.2 Provide all new employees with a College orientation program and information specific to their role.

Objective 3.3 Invite participatory governance in planning and decision-making by encouraging constituent representation on committees, and promoting effective dialog among constituencies and the Board of Trustees.

Objective 3.4 Publicize all College reports, by having them available for examination in the College library or College website.

Objective 3.5 Develop and disseminate an institutional faculty, management, and classified staffing plan that takes into consideration planning for areas of demonstrated need or deficiencies, 50% Law compliance, and administrative leadership capacities.

Objective 3.6 Employ qualified faculty and staff and provide opportunities for continued professional and staff development, consistent with the mission and based on identified teaching, learning, and operational needs.

The College's program review process is one way in which unmet staffing needs are articulated institutionally through the Program Review Committee and the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Since program review reports are prepared only once every two, three and four years,[311] the College recognizes that it required a mechanism to permit staffing (and other) budget requests to be considered more frequently, namely, on an annual basis.

As a result, the Budget Committee, with the support of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, implemented annual budget request procedures that accommodated two types of budget funding: rollover (essentially a repeat of the prior year's budget with minor changes) and discretionary, which are one-time and permanent requests. Typically, staffing requests would be considered a permanent budget change.

Program review reports are presented to constituent leadership groups through the Program Review Committee, and are reviewed by the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Program Review Committee recommendations are forwarded on to the College

[311] Program Review reports for academic programs and student support operations, which used to be prepared once every five years, are now prepared once every three years. Career and Technical Education program reviews are prepared once every four years, with updated every two years. Annual budget requests consist of two types: rollover requests; and discretionary requests for one-time and permanent funding. Staffing requests would fall under permanent discretionary funding requests.

Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and then to the Board of Trustees for review and comment in open session. The review process effectively integrates program review with budget resource discussions and with strategic planning.[312]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.A.6

The College has long had an integrated budget, program review and strategic planning process. In 2013, that process has come under close review, and was improved. During 2012, the College had adopted a "Snapshot" process that provided divisions and departments with the opportunity to make discretionary annual budget requests through the program review process. The procedure was successful to a certain extent, but did not allow adequate integration with program review, since it was perceived as principally a budget process.

The process was changed so that discretionary requests are now sent directly to the Budget Committee, and must be justified *by program review standards*: alignment with the Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, furthering a program or operational purpose, and justified with data demonstrating the request as an unmet need. Each of the three committees—Program Review, Budget and Strategic Planning/Steering—have overlapping members, providing better continuity and integration among these key functions

Action Plan for Standard III.A.6

The College meets this standard. The College has reviewed its human resources planning process in connection with budget, program review and strategic planning, and improved upon it.

Standard III.B Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Response to Standard III.B

The College recognizes that having a safe, clean, quiet and well-cared for campus is essential to achieving its mission, namely, to create "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."[313] In this regard the College's physical resources are of paramount importance. The College's commitment to providing an exemplary learning environment is evident in the maintenance of existing building and grounds and in the existence of organizations and committees such as the Security Task Force and the Facilities Committee.[314]

[312] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative

[313] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9

[314] Both the Security Task Force and the Facilities Committee are composed of all College constituent groups. The College is considering combining these two committees to improve efficiency, since they serve similar purpose. See the document College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14.

Responsibility for maintaining the College's building and grounds to support a quality learning environment rests with the Maintenance and Operations department, a division of the Office of Business Services.

The operations of the Maintenance and Operations department are handled by two different employees. The facilities management portion, which consists of planning and managing facilities usage and compliance reporting, and budgeting is handled by the Chief Business Officer. Maintenance, repair, and replacement of machinery and equipment are handled by the Director of Maintenance and Operations.

The five key functions of the Maintenance and Operations department are:

1. Maintain existing grounds and structures within the College district, including the Blythe main campus, the Child Development Center and the Needles Center.

2. Oversee the operations of the campuses, including maintenance, repair and replacement of machinery and equipment.

3. Provide custodial services and oversee security.

4. Set up and take down equipment and materials for special campus events, such as graduation, Board of Trustees' meetings, conferences, and other activities.

5. Overall management of all facilities, budgeting and compliance with regulatory and other government agencies, and management of civic center agreements.

The College's concern for safety is also evident in the Security Task Force, an ad hoc committee consisting of all key campus constituencies.[315] The Security Task Force reviews safety concerns and complaints from College personnel and relays such information to the Maintenance and Operations department for action.

Apart from normal Maintenance and Operations activity, the College has completed several major building projects during the past few years. These projects include:

Technical Building, completed 2007
Physical Education Complex, completed 2008
Needles Center, reconstruction completed 2008
Fine and Performing Arts Building, completed 2012
Solar Project, completed 2010

[315] College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14

Physical resource planning is integrated with College planning in several ways: the Maintenance and Operations Director is part of the Full Administrative Council and regularly discusses issues pertaining to buildings and grounds and safety with other managers and administrators; the department conducts program review, enabling broad campus discussion of its project planning; the Maintenance and Operations Director, in conjunction with the Chief Business Officer, in discussion with other managers and in relation to other College plans, updates annually the Deferred Maintenance Plan which is a five-year forecast of maintenance and repair projects.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B

The College takes great care to ensure that its physical facilities and equipment are well-maintained, that organizations and committees such as the Security Task Force and Facilities Committee are in place to permit College personnel to make known their concerns, and that academic program planning is underway for the new facilities, particularly the Fine and Performing Arts Building. The College recognizes the importance of careful and thorough planning and utilizes the expertise of its faculty and staff in helping guide program and facilities development.

Action Plan for Standard III.B

The College will continue its current practices in the areas of maintaining existing buildings, grounds, and equipment, encouraging personnel recommendations on safety and maintenance issues, constructing new facilities and planning academic programs and support services for the new facilities. The College is considering combining the Facilities Task Force and Security Task Force into a single committee since both have very similar purposes.

Standard III.B.1

The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.

Response to Standard III.B.1

The College assures the safety and sufficiency of its physical resources that support its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery, as follows:

Blythe campus: The Maintenance and Operations department has a staff of four full-time and six part-time groundskeepers and maintenance personnel whose charge is to maintain a safe, clean and well-maintained campus environment supporting the quality and integrity of instructional activity at the Blythe main campus. Security during evening and weekends is provided by a private security company under contract with the College. The College installed cameras in the parking lots and throughout the buildings.

Needles Center: The Needles Center conducts instructional programs in a newly reconstructed historical building in the center of town. A part-time employee assigned to provide maintenance; additional staffing provides security services.

Child Development Center: The maintenance and security of the Child Development Center is handled by staff and Facilities and Maintenance employees. The children's playground was recently upgraded to improve safety by building a sponge underlayment to the play area surface.

Specialized instructional services conducted: The College conducts a number of instructional programs in police, fire and hazardous materials handling in areas outside the district. The College's programs are operated with the approval of the community college districts served by these areas. Such programs are conducted under agreements requiring compliance with all regulations governing educational programs established by the California Government Code Title 5, California Education Code, and the College. These facilities are inspected by the Chief Business Officer at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Correspondence: Class materials for correspondence courses are delivered between students and faculty members via through the Office of Correspondence Education.

Distance education—online: Online education is a small, but growing, mode of instructional delivery. The faculty members who teach these courses work directly with the Office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, and with the Information Technology department in managing the required equipment and software.

Interactive television courses (ITV) A small but growing number of course sections is offered in interactive television between the Blythe main campus and the Needles Center. The facilities for interactive television program delivery consist of classrooms at both the Blythe campus and the Needles Center and are managed by the Information Technology department and the Office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. The number of classrooms with ITV capability has increased from four in 2008 to ten today.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.1

The College understands the importance of maintaining a safe, clean and well-maintained campus at all its locations supporting the quality and integrity of its instructional programs and support services. The College recognizes the importance of maintaining quality facilities for instructional delivery modes and at all locations and provides sufficient personnel and other support to achieve this objective.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.1

The College will continue its current practices in providing facilities that support the quality and integrity of its instructional programs and support services.

Standard III.B.1.a

The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.

Response to Standard III.B.1.a

With regard to its buildings and grounds, the College has an ongoing building, maintenance, upgrade and replacement program. The program is evidenced by the Deferred Maintenance Plan, which runs for 5-year periods, and is updated annually by the Maintenance and Operations department Director in conjunction with the Chief Business Officer.[316]

Here are examples of recent major upgrade and replacement projects:

1. Reconstruction of Needles Center, completed 2008

2. Replace back-up batteries for use in emergencies, ongoing

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.1.a

The College, through its Maintenance and Operations department, has a systematic program, evidenced in the Deferred Maintenance Plan, in place to cover maintenance, upgrades and repair of its existing facilities.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.1.a

The College will continue its current policies and practices dealing with maintenance, upgrades, and repair of its existing facilities.

Standard III.B.1.b

The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

Response to Standard III.B.1.b

Access: All existing facilities—Blythe campus, Needles Center and Child Development Center—comply with access requirements of the ADA (Americans With Disabilities Requirements) and with recommendations by the College's Disabled Student Programs and

[316] Deferred Maintenance Plan

Services (DSPS) personnel. These facilities are also assessed for proper access by visual inspection of Maintenance and Operations staff as well as other College personnel.

Safety: The Maintenance and Operations department conducts regular safety inspections of its facilities at all locations. It ensures that emergency contact phone numbers and evacuation plans are posted in classrooms and hallways. The College Emergency Response Plan is posted to the College website. The College's insurance carrier, Keenan and Associates, also provides information regularly on improving the College's safety program, usually during all-staff meetings. During the November 25-27, 2013 Flex Days, the College presented seminars on safety and security precautions in the event of a violent attack on the campus.[317]

Security: A security officer is on patrol at the Blythe main campus every evening until 10 p.m. and remains on duty until the all persons have vacated the buildings. Security at the Needles Center is provided by a part-time employee and existing Needles Center staff. Security at the Child Development Center is handled by existing Center staff. Emergency phone numbers are posted in all classrooms, hallways, and other areas that are visible to persons occupying the buildings.

Healthful learning and working environment: The College seeks to maintain a campus that provides a healthful learning and working environment by inspecting facilities regularly for hazardous conditions, excessive noise, or other factors that would detract from a quiet and healthy learning environment. In addition to conducting its own inspections and walk-arounds, the Maintenance and Operations department participates on the Security Task Force and Facilities Committee[318] and is apprised of problems and adverse conditions in this manner, as well.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.1.b

The College, through the Maintenance and Operations department, strives to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment at all its locations through regular inspections by its own staff, by acting on recommendations and advice by facilities occupants and through discussions and recommendations of the Facilities Committee, Security Task Force and other campus committees.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.1.b

The College will continue in its current practices of assuring access, safety, security and a healthful learning and working environment at all its locations.

[317] Flex Day agendas, Nov. 25, 2013

[318] As noted earlier, these two committees have very similar purposes. In the interest efficiency and effectiveness, the College is now combining them into one committee.

Standard III.B.2

To assure feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

Response to Standard III.B.2

The College is diligent in planning and utilizing its facilities in a manner that represents an efficient use of space to support instructional programs and services. It engages in systematic, ongoing assessment of its facilities and their use.

Here are some examples of facilities modifications in response to changing campus needs:

1. Installation of interactive TV equipment in several classrooms and the CL 101 auditorium to facilitate the delivery of instructional programs and Board of Trustees' meetings between the Blythe campus and the Needles Center. The number of classrooms with ITV has increased since 2008.

2. Re-location of Office to Correspondence Education from CL building to CS building, freeing up space for classroom use, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of Correspondence Education: quieter testing area and better accessibility to the mail room).

3. Planning for re-start of the Learning Skills Center, using the facilities and staffing of the Library and Office of Correspondence Education, with benefits of quiet areas for testing and study, enclosed rooms for tutoring, workshops and training, and faculty supervision of the Student Success Center.

4. Conversion office space in CL building into DSPS office and assessment room.

5. Equipping large classroom in the Fine and Performing Arts building with computer terminals specifically for ESL classes.

Planning and use of facilities is reviewed in various forums including the Full Administrative Council and the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

The Maintenance and Operations department, moreover, plans and evaluates the College's facilities, and follows a maintenance schedule for equipment, such as grass mowers, trucks, vans, and carts. The department takes into account the utilization of facilities and equipment, as well as the results of inspections, in determining the extent of upgrade, repair and replacement required.

The department regularly undertakes upgrade projects such as carpet replacement, light fixtures replacement, painting, classroom projection system replacements, and landscape improvements

in response to the intensive use and wear-and-tear of these facilities. The department also responds to recommended upgrades and replacements expressed by College personnel in the Administrative Council, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Security Task Force, Facilities Committee and other College organizations.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.2

While the College is satisfied with its efforts in planning for and evaluating its facilities for instructional and support purposes, it strives to improve these processes continuously. The College has a highly capable maintenance and facilities staff; it considers the recommendations of College personnel regarding facilities management through the various campus organizations and committees; and it responds to changing campus needs in it facilities.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.2

The College will continue with its current processes in planning for and evaluating facilities use, continuously seeking ways to improve those processes.

Standard III.B.2.a

Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

Response to Standard III.B.2.a

The College recognizes the tremendous capital investments it has in its buildings (current and projected), grounds, and equipment, and it has taken steps to protect these investments. The College now uses a more sophisticated budgeting model and procedure to evaluate the full cost of facilities ownership. The College budget for facilities includes such items as maintenance, insurance, security, repair and replacement for existing buildings.

As stated earlier, in the response to Standard I.B.3, the College conducts ongoing, rigorous follow-up of existing programs and services to ensure their effectiveness. The College applies the same kind of evaluation to programs and services planned for its facilities. The College is focusing on developing systems for enrollment management, emphasizing forecasting and planning for growth, particularly at the Blythe campus, the correspondence and distance education programs and the Needles Center.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.2.a

Equipped with a more sophisticated budgeting model and procedure to evaluate the full cost of facilities ownership, the College is better prepared than it was to plan for the future. It also recognizes that it is essential to plan thoroughly for the programs and services that will need to be housed in the appropriate facilities, and to account for the costs associated with those

programs and services, as well. The organizations and committees for planning and evaluating the use of the new facilities are in place and effective. These include the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Budget Committee, and Full Administrative Council.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.2.a

The College is in the process of meeting this standard. To do an effective job in cost projections, the College is integrating construction planning with instructional program and support planning more effectively. Such integrated planning is evident in the discussions and actions of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Budget Committee and Full Administrative Council.

