

EVALUATION REPORT

OXNARD COLLEGE

400 South Rose Avenue
Oxnard, California 93033

A Confidential Report Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Oxnard College from October 19 through October 21, 2004

Michael T. Rota, Chair

OXNARD COLLEGE

Team Roster

October 19-21, 2004

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SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION: Oxnard College

DATE OF THE VISIT: October 19-21, 2004

TEAM CHAIR: Michael T. Rota
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Oxnard College is one of three colleges that comprise the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD). The Oxnard College service area includes the cities of Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and Camarillo and the incorporated areas of Channel Islands and El Rio. The number of college-age residents in Oxnard College's service area represents one third of Ventura County's entire college-age population.

A nine-member accreditation team visited Oxnard College in mid October for the purpose of reaffirming the institution's accreditation. The College prepared well for the visit and was very accommodating to the requirements of the Team. During the visit, the Team had the opportunity to meet with all of the individuals who play key leadership roles in the College and with the District chancellor, lead staff, and board members. The supporting materials made available in the workroom assigned to the Team were well organized and referenced to the Oxnard College Self Study Report.

Oxnard College's Self Study follows models of similar documents developed under the prior ACCJC Standards. Prior recommendations and eligibility requirements are addressed. Also included is an organizational "map" explaining the relationship of Oxnard College within the Ventura County Community College District. General information regarding college history, mission, descriptions of students served, educational programs, and delivery systems provides the reader with a context in which the Self Study was developed.

There are several themes that emerged in the Self Study. The College has not yet developed a culture of research, and it does not yet seem aware that it needs to discover the relationships between departments, disciplines, and different college entities to function more efficiently. There exists a spirit of autonomy within the College and the District that creates duplication of effort, loss of resources, and an inability to sustain a dialogue within the College community and the district. This spirit of autonomy appears to interfere with the creation of an integrated planning process. The Self Study speaks to this lack of integrated planning and budget process, but does not acknowledge the impact this lack of integration has on effective resource allocation and institutional effectiveness.

The Self Study reflects a campus that is still struggling to create an integrated planning and budget process. It demonstrates some efforts to achieve this; however, because there

is a lack of collaboration in the campus culture, achieving an integrated process is difficult. According to the Self Study, Oxnard College is working toward adapting to a culture of research based planning and assessment. The Self Study indicates that they have not yet achieved this. While they do have an institutional researcher, the campus community does not seem to reflect or to dialogue on what data/research would be useful to begin analyzing problems. For example, the Self Study mentions an enrollment drop, yet no research has been done to discover the causes.

Recommendations for Oxnard College

The ACCJC in its Guide to Evaluating Institutions (August 2004) identified a number of themes that thread throughout the Standards. The visiting Team found these themes to be a helpful matrix to cluster and consolidate recommendations and reduce the redundancy the Team found inherent in a Standards-based series of recommendations.

Recommendation Related to the Theme Institutional Commitments

1. The Team recommends that the College conduct a survey of its community to determine the community's educational needs and interests. The College should then review its mission statement and related declarations in the context of the survey results and ensure that the institution's mission statement is accurate, unambiguous, and effectively integrated into campus planning processes (Std. I.A.). Following the community survey and analysis and mission statement revision, the College should review and revise as necessary its major planning documents and processes to ensure incorporation of mission statement concepts and principles (Std. I.A.4.).

Recommendations Related to the Theme Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

2. The Team recommends the College assure the development of a set of policies and practices that describe and link institutional analysis, decision making, and resource allocation processes within a collegial governance framework. These policies and practices should guide the development of plans which should include timelines, responsible parties, and a description of how policies and practices will be communicated to all constituent groups of the college. (Std. II.B.4; Std. III.A.6; B.2.b; C.2; D.1.a.)
3. The Team recommends that the College leadership and governance committees assure there be a focus on obtaining relevant and timely information to understand its community needs, its enrollment patterns, and the needs of the students it serves. Following analysis of the information, the College should develop a comprehensive but realistic multi-year college plan for program development, managing enrollment, determining what students are learning, and regularly identifying where appropriate changes are needed. (Std. IV.A.2.b, 3). A comprehensive planning process for the college should include:

- Timely completion of unit plans that lead to meaningful review and adoption by the Planning and Consultation Council and other campus planning and resource allocation groups (Std. I. B.2,3,5,6,7);
- The implementation of a process of regular evaluation of the college physical resources, including buildings, equipment, and other critical technology resources. The various college entities working on physical resources planning should collaborate in the assessment and utilization of campus facilities (Std. III. B.2);
- A technology plan for the future growth, support, and maintenance and repair of critical technology resources; the training of personnel; and a policy and practice that incorporates consideration of technology needs into all college planning processes (Std. III. C; from 1999);
- A formal link between the planning processes and the resource planning, acquisition, and allocation processes; and
- Regular evaluation of all these process and links (Std. III. A.6; B.2.b; C.2; D.1.a. from 1993 and 1999).

