

## FOCUSED MIDTERM REPORT

Palo Verde Community College  
One College Drive  
Blythe, California 92225

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Palo Verde  
Community College on May 11, 2004

Dr. D. Roe Darnell, Team Chair  
Dr. Judith Endeman, ACCJC Commissioner

May 12, 2004

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

FROM: D. Roe Darnell, Team Chair

SUBJECT: Report of Focused Midterm Visit Report, Palo Verde Community College,  
May 11, 2004

**Introduction:**

At its meeting on June 9-11, 2002 the Commission acted to require of Palo Verde Community College a Focused Midterm Report and visit. The visiting team, Dr. D. Roe Darnell and Dr. Judith Endeman, conducted the site visit to Palo Verde Community College on May 12, 2004. The purpose of the team visit was to validate the Focused Midterm Report prepared by the college and to determine if sustained, continuous, and positive movement toward institutional good practice had occurred.

In general, the team found that the college had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with individuals and groups agreed upon earlier with the team chair and by providing materials to the team before the visit. Over the course of the day, the team met with the President of the college, the Academic Senate President, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Enrollment Management Committee, the Vice Presidents of Instruction and Student Services, the Board and members of the staff, faculty and students.

The Focused Midterm Report prepared by the college Strategic Planning Committee was succinct, well organized, and specific to the three items identified in the Commission's June, 2002 letter. Wide college participation in the report preparation was evident. The District Board, continuing to recognize its role as a single unit guiding policy, reviewed the report prior to its final adoption.

The Focused Midterm Report and visit were expected to document improvement in the following areas:

- ? That the institutional Planning Committee immediately redefine the institutional planning process to ensure the use of comprehensive, reliable, and relevant data for setting strategic priorities, for defining the intended outcomes of planning efforts, and for linking other college plans. Planning developments should be shared with the college and the community at large. (Standards 3A.1, 3A.3, 3B.1, 3B.2, 3B.33C.1, 3C.2, 3C.4)
- ? That the college develop and implement an effective enrollment management plan based on current and projected data about the college service area and students served. The plan should address declining and/or increasing student enrollments, changing demographics, current instructional needs of the community and excessive cancellation of the printed course offerings in the schedule of classes.

- (Standards 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3A.1, 3B.1, 4D.1, 4D.5, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.10, 6.6, 7B.2, 9A.2, 10C.1)
- ? The qualifications of faculty, especially new faculty, should be adequate to meet the needs of students and programs. (Standards 7A.111, 7A.2, 7A.3)

### **College Responses to the Team Recommendations:**

**1. That the institutional Planning Committee immediately redefine the institutional planning process to ensure the use of comprehensive, reliable, and relevant data for setting strategic priorities, for defining the intended outcomes of planning efforts, and for linking other college plans. Planning developments should be shared with the college and the community at large. (Standards 3A.1, 3A.3, 3B.1, 3B.2, 3B.33C.1, 3C.2, 3C.4)**

Review of the Focused Midterm Report, Strategic Planning Committee minutes, and discussions with committee members show evidence of a stronger involvement of all college groups in planning and a strong feeling on involvement. The linking of other college plans is in progress. In some cases, plans, such as the Enrollment Management Plans, are developed through committees reporting directly to the Strategic Planning Committee. In other cases plans, such as Program Review, the final report is reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee for congruence with the college plan. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee recognize the need to improve the integration of all college plans in the broader planning effort.

In the college's planning efforts, there is a steady movement from a culture of intuition to a culture of evidence. This is evidenced by the use of student need survey information in the decision to hire a new reading instructor and in the review of student education plans in planning course schedules. The Strategic Planning Committee has been hampered in its effort to develop comprehensive data by the resignation of the college researcher. A new researcher has been appointed and is focusing on the development of data.

The college is effectively communicating its Plan to the college community and to the public community. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee make regular and frequent reports to their constituents and serve as conduits for information to the Strategic Planning Committee. College personnel frequently speak to public groups regarding college plans and a college web page focusing on the Strategic Plan is accessible to the public.

### **Conclusion:**

The college is making progress in the area. There is an increase in involvement in all phases of the planning process and communication of the plan. The ability of the college to effectively identify and evaluate outcomes is negatively impacted by the lack of data and the integration of existing data. Improvement is needed in this area.

**2. That the college develop and implement an effective enrollment management plan based on current and projected data about the college service area and students served. The plan should address declining and/or increasing student enrollments, changing demographics, current instructional needs of the community and excessive cancellation of the printed course offerings in the schedule of classes. (Standards 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3A.1, 3B.1, 4D.1, 4D.5, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.10, 6.6, 7B.2, 9A.2, 10C.1)**

The college has developed an enrollment management plan and is in the process of implementation. As a result, they have effectively moved from designing course schedules based on faculty and staff wishes to schedules based on student enrollment needs. The number of classes listed in the published schedule but canceled because of low enrollment has been significantly reduced. The addition of an advising module to the college management information system is planned for the coming year. This is consistent with the Enrollment Management Plan and will allow the college to review student education plans electronically and determine scheduling needs as a result.

The college has identified an increase in student success- defined by graduation, program completion, transfer and employment rates- as an enrollment management goal. The Enrollment Management Committee stated that definition and measurement of this goal is hindered by a combination of recent employee turnover in student services and by shortcomings in the availability of relevant data and support in the area of institutional research.

**Conclusion:**

The college has substantially completed the planning process inherent to this recommendation and is in the implementation stage. Stronger support in data analysis is needed to strengthen implementation and evaluate its effectiveness.

**3. The qualifications of faculty, especially new faculty, should be adequate to meet the needs of students and programs. (Standards 7A.111, 7A.2, 7A.3)**

College administration, working with representatives of the Academic Senate, initiated a process whereby the qualifications of fulltime and adjunct faculty were reviewed according to defined minimum qualifications. In this review, the Academic Senate assumed primary responsibility. As a result, the qualifications of faculty are well documented and correspond to faculty course assignments.

The college has also adopted and follows procedures relating to new faculty hires and assignments. This procedure includes the direct involvement of the Vice President of Instruction and the Academic Senate prior to faculty assignment to classes. As reported by the Academic Senate President the procedure is closely followed.

**Conclusion:**

The college has substantially responded to this recommendation.