Standard III.B.2.b

Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Response to Standard III.B.2.b

Physical resource planning is integrated with College planning in several ways:

1. The Maintenance and Operations Director and Chief Business Officer are part of the Full Administrative Council and discuss issues pertaining to buildings and grounds and safety with managers and administrators from other departments regularly. These kinds of meeting forums enable facilities planning to be integrated with the planning of other College programs and projects.

2. The Maintenance and Operations department develops a program review report, along with other departments of the Office of Administrative Services, every three years.[319] The report is reviewed by the Program Review Committee, as well as the Board of Trustees, in the context of other College programs and needs, affording the opportunity for broad recommendations that fit with other College objectives.

3. The Maintenance and Operations Director updates annually the Deferred Maintenance Plan which projects maintenance and repair projects five years.[320] The document is a "rolling" five-year projection that the Director updates annually. As projects are completed or modified or as new ones emerge in response to needs in other areas, the Plan is changed accordingly.

[319] Program Review Reports, Administrative Services/Maintenance and Operations
[320] Deferred Maintenance Plan

4. Care and maintenance of physical facilities is incorporated into the Integrate Strategic Plan as Initiative 5 Financial and Operational Stability the goal of which is to "Enhance district fiscal and physical resources with strategic and transparent stewardship."[321]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.B.2.b

The College strives to incorporate physical resources planning with other College plans. It does so in various ways: through participation in committees that facilitate the exchange of plans and ideas between physical planning and other planning; through program review, which is examined in the context of other College needs and programs; through the Deferred Maintenance Plan, which takes into account changing College needs; and through the ongoing assessment of needs and the impact of such needs on physical resources planning.

Action Plan for Standard III.B.2.b

The College meets this standard. The College will continue on its present course in integrating physical resource planning with other College planning, emphasizing expanding and emerging instructional and support needs.

Standard III.C Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Response to Standard III.C

Because technology impacts virtually every aspect of College activity—student learning, student support services, business analytics reporting, research, budgeting, and communications—the College is committed to maintaining effective technology resources. The College Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 includes Technology Support as a key initiative, whose goal is to "ensure that state-of-the art information technology and media are used by a highly-skilled college community."[322]

The Information Technology (IT) department, a division of the office of the Superintendent/President and managed by the IT Director, carries the major share of responsibility for developing, maintaining and improving the College's technology and for helping the College achieve the Integrated the Strategic Plan goal regarding technology and support.

[321] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 5, Financial and Operational Stability
[322] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 4 Technology and Support

In addition, the office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services provides technical support to instructional services with the recent hiring of two part-time instructional aide positions. The positions are reclassifications of two positions previously funded by the Title III Virtual Campus grant. The positions provide various kinds of support including, but not limited to, maintenance of classroom equipment, ITV maintenance, training of faculty in using classroom technology, and support of the Bridge, the College's online course management system.[323]

In learning and support services, the IT department is responsible for maintaining and upgrading computer and projector equipment and software in the classrooms, labs, and library at the Blythe main campus, as well as at the Needles Center.[324] The IT department maintains the interactive television (ITV) system which transmits courses between the Blythe main campus and the Needles Center.[325] The IT department also has a full-time technical support position at the Needles Center.

Although incarcerated students are prohibited access by prison rules and policies to all online services, the College recently entered into a pilot program agreement with the prison system to allow incarcerated students limited access to the internet for the purpose of instruction only. During Fall 2013, the College offered one online class section specifically for incarcerated students, and will evaluate the project.

In the area of institutional effectiveness, the IT department provides direct management of and technical support to the College's communications infrastructure, namely, business analytics, voice mail, telephone and email services. Support entails performing upgrades and repairs on existing equipment, replacing outdated equipment, and providing training and technical assistance to faculty, staff and students.

In 2009, the College finished the major portion of the Datatel implementation.[326] Ongoing implementation tasks continued for a few years after, but now have come to a completion. Ongoing maintenance and necessary enhancements will continue to be an institutional responsibility.

To date, all components of Datatel that the College owns have been implemented with the exception of Advancement and the Portal. A committee, the "Core Team", was formed in 2007 to facilitate implementation. Now, although it is still called Core, the team serves as a user's group whose function is to analyze and resolve problems arising with Datatel and to provide the

[323] The two part-time positions were originally funded by the Title III, Virtual Campus grant. With the conclusion of the grant September 30, 2013, the College absorbed these two positions, assigning them to instruction support under the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

[324] Summary of the Title III, Virtual Campus grant

[325] The Needles Center now has a full-time IT technician on staff. Until Fall Semester 2013, the position was one-half time.

[326] Datatel recently merged with another SunGuard Higher Education, creating a new company with a new name, Ellucian. For the sake of clarity and continuity, however, this report uses the company's former name Datatel, the name with which the majority of College users are most familiar.

means to communicate about patches and updates. Additionally, this is the forum for resolving operational requirements needed for federal and state reporting, and for institution-wide goals and plans. The Core team meets about twice a month, more often if needed.

Information technology planning is integrated with College planning in several ways: the IT Director is part of the Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and in this context regularly discusses issues pertaining to information technology with other administrators, faculty and staff; the department conducts program review, enabling broad campus discussion of its project planning with other College constituents; the IT Director, in discussion with other managers and in relation to other College plans, prepared the Technology Master Plan 2004-05[327]; and a Technology Support section is incorporated into the College's Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16.[328]

The IT Director also chairs the Instructional Technologies Committee, reinstated by the College in 2010 to provide better communication among the IT department, Title III Virtual Campus grant program and the faculty. The Committee reviews a variety of issues pertaining to instructional technology issues, including training, problem-solving, and equipment repair and replacement.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C

The College, through its IT department and through the office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, provides effective support to instructional programs in the form of classroom technology, online instruction, training and ITV, and the Blythe campus and Needles Center. The department maintains the College's other technology support systems, including business analytics reporting, voice mail, telephone, email, internet access and the Website. IT planning is integrated with campus planning through participation of the IT Director on several campus committees, through program review, through the Technology Master Plan, and through inclusion of a Technology Support section in the Strategic Plan. The IT department is committed to providing ongoing training and technical assistance to faculty, staff and students.

Action Plan for Standard III.C

The College will continue to maintain current levels of technology support and training as Datatel implementation is being completed, and as communications, instruction and student support services needs arise.

Standard III.C.1

The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.

[327] Technology Master Plan, 2004-05; the IT department is currently working on an update to the plan
[328] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 4 Technology and Support

Response to Standard III.C.1

Learning: The achievement of student learning is the key College objective, and it is where the IT department focuses its support. The department maintains the computers, software and projection systems located in all classrooms, and the library, at the Blythe campus and Needles Center. It provides technical support to the interactive television systems located at the Blythe main campus and the Needles Center, as well as support and maintenance for the computer and communications systems at the Blythe campus and Needles Center.

A chart listing the staffing and responsibilities of the IT department, together with the relevant technical staffing of the office of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, is found later, in the College response to Standard III C.1.a.

Staff of the Title III Virtual Campus grant program recently completed online registration orientation tutorial, which will be implemented for Spring Semester 2014.[329]

Learning and Teaching: Because teaching and learning go hand-in-glove, most of the support services provided to students to promote learning apply to teaching as well: On-the-spot training and technical assistance; maintenance and upgrade of classroom computers, projection systems, and office computers; software upgrades, interactive television, Website, library databases—these resources and services are all essential for teaching and are all supported by IT department staff. The College reinstated in 2010 the Instructional Technologies Committee to enable faculty to work directly with IT staff in addressing plans and issues affecting learning and teaching.

College-wide communications: The IT department provides support to the College's electronic communications systems, namely, email (Outlook), voice mail, telephone and the Website. The College has a full-time network technician and a position assigned full time to the technical support help desk. The IT department has resolved several technical problems that had resulted from an absence of fiber optic cable services. Now the College uses microwave dishes for high-speed internet connections. This advancement has greatly improved ITV communications between Blythe and the Needles Center, for classes and for general College-wide communications.

Research: Research studies to date have derived data from the existing system, CCCCO Data Mart, special studies such as Noel-Levitz, and from faculty members performing analyses of student learning outcomes in their classes. With the implementation of Datatel, institutional research activity has improved as a result of enhanced access to data, with beneficial impact, for example, on the College's initiation of the Student Success and Support Program.

Operational systems: Datatel has greatly enhanced the reporting accuracy and timeliness of campus reports required by the state Chancellor's Office and federal programs. These positive changes have had beneficial impact on the Admissions and Records, Human Resources and Financial Aid.

[329] College website, online tutorials

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C.1

The College's technology resources in the areas of teaching, learning, and communications are adequate to meet current needs of students and personnel. With the implementation of Datatel, all areas—teaching, learning, communications, research and operations—have benefitted significantly. The system affords better opportunities for faculty-student communication through portal technology, facilitates online teaching, improves opportunities for institutional research and greatly improves specialized business analytics reporting to community college agencies such as the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Action Plan for Standard III.C.1

The IT department will continue to provide sufficient levels of technology support for teaching, learning, communications, research and operations while working with key College personnel.

Standard III.C.1.a

Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

Response to Standard III.C.1.a

The College, through the IT department, provides ongoing support to technology resources sufficient to enhance its operations and effectiveness. Here are some key examples evidencing such support:

Professional Support: The IT department currently has the following staffing level:

1 IT Director, full-time
1 IT Assistant Director, one-half time
1 Web service/network specialist
2 Help desk technicians/Network technicians
1 Part-time microcomputer repair person
1 permanent full-time help desk technician in Needles

The office of the Vice-President of Instructional and Student Services maintains the following positions:

2 Instructional Aides, part-time

Between 2008 and 2013, the College was awarded a Title III grant "Virtual Campus" grant that provided staffing and equipment support principally for distance learning instruction. The grant

resulted in the acquisition of classroom equipment that facilitated instruction and communications with the Needles Center. The grant also provided for the purchase and implementation of the Sakai online course management system, commonly referred to on campus as "the Bridge".

The grant ended September 30, 2013. Two technicians who had been originally hired with grant funds have now been hired by the College on a part-time basis to continue providing instructional technology support. They report to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

Communications: The College functions effectively with its current telephone, voice mail, email, website and internet systems. Each of these systems is serviced by the IT department.

Hardware: The IT department systematically upgrades its servers, as well as computer hardware in classrooms and in faculty and staff offices. With Title III grant funding, the IT department installed camera and monitor equipment in several classrooms, providing opportunities for ITV instruction between the Blythe campus and the Needles Center.

Software: The College uses Microsoft products predominantly. As a member of the Foundation for California Community Colleges, the College enjoys substantial discounts in its software agreements.

Business analytics and reporting requirements: The College's management information system, Datatel, is compatible with California community college reporting requirements and functions well for all operations, especially registration, student records, and financial aid. Datatel is also used by all the community colleges in Riverside County, where the College's Blythe campus is located.

Financial reporting: The College uses the financial management system of the Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools to process all its financial transactions and reporting, including budget, payroll, grants, and other special financial services. This arrangement is expected to continue.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C.1.a

That the College's technology is designed to enhance its operations and effectiveness is evident in its staffing (which is sufficient to meet current needs), communications systems, ongoing hardware and software replacements and upgrades, MIS reporting and financial reporting. As the implementation of Datatel is completed and College personnel are trained in its use, the College will have periodic need for a consultant to provide programming support and training. The College engaged the services of a consultant in Spring 2013 for two weeks to provide such services. As the need arises the College will likely use the services of consultants again from time to time in the future.

Action Plan for Standard III.C.1.a

The IT department will maintain the services currently provided in the communications systems (telephone, voice mail, email, web site and internet). The College, through the IT department, has implemented the conversion to Datatel starting with student records, financial aid, state reporting, and online services for students. The current arrangement with the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools for financial reporting is expected to continue.

Standard III.C.1.b

The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Response to Standard III.C.1.b

One of the College's Integrated Strategic Plan objectives is to ensure that "state-of-the-art technology and media are used by a highly-skilled college community."[330] In striving to achieve that goal, the College wants to see its students and personnel well-trained in the technology available to them.

While the major training emphasis over the past few years has been in helping College personnel learn to use Datatel, other types of training continue to be offered, including:

Title III virtual campus grant: The grant provided funds for equipment and software, as well as for training.[331] The College was able to purchase the Sakai online course management system (popularly known as "the Bridge") as well as classroom equipment, including Starboard and PolyCom cameras that facilitated ITV course delivery with the Needles Center.

Help-desk training and technical support: See staffing detail in the College response to Standard III.C.1.a.

Student access and orientation: An online orientation session is has been developed as implemented for Spring Semester 2014. The session will provide students with orientation to a variety of student support services, including counseling, financial aid, placement testing and others.[332]

Flex day/faculty-staff meeting training: In response to stated needs, the College uses Flex days and faculty-staff meetings as opportunities to provide training in specialized topics such as Grade Pro, Microsoft Exchange, Outlook, information literacy, website navigation and similar subjects

[330] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 4 Technology and Support
[331] Summary of Title III Virtual Campus grant
[332] College website, online tutorials

with technology emphasis. The College sponsored several training programs during Flex Days that had direct application to Title III equipment and software.[333]

Classroom instruction: The College, through its Business Division, offers a large number of courses in computer information on science (CIS) courses providing instruction in computers, programming and software programs. Such classes are open to everyone—regular students, faculty, staff, as well as the general public.

Staff development: As discussed in the response to Standard III.A.5, funded professional development opportunities for College personnel are available through the Staff Development Committee, the CSEA Professional Growth Fund, as well as through the approved budgets of each of the College's divisions and departments. Technology course work and training are among the priorities of these programs.

Fee Waiver Program: In Spring 2013, the College implemented an enrollment fee waiver program encouraging employees to complete associate degrees, and to advance themselves educationally.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C.1.b

In fulfilling a key objective of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, the College will continue to offer training opportunities in technology through the help-desk staff, at Flex days, at faculty-staff meetings, in classroom instruction and through staff development funding priorities

Action Plan for Standard III.C.1.b

The College will continue to provide training opportunities, programs and opportunities, such as the help-desk, Flex days and faculty-staff meetings, classroom instruction, fee waiver program and priorities of the various staff development programs.

Standard III.C.1.c

The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.

Response to Standard III.C.1.c

Recognizing that keeping current in technology is a major challenge, the IT department's practice of replacing aging and out-of-date equipment and software with upgraded technology meets College needs as they emerge. Thanks largely to funding through the Title III Virtual Campus grant and to the opening of the new Fine and Performing Arts building, the College has been able to upgrade and replace aging technology infrastructure.