Recommendation Related to the Theme Student Learning Outcomes

4. The Team recommends that Oxnard College develop policies and procedures that establish a clear designation of responsibility for the implementation of a plan, to ensure the creation and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level (Std. II.A.2.a; A.2.e). The procedures should include a process that ensures all courses and their course outlines of record are meeting the five-year course review policy of the College (Std. II.A.6).

Recommendation Related to the Theme Dialogue

5. The Team recommends that the College leadership (including administrative, faculty senate, classified senate, and student leadership), as part of its evaluation of the recently created planning processes and as a reflection of the college's commitment to improving institutional effectiveness, engage administrators, faculty, classified staff, district leaders and the board in a more substantial and comprehensive dialogue (Std. I. B.1, 3, 4, 7; Std. II. A.1.c; A.2.e, f) about how to implement the elements of:
 - Program review and other data reflecting educational effectiveness;
 - Student learning outcomes and assessment and evaluation processes that allow the faculty and those responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes to demonstrate their effectiveness in facilitating students' achievement of those learning outcomes;
 - Effective collegial governance and leadership that is accountable for achieving expected outcomes; and
 - A process that results in the communication of the results of institutional assessment, evaluation, and the College community's commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Recommendation Related to the Theme Institutional Integrity

6. The Team recommends that the college assure through its policies, practices, and publications:
 - An appropriate understanding of, and concern for, its communication with the public (Std. II.A.3);
 - Issues of equity and diversity (Std. III.A.4);
 - Appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel by assessing the professional development needs of its employees, and plan and implement professional development activities to meet those needs (Standard III.A.5.a; A.5.b.);
 - Regular assessment of its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission (Std. III.A.4.a; A.4.b.); and
 - Integration of its human resources planning with institutional planning; and
 - Systematic assessment of the effective use of human resources and use the results of the assessment as the basis for institutional improvement (Std. III.A.6).

Recommendations Related to the Ventura County Community College District Practices

Oxnard College is a part of the three college Ventura County Community College District. As part of the comprehensive visit, a team composed of the visiting team chairs to the three colleges and selected college visiting team members dealing with leadership, governance and resource issues played the role of a visiting team to the district. The Team met with members of the District governing board, the District chancellor, and staff members in the chancellor's office. The following recommendations were jointly developed by the participants in that process:

7. The Team recommends that the District develop written personnel procedures that are equitable and consistently administered to ensure fairness in all employment practices. This should include a clearly defined and well-articulated policy for the selection and evaluation of the presidents of the Colleges. (Std. III.A.3.a and IV.B.1.j)
8. The Team recommends that the District, in cooperation with the Colleges, formulate a districtwide resource allocation model, which will be flexible enough to guide increases or reductions in budget allocations, which will follow goals for districtwide student learning outcomes, and which will ensure accountability to operate within agreed upon allocations. (Std. III.D.1.a and III.D.1.c)
9. The Team recommends that the District develop a funding plan for the unfunded retiree medical liability following the recommendations contained in the actuarial study completed in October 2004. (Std. III.D.1.c)
10. The Team recommends that the District honor its policy on shared decision-making by implementing operational and evaluative procedures that delineate the

roles and responsibilities of the various college/district constituencies that participate in collegial governance. (Std. IV.A.2.a and IV.A.3)

11. The Team recommends that the Board of Trustees implement a process to regularly evaluate and revise District policies, and implement and participate in an on-going process for professional development and orientation for new Board members, which includes a review of Board roles and responsibilities. (Std. IV.B.1.e and IV.B.1.f)
12. The Team recommends that the District assume leadership for a districtwide, collaboratively developed strategic plan that is informed by District research and coordinated with College planning. (Std. IV.B.3)
13. The Team recommends that the Chancellor establish and implement a process for open communication with the Colleges by providing information and ensuring staff understanding of Board direction and expectations. Further, the District should develop a more effective process for ensuring accountability in achieving standards of educational excellence, fiscal integrity, and operational efficiency within a culture of evidence. (Std. IV.B.3.a-f)

ACCREDITATION EVALUATION REPORT FOR

OXNARD COLLEGE

October 19-21, 2004

INTRODUCTION

Oxnard College is one of three colleges that comprise the Ventura County Community College District. The Oxnard College service area includes the cities of Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and Camarillo and the incorporated areas of Channel Islands and El Rio. The number of college-age residents in Oxnard College's service area represents one third of Ventura County's entire college-age population.

What is now Oxnard College was started in 1969 as an education center under the direction of Ventura College. In 1974, the Camarillo Center was opened under the auspices of Moorpark College, and in the same year, the Ventura County Community College District Board approved the establishment of Oxnard College. Classes at Oxnard College began in the summer of 1975, utilizing the two established education centers in Oxnard and Camarillo. The College moved to its current 118-acre site in 1979 with the completion of two permanent buildings: the liberal arts building housing 20 classrooms plus science and business laboratories and faculty office wings, and a library/learning resources center consisting of the College library, learning center, general classrooms, and administrative and student services offices.

By mid fall 1975, Oxnard College had more than 4,400 students enrolled, and during the spring semester, that number was even higher. Over the next twenty years the College grew slowly and steadily. In the five years from 1998 to 2002, Oxnard College grew by over 1,700 students or more than 25 percent to nearly 8,600; however, starting in 2003, the College experienced a significant drop in student enrollment. During the past two years, the College enrollment has declined by nearly 2,000 headcount students, erasing all of the growth that had been achieved in the previous five years. This enrollment decline has resulted in a sharp drop in revenues for the College and the district, and resultant cost reduction and enrollment management initiatives.

In fall 2004, Oxnard College enrolled 6,594 students; a decline of 879 (12 percent) from the 7,473 it enrolled in fall 2003. Among the students enrolled in 2003, 61 percent reported their ethnicity as Latino, 59 percent reported their gender as female, 69 percent enrolled on a part-time basis, and a majority of the students listed their age as under 25. The average age, 27, has been steadily decreasing over the past several years. Nearly half the students (46 percent) report their goal as transferring to a four-year college, and 24 percent report occupational preparation/upgrading as their goal.

In the fall of 2003, Oxnard College employed 90 full-time faculty and 218 part-time faculty members. In order to meet the state's required ratio of full-time to part-time faculty, 14 additional faculty were hired by the College in spring 2004 to begin work in fall 2004; however, several of these positions were replacements for faculty retirements and resignations resulting in a net gain of eight new faculty positions despite the decline in enrollment. The number of part-time faculty decreased in fall 2004 as a result of these new hires.

In fall, 1979, the first two permanent buildings were occupied on the campus: a liberal arts building housing 20 classrooms plus science and business laboratories and faculty office wings, and a library/learning resources center consisting of the College library, learning center, general classrooms, and administrative and student services offices. The occupational education building houses the college's information processing, air conditioning and refrigeration, hotel and restaurant management, electronics, and word processing programs was completed in 1986.

Several new buildings and major renovation projects are scheduled to be completed within the next 10 years due to the passage in 2002 of "Measure S", a \$356 million bond issue for construction projects district wide. For Oxnard College, new construction projects include a long awaited performing arts center including a theater; a student services building; a general classroom building; a large parking lot; and a new fire technology facility at the Camarillo Airport site. Major remodeling projects include the library/learning resources center, expansion of the bookstore and child development center, and the renovation and expansion of the gymnasium and athletic fields.

Oxnard College Accreditation

A nine-member accreditation Team visited Oxnard College in mid October 2004 for the purpose of reaffirming the institution's accreditation. The College prepared well for the visit and was very accommodating to the requirements of the Team members. During the visit, the Team had the opportunity to meet with all of the individuals who play key leadership roles in the College and with the District chancellor, lead staff, and board members. The supporting materials available in the workroom assigned to the Team were well organized and referenced to the Oxnard College Self Study Report. They were supporting materials missing; however, as much relevant documentation was found at the District office.

Oxnard's Self Study follows models of similar documents developed under the prior ACCJC Standards. Prior recommendations and eligibility requirements are addressed. Also included is an organizational "map" explaining the relationship of Oxnard College within Ventura County Community College District. General information regarding college history, mission, descriptions of students served, educational programs, and delivery systems provides the reader with a context in which the Self Study was developed.

The Self Study (approximately 400 pages) was organized around ACCJC's four Standards. Each Standard and component was stated as a heading with subheadings of "descriptive summary" and "self analysis." "Planning agenda" was also included as a subheading, but not consistently. There are areas where the College identified problems in both the "descriptive summary" and "self-analysis," but no "planning agenda" followed (see, for example, Standard I. B.1). There are instances where contradictory information was presented (e.g., length of program review cycle – p. 18 states that every program will be reviewed on a three-year cycle, and on p. 156 – the College reports that the process takes place every three to five years). It was difficult to follow the number of committee acronyms, and whether the committee being described was a College committee or a District committee.

Several overarching themes emerged in the Self Study. The College has not yet developed a culture of evidence/research, and it does not yet seem aware that it needs to discover the relationships between departments, disciplines, and different college entities to function more efficiently. The spirit of autonomy within the College and the independent approach by the District have fostered a sense of isolation and created duplication of effort, loss of resources, and an inability to sustain a dialogue within the College community and the district. This sense of isolation and lack of dialogue appear to interfere with the creation of an integrated planning process. The Self Study speaks to this lack of integrated planning and budget process, but does not acknowledge the impact this lack of integration has on effective resource allocation and/or institutional effectiveness.