[333] Flex Day agendas; see Aug. 21, 2009; Jan. 11, 2010, Mar. 19, 2010; Feb. 11, 2011, and April 21, 2011

A formal process governing technology evaluation and replacement, however, is needed to ensure the lowest cost of ownership of technology assets, the effective deployment of technology assets throughout the College, and the staged retirement of aging assets. The Technology Master Plan, Goal #9, states that the College shall: "Provide technology equipment to meet the needs of Palo Verde College." The Plan outlines three strategies to achieve this goal:[334]

1. Establish and keep current baseline standards for technology purchases.

2. Coordinate the purchase and distribution of technology order to maximize return on equipment investment and simplify support issues.

3. Develop plans for the systematic addition and replacement of technology equipment.

College Self-Evaluation for Standard III.C.1.c

To date, the College has not implemented a formal process to evaluate and replace equipment. The IT department needs to continue its processes in replacing aging equipment, but it needs to do so in accordance with a plan that will ensure the lowest cost of ownership, the efficient deployment and use of assets in response to College needs, and the staged retirement of aging assets.

Action Plan for Standard III.C.1.c

The IT department will develop a plan for the systematic addition and replacement of technology equipment.

Standard III.C.1.d

The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

Response to Standard III.C.1.d

The IT department provides valuable services to the College in the form of technology equipment and software purchases and upgrades, the distribution of technology consistent with College needs, maintenance and repair of technology assets and training and technical assistance to faculty, staff and students.

Technology support is provided throughout the College in the form of instructional support for classroom equipment and software, the Bridge, student support services software and equipment, and communications systems including telephone, internet and email. These services apply to the Blythe campus and to the Needles Center

[334] Technology Master Plan, 2004-05, Goal #9

The IT Director, as a member of the Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, moreover, discusses issues pertaining to campus technology with managers and administrators from other departments regularly. The IT director chairs the Instructional Technologies committee and in this capacity, discusses directly with faculty technology issues of interest to them. From these contacts and on advice from his staff and others, the IT Director implements the distribution and utilization of technology resources to optimize benefits to the College's programs and services.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C.1.d

The College is well-served in its technology requirements by the staff of the IT department.

Action Plan for Standard III.C.1.d

The IT department will continue its current services to the College.

Standard III.C.2

Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Response to Standard III.C.2

The IT Director is part of the Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and discusses issues pertaining to technology with managers and administrators from other departments regularly. These kinds of meeting forums enable technology planning to be integrated with the planning of other College programs and projects.

The IT department develops a program review report every three years.[335] The report is reviewed by the Program Review Committee, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and the Board of Trustees, in the context of other College programs and needs, affording the opportunity for broad recommendations that fit with other College objectives.[336]

The Technology Master Plan 2004-05, while it is in need of updating, nonetheless is consistent with the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, matching College strategic objectives with the objectives of the IT department.[337]

A Technology Support section is incorporated into the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16.[338]

[335] Recent changes in program review scheduling will result in support services reports every three years.
[336] Program Review Report, Information Technology 2011
[337] Technology Master Plan, 2004-05
[338] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 4, Technology and Support

The IT department assesses the effective use of technology resources as a result of contact with faculty, staff and other administrators in various campus committees and organizations, as noted above.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.C.2

Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning through the inclusion of technology as a key initiative in the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, and through the director's involvement in the Instructional Technologies Committee and Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The Technology Strategic Plan 2004-05 needs to be updated with input from faculty and staff.

Action Plan for Standard III.C.2

Update the Technology Plan2004-05, with the assistance of a committee of faculty, support staff, management and administration.

Standard III.D Financial Resources

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Response to Standard III.D Financial Resources

The financial resources of the College are managed by the office of Business Services under the general direction of the Chief Business Officer. The functions of the office of Business Services all relate to the effective delivery and support of student learning programs, and they include the management of: [339]

1. All College financial services, including budget, payroll, purchasing, accounts receivable, accounts payable and cash accounts

2. Special accounts, including ASG and other campus organizations

3. Palo Verde College Foundation donations, scholarship payouts, and financial reporting

4. Annual independent audit prepared by a reputable CPA firm

[339] Program Review Report, Administrative/Business Services, 2011

5. Periodic financial reporting to all College divisions and departments, including categorical programs, and reporting to appropriate state and federal agencies, as required

6. Physical resources, through the Maintenance and Operations Director, including maintenance, repair, upgrade and purchasing

7. Food services, under contract with an independent food service vendor

The Chief Business Officer manages the annual budget through the Budget Committee, a mutual agreement committee consisting of all College constituent groups.[340] The process ensures that all divisions and departments have the opportunity to propose budgets annually for their respective areas, have a fair and open hearing on their proposals, defend their proposals and receive timely decisions on their proposals.

The office of the Chief Business Officer manages the College budget, once it is approved, in a fiscally prudent and conservative manner to ensure that all programs and services are adequately funded. Financial transactions are handled expeditiously and fund balances are maintained in a fiscally responsible manner to ensure financial stability. While the Chancellor's office requires a 5% fund balance in its unrestricted general fund, for example, the College maintains a minimum of 12%.[341]

Prior to the 2011 fiscal problems, the College has used Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes to pay continuing monthly obligations during times of state funding delays. However, since 2011, the College decided a more prudent fiscal practice was to borrow from itself, when needed, instead of incurring interest charges and fees on the TRAN loans.

The College's financial planning is integrated with other College planning in various ways. For one, its decisions are consistent with College goals expressed in the Integrated Strategic Plan. In the 2013 revision of the Integrated Strategic Plan, a new section, Financial and Operational Stability, was added, largely the result of the College's recent financial problems and the recognition that financial planning needed to be integrated better with other College functions. The goal of this component of the Integrated Strategic Plan is to "enhance district fiscal and physical resources with strategic and transparent stewardship." [342]

Financial resource planning is also integrated with program review and strategic planning. During the peak of the financial crisis, the customary budget process was suspended and, instead departments and divisions were asked simply to roll over the prior year's budgeted amounts. Once the College began to recover, it became evident that, apart from stricter budget practices, the budget system needed to be made more transparent better integrated with program review and strategic planning. As discussed earlier in Standard I.B.6, the Program Review Committee

[340] College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14
[341] PVC Annual 311-Chancellor's Office
[342] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-2016, page 4

and Budget Committee worked collaboratively with the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and developed a process that effectively integrated all three functions. This process is described in both flow chart and narrative form, and combines portions of processes that had been previously in place.[343]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D

The College has adopted conservative and prudent financial practices while being able to support instruction and services for its students. The College is emerging from a serious crisis and recognizes that it must be vigilant in its day-to-day practices as well as in long-range planning.

Action Plan for Standard III.D

The College will continue with its current budgetary practices, with emphasis on ongoing review and self-evaluation in order to continuously improve.

Standard III.D.1

The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.

Response to Standard III.D.1

The Mission of the College is to foster student learning and success: "California community college that supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services. The College promotes student success and lifelong learning for a diverse community of learners."[344]

Toward these ends the College strives, through its financial planning process, to maintain a financially stable, safe, effective and efficient working and learning environment, as follows:

Maintains the financial stability of the College: Despite discouraging FTES forecasts, the College is maintaining financial stability through its prudent management practices by keeping costs down. The College supports efforts to boost FTES, wherever possible, in terms of outreach efforts, expansion of new instructional programs, and growth of online courses.

Issues timely and accurate financial reporting internally and externally: The College is timely in all its reporting requirements, including requirements set for the by the Chancellor's office. In 2012, the College's Business Services department provided training to faculty and staff on the use of the Galaxy financial records program, enabling College personnel to access budget information about their own areas and the College as a whole.

[343] Integrated Budget, Program Review, and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative
[344] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

Supports qualified faculty, staff and administration through effective human resources practices: Payroll, overload compensation, expense reimbursement and other special pay arrangements are processed in a timely and accurate manner.

Provides learning and instructional support through expeditious purchasing procedures: Purchasing is conducted in a timely and accurate manner for all College departments.

Adheres to the practice of collegial governance*:* The budget approval process calls for approval of all division and department budget proposals by the Budget Committee, a mutual agreement committee that has representation from all College constituencies.

Supports a safe and clean campus environment that is conducive to learning*:* Responsibility for maintaining a safe, clean, quiet and well-cared for campus rests with the Maintenance and Operations department, a division of the office of the Business Services, under the direction of the Chief Business Officer.

These aforementioned objectives are, in summary, the key objectives established by the office of Business Services in its most recent program review report, in 2011.[345]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.1

The office of Business Services, in carrying out its responsibility as the College's principal financial planner, looks to the College's Mission Statement as the foundation for financial planning. With its focus on student learning and success, the office of Business Services allocates financial resources to help sustain a College environment that is: financially stable; that complies with the rules and regulations of federal and state agencies; that is clean and well-cared for; whose payroll is accurate and timely; which has arranged for program managers and division chairs to have access to timely financial reports; and which encourages collegial participation in its budgeting process.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.1

The office of Business Services will continue in its reliance on the College's Mission Statement and Integrated Strategic Plan as the foundation for financial planning.

Standard III.D.1.a

Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.

Response to Standard III.D.1.a

The College's key strategic planning document is the Integrated Strategic Plan. Originally developed and implemented in 2002, the Strategic Plan has since been revised several times—in

[345] Program Review Report, Administrative/Business Services, 2011

collegial governance forums—as new priorities emerge or as goals are achieved. The most recent revision incorporated a new section: Financial and Operational Stability

Financial planning is also integrated with institutional planning through the program review process through a system developed during the past year, which incorporates elements of the budget process that had previously been practice.[346] The integration of these functions is described in detail in the response to Team Recommendation 2-3 earlier in this report.

As part of the review process, budget proposals are required to justify extraordinary or discretionary expenditures in terms of specific initiatives and objectives of the Integrated Strategic Plan.[347] Budget proposals are evaluated in terms of the appropriateness of proposed spending to the effectiveness of its services in serving students.

Uphold the mission of the College: As stated in the response to Standard III.D.1, above, the office of Business Services looks to the College's Mission as the foundation for financial planning. With its focus on student learning and success, the office of Business Services allocates financial resources to help sustain "supports an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."[348]

Program review: The College requires the office of Business Services (as well as all divisions and departments) to conduct program review every three years. The most recent program review by the office of Business Services was in 2011. The report is reviewed by the Program Review Committee, a mutual agreement committee consisting of all College constituents, and the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The program review report is adopted by the Board of Trustees and then posted to the College website. The program review process, which requires examination of the financial planning process by other College constituents, assures that financial planning is integrated with other College planning.

Participation on the key planning committees: The Chief Business Officer, as a member of the Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, moreover, discusses issues pertaining to financial planning with managers and administrators from other departments regularly.[349] These kinds of meeting forums enable financial planning to be integrated with the planning of other College programs and projects

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.1.a

The College strives to integrate financial planning with other College plans. It does so through the actions of the office of Business Services, which include managing the annual budget process; securing financial resources to support College plans; upholding the College mission; conducting program review; and participating on key planning committees.

[346] Integrated Budget, Program Review, and Strategic Planning Flow Chart and Narrative
[347] Draft-Budget request forms for enhancement requests
[348] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9
[349] College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14

Action Plan for Standard III.D.1.a

The College will continue its current practices in integrating financial planning with other College plans.

Standard III.D.1.b

Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

Response to Standard III.D.1.b

College faculty, staff and administrators look continuously to the availability of financial resources to fund current and anticipated programs and projects. Information about the availability of financial resources comes primarily from the office of Business Services, which produces the annual budget, audited financial statements, and funding forecasts provided by the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

These reports provide realistic assessments of the College's financial resources and obligations, enabling all personnel with responsibility for budgeting the opportunity to make informed decisions.

The Chief Business Officer chairs the Budget Committee, a mutual agreement committee consisting of all College constituents. At Budget Committee meetings the Chief Business Officer and her staff keep members apprised of local and statewide developments affecting the College's budget, such as budget obligations, funding forecasts, cash flow reports, new budget requirements, changes in programs and other subjects. The Budget Committee members, in turn, keep their constituents informed as to financial issues affecting the College.

The Chief Business Officer is also a member of the Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee. These committees provide forums to discuss issues pertaining to financial planning with managers and administrators from other departments regularly.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.1.b

The College's overall planning process is closely linked to its financial planning process; personnel involved in College planning have available to them a realistic assessment of the College's financial resources and obligations. College planners are continuously apprised by the office of Business Services of local and statewide developments affecting the College's budget, such as budget obligations, funding forecasts, cash flow reports, new budget requirements and changes in programs.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.1.b

The office of Business Services will continue its current practices in ensuring that College plans are informed by realistic assessments of College financial resources and expenditures.

Standard III.D.1.c

When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

Response to Standard III.D.1.c

As part of its financial planning procedures, the College looks beyond the immediate year's forecast, and plans multi-year budget projections to ensure that funds will be available to meet future obligations. Because of the financial uncertainties the College has been facing, the Chief Business Officer recognized that multi-year budget projections were essential for planning. Accordingly, she prepared budget projections based on various FTES scenarios, which were incorporated into a Special Report required by the ACCJC.[350]

As reported in the Special Report to the ACCJC, April 1, 2013, the College planned several contingencies in the event to the goal of 1,800 FTES was not attained following stabilization.[351] In fact, the College attained 1,592 FTES in 2012-13, an increase of 50% above the FTES of the preceding year. While the goal was not reached in the first year following stabilization, the College has still two more years, according the Chancellor's office policies, to restore FTES to 1,800.

The major obligation the College faces is an annual COP debt payment of $855,000. Because 2012-13 FTES was 1,592—short of the target of 1,800 FTES, resulting in a budget shortfall of $949,485 for 2013-14. To address the shortfall the College implemented a contingency previously approved by the Board of Trustees, namely, to make the annual COP debt payment by borrowing from the LAIF/COP capital fund, instead of making the payment from the College general fund.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.1.c

In planning for the year's upcoming budget projections, the College takes into account long-term obligations and plans accordingly. The College has engaged the assistance of an external consultant with expertise in public finance, including COP funding, to help guide the College in

[350] Special Report to the ACCJC, April 1, 2013, page 16*ff*

[351] To address the deficit balance in the 2011-12 budget without using COP monies any longer, the decision was made to reduce course offerings to save some of the costs associated with hiring adjunct faculty, thereby reducing FTES generation and intentionally placing the College in "stabilization" for 2011-12.

making prudent decisions. The College recognizes that it must maintain its conservative fiscal management practices while seeing new sources of FTES revenue.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.1.c

The College will continue its practice in making provisions for long-term obligations in its financial planning, while seeking new FTES revenue sources.

Standard III.D.1.d

The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget.

Response to Standard III.D.1.d

The Chief Business Officer coordinates financial planning and the preparation of the College budget each year and follows established, publicized procedures. The annual budget cycle for the College is as follows:

1. June: Notification to the College by the Chancellor's office of estimated funding for the upcoming academic year.

2. February: Budget process for the College begins. The office of Business Services provides College constituents with the budget procedure package, which consists of budget forms and a timeline for submission of proposals.