The Self Study reflects a campus that is still struggling to create an integrated planning and budget process. It demonstrates some efforts to achieve this; however, because of a lack of collaboration in the campus culture, achieving an integrated process is proving to be difficult. According to the study, Oxnard College claims to be working toward establishing a culture of research-based planning and assessment. While they do have an institutional researcher, the campus community does not seem to reflect or to dialogue on what data/research would be useful to begin analyzing problems. For example, the Self Study mentions an enrollment drop, yet no research has been done to discover the causes.

The most recent comprehensive accreditation review of Oxnard College was in March 1999. In June 1999, ACCJC reaffirmed the accreditation of the College and requested that an interim report be submitted to ACCJC by November 1, 2000. Subsequently, a visit was made to the College by representatives of the Commission, a report filed, and a request made to the College by the Commission that a focused midterm report be submitted by November 1, 2001. In its transmittal letter to the college, the Commission asked that in addition to the recommendations made as part of the 1999 reaccreditation visit, the College report progress on the following recommendations:

The College should establish its priorities through a well-articulated, integrated planning process which incorporates a college participatory decision-making process (Std. 3).

The College needs to further refine and implement a formalized qualitative and quantitative educational program review process. (Std. 4D.1)

The College should develop and implement a plan of research and integrate it thoroughly into its planning and program review processes. (Std. 3A.1)

The focused midterm report was submitted in October 2001 and accepted by the Commission in January 2002 with a requirement that the College complete a progress report by November 1, 2002, focusing on the eight recommendations addressed in the focused midterm report.

The Commission accepted the progress report in January 2003, noting that the next comprehensive evaluation will occur during fall 2004. The Commission, in its correspondence to the college, “. . . urged the College to pay particular attention to recommendations 1, 2, (outstanding since 1993), 7 and 8 in the 1999 Evaluation Report.”

Commendations for Oxnard College

The 2004 visiting Team had the opportunity to read and assess the college’s Self Study and supporting documents, the report of the March 1999 visiting Team, and other sources of evidence related to the assertions made in the Self Study. The Team met on the campus with a variety of individuals and examined the facilities. The Team conducted two open sessions in which any member of the College community could meet with the Team for any reason, conducted classroom visits, and met with the members of the board of trustees, the chancellor, and district office staff. The visiting Team recognizes the significant work being done by the administration, the faculty and staff by making the following commendations:

- The work to design a program review, assessment and planning process and the completion of a great many program reviews;
- The hard work and enthusiasm and commitment to the College by the administration, the faculty, the staff, and the students taken place in an environment of significant fiscal difficulties and numerous leadership changes in the College and the district;
- The attractive campus and the well maintained facilities;
- The widely recognized quality programs such as Dental Hygiene, the Tutorial Center, the Library; and
- The clear focus by administrators, faculty, and staff on students and their success.

Recommendations for Oxnard College

The Oxnard College Self Study was prepared using the four Standards adopted by the Commission in 2002, an approach that allowed the visiting Team to draw clear linkages between the stated expectations of the Commission and the various activities the College was engaged in as it sought to respond to the recommendations from several previous visits from the Commission (recommendations based upon the 1996 Standards) and the

requirements of the 2002 Standards. As a result, the Team found a number of instances where draft recommendations prepared by visiting Team members based upon their analysis from Standards perspective were repetitive when examined as a whole.

The ACCJC in its Guide to Evaluating Institutions (August 2004) identified a number of themes that thread throughout the Standards. The visiting Team found these themes to be a helpful matrix to cluster and consolidate recommendations.

Recommendation Related to the Theme Institutional Commitments

Through the adoption of good practices, the institution is expected to make a commitment in action to providing high quality education congruent with institutional mission. This commitment is demonstrated by the adoption of an institutional mission statement that reflects the intended student population and the institution's commitment to student learning. Accredited institutions are expected to insure the consistency between its established mission and institution goals and plans to insure that the mission is more than a statement of intention — that it guides institutional action. It is also expected that the institution commit to supporting student learning as its primary mission.

Overall, the Team concluded that the college's mission statement is not yet effectively integrated into the planning and implementation of educational programs and services. The Self Study acknowledges that some program review participants had trouble "relating program goals to the mission because of its generality" and that "units are not required to respond to the mission directly" in their planning. Although the planning agenda says the Planning and Consultation Council will address these issues, there was no evidence that it has a plan for doing so.

- 1. The Team recommends that the College conduct a survey of its community to determine the community's educational needs and interests. The College should then review its mission statement and related declarations in the context of the survey results and ensure that the institution's mission statement is accurate, unambiguous, and effectively integrated into campus planning processes (Std. I.A.). Following the community survey and analysis and mission statement revision, the College should review and revise as necessary its major planning documents and processes to ensure incorporation of mission statement concepts and principles (Std. I.A.4.).**

Recommendations Related to the Theme Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

Good practice requires ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement to better serve students. Evaluation focuses on student achievement, student learning, and the effectiveness of processes, policies, and organization. Institutional improvement is achieved through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation. The planning cycle begins with evaluation of student needs and college programs and services. This evaluation in turn informs college decisions about where it needs to improve, and the college identifies improvement goals

campus-wide. Resources are distributed in order to implement these goals. When resources are insufficient to support improvement goals, the college adjusts its resource decisions to reflect its priorities or seeks other means of supplying resources to meet its goals.

The College has not yet integrated the outcomes of the completed program reviews with the campus unit plans or the resource development and allocation processes. As an example, when asked how the College determined its priorities for resource allocations or policies, faculty and staff interviewed said they were either uncertain due to the lack of a fully implemented governance structure and the time constraints on developing budgets to present to the district, or they thought it was done at the senior administrative level.

While the college's overall planning process is designed to be the means by which the College gauges its effectiveness and establishes new goals, program review, while well designed in concept and completed for most programs, is not yet integrated into any college-wide planning process, nor is unit planning implemented and acted upon to any meaningful extent.

- 2. The Team recommends the College assure the development of a set of policies and practices that describe and link institutional analysis, decision making, and resource allocation processes within a collegial governance framework. These policies and practices should guide the development of plans which should include timelines, responsible parties, and a description of how policies and practices will be communicated to all constituent groups of the college. (Std. II.B.4; Std. III.A.6; B.2.b; C.2; D.1.a.)**
- 3. The Team recommends that the College leadership and governance committees assure there be a focus on obtaining relevant and timely information to understand its community needs, its enrollment patterns, and the needs of the students it serves. Following analysis of the information, the College should develop a comprehensive but realistic multi-year college plan for program development, managing enrollment, determining what students are learning, and regularly identifying where appropriate changes are needed. (Std. IV.A.2.b, 3). A comprehensive planning process for the college should include:**
 - Timely completion of unit plans that lead to meaningful review and adoption by the Planning and Consultation Council and other campus planning and resource allocation groups (Std. I. B.2,3,5,6,7);**
 - The implementation of a process of regular evaluation of the college physical resources, including buildings, equipment, and other critical technology resources. The various college entities working on physical resources planning should collaborate in the assessment and utilization of campus facilities (Std. III. B.2);**
 - A technology plan for the future growth, support, and maintenance and repair of critical technology resources; the training of personnel; and a policy and practice that incorporates consideration of technology needs into all college planning processes (Std. III. C; from 1999);**

- **A formal link between the planning processes and the resource planning, acquisition, and allocation processes; and**
- **Regular evaluation of all these process and links (Std. III. A.6; B.2.b; C.2; D.1.a. from 1993 and 1999).**

Recommendation Related to the Theme Student Learning Outcomes

When an institution places student learning as its primary mission, good practice expects that the institution consciously and robustly demonstrates the effectiveness of its efforts to produce and support student learning by developing student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level. Demonstrating effectiveness requires that learning outcomes be measured and assessed to determine how well learning is occurring so that changes to improve learning and teaching can be made. It requires that faculty engage in discussions of ways to deliver instruction to maximize student learning. It requires that those providing student support services develop student learning outcomes and evaluate the quality of their policies, processes, and procedures for providing students access and movement through the institution, and it requires that student learning outcomes be at the center of the institution's key processes and allocation of resources. Ultimately, an institution is expected to engage in self-analysis leading to improvement of all that it does regarding learning and teaching.

The College has designed a comprehensive program review process that has yet to be integrated with the development of unit plans and the campus resource development and allocation processes. While it has committed resources to establish an institutional research capacity, it has not yet developed a process of data informed decision making that is essential to the development of improved Student Learning Programs and Services. The lack of institutional dialogue is having a negative impact on the college's ability to ensure all components of the institution are moving toward meeting the elements and intent of the Commission Standards.

- 4. The Team recommends that Oxnard College develop policies and procedures that establish a clear designation of responsibility for the implementation of a plan, to ensure the creation and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level (Std. II.A.2.a; A.2.e). The procedures should include a process that ensures all courses and their course outlines of record are meeting the five-year course review policy of the College (Std. II.A.6).**

Recommendation Related to the Theme Dialogue

The Commission Standards are designed to facilitate college engagement in inclusive, informed, and intentional dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. It is expected that the dialogue will purposefully guide institutional change. All members of the college community should participate in this reflection and exchange about student achievement, student learning, and the effectiveness of its processes, policies, and organization. For the dialogue process to have its intended effect, it should be based on reliable information about the college's programs and services, and evidence on how well

the institution is meeting student needs. Information should be quantitative and qualitative, responsive to a clear inquiry, meaningfully interpreted, and broadly communicated. The institutional dialogue should result in ongoing self-reflection and conscious improvement.

The Team observed that the College has experienced an unusual amount of staff and administrative turnover. This turnover, coupled with the lack of an established integrated planning process has resulted in communication and accountability concerns. These observations are supported by comments made in interviews with staff and faculty and included in a number of program reviews. People interviewed have contended that the instructions and direction they received from their supervisor or administrator were inconsistent and changed with personnel changes.