3. April-May: Budget Committee meets over a period of several weeks to review proposals of constituents.

4. June: The office of Business Services prepares the Tentative Budget for review and approval by the Board of Trustees in open session.

5. August: The College receives confirmation from the Chancellor's office of actual funding for the College's current academic year.

6. September: The office of Business Services prepares the final budget for the current year and provides it to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

7. Monthly: The office of Business Services distributes reports to all division chairs, program managers, administrators and department heads.

8. November-January: The independent auditor's report on the previous year's financial statements and report on compliance requirements is completed and presented to the Board of Trustees.

Other factors have an impact on the preparation of the budget. These may include the results of collective bargaining agreements, changes in requirements and funding levels of categorical programs, changes in Chancellor's office financial reporting requirements, and others. The office of Business Services is highly responsive to changes such as these and makes appropriate adjustments in the budget processes.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.1d

The College, through the office of Business Services, follows a systematic and publicized process for the preparation of the annual budget. The office of Business Services works primarily through the Budget Committee to inform constituents about the budget and to complete the budget process. Meetings of the Budget Committee are announced to the entire college community: all are welcome to attend and to participate in discussions.

The salary schedules of all constituent organizations are published on the College website. Copies of the College budget, tentative and adopted versions, and the independent auditor's reports are available in the College's website for general review.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.1.d

The office of Business Services will continue to make available the College budget, tentative and adopted versions, available for general review at the College library, to maintain a policy of transparency in Budget Committee discussions.

Standard III.D.2

To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.

Response to Standard III.D.2

The office of Business Services ensures the financial integrity of the College by employing effective control mechanisms. These mechanisms are:

Annual independent audits: The annual independent audit helps ensure the financial integrity of the College and verify its responsible use of financial resources. The audit assesses the College's compliance with federal and state rules and regulations, the propriety of revenues and expenditures, and the adequacy of financial accounting and internal controls.[352]

Accounting transactions performed by agreement with the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools: It has long been the practice of the College to employ the services of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools to assist with the College's payroll, financial reporting,

[352] Independent Audit Report, 2013 and Independent Audit Reports, 2009-2012

purchasing and other financial transactions. The rationale behind this practice is that of economies of scale: it is more cost effective to have the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools perform these transactions (which it performs for other community colleges, as well) than for the College to perform them itself.

Financial reports for departments and divisions: In 2012, the College's Business Services department provided training to faculty and staff on the use of the Galaxy financial records program, enabling College personnel to access budget information about their own areas and the College as a whole.

Review and oversight of financial management: Oversight of financial management practices is accomplished by the Budget Committee, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Full Administrative Council and Board of Trustees. The financial management of the College, while handled primarily by the office of Business Services, is reviewed by other College committees and organizations. These additional review and oversight provisions help ensure the responsible use of financial resources. The Budget Committee, for example, reviews the College budget periodically throughout the year, as does the Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees Audit and Finance Committee: The Committee was formed in Fall Semester 2012 to help Board members be better informed of ongoing financial problems the College is facing and efforts to resolve them. Meetings focus on specific financial issues, including, Board policies and administrative procedures that deal with finance, possible general obligation bond refinancing efforts; LAIF/COP fund account, FTES situation and projects, and other matters.[353]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2

The College employs several mechanisms which help protect its integrity and help ensure the responsible use of its financial resources. These mechanisms are the annual audit; the involvement of a highly reputable external public agency skilled in school finance (the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools) in the handling of certain transactions; periodic internal audits; the access to financial statements by all College personnel; the review and oversight of College finances by various campus organizations and committees; and review of the College's financial practices by the Board Audit and Finance Committee.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2

The mechanisms currently in place are sufficient to ensure the integrity of the College and the responsible use of its financial resources.

Standard III.D.2.a

Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional

[353] Board Audit and Finance Committee, agendas and minutes, on College website

responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

Response to Standard III.D.2.a

The budget and the findings of the independent auditor verified that the College is allocating appropriate financial resources to support student learning programs and services. These findings are evident in the 2013 Audit Report which states there were no questioned costs for the current year, and that prior year audit findings have been resolved or implemented. [354]

Also, it is evident in the SLOs and assessments produced by the office of Business Services that there is a strong commitment to student learning and the support of learning. For example, the Accounts Payable/Purchasing function presents this SLO, as published on the College website:[355]

> Accounts Payable/Purchasing consists of qualified personnel to evaluate purchases for appropriateness and pricing as well as make payments in a timely manner; so the college can promote high quality educational programs for our students and the community.

The Payroll operation presents this SLO:

> Utilizing the highest standards and the best available technologies, all payroll records are presented in a timely, accurate, complete and meaningful format in support of the District's educational mission and the Colleges' educational master plans for Area Learning Outcomes.

The SLOs presented by the Business Services office also provide specific methods of measurement, further evidencing the Business Services' commitment to student learning.

The Business Services program review report, 2011, evidences a strong commitment to creating an environment supportive of student learning.[356]

> Program Review Question: *Describe specific, documented accomplishments that support and facilitate the achievement and assessment of student learning outcomes, including measures employed to evaluate program effectiveness in achieving such outcomes.*
>
> Business Services Response: Student learning outcomes were not addressed in the previous non-instructional program review. However, the Business Office supports student learning outcomes by providing necessary textbooks and instructional supplies for students to complete courses. The Business Office also provides a pleasant place for student's meals, and serves students by addressing concerns such as scholarship funds, payroll, student fees, and textbook information.

[354] Independent Audit Report, 2013 and Independent Audit Reports, 2009-2012
[355] PVC SLOs > Learning Support SLOs > Business Services
[356] Program Review Report, Administrative/Business Services, 2011, page 6

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.a

The College, through the Business Services office, clearly demonstrates its commitment to allocating financial resources to support student learning programs and services. This commitment is evidenced in Business Services' conscientious attention to addressing thoroughly audit findings, establishing operational SLOs and the means to measure them, and the tangible results of its commitment to learning reflected in the office's program review report.

Action Plan: Standard III.D.2.a

The College will continue its current practices in allocating resources to learning programs and services in accordance with standards established by the Education Code and other state mandates.

Standard III.D.2.b

Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

Response to Standard III.D.2.b

The office of Business Services makes available appropriate financial information to College personnel frequently and systematically. Financial reports to the campus are timely and of sufficient scope and detail to support planning and decision-making. Here are some of the principal ways the campus is provided financial information:

Galaxy system: In 2012, the College's Business Services department provided training to faculty and staff on the use of the Galaxy financial records program, enabling College personnel to access budget information about their own areas and the College as a whole.

Faculty-Staff meetings and Flex Days: From time to time, the office of Business Services presents financial status reports to the entire campus at all-staff meetings and specialized training during Flex Days. Examples of topics include: the status of state funding and its implications for the College; how to complete a purchase order request; how to develop a division budget; and a presentation on the Certificates of Participation (COPS) program.

Budget Committee and other committees and organizations: College financial information, while handled primarily by the office of Business Services, is reviewed by other College constituents. These additional review and oversight provisions help ensure the responsible use of financial resources and keep College personnel informed of the College's financial condition. The Budget Committee, Administrative Council, and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, for example, review the College budget periodically throughout the year.

Budget Committee meetings are held usually monthly. They are announced to the college community, and all are invited to attend and participate, thus ensuring transparency and keeping the College community current on budget and finance matters.

Reports to the Board of Trustees: Each month, the Chief Business Officer presents a financial report to the Board of Trustees. The report includes a presentation of check warrants for Board review and approval, a cash flow analysis, and after the end of each fiscal year, an independent auditor's report.

Access to the College budget: The College publishes on the website salary schedules of each of the bargaining units. The College budget, tentative and adopted versions, is available for general review on the College website.[357]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.b

The College strives to keep its personnel informed about the College's financial condition. It informs program managers, division chairs and department heads frequently of the financial status of their programs and areas to enable them to plan effectively and to make decisions. The Chief Business Officer reports monthly to the Board of Trustees and periodically to the entire campus during all-staff meetings. Various College organizations and committees provide oversight of the College's financial systems and reports. Program managers, division chairs and department heads have access to financial data in their areas via the Galaxy system.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.b

The College will continue its current practice making available timely and appropriate financial information to College personnel.

Standard III.D.2.c

The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

Response to Standard III.D.2.c

Reserves: In the unrestricted general fund, the College maintains reserves in excess of required minimums: 12% vs. the required 5% for emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.[358]

Risk management: The College carries sufficient insurance to cover liability, property loss and other protections. The policy is managed by Keenan and Associates.[359]

Access to cash: Virtually all of the College's cash and cash equivalents are on deposit with the Riverside County Treasurer's Office. The Statement of Cash Flows, available in the independent

[357] Business Services on College website (Main page > Faculty & Staff > Business Services)
[358] PVC Annual 311-Chancellor's Office
[359] Insurance Documents

auditor's reports, provides detail as to the sources and uses of cash, and the net increase of cash.[360]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.c

The College has taken reasonable steps to ensure its financial stability, particularly with regard to unforeseen occurrences, such as delays in state funding or reimbursement. The College maintains adequate liability and replacement insurance coverage consistent with state requirements, and maintains adequate cash flow as evidenced in the independent audit reports.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.c

The College will continue its current practices in maintaining stable cash flow, adequate insurance coverage, and adequate preparation for unforeseen occurrences.

Standard III.D.2.d

The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

Response to Standard III.D.2.d

The College, through the office of Business Services, Budget Committee, program review process, and independent audit practices effective oversight of the finances of all programs. The College, moreover, maintains a variety of grant, auxiliary, financial aid and contractual programs and services in support of students and the College's learning environment. Here are examples of some of the key entities with a description of how the College oversees their operations and finances:

Financial aid: The College's various student financial aid programs are managed by the Financial Aid Officer, under the general direction of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. The program is reviewed and is audited independently each year as part of the College's annual audit. Annual financial compliance reports are also required throughout the year. The Financial Aid Officer prepares a program review report every three years.[361] The Financial Aid office submits an operating budget annually for review and approval by the Budget Committee.

EOPS, CalWORKS: The managers for these programs have timely access to all financial reports through the Galaxy system. The manager also submits periodic reports to the funding agencies for these programs, and conducts program review for these programs every three years. These programs are subject to oversight by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

[360] Independent Audit Report, 2013 and Independent Audit Reports, 2009-2012
[361] Student Services Program Review, 2011, Financial Aid, page 46

Contractual relationships: The College uses the services of consultants, adjunct instructors and other specialists. The services provided by these contractors are reviewed and evaluated by the College department or division responsible for procuring the services. For example, architectural consultants are evaluated by the Superintendent/President; adjunct instructors are evaluated by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Support Services; food services are provided by a private company under contract with the College and are evaluated by the Chief Business Officer.

Palo Verde College Foundation: The Palo Verde College Foundation, while an independent legal entity established to provide scholarships and other financial support to Palo Verde College students. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors. Financial oversight of the Foundation is handled by the office of Business Services, the Foundation Board of Directors, and the College Board of Trustees. The Foundation is audited by an independent auditor as part of the College's annual audit.

Associated Student Body (ASG): The ASG is an official College organization whose purpose is to promote student academic progress primarily through student advocacy, fundraising, and collegial governance. ASG finances, including funds generated through fundraising, are managed by the office of Business Services.

Child Development Center: The Child Development Center is managed by a Site Supervisor/Teacher and staff, all of whom are employees of the College. Child Development Center operations and finances are evaluated by the Vice President of Instructional Services. The Child Development Center submits an operating budget annually for review and approval by the Budget Committee. The financial statements of the Child Development Center are examined by an independent auditor along with the financial statements of the College.

The College does not invest in marketable securities. It maintains the majority of its cash on deposit in the Riverside County Treasury.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.d

The College is thorough in its oversight of the operations and finances of all financial resources, including various campus organizations and functions. Each of the programs described above is managed day-to-day by a program manager or supervisor, with oversight at the level of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services or the Superintendent/President; each receives monthly budget reports; each produces a program review report every three years; and each is reviewed annually by independent audit.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.d

The College will continue its current practices in providing continuous, responsible oversight of the various grant, externally-funded, auxiliary and fund-raising programs and services described in the standard.

Standard III.D.2.e

All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Response to Standard III.D.2.e

As noted in the response to Standard III.D.2.d, the College is thorough in its oversight of the use of all financial resources, including the various grant, externally-funded, auxiliary and fund-raising programs and services described in the standard. In doing so, the College continuously strives to uphold the integrity of these programs in a manner consistent with the College's mission and values: "Palo Verde College maintains the highest standards of ethics and integrity. The College consistently demands respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs, professional interactions and community relations."[362]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.e

The College utilizes various mechanisms that provide oversight of the use of financial resources and that help ensure those financial resources are used with integrity. The mechanisms are: day-to-day management by a program manager or supervisor, with oversight at the level of the Vice President of Instruction or Student Services or the Superintendent/President; monthly budget reports for key programs; program review report every five years; and review annually by independent audit.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.e

The College will continue its current practice of providing oversight of the use of financial resources to help ensure that such resources are used effectively and with integrity.

Standard III.D.2.f

Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Response to Standard III.D.2.f

The College maintains contractual agreements with various external parties in order to enhance the quality and extent of its educational services. The College expects each of its contractors to perform according to the terms of the agreement, but as well, in a manner which is consistent with the College's mission and goals and which maintains the integrity of the College. The

[362] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9

College incorporates into its contractual agreements, therefore, appropriate legal provisions designed to achieve these objectives.[363]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.f

The College, through provisions incorporated into its various contracts and agreements with external entities, strives consistently to uphold its mission and goals as well as its integrity. The College recognizes that external contractors provide services which the College itself is either unable to provide, or which would be inefficient for the College to provide.

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.f

The College will continue its practice in incorporating in its contracts and agreements appropriate provisions designed to uphold its mission and goals and to maintain its integrity.

Standard III.D.2.g

The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.

Response to Standard III.D.2.g

There are three principal ways by which the College evaluates its financial management processes: program review, specifically by the office of Business Services; recommendations resulting from the annual independent audit; and recommendations from the Budget Committee and other key committees and organizations.

Program review process: Every three years all divisions and departments are required to conduct program review, a self-assessment of the department's effectiveness. Program review asks the department, among other things, to set goals that will help it improve its services. The office of Business Services is responsible for many services and programs, but its key *financial* responsibility is preparing the budget for the College, handling financial transactions such as payroll and purchasing, and preparing budget reports for other divisions and departments. In its most recent program review report, in 2011, the office of Business Services outlined several recent accomplishments that helped improve its services, and identified other areas where improvement is needed.[364]

Annual independent audit: Each independent audit report contains a Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs in which the auditor recommends changes in accounting and financial management procedures that will improve the accuracy and reliability of the College's financial statements. Each audit report also includes a follow-up on action taken by the College to

[363] Sample contractual agreements: Master Agreement between District and Industrial Emergency Council
[364] Program Review Report, Administrative/Business Services, 2011, page 5*ff*

resolve findings of prior years. The College systematically follows up on prior years' recommendations and has made changes that subsequently proved acceptable to the auditors.

The most recent report, 2013, indicated there were no questioned costs for the current year, and that prior years' findings had been resolved.[365]

Recommendations on financial management by the Budget Committee, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and Administrative Council: The financial management of the College, while handled primarily by the office of Business Services, is reviewed by other College committees and organizations in the course of day-to-day business, and by virtue of the fact that the Business Services Officer is a member of these committees. These additional review and oversight opportunities invite ideas and suggestions from other College personnel as to improving financial management practices.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard III.D.2.g

The College's financial management practices are continuously reviewed through program review, the annual independent audit and various campus committees and organizations. Some examples of recommended changes in financial management resulting from these review processes are:

Action Plan for Standard III.D.2.*g*

The College will continue to review its financial management practices through various means, including program review, independent audit and the recommendations of other College personnel expressed in the context of campus committees and organization.

[365] Independent Audit Report, 2013 and Independent Audit Reports, 2009-2012

Standard IV
Leadership and Governance

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

Standard IV.A Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

Response to Standard IV.A: Decision-Making Roles and Processes

That the College values ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization is evident in various ways: the various initiatives of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16[366]; the institutional code of ethics[367]; job performance evaluation criteria[368]; and organizational and committee structures that encourage collegial governance.[369] The College recognizes that ethical and effective leadership enable the College to identify values, set and achieve goals and make improvements.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A

As will be seen in the discussions to follow, the College places a high value on ethical and effective leadership—not only among the College's managerial and administrative personnel, but throughout the organization. College personnel are encouraged to participate collegially in the shaping the College's future. Moreover, the College expects its leadership, at the managerial and administrative levels, to perform according to high standards of ethics and competency, to make the right decisions, to help set direction for the College, and to achieve results.

The College and its personnel perform ethically and effectively. The systems that facilitate these actions are in place and are, for the most part, working well. The Board of Trustees and Superintendent/President formulate annual goals and publish them.[370]

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[366] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-14

[367] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715 and BP 3050

[368] For the management evaluation procedure, see Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7262, AP 7262 ; See also: Superintendent/President Evaluation Procedure

[369] Organization and Committee List, 2013-14

[370] Board of Trustees' Goals for 2013-14; CEO Goals for 2013-14

Action Plan for Standard IV.A

The College will continuously improve ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization. The Board of Trustees and Superintendent/President and administrators formulate annual goals and make them known to the College community.

Standard IV.A.1

Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning and implementation

Response to Standard IV.A.1

An environment of empowerment, innovation and excellence exists at the College, and that environment is not only promoted by College leadership, but is evident in College policies and practices:

Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16 and the Statement of Mission, Vision and Values: The initiatives and values expressed in these two College documents reflect the College's commitment to empowerment, innovation and excellence.[371] The Strategic Plan was originally created in 2002, and has been revised over the years; in 2013 the name was changed to Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, to emphasis the interconnectedness of its various initiatives and objectives. The most recent revision was in Spring 2013. Although the document stands alone as a plan, it often is presented with Board of Trustees' goals integrated within it to show the affinity between goals of the Board and those of the College.[372] Except for modifications to the Mission Statement itself, the Statement of Mission, Vision and Values has remained unchanged since 2002. Here are a few excerpts from the Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16 and Statement of Mission, Vision and Values that underscore the College's commitment to empowerment, innovation and excellence:

1. "Palo Verde College is committed to excellence. The College expects quality instruction and services, and applauds the achievement of its students, faculty and staff." (Statement of Mission, Vision and Values)

2. "Palo Verde College supports and encourages creativity and innovation in teaching, course and program development and student learning support services." (Statement of Mission, Vision and Values)

[371] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16; College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9
[372] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16

3. "Create and sustain an institutional environment of transparent collegiality in which College personnel have an understanding of the functions, roles and responsibilities of their colleagues and College organizations and committees which support the Mission of the institution." (Initiative 3: Organizational Effectiveness)

4. "Invite participatory governance in planning and decision-making by encouraging constituent representation on committees, and promoting effective dialog among constituencies and the Board of Trustees." (Initiative 3: Organizational Effectiveness, Objective 3.3)

Institutional Code of Ethics: The Board of Trustees adopted BP 3050 Institutional Code of Ethics in 2008 which applies to all College employees as well as Board members themselves and reflects the College's support for active involvement of all personnel in making recommendations for policies and decisions:

> "Each Trustee, officer and employee of Palo Verde College shall…welcome and encourage the active involvement of students, employees and citizens of the District with respect to reviewing and recommending policy." [373]

Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice: The Board of Trustees adopted BP 2715 in 2008 which applies to the Board members' standards of ethics and practice: "Welcome and encourage the active involvement of students, employees, and citizens of the District with respect to establishing policy." [374]

Job performance evaluation criteria: All College personnel are evaluated periodically as to their job performance. Among the criteria to assess employee performance is the extent to which the employee (in the case of managers and administrators) encourages collegial participation, and (in the case of faculty members) participates in College organizations, committees and activities. Here are examples of questions from administrator and faculty evaluation procedures:[375]

1. "Encourages people to excel." (Administrative/Management/Confidential Evaluation, #1)

2. "Leads and motivates staff to accomplish program goals." (Administrative/Management /Confidential Evaluation, #11)

3. "Is able to motivate people." (Administrative/Management/Confidential Evaluation, #34)

4. "Helps create a climate of support for innovation, new approaches and new ideas." (Administrative /Management Staff Survey, #3)

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[373] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 3050

[374] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715

[375] Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 19 (teaching faculty); Non-teaching Faculty Evaluation Forms, page 4; Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures (Administrator Evaluation Procedure), BP 7262, AP 7262

5. "Participates in activities on campus, including committee and task force involvement, not including Flex Days, Career Day, or Institute Day." (Professional Development Self-Disclosure Statement, Teaching and Non-Teaching Faculty)

Organizational and committee structures that encourage collegial governance: The College recognizes the contributions its diverse personnel make to the success of the school and encourages collegial governance in its various committees and organizations. Committees and organizations whose membership is drawn from various constituencies—faculty, staff, administration, students—are referred to as "mutual agreement" committees. There are eight mutual agreement committees: Budget, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering, Distance Education, Facilities, Student Success, Program Review, Staff Development, and Instructional Technologies.[376] These committees actively solicit the participation and views of its membership in the effective governance of the College.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.1

The College demonstrates the commitment to empowerment, innovation, and excellence and demonstrates its commitment to participative processes. These commitments are evidenced in the College's Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16 and values, in its institutional code of ethics, in the criteria by which it evaluates job performance and in its organizational and committee structure which encourages collegial governance. Administrators, faculty, staff and students need to continue to encourage College-wide participation among their constituencies in decision-making processes.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.1

College leadership—including administrators, faculty, staff and students—will continue efforts to encourage collegial participation of all constituencies in College decisions.

Standard IV.A.2

The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special purpose bodies.

[376] College Committees and Organizations, 2013-14; see also Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510

Response to Standard IV.A.2

The College policy providing for faculty, staff, and student participation in the decision-making process is Board Policy 2510, Collegial Governance: Participation in Local Decision Making, adopted by the Board of Trustees.[377]

The policy states that while the Board of Trustees is the ultimate decision-maker in those areas assigned to it by state and federal laws and regulations, it is committed to ensuring that appropriate members of the College community participate in developing policies and administrative procedures. The following members of the College community shall participate in the decision-making process: Academic Senate, staff, and students.

Additionally, Administrative Procedure 2510 Collegial Governance: Participation in Local Decision Making identifies the College committees and organizations and, for each, describes its charge, membership and manner of reporting.[378]

Collegial governance is also supported in the College's Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16: Initiative 3, Organizational Effectiveness, states: "[The College will] create and sustain an institutional environment of transparent collegiality in which College personnel have an understanding of the functions, roles and responsibilities of their colleagues and College organizations and committees which support the Mission of the institution."[379]

The College is currently compiling a "Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook," which brings together in a single publication the policies, resolutions, and other published resources that describe the College's commitment to and practice of collegial governance.[380] The Handbook is expected to be completed by the end of the Spring Semester 2014.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.2

The College, through its Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, adequately addresses this standard, namely, providing written documentation calling for the participation of faculty, administrators, staff and students in the decision-making process. Collegial governance is identified as an initiative in the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.2

The College will continue its implementation of written policies on collegial governance and principles, and will complete the "Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook".

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[377] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[378] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[379] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Initiative 3, Organizational Effectiveness
[380] Draft—Shared Planning and Decision-Making Handbook

Standard IV.A.2.a

Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

Response to Standard IV.A.2.a

As stated above in the response to Standards IV.A 1 and IV.A 2, all key constituent groups—faculty members, administrators, staff and students—have clearly defined roles in the participative governance process. These roles are spelled out in several College documents and organizations, including:

1. Board Policy 2510, Collegial Governance: Participation in Local Decision Making, which acknowledges the Board of Trustees' responsibility in encouraging the participation of faculty, staff and students in decision-making.[381]

2. Administrative Procedure 2510, Collegial Governance: Participation in Local Decision Making, which describes College committees and organizations and identifies for each its charge, membership and manner of reporting.[382]

3. Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, in which Objective 3.3, Initiative 3 Organizational Effectiveness states: "Invite participatory governance in planning and decision-making by encouraging constituent representation on committees, and promoting effective dialog among constituencies and the Board of Trustees."[383]

4. Board Policy 2510, Collegial Governance: Participation in Local Decision Making, which, among other matters, defines its relationship with the College's Academic Senate: "The Board or its designees will consult collegially with the Academic Senate, as duly constituted with respect to academic and professional matters, as defined by law. Procedures to implement this section are developed collegially with the Academic Senate."

5. CTA is a legally-established faculty association authorized to engage in collective bargaining on work-related matters. The CTA is invited to report on its activities at regularly-scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, and has a vote on all mutual agreement committees, including the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

6. CSEA is a legally-established classified staff association authorized to engage in collective bargaining on work-related matters. The CSEA is invited to report on its

[381] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[382] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2510
[383] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Objective 3.3

activities at regularly-scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, and has a vote on all mutual agreement committees, including the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Collegial governance is implemented not only in the College committees and organizations referenced above, but also in less formal ways through participation in Flex Days, Institute Days, all-staff meetings, Board of Trustees' meetings, and other venues where participation and dialogue are encouraged.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.2.a

The College provides for clearly defined roles of faculty, administrators, staff and students in participative governance. These roles are expressed formally in Board of Trustees' policies and the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, and informally by encouraging campus-wide participation in Flex Days, Institute Days, all-staff meetings and Board of Trustees' meetings.

Action Plan to Standard IV.A.2.a

The College will continue to support clearly defined roles of faculty, administrators, staff and students in participative governance.

Standard IV.A.2.b

The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.

Response to Standard IV.A.2.b

As stated in the response to Standard II.A.2.a, faculty members play a central role in maintaining the academic quality of courses and programs. Part of that role includes identifying desired competency levels and learning outcomes, and assessing student progress towards achieving those outcomes. Here are the various ways this is accomplished:

Division review: Prepared by individual faculty members, each new, revised and updated course outline of record is reviewed by the division in which the course is taught. Courses are reviewed for several characteristics, including need, appropriateness for the college level, rigor of student learning outcomes, currency of the subject, pre-requisites, recommended textbook, teaching methods, evaluation methods, and assigned work. Once approved, the course is recommended for review by the Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, and subsequently by the Board of Trustees, which has a policy in place providing for the Board to "consult collegially" with Academic Senate on academic and related matters.[384]

[384] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510

Course outlines of record are posted to the Curriculum Committee page of the College website, and are available for viewing by the public.

Division faculty members have also taken responsibility for identifying and measuring student learning outcomes at the levels of certificates and degrees. As of Spring Semester 2013, student learning outcomes for courses, degrees, certificates and learning support services, as well as institutional learning outcomes, are posted to the Accreditation page of the College website.[385]

Technical Review Committee and Curriculum Committee: Subsequent to division approval, all course outlines of record, new and revised, are reviewed by the Technical Review Committee before going to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum consists of representatives from each academic and vocational division, a representative from the Associated Student Body, the Librarian, Admissions and Records Director, and Articulation Officer.[386]

The Curriculum Committee is co-chaired by the Interim Vice President of Instruction and Student Services and a faculty member. The Curriculum Committee examines each course for the same qualities the division does, but from a broader, College-wide perspective. The Curriculum Committee may approve a course, approve it with modifications or disapprove it and send it back to the sponsoring division for rework.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.2.b

The College leadership relies on faculty and faculty organizations such as divisions, Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee for recommendations about student learning programs and services. The Board of Trustees ultimately approves all curricula; however, it customarily follows the recommendations of the Academic Senate, through its subcommittee, the Curriculum Committee.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.2.b

The College will continue its current practice in relying on faculty and faculty organizations for recommendations on student learning programs and services.

Standard IV.A.3

Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.

[385] PVC SLOs
[386] College Organizations and Committees, 2013-14

Response to Standard IV.A.3

In addition to the participative governance structures and processes described above in the responses to Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, and IV.A.2.a, the College also provides for open discussion and communication of ideas among constituent groups at meetings of the Board of Trustees.[387] Early in the agenda of every meeting is a segment devoted to reports and discussion from the faculty association (CTA); staff association (CSEA); Academic Senate, and Associated Student Government. A segment of each meeting agenda is also set aside for comments from citizens. These opportunities bring members of the Board of Trustees into discussions with representatives of constituent groups and the general public; they provide the occasions for Board members, constituent groups, and the public to discuss issues openly and for the good of the College.

The openness and accessibility of the Board of Trustees during regularly scheduled Board meetings is described in an array of Board policies and procedures.[388]

The Board of Trustees includes a student representative in addition to the seven members elected at large—five from Blythe, two from Needles.[389]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.3

There are effective governance policies and procedures in place such that the College can live up to its Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 initiative, namely, to "invite participatory governance in planning and decision-making by encouraging constituent representation on committees, and promoting effective dialog among constituencies and the Board of Trustees."[390]

The principles of collegial governance are spelled out in Board of Trustees' policy and the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16 and are put into practice in various College venues: committee and organization meetings; Flex Days, Institute Days, and all-staff meetings; and at meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.3

The College will continue its support of established governance structures, processes, and practices that enable the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students to work together for the good of the College.