The College cites examples of dialogue on student learning outcomes, but there is insufficient evidence of how the college's efforts to analyze and evaluate learning outcomes relate to institutional improvement in this area. The Team did not find evidence of a consistent planning process or informed institutional dialog sufficiently well established assure that the College can reach its strategic and student learning goals.

While the district's governing board has developed board policies and a board handbook, the existing policies do not address how the board assures the quality and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services. The inclusion of reports about educational programs in the board meetings is one way to help the board learn about programs and student outcomes, but a policy delineating the expectations and responsibilities concerning student learning and program improvement that addresses quality and effectiveness is also needed.

As a part a process of dialogue, the chancellor of the District and president of the College can strengthen the College by developing and communicating a sense of empowerment and accountability throughout the management, faculty, classified staff, and student leadership (Std. IV.A.1,3).

5. The Team recommends that the College leadership (including administrative, faculty senate, classified senate, and student leadership), as part of its evaluation of the recently created planning processes and as a reflection of the college's commitment to improving institutional effectiveness, engage administrators, faculty, classified staff, district leaders and the board in a more substantial and comprehensive dialogue (Std. I. B.1, 3, 4, 7; Std. II. A.1.c; A.2.e, f) about how to implement the elements of:

- **Program review and other data reflecting educational effectiveness;**
- **Student learning outcomes and assessment and evaluation processes that allow the faculty and those responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes to demonstrate their effectiveness in facilitating students' achievement of those learning outcomes;**
- **Effective collegial governance and leadership that is accountable for achieving expected outcomes; and**

- **A process that results in the communication of the results of institutional assessment, evaluation, and the College community's commitment to continuous quality improvement.**

Recommendation Related to the Theme Institutional Integrity

Good practice requires that the institution demonstrate concern with honesty, truthfulness, and the manner in which it represents itself to all stakeholders, internal and external. It speaks to the intentions of an institution as well as to how it carries them out. It prompts institutional assessment of the integrity of its policies, practices, and procedures and to how it treats students, employees, and its publics. It asks that the institution concern itself with the clarity, understandability, accessibility, and appropriateness of its publications; that its faculty provides for open inquiry in their classes as well as student grades that reflect an honest appraisal of student performance against faculty standards. It has an expectation of academic honesty on the part of students. It requires that the institution demonstrate regard for issues of equity and diversity. It encourages the institution to look at its hiring and employment practices as well as to its relationship with the Commission and other external agencies. Finally, it expects that an institution be self-reflective and honest with itself in all its operations.

The College and district have published documents, board policies, handbooks, employee contracts, job descriptions, and job announcements. The College relies on district personnel policies and the faculty union and classified contract for its policies and procedures. The Self Study states that some of the literature used to publish the policies, such as the Part-time Faculty Handbook, is not updated consistently. In the recent past, the College has had difficulty in publishing a college catalog and curricular check sheets in a timely manner. For example, the catalog for 2003-2004 was not available until December of 2003. There were also some questions raised regarding the accuracy of some of the information used in the catalog. The College reported that the Counseling Office and the Transfer Center did not always distribute coordinated information to students which compromised the accuracy and consistency of information. An internal audit discovered numerous errors in the past year's curricular check sheets that then were published in the catalog.

The College does not have a comprehensive professional development program. The chair of the Professional Development Committee affirms the Self Study report by stating that since the state cut staff development funding, professional development activities at the College have decreased. There is no professional development plan, nor does the Professional Development Committee chair see a need for planning as there is no money to fund activities. If there were a plan, it is not clear to the Team how it would be integrated into the institutional planning and budget process.

Although the College relies on district, board, and state regulatory policies, there is no evidence that the College has an institutional policy to ensure diversity. There is no evidence to suggest that the College community addresses the complexity of diversity issues through its policies and procedures. While the Self Study states that "all

complaints and grievances related to discrimination, harassment, and other personnel issues are taken seriously and investigated,” there is no formal procedure to guide an employee who wishes to report violations (Std. III. A.4).

6. The Team recommends that the college assure through its policies, practices, and publications:

- **An appropriate understanding of, and concern for, its communication with the public (Std. II.A.3);**
- **Issues of equity and diversity (Std. III.A.4);**
- **Appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel by assessing the professional development needs of its employees, and plan and implement professional development activities to meet those needs (Standard III. A.5.a; A.5.b.);**
- **Regular assessment of its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission (Std. III.A.4.a; A.4.b.); and**
- **Integration of its human resources planning with institutional planning; and**
- **Systematic assessment of the effective use of human resources and use the results of the assessment as the basis for institutional improvement (Std. III.A.6).**

Recommendations Related to the Ventura County Community College District Practices

Good practice at a college that is part of a multi-college district is directly affected by the role that the district administration plays, and the expectations the district sets for campus performance. Good practice at the district level calls for the district to provide primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity throughout the district, and assures support for the effective operation of the colleges. It establishes clearly defined roles of authority and responsibility between the colleges and the district and acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board.

Oxnard College is a part of the three-college Ventura County Community College District. As part of the comprehensive visit, a Team composed of the visiting Team chairs to the three colleges and selected college visiting Team members dealing with leadership, governance and resource issues played the role of a visiting Team to the district. Team members had the opportunity to meet with members of the District governing board, the District chancellor, and members of the staff of the chancellor’s office.

While the Oxnard College Self Study questions the board's depth of understanding of what is happening in the District and at Oxnard College, Team members did not find that same degree of concern in the Self Study reports of Ventura and Moorpark colleges. Discussions with two of the members of the board of trustees and district executives, and a review of documents provided by the District indicate that there is greater Board

understanding of the colleges and the need for the District to respond to community needs than Oxnard College may perceive.

The Oxnard College Self Study expresses the perception that the District and board have never supported the College equitably because it is not fully “built-out,” and is not funded at a higher level to serve its larger service population of students at the basic skills level. The Self Study contains complaints and implies that this lack of support has contributed to the current enrollment and financial difficulties the College is experiencing. The Team feels that the persistence of this attitude over a long period of time has compromised the ability of the College to respond to its challenges.

The fiscal and enrollment crises facing the District and college coupled with new district leadership and board membership provide an opportunity for the College to concentrate on the future and put the past into historical perspective. Leaders at every level and in every unit of the College should accept that they have the responsibility to create a brighter future for Oxnard College by more effective planning and use of resources (Std. IV.A.1, 2, 2.a).

- 7. The Team recommends that the District develop written personnel procedures that are equitable and consistently administered to ensure fairness in all employment practices. This should include a clearly defined and well-articulated policy for the selection and evaluation of the presidents of the Colleges. (Std. III.A.3.a and IV.B.1.j)**
- 8. The Team recommends that the District, in cooperation with the Colleges, formulate a districtwide resource allocation model, which will be flexible enough to guide increases or reductions in budget allocations, which will follow goals for districtwide student learning outcomes, and which will ensure accountability to operate within agreed upon allocations. (Std. III.D.1.a and III.D.1.c)**
- 9. The Team recommends that the District develop a funding plan for the unfunded retiree medical liability following the recommendations contained in the actuarial study completed in October 2004. (Std. III.D.1.c)**
- 10. The Team recommends that the District honor its policy on shared decision-making by implementing operational and evaluative procedures that delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various college/district constituencies that participate in collegial governance. (Std. IV.A.2.a and IV.A.3)**
- 11. The Team recommends that the Board of Trustees implement a process to regularly evaluate and revise District policies, and implement and participate in an on-going process for professional development and orientation for new Board members, which includes a review of Board roles and responsibilities.**

(Stds. IV.B.1.e and IV.B.1.f)

- 12. The Team recommends that the District assume leadership for a districtwide, collaboratively developed strategic plan that is informed by District research and coordinated with College planning. (Std. IV.B.3)**
- 13. The Team recommends that the Chancellor establish and implement a process for open communication with the Colleges by providing information and ensuring staff understanding of Board direction and expectations. Further, the District should develop a more effective process for ensuring accountability in achieving standards of educational excellence, fiscal integrity, and operational efficiency within a culture of evidence. (Std. IV.B.3.a-f)**

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE VISIT

March 22-25, 1999

The College has had three changes in the campus chief executive officer in the past five years. In the same period there has been similar turnover in other senior leadership positions at the college. This frequent change in leadership has been a major contributing factor in the inability of the College to deal effectively with each of the eight recommendations from the March 1999 accreditation visit.

March 1999 Recommendation 1

The Team recommends the College review its philosophy and mission statement, setting a specific timeline and incorporating all constituent groups in the process.

The College has met the previous Team's recommendation that it review its philosophy and mission statements and, as required by Standard I. A.3, these have been revised and discussed campus wide. The current mission is supplemented by the college's statements of vision, core values, strategic goals, and college philosophy. These declarations along with the mission statement describe the college's understanding of its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning. The mission statement has been approved by the District governing board, and the College has posted the mission and related statements campus-wide and made them available to the campus and community through various media (Std. I. A.2.). College staff value the mission statement and accompanying declarations for their breadth of values represented. However, the all-inclusiveness of the mission statement and related declarations has resulted in statements so overly broad that they are not effective tools for guiding the college's planning or for clearly defining the institution's primary educational purposes (Std. I. A. Mission).

March 1999 Recommendation 2

The Team repeats the 1993 Team recommendation that the College establish priorities through a well-articulated, integrated planning process, which incorporates a college-wide participatory decision-making process.

The College responded to this recommendation in October 2002 identifying an "Overall Planning Process." This process is well articulated but not utilized by the college. College divisions and departments are completing program reviews, the first step of the process, but are failing to follow through with the subsequent steps of the process. The Self Study report acknowledges that some program review participants had trouble "relating program goals to the mission because of its generality" and that "units are not required to respond to the mission directly" in their planning. Although the planning

agenda says the Planning and Consultation Council will address these issues, there is no evidence that it has a plan for doing so.