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[388] Examples of these policies: Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510, AP 2510 BP 3105, BP 3050, BP 4020 and AP 4020

[389] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2010, BP 2015

[390] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16, Objective 3.3

Standard IV.A.4

The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.

Response to Standard IV.A.4

The College is committed to the ongoing assessment and evaluation of its programs, practices and services to achieve continuous improvement. This commitment is evident in virtually every College activity: program review; job performance evaluations; updating of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16; improving the budget review process; continuous assessment of student learning; evaluation of supportive services; and using data more effectively in decision-making.

The same commitment is evident in the College's efforts to achieve and exceed standards of accreditation by external agencies. In addition to working with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, the College works cooperatively with the accrediting agencies of specific programs, including nursing, administration of justice and alcohol and drug studies.

That the College complies with accreditation standards, policies and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes is evident by a review of College history.

The College has participated diligently in the accreditation process. Since the start of the current accreditation cycle in 2008, the College prepared and submitted Follow-Up Reports in 2008, 2009 and 2010, and received members of the original team for follow-up visits.

The College submitted the Midterm Accreditation Report, March 15, 2011, which was subsequently accepted by the Commission.[391] The College has submitted other reports to the Commission in a timely manner. The College has worked diligently to resolve the visiting team and Commission recommendations resulting from the comprehensive visit.

Between Fall 2011 and Spring 2013, the College was involved in extensive staffing and operational changes as a result of the fiscal problems that were disclosed in mid-2011. During this period, the College prepared, in response to requests from the ACCJC, submitted a series of five Follow-Up and Special Reports.[392] Three reports involved team visits.[393]

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[391] Midterm Accreditation Report, March 15, 2011

[392] Special Report, December 14, 2012; Special Report, March 28, 2012 with visit ; Follow-Up Report, October 24, 2012 with visit; Special Report, April 1, 2013 with visit; Follow-Up Report October 15, 2013 with visit.

[393] Special Report March 28, 2012 resulted in: Special Visit Report May 3, 2012; Special Report October 24, 2012 resulted in: Special Visit Report, November 20, 2012; Special Report April 1, 2013 resulted in visit in: Special Visit Report, May 6, 2013; Follow-Up Report October 15, 2013 resulted in Special Visit Report, November 19, 2013, pending as of the writing of this Self-Evaluation report

The preparation of the present Self-Evaluation report and the arranging for the team visit is part of the College's long history of compliance with accreditation requirements.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.A.4

The College's history demonstrates that it has complied with the procedures, standards, policies and guidelines of external accrediting agencies—the Commission, as well as agencies that accredit specific College programs.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.4

The College will continue its practice of complying with accreditation procedures, standards, policies and guidelines established by external accrediting agencies.

Standard IV.A.5

The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations.

Response to Standard IV.A.5

The College recognizes that effective leadership is closely tied with the College's governance and decision-making structures and processes. Without effective leadership, governance would lack focus and direction. To maintain the effectiveness and integrity of its governance structures and processes, the College regularly evaluates organizational leadership in tandem with governance, and it does so in various ways. These include: the program review process; accreditation process; administrator job performance evaluation; student and staff survey (Noel-Levitz); periodic update policies and processes dealing with collegiality; and periodic update of the Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16.

Program review process: In 2006-07 the College implemented a revised program review system for all programs—instructional and non-instructional and published it as the Program Review Guide. The system provides more rigorous measures of performance, including support of student learning, achievement of prior goals, and consistency with the College mission. The process ensures that College programs are evaluated regularly, that improvements are implemented, that programs improve and that the process is widely discussed.[394]

The program review process is undergoing another revision and is expected to be completed by Spring Semester 2014. To date, the Program Review Committee has revised the frequency of

[394] Program Review Guide, 2009

reports as follows: academic programs every three years; vocational, or CTE, program updates every two years, and CTE comprehensive program reviews every four years.[395]

Accreditation process: Implementing accreditation standards and recommendations—and evaluating progress—is an ongoing College-wide activity. The key governance organization is the Accreditation Team, consisting of approximately twenty representatives from all constituent groups and chaired by the Accreditation Liaison Officer. The Accreditation Liaison Officer is a member of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee to which he reports on accreditation matters.

The document that evaluates the College in relation to accreditation standards and establishes action plans to achieve them is the institutional Self-Evaluation, formerly referred to as the Self-Study. Because the accreditation process touches virtually every function of the College—learning programs and student support services; collegial participation and governance; program and service effectiveness; planning; and leadership—and because it is an ongoing process, it is among the College's most comprehensive and effective evaluation systems. All reports relevant to accreditation—Self-Evaluation report, Follow-Up Reports, Special Report, as well as ACCJC letters and other communications—are made available to College constituents on the College's Accreditation website, one click away from the home page, and are widely discussed in various College venues.[396]

Development of administrator job evaluation procedures: The College developed and implemented a formal administrative and management evaluation procedure in 2005. In order to preserve confidentiality, the results individual evaluations are, of course, not disseminated; however, the process is a matter of public knowledge and includes a survey of faculty members and subordinates regarding each administrator's job performance. The development of administrator job evaluation procedures reflects the College's commitment to ensure effective leadership in the governance process and to invite the participation of faculty and staff in the process.[397]

Student and staff survey (Noel-Levitz): In 2010-11, the College administered the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS), student engagement surveys produced by Noel-Levitz. The College had conducted the surveys three times before—in 2005, 2000 and 1995. Data from the 2010 Noel Levitz survey was summarized and presented to the College community in Spring Semester 2012.[398]

Periodic update of policies dealing with collegiality: The College is in the process of developing a Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook, which, when completed by the end of Spring 2014, will be a compendium of resolutions, policies and other existing College documents which define processes that are current in place but which exist in various locations. The purpose of the

[395] Program Review scheduling matrix
[396] Accreditation website
[397] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 7262, AP 7262
[398] Noel-Levitz 2010

Handbook is to combine existing documents and references on the subject of collegial governance all in one place.[399]

Periodic update of the Integrated Strategic Plan: The College's Strategic Plan, originally written in 2002, has been updated and revised through the collegial governance process frequently over the past 10 years, with the most recent revision in Spring Semester 2013. Key revisions of the document included the re-wording of some goals and initiatives, rearrangement of some of the elements and the addition of an initiative dealing with College finance. The Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16 is frequently presented with Board of Trustees goals incorporated within it.

The College strives to ensure that its leadership and governance processes are effective. Evidence that the College regularly assesses these areas is in the revision and implementation of the program review process; the ongoing accreditation process; implementation of administrator performance evaluations; periodic student and staff Noel-Levitz surveys; annual and periodic update of the Strategic Plan.

Action Plan for Standard IV.A.5

The College will continue its current practices in reviewing and evaluating leadership and governance processes, and where necessary, implementing improvements.

Standard IV.B Board and Administrative Organization

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

Response to Standard IV.B: Board and Administrative Organization

The principal responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are setting, and periodically reviewing, policies governing the College,[400] and selecting, appointing and evaluating the Superintendent/President.[401]

The Board of Trustees delegates to the Superintendent/President the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board requiring administrative action.[402]

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[399] Draft—Shared Planning and Decision-Making Handbook
[400] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC
[401] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2431, AP 2431, BP 2435, AP 2435
[402] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2430, BP 7110

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B

The College recognizes the Board of Trustees as the governing board for the College, responsible for setting policy for the College and for selecting and evaluating the Superintendent/President. These authorities and responsibilities are described in Board of Trustees' Policy and Administrative Procedures.[403]

The College is a single-college district; therefore, the organizational role of the district is identical to that of the College.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B

The College achieves this standard and will continue its current practices in recognizing the authorities and designated responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.

Standard IV.B.1

The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrative officer for the college or the district/system.

Response to Standard IV.B.1

The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services: The Board of Trustees, in carrying out this responsibility, "consults collegially" with the Academic Senate on matters of "academic and professional matters."[404] Academic and professional matters are identified in Title 5 as the eleven policy development and implementation areas that are the responsibility of the Academic Senate.[405]

The practice of collegial consultation is supported in administrative procedure: "In issues related to academic and professional matters, the Board will rely primarily on the Academic Senate."[406]

In carrying out its responsibilities and in the spirit of collegial consultation, the Board of Trustees reviews and adopts all new and modified curricula, certificate programs, degree requirements, and program review procedures and reports.[407]

[403] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2429-PVC
[404] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[405] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[406] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2510
[407] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC

The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing policies to assure the financial stability of the institution: Upon recommendation of the Superintendent/President, the Board of Trustees reviews and approves a wide range of matters relating to the College's financial operations and stability. These matters include, but are not limited to, review and approval of:[408]

1. Accounting systems and procedures that provide an accurate and timely financial picture of the College and its departments
2. Monthly cash flow reports
3. Check warrants
4. Tentative and final College budget
5. Hiring and compensation level of full-time employees
6. Contracts with outside agencies, organizations and individuals, including consultants, contractors, auditors and adjunct faculty (above a specified dollar amount)
7. Major purchases (above a specified dollar amount)
8. Conference and professional development activity requiring out-of-state travel
9. Receipt of grant funds
10. Annual independent audit

In Fall Semester 2012, the Board of Trustees formed the Audit and Finance Committee, largely in response to the financial crisis that occurred in mid-2011. The purpose of the committee is to help Board members be better informed of ongoing financial problems the College is facing and efforts to resolve them. Meetings focus on specific financial issues, including, Board policies and administrative procedures that deal with finance, possible general obligation bond refinancing efforts; LAIF/COP fund account, FTES situation and projects, and other matters.[409]

The Board of Trustees has a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the Superintendent/President: The policies for selecting and evaluating the Superintendent/President in place and fully implemented.[410]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1

[408] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC
[409] Board Audit and Finance Committee, agendas and minutes, on College website
[410] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2431, AP 2431 BP 2435, AP 2435, AP 2429-PVC

The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services; to assure the financial stability of the institution; and to select and evaluate the Superintendent/President are established and in effect in Board Policies and Administrative Procedures.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1

The College meets this standard and will continue its current practices in recognizing the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees in the areas addressed in the standard.

Standard IV.B.1.a

The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.a

The College, through the Board of Trustees and implementation of its policies and administrative procedures, fulfills this standard, as follows:

Independent policy-making body: To ensure that the Board of Trustees acts as an independent body, free of influence or economic interest in its decisions, members are required to file a conflict of interest statement in accordance with the provisions of Government Code of the State of California and restated in policy of the Board of Trustees.[411] Members also must adhere to the provisions of the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which state, in part, that each member will "resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a community college board member to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency apart from the welfare of the Palo Verde Community College District."[412]

Reflects the public interest: Each member of the Board of Trustees is required to adhere to the provisions of the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which state, in part: "I am committed to serve the needs of the citizens of the District…I am responsible to all citizens of the District, and not solely to those who elected me. The authority delegated to me by the voters must be exercised with as much care and concern for the least influential as for the most influential member of the community."[413]

Acts as a whole—Once the Board of Trustees votes, it is required by the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice to act as a whole to uphold that decision: "It is my further responsibility to…base my personal decisions upon all available facts in each situation, vote by

[411] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2710, AP 2710
[412] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715
[413] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715

honest conviction in every case unswayed by partisan bias, and abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board."[414]

Defends the College and protects it from undue influence or pressure: This requirement is part of the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which states, in part, that each member will "resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a community college board member to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency apart from the welfare of the Palo Verde Community College District."[415]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.a

Policies are in place and implemented to ensure the Board of Trustees is an independent policy-making body; acts in the public interest; acts as a whole once it reaches a decision; and advocates for and defends the College and protects it from undue influence or pressure.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.a

The College meets this standard and will continue its current practices in supporting the responsibilities and actions of the Board of Trustees in the areas addressed in the standard.

Standard IV.B.1.b

The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.b

The Board of Trustees adopted the College Mission Statement as part of its policies[416] and strives to uphold its principles with regard to:

The quality, integrity and improvement of student learning programs and services: As stated in the response to Standard IV.B.1, the Board of Trustees, in carrying out this responsibility in a manner consistent with the Mission Statement and the principle of collegial governance, "consults collegially" with the Academic Senate on matters of "academic and professional matters."[417] Academic and professional matters are identified in Title 5 as the eleven policy development and implementation areas that are the responsibility of the Academic Senate.[418] The

[414] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715
[415] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715
[416] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 1200
[417] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[418] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510

practice of collegial consultation is supported in administrative procedure: "In issues related to academic and professional matters, the Board will rely primarily on the Academic Senate."[419]

In carrying out its responsibilities and in the spirit of collegial consultation, the Board of Trustees reviews and adopts all new and modified curricula, certificate programs, degree requirements, and program review procedures and reports.[420]

The resources necessary to support student learning programs and services: The Board of Trustees acts reasonably, upon recommendation of the Superintendent/President, in approving items that support student learning programs and services consistent with the College Mission Statement and Board policy,[421] including, but not limited to:

1. The College annual budget
2. Curricular offerings of the college upon the recommendation of the Superintendent/President after consultation with the Academic Senate
3. New positions, including faculty, counseling, administrative and support positions
4. Receipt of grant funds related to student learning programs and services
5. Purchase of goods and services related to student learning and support services (above a specified dollar amount)
6. Conference and professional development activity requiring out-of-state travel

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.b

The Board of Trustees in its policy-making role adheres to the College Mission Statement by supporting student learning programs and providing them with sufficient resources to perform effectively.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.b

The College meets this standard and will continue its current practices in supporting the Board of Trustees policy-making and resource-allocation roles vis-à-vis student learning programs.

Standard IV.B.1.c

The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

[419] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2510
[420] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510
[421] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC

Response to Standard IV.B.1.c

Educational quality: As stated in the responses to Standard IV.B.1 and IV.B.1.b, above, the Board of Trustees, in carrying out this responsibility, "consults collegially" with the Academic Senate on matters of "academic and professional matters."[422] Academic and professional matters are identified in Title 5 as the eleven policy development and implementation areas that are the responsibility of the Academic Senate.[423] The practice of collegial consultation is supported in administrative procedure: "In issues related to academic and professional matters, the Board will rely primarily on the Academic Senate."[424]

In carrying out its responsibilities and in the spirit of collegial consultation, the Board of Trustees reviews and adopts all new and modified curricula, certificate programs, degree requirements, and program review procedures and reports.[425]

Legal matters: Board policy authorizes the Board of Trustees to retain legal counsel on matters pertaining to the College and Board action and responsibilities.[426] The Board of Trustees is authorized, moreover, to "determine the policies that will govern the operation of the District and to review them periodically [and to] require and consider reports from the Superintendent/President concerning the programs and conditions of the college."[427] The authorization includes all polices and matters coming before the College, including legal matters.

Financial integrity: The Board of Trustees is authorized to "provide for the establishment of the necessary procedures to assure proper accounting of receipts and disbursements of District funds, those of student organizations, and other funds under the supervision of the District [and to] provide for the annual audit of all funds of the District, student organizations, and other funds under the supervision of the District."[428]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.c

The Board of Trustees, reflecting the authority given it by California Education Code, has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.c

The College meets this standard and will continue its current practices in supporting the Board of Trustees' responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

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[422] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510, AP 2510
[423] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510, AP 2510
[424] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510, AP 2510
[425] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2510, AP 2510
[426] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2612-PVC
[427] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC
[428] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC

Standard IV.B.1.d

The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.d

Board bylaws establish the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees for its internal governance. The Board bylaws are incorporated into the Board's overall Policies and Administrative Procedures. Like all Board policies and administrative procedures, the Board bylaws are published on the College website.

Board size: Board policy specifies the size and membership of the Board, which consists of a student representative in addition to the seven members elected at large—five from Blythe, two from Needles. One non-voting student is a member part of the Board.[429]

Duties and responsibilities: The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees reflect the authorities granted by California Education Code and are incorporated in Board Policies and Administrative Procedures.[430]

Structure: The organizational structure of the Board of Trustees as to size, membership, committees and related matters is described in Board policy.[431]

Operating procedures: Operating procedures cover a vast array of issues, including but not limited to vacancies, term limits, closed sessions, quorum and voting, agendas, and decorum are addressed variously in Board Policies and Administrative Procedures.[432]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.d

All College policies are currently being reviewed for revision and update. Revised Board bylaws, which describe the Board's internal governance, have been incorporated into Board policies and are published on the College website. Policies not yet reviewed for revision and update are available in the College library.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.d

The College meets this standard and will continue its current practices in publishing Board bylaws and other policies.

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[429] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2010, BP 2015
[430] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2429-PVC, AP 2429-PVC
[431] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures; BP 2010, BP 2015
[432] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures; see, for example, BP 2110, BP 2130, BP 2315, BP 2330, BP 2340 and BP 2355

Standard IV.B.1.e

The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.e

Board policies and procedures are constantly in the process of being updated and revised in accordance with one of the Board's authorities, namely, "to determine the policies that govern the operation of the District and to review them periodically."[433] Examples of Board of Trustees review of policies is evident in selected Board Agendas and Minutes.[434]

College Self-Evaluation: Standard IV.B.1.e

The College recognizes the importance of regularly reviewing and updating its policies and procedures, demonstrates that it follows this practice.

Action Plan: Standard IV.B.1.e

Continue periodic review and, where needed, update of Board Policies and Procedures

Standard IV.B.1.f

The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.f

New member orientation and Board member development: According to Board policy, the Board of Trustees "is committed to its ongoing development as a board and to a trustee education program."[435] The policy further states that the "Superintendent/President and the Board shall assist each new member-elect to understand the Board's functions, policies and procedures before he or she assumes office. Such assistance shall include, but shall not be limited to, Board study sessions and providing written materials and invitations to attend Board meetings, conferences and other activities that foster trustee education with the Superintendent/President."[436]

To help better acquaint all Board members of their responsibilities the College administration prepared a "Board Professional Development Binder" containing extensive documentation of

[433] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, AP 2429-PVC
[434] Board of Trustees' Agendas and Minutes: March 12, 2013; September 10, 2013, and December 10, 2013
[435] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2740
[436] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2740

College policies and processes. The binder is among the many resources Board members have available to them to help them do their job.[437]

Each year, Board members, especially the Board President and new members, are encouraged to attend training sponsored by the Community College League of California. Last year, the Board President attended, and in January 2014 as many as three members are expected to attend, as well.

The Board Finance and Audit Committee was formed in Spring Semester 2012 to assist Board members in understanding the complex financial problems the College is facing and efforts to resolve them. The committee meets at least twice each semester, but during Fall Semester 2013 met almost monthly.[438]

Board continuity and staggered terms of office: The continuity of the Board is achieved by having staggered terms: "Elections shall be held every two years, in odd-numbered years. Terms of trustees are staggered so that, as nearly as practical, one half of the trustees shall be elected at each trustee election."[439] Provisions for unexpected vacancies are addressed in Board policy.[440]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.f

The Board of Trustees has an effective professional development and new-member orientation. Board members attend training and workshop sessions offered through the Community College League of California and have various resources available to them through the College. Their participation in meetings of the Board Finance and Audit Committee assist them in understanding and working to resolve the financial problems the College faces.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.f

The Board of Trustees has effective programs of new-member orientation and professional development and will maintain these practices. The Board will also follow its policies governing continuity of Board members and the filling of unexpected vacancies.

Standard IV.B.1.g

The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.

[437] Board of Trustees Resources
[438] Board Audit and Finance Committee, agendas and minutes, on the College website
[439] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2100; see also AP 2100
[440] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2110 and AP 2110

Response to Standard IV.B.1.g

Board self-evaluation: The members of the Board of Trustees evaluate their own performance once each year, in accordance with Board policy.[441] Board members develop their own evaluation instruments and review a summary of the results at a Board session scheduled for that purpose. In its most recent self-evaluation, in 2012-13, the Board assessed its performance according to the following guidelines:[442]

1. Policies, Guidance, and Decision-Making
2. Relationships with the Superintendent
3. Board-Employee Relationships
4. Relationships with the Educational Program/Students
5. Board/Community Relationships
6. Business and Financial Management
7. Professional Development of the Board

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.g

The Board of Trustees is committed to the practice of self-assessment as part of the process of improving performance, as is evidenced in Board policy and by the self-evaluation instruments.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.g

The Board of Trustees will continue its annual practice of self-evaluation as part of the overall process of improving performance.

Standard IV.B.1.h

The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.h

Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice: To ensure that the Board of Trustees acts as an independent body, free of influence or economic interest in its decisions, members are required to file a conflict of interest statement in accordance with the provisions of Government Code of the State of California and restated in policy of the Board of Trustees.[443] Members also must adhere to the provisions of the Board-adopted Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which states, in part, that each member will "resist every temptation and outside pressure to use [his or her] position as a community college board member to benefit either

[441] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2745; see also AP 2429-PVC, item #18
[442] Board of Trustees' Self-Evaluation, 2012-13, reviewed by Board, September 23, 2013
[443] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2710 and AP 2710

[himself or herself] or any other individual or agency apart from the welfare of the Palo Verde Community College District."[444]

Board policy contains provisions for dealing with behavior that violates this code—as well as the Conflict of Interest Code[445]—namely, that the violator shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.[446]

Institutional Code of Ethics: The Board's Institutional Code of Ethics is more inclusive than the Code of Ethics/Standard of Practices, in that the Code applies to all College personnel. [447]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.h

The College demands ethical behavior of its Trustees as well as all members of the College community and has provided adequately for it in its policies, as well as in its Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16and Values: "Palo Verde College maintains the highest standards of ethics and integrity. The College consistently demands respect, honesty and fairness in its educational programs, professional interactions and community relations."[448]

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.h

The College will continue its practices in the area of ethics as they apply to the members of the Board of Trustees and to the College community.

Standard IV.B.1.i

The governing board is informed about and involved in the accrediting process.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.i

The Board of Trustees has been kept informed about and involved in the accrediting process throughout the current accreditation cycle, which started in 2008:

The Board of Trustees in October 23, 2012 approved the "Accreditation Resolution on Governance," expressing support for accreditation, specifically the Board's governance role as delineated in Accreditation Standard IV.[449]

Board review of accreditation reports: The Board of Trustees has reviewed and approved every accreditation follow-up report and special report issued by the College in the current accreditation cycle. Additionally, representatives of the Board have met consistently with

[444] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715
[445] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2710
[446] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2715 and BP 3050
[447] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 3050
[448] Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-14; College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, page 9
[449] Accreditation Resolution on Governance

visiting team members during visits to the College. The Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the current Self-Evaluation report January 21, 2014.

Superintendent/President Goals: The Superintendent/President has presented among his 2013-14 goals the aim to "take the lead in demonstrating accreditation expertise, addressing the final accreditation follow up report for the current cycle, providing leadership in the development of the next accreditation self-study, and leading a successful accreditation site visit in 2014."[450]

Monthly reports to the Board of Trustees by the Accreditation Liaison Officer: During the past year, the Accreditation Liaison Officer presented a series of monthly accreditation progress reports to the Board of Trustees. The purpose was to keep the Board informed of progress in resolving accreditation problems and in completing various follow-up reports and the Self-Evaluation report.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.i

The Superintendent/President, Accreditation Liaison Officer and other College personnel have been diligent in keeping the Board of Trustees fully informed of and involved in the accreditation process.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.i

The College will continue its current practices in keeping the Board of Trustees informed of and involved in accreditation processes.

Standard IV.B.1.j

The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and hold him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively. In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

Response to Standard IV.B.1.j

Selecting and evaluating the Superintendent/President: Provisions for the Board of Trustees to select and evaluate the Superintendent/President are described in Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures.[451]

[450] CEO Goals, 2013-14

[451] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2431, AP 2431, BP 2435, AP 2435

"Delegates responsibility and holds accountable…": The Board of Trustees is authorized by Board policy to delegate certain powers and duties to the Superintendent/President and to hold the Superintendent/President responsible for executing such powers and duties even if he, in turn, delegates those powers and duties: "The Board of Trustees delegates to the Superintendent/President the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board requiring action…The Superintendent/President may delegate any powers and duties entrusted to him or her by the Board including the administration of colleges and centers, but will be specifically responsible to the Board for the execution of such delegated powers and duties."[452]

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1.j

The Board of Trustees is consistent in carrying out the responsibilities of selecting and evaluating the Superintendent/President. The Board of Trustees delegates to the Superintendent/President executive responsibility for administering policies adopted by the Board and holds him accountable for carrying out that responsibility even if he delegates any part of that responsibility to others.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.1.j

The College will continue its current practices in supporting the Board of Trustees in their authority to select and evaluate the Superintendent/President, to delegate certain powers and duties to the Superintendent/President and to hold him accountable for the administration of those powers and duties.

Standard IV.B.2

The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

Response to Standard IV.B.2

The President/Superintendent, by virtue of his leadership, management skills, knowledge and experience in college administration and character, is responsible for establishing and maintaining the highest level of quality for the College as an institution of higher learning. His ongoing job responsibilities include:[453]

1. Chief advisor to the Board of Trustees on policy matters and decisions pertaining to the effective management and operation of the College.

2. Chair of the Full Administrative Council, consisting of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Chief Business Officer, Director of Human

[452] Board of Trustees' Policies and Administrative Procedures, BP 2430, AP 2430
[453] Superintendent/President Job Description; see also Program Review, Office of the Superintendent/President

Resources, Director of Information Technology and all program managers, providing managerial support and direction to the College.

3. Chair of the College/Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, consisting of representatives of all constituent organizations—faculty, staff, administrators and students. The Committee is charged with reviewing issues of concern to the College community and assigning those concerns to the appropriate constituent organization to develop recommendations. The Full Administrative Council and College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee are also responsible for reviewing and approving agendas of the Board of Trustees and frequently have joint meetings to accomplish this task.

4. Secretary to the Palo Verde College Foundation, which provides scholarship and other support to the students of the College. In this role, the Superintendent/President provides administrative support and informed guidance to the Foundation, while serving as its liaison with the Board of Trustees and the College.

5. Acts as the key representative of the College in community organizations and functions.

6. Serves as the representative of the College for appropriate state, regional and federal agencies and organizations.

7. Supervisor of the office of the Superintendent/President, which consists of an administrative staff, the Administrative Assistant and the Executive Secretary. Four administrators report directly to the Superintendent/President:

    a. Vice President of Instruction and Student Services
    b. Chief Business Officer
    c. Director of Human Resources
    d. Director of Information Technology

8. Plans and presides at Faculty-Staff meetings, monthly gatherings of all faculty, staff and administrators for a one-hour meeting devoted to discussion to topics of interest and concern to the College community, such as the budget, accreditation progress, and reports from College departments and organizations.

The Superintendent/President also provides leadership to the College by ensuring Board policies are reviewed and updated to maintain consistency with the College's mission and to maintain compliance with state and federal policies and standards in higher education. He coordinates with College constituencies to provide for collegial governance of the College, works cooperatively with constituent organizations in evaluating the effectiveness of the College's

processes and structures and provides leadership to the College in meeting or exceeding standards of accreditation.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2

The Superintendent/President is the key leader of the College and its chief representative. He is given the authority by the Board of Trustees to administer policies in its behalf, and as such is entrusted with upholding the mission and ensuring the educational quality of the College. He promotes collegial participation, and encourages his immediate subordinates to do the same.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2

The College will continue its current practices in supporting the Superintendent/President as the key leader of the College, whose responsibilities include upholding the College mission, administering policies on behalf of the Board of Trustee, and ensuring the quality of the College and its programs and services.

Standard IV.B.2.a

The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.

Response to Standard IV.B.2.a

The Superintendent/President's immediate subordinates responsible for managing the operations of the college are the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Chief Business Officer, Director of Human Resources, and the Director of Information Technology, as presented in the Organization of Palo Verde College section earlier in this report.

Through these key persons, the Superintendent/President oversees the operations of the College. The administrative structure is simple but effective, and demonstrates the Superintendent/President's skills in delegating authority. He invests in each of his subordinates the authority and resources to carry out his or her responsibilities effectively:

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2.a

The Superintendent/President has assembled a team of administrators who know their jobs and who understand the duties and responsibilities with which the Superintendent/President has charged them. The Superintendent/President is an effective delegator. He invests his subordinates with sufficient authority and resources to administer College programs and services effectively.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2.a

The Superintendent/President has assembled an effective management team and delegates to the team members appropriately in a manner that meets this standard.

Standard IV.B.2.b

The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:

Establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities;

Ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions;

Ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and

Establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts

Response to Standard IV.B.2.b

The Superintendent/President guides the College in a process of ongoing improvement of its teaching and learning environment, as follows:

1. Establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities: The Superintendent/President sets a positive tone encouraging collegial participation in College policy discussions and decisions in support of the Mission, namely, to support "an exemplary learning environment with high quality educational programs and services."[454] He recognizes that sustaining an exemplary learning environment requires that all College constituents are empowered to participate collegially in formulating College policies.

   The Superintendent/President has established collegial processes in various venues: as advisor to the Board of Trustees on academic matters; as chair of the College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Full Administrative Council; as chair of all-staff meetings; and in his delegation of authority to his management team.

   The goals of the Superintendent/President call for efforts to "continue to work in a transparent and collegial decision-making process consistent with AB1725." (Goal 3)[455]

[454] College Catalog, 2013-14, Statement of Mission, Vision and Values, page 9
[455] CEO Goals, 2013-14

2. Ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions: The Superintendent/President supports the institutional research function, which is carried out by a faculty member who also serves and the Accreditation Liaison Officer. The institutional researcher, under the direction of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Support Services, is concentrating on working with faculty members and other College staff in identifying and evaluating student learning outcomes.

3. Ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes: The Superintendent/President ensures through his executive actions and powers of delegation that educational planning is integrated with resource planning, whether they are financial, human or facilities resources.

   Budget planning affecting learning programs is developed by the divisions and departments and are presented to the Budget Committee each year. The Budget Committee is chaired by the Chief Business Officer acting under the authority of the Superintendent/President. The budget process is integrated with program review and strategic planning, ensuring that budget resources are appropriately matched to funding needs that support student learning.[456]

   As for human resources, the Superintendent/President recognizes that staff diversity is an important asset for the College and actively encourages it in faculty and staff recruitment and selection. He also places high value in rigorous job performance evaluations that recognize superior performance and that provide for remediation.

   As for facilities resources, the Superintendent/President ensures through the Chief Business Officer that facilities are clean, in good repair and suitable to support student learning.

4. Establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts: The President/Superintendent actively promotes regular and comprehensive evaluations of College policies and practices, as evidenced by his involvement in the update of the Integrated Strategic Plan 2013-16, ongoing Board policy updates and revisions, the revision of the Management Handbook[457] and the development of the Shared Planning and Decision Making Handbook.[458] He supports policies and programs of continuous improvement in all programs and services, evidenced by his strong advocacy of program review, institutional research, and the accreditation process.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2.b

The Superintendent/President demonstrates strong commitment and support of collegial participation, research as the basis for planning and decision-making, the integration of

[456] Integrated Budget, Program Review and Strategic Planning Flow Chart, and Narrative
[457] The Management Handbook is currently being revised by the Superintendent/President and management staff.
[458] Draft—Shared Planning and Decision-Making Handbook

educational planning with resource planning, and the practice of ongoing evaluation of programs and services to achieve continuous improvement.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2.b

The Superintendent/President, by virtue of his active support of collegial governance, research, integrating educational planning with resource planning, and ongoing evaluation as the basis for making improvements, enables the College to achieve this standard. .

Standard IV.B.2.c

The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.

Response to Standard IV.B.2.c

The Superintendent/President assures the implementation statutes, regulations and Board policies several ways:

1. By staying informed of changes and new statewide developments that have an impact on the College: As a participant in statewide professional associations and organizations, including the Community College League of California, the Superintendent/President stays informed of new and anticipated regulatory and policy developments that might affect the College. He relays back to the Board of Trustees and to College personnel news of such developments and what impact they might have on the College.

2. By maintaining ongoing contact with faculty and staff: The Superintendent/President is highly accessible to the Board, faculty, staff and administration at various types of meeting venues, formal and informal. Such venues include formal meetings of the Board of Trustees, College Council/Strategic Planning Steering Committee, all-staff and Flex and Institute Days; they may also include informal meetings over lunch in the Den, while walking to a meeting or a class, or in an email exchange. These venues provide opportunities for the Superintendent/President to discuss candidly matters facing the College and to ensure that College processes are consistent with its Mission and policies.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2.c

The Superintendent/President, by virtue of his managerial practices and style, assures the implementation of statewide and College policies and regulations. He is highly accessible to members of the Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, staff and students. He keeps current with statewide rules and policies that might have impact on the College, and he conveys these observations to the Board of Trustees and College personnel. He participates in various kinds of

meeting venues, formal and informal, that enable him to assure the College is consistent with its mission and policies.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2.c

The College, through the Superintendent/President, follows practices that assure the implementation of policies and regulations required of the College by the Board of Trustees and by statewide policies and regulations. His practices ensure that the College meets this standard.

Standard IV.B.2.d

The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.

Response to Standard IV.B.2.d

The Superintendent/President controls the budget and expenditures as follows:

1. Because the Superintendent/President is relatively new to the College, having started in July 2013, he has not yet worked through a full, annual budget cycle. Nonetheless, he reviews monthly expenditures with the Chief Business Officer to ensure they are within budget limits, and he regularly reviews FTES projections with the Chief Business Officer and Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.

2. Periodically throughout the month, and prior to each Board meeting, the Superintendent/President reviews the cash flow statement and other budget reports produced by the office of Chief Business Officer. He notes any expenditure that appears to be out of line and reviews fund balances to make sure they are in compliance with state requirements and College budget policy.

3. During contract negotiations with the College's two associations, CSEA and CTA, the Superintendent/President, as chief negotiator for the College, reviews with the Chief Business Officer and Vice President of Instruction and Student Services all contract items that have potential financial impact on the College. He takes into account all other ongoing and anticipated financial obligations of the College, as well as its projected revenue, prior to committing to further contract obligations.

4. All purchase orders, travel requests, contracts, and other agreements involving expenditures must receive approval by the Superintendent/President.

5. The Superintendent/President reviews the independent auditor's annual report with the Chief Business Officer, and where applicable, other administrators and staff. He reviews auditor's recommendations and ensures, through the Chief Business Officer, that all recommendations are implemented to the satisfaction of the auditor.

6. The Superintendent/President is mindful of the tremendous debt the College is carrying and the requirement to repay it. He is currently exploring, with Board support, the feasibility of issuing general obligation bonds to help in the refinancing of the debt, an opportunity that will occur in 2016.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2.d

The Superintendent/President does an effective job in controlling the budget and expenditures. He confers regularly with the Chief Business Officer on budget matters and reviews monthly cash flow and other reports. He represents the College in contract negotiations and is responsible all contract items that have potential financial impact on the College. He approves purchase orders, travel requests and other monetary agreements. He reviews the auditor's annual report and ensures that the College implements the auditor's recommendations.

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2.d

The Superintendent/President's effective control of the budget and expenditures enables the College to meet this standard

Standard IV.B.2.e

The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

Response to Standard IV.B.2.e

The Superintendent/President is active in the Blythe community formally and informally. He is an active member of the Blythe Rotary Club and participates in many community events. Informally, the Superintendent/President works closely with the administration of the Palo Verde Unified School District and the City of Blythe, as well as with elected officials from both. Moreover, the Superintendent/President is widely known and involved with community affairs and maintains close ties with the local newspaper.

The Superintendent/President is making efforts to participate in the Needles community, home to the College's Needles Center. He has participated in various community events, including service club meetings. The Superintendent/President, along with the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, maintains ongoing contact with the Director of the Needles Center to ensure the Needles Center receives the benefits of all the College's educational and student support services.

College Self-Evaluation of Standard IV.B.2.e

The Superintendent/President is active in both Blythe and Needles communities, and is an effective ambassador for the College in each community

Action Plan for Standard IV.B.2

The Superintendent/President will continue his work in the communities of Blythe and Needles.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	
A team agendas	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/A-Team%20agendas.pdf
A team on LSC and ESL	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/A-Team%20LSC%20and%20ESL%20Oct.%2011,%202013.pdf
Academic Senate Resolution on Central Role	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Academic%20Senate%20Resolution%20recognizing%20central%20role%20of%20faculy.pdf
Academic Senate Resolution on Prof Conduct	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Academic%20Senate%20Resolution%20on%20Professional%20and%20Collegial%20Conduct.pdf
Advisory Committees	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Advisory%20Committees%202013-14.pdf
Alignment of Institutional Outcomes	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Alignment%20of%20Institutional%20Outcomes%20with%20Program%20OutcomesHighlighted.pdf
Analysis of ESL Enroll History	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Analysis%20of%20ESL%20Enroll%20History.pdf
Analysis of ESL vs. MUS	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Analysis%20of%20ESL%20vs.%20MUS%20Enrollment.pdf
Analysis of MUS instructor	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Analysis%20of%20Music%20Instructor.pdf
Basic Skills ENG success compared	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Basic%20Skills%20ENG%20success%20rate%20compared.pdf
Blythe economic profile	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Blythe%20economic%20profile.pdf
Board performance goals 2013-14	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Board%20Performance%20Goals%202013-14.pdf
Board performance goals 2012-13	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Board%20Performance%20Goals%202012-13.pdf
Board Policies and Administrative Procedures	http://www.paloverde.edu/board/policies-procedures.aspx
Board professional development binder	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Board%20Professional%20Dev%20binder.pdf
Board self-evaluation	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Board%20Self%20Evaluation%20Form%202012-13%20Master.pdf
Calculating Class Hours	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Calculating%20Class%20Hours.pdf
Chief Exec goals 2013-14, all staff mtg	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/CEO%20Goals-All%20Staff%2011-19-13.pdf

Chief Exec goals 2013-14, official	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/CEO%20Goals%20for%202013-14-Official.pdf
College Catalog, 2013-14	http://www.paloverde.edu/current-students/pdf/catalog/13-14/13-14catalog.pdf
COP Refinance	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/COP%20Refinancing%20Presentation%20T%20Schaefer.pdf
Course outline template	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Course%20Outline%20Template%2011-8-12.pdf
Course retention and success	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/CourseRetention-SuccessSumm-2010-2013.pdf
CSEA District agreement evaluations	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/CSEA-District%20Agreement%20Evaluation%20Process.pdf
CTA district MOU	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/CTA-District%20MOU%20May%2030,%202013.pdf
Degrees and certificates awarded	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Degrees%20and%20Certificates%20Awarded%202010-2014.pdf
Degrees and certificates sponsoring div	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Degrees%20and%20Certs-Sponsoring%20Div%20Updated%20MARCH%206,%20,2013.pdf
Draft budget request	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Draft%20Budget%20Request%20Sheet.pdf
Draft budget request enhancements	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Draft%20Budget%20Request%20Sheet-Enhancements%20request.pdf
Educ and facilities Master Plan	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Educ%20and%20Fac%20MP.pdf
Enroll by age, gender ethnicity	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Enrollments%20by%20age,gender,ethnicity.pdf
Enroll by instruct location	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Enrollment%20by%20Instructional%20Location%202009-2013.pdf
Enroll fee waiver	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Enrollment%20Fee%20Waiver%20MOUs.pdf
Enroll status gender	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Enrollment%20Status-Gender%20and%20Ethnicity-2010-13.pdf
Faculty evaluation forms	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Faculty%20Evaluation%20forms%20revised%209-2013.pdf
Faculty staff directory	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Faculty-Staff%20Directory%2012.19.13.pdf
Flex days	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Flex%20Days-08-13.pdf
Guidelines for SLO assessments	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Guidelines%20for%20Completing%20Assessments.pdf

Guidelines for ISAs	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Guidelines%20for%20ISAs.pdf
HR staff development process	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/HR-Staff%20Development%20Process%202010%202011%202012.pdf
HR staff utilization	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/HR-Utilization%202010%202011%202012.pdf
Institute Days	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Institute%20Days-08-13.pdf
Integrated flow chart	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Integrated%20Flow%20ChartFINAL.pdf
Integrated flow chart narrative	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Integrated%20Flow%20Chart%20Narrative.pdf
Integrated Strategic Plan	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Integrated%20Strategic%20Plan%202013-16%20FINAL.pdf
Integrated Strategic Plan, 2013-16	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Integrated%20Strategic%20Plan%202013-16%20FINAL.pdf
Internal operational procedures	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Internal%20Operational%20Procedures%20for%20Incarcerated%20Individuals%20with%20State%20Prison%20Participation.pdf
Job announcements	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Job%20announcements.pdf
Library workshops Ebsco	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Library%20workshop-Ebsco%20Library%20database%20assignment.pdf
Library workshops GES	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/LIbrary%20workshop-GES%20Test.pdf
Master Agreement IEC	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Master%20Agreement%20Dist-IEC%2012-12-12.pdf
Needles demographics	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Needles_BAO_2013_pdf.pdf
Needles site	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/needles%20site.pdf
Noel Levitz 2010-11	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Noel-Levitz%202010-11.pdf
NT faculty evaluations	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/NT%20Faculty%20Evaluations%2011-04-10%20revised%2009-2013.pdf
Organization and committee list	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Organization%20and%20Committee%20List%2010.3.2013.pdf
Pilot program review snapshot	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Pilot%20Program%20Review%20Annual%20Snapshot.pdf
Problem areas for accreditation	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Problem%20Areas%20for%20Accreditation%20with%20Comments.pdf

Program review guide original	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Program%20Review%20Guide%20-%20Original.pdf
Program review schedule matrix	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Program%20Review%20Schedule%20Matrix.pdf
Program review workshops	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Program%20Review%20Workshops.pdf
Program SLOs report	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Program%20SLOs%20Report%20After%20Flex%20Day%20Feb%201-updated%20MARCH%206,%202013.pdf
PVC Annual 311	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/PVC%20Annual%20311%20Chancellor's%20Office.pdf
PVC Audit 2013	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/PVC%20audit%202013.pdf
PVC audits 2009-12	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/PVC%20audits%202009-2012.pdf
PVC Board institutional goals	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/PVC%20BOARD%20INSTITUTIONAL%20GOALS%20FOR%202012.pdf
PVC Matriculation plan	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/PVC%20Matriculation%20Plan%202010.pdf
Region 9 grid	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Region%209%20Grid%202012-2013.pdf
Shared planning and decision making	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Shared%20Planning%20and%20Decision%20Making%20Handbook%20Draft.pdf
SLO assessment plan	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/SLO%20Assessment%20Plan%20Palo%20Verde.pdf
SLO workshop flex day	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/SLO%20WorkshopFlexDayApril19.pdf
Staff development process	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/STAFF%20DEVELOPMENT%20PROCESS%202010-2012.pdf
Sup-Pres evaluation	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Supt-Pres%20Evalform.2010%202011.pdf
Sup-Pres job description	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Supt-Pres%20Job%20Description%2005-11-12.pdf
Syllabi samples	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Syllabi-samples.pdf
Title III virtual campus	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Title%20III%20Grant%20Virtual%20Campus-Summary.pdf
Transfer career day	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Transfer-Career%20Day%20Spring%202013.pdf
Vision mission values	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Vision,%20Mission,%20Values.pdf

Visitation report May 6, 2013	http://www.paloverde.edu/accreditation/pdf/Visitation%20Team%20Report%20May%206,%202013.pdf