The link between planning and resource allocation remains unclear, as many components of the planning process have not been implemented. No evaluation of the planning process has been initiated. The link between college-wide planning and district resource allocation is also unclear. College-wide participatory decision-making processes have been implemented which, unfortunately, have resulted in an overabundance of committees. It is unclear how many of the committees are related and for which aspects of planning each is responsible.

March 1999 Recommendation 3

The Team recommends that the College must further refine and implement a formalized qualitative and quantitative educational program review process.

The recommendations from the previous Team could be generally interpreted as recommending that Oxnard College develop a clear and comprehensive collaborative decision making and resource allocation structure which is based on institutional dialogue and broad constituent involvement and is clearly communicated through out the organization.

On the surface it would appear the College has made an honest effort to respond to the recommendations of the previous Team, although there appears to be a lack of consistent implementation or integration of the college's response to those recommendations. An example of the inconsistency between the college's response and the implementation of their response can be seen in their response to the March 1999 Recommendation 3.

The College Self Study said that Oxnard College has designed a program review process, but also stated that some departments have not completed their program reviews (Std. II. A.2.e.) and participation of staff in program review is not consistent across departments or divisions (Std. I. B.4, also supported by copies of program reviews in the visiting Team room). When the program reviews are completed, they are reviewed and commented upon by the Program Review Committee, but the Team found no evidence that action or program improvement resulted from the review or related comments. The College does not appear to have defined an articulated way to measure program effectiveness. Without an effective way of measuring program effectiveness, the College does not appear to have met March 1999 Recommendation 3.

The College previously responded to this recommendation in its October 2002 Progress Report by certifying that a formalized qualitative and quantitative educational program review process is in effect. Review of program review binders and actual documents confirm that program review is indeed occurring. However, the results of program review are shared only at the department or unit level. Program review results are not integrated into unit plans nor are they made part of the planning processes conducted by the Planning and Consultation Council or other central planning and resource committees

on the campus. The faculty senate has assumed no leadership position in leading the campus to utilize the results of program review or to implement measurement of student learning outcomes.

March 1999 Recommendation 4

The Team recommends the College develop and implement a plan of research and integrate it thoroughly into its planning and program review process.

The College has made progress in addressing this recommendation. In August 2001 a director of research reporting to the executive vice president student learning was hired. The director of institutional research is currently responsible for institution-wide data distribution and research, chairs the Program Review Committee, is an administrative member of numerous college-wide committees, and was the administrative co-chair of the accreditation Self Study process. The director of institutional research establishes annual goals and objectives for Office of Institutional Research (director and one administrative assistant). The director of institutional research works closely with the Ventura County Community College District's research office. Administration, faculty, and classified staff utilize the services of the office of institutional research, indicating that the position and the person have become integrated into the college's culture.

Research data is apparently now available, and the researcher is part of the Oxnard College Strategic Plan Team. The College president and others are making more use of research data, but other necessary institutional processes for using the office and the data in effective ways still need to be improved.

March 1999 Recommendation 5

The Team recommends the College conduct a thorough review of its operational structures and the roles of administrators and departments in the functioning of the college.

It appears the College has made an effort to respond to the recommendations of the previous Team, although there appears to be a lack of consistent implementation or integration of the college's response to those recommendations. The recently appointed chancellor of the District has contracted for a management and administrative practices audit within the District and the three colleges. This audit may lead to significant operational changes at the College level.

March 1999 Recommendation 6

The Team recommends the College review various models of shared governance and develop a written statement of the philosophy and procedures for shared governance.

Collegial governance philosophy and their implementations have been addressed, but collaborative governance and communication issues are still problems in many areas, which is reflected in the 2004 recommendations

March 1999 Recommendation 7

The Team recommends the College develop well-understood and consistent procedures for allocation and reallocation of all college resources (including space, funding, and personnel) consistent with institutional plans and relevant data.

The College responded to this recommendation in its October 2002 Progress Report indicating the Campus Use, Development and Safety Committee, and the Financial Resources Committee would deal with space and funding, while personnel resource issues will now move from the faculty senate process and be assessed in the Financial Resources Committee and in the overall planning process. The Campus Use, Development and Safety Committee does currently deal with space resources, but the Financial Resources Committee does not appear to have a clear role in dealing with funding and personnel resource issues.

The College has developed two different processes for dealing with the allocation of physical resources. The collegial governance Campus Use, Development and Safety Committee's charge is the allocation of current facilities. The charge of the Facilities Planning Committee is the overall campus planning in relation to the allocation of facilities being constructed with the college's share of the "Measure S Bond" funds.

March 1999 Recommendation 8

The Team recommends that the College develop and implement a plan for the support, maintenance and repair, training, and inventory control of technology resources.

The College responded to this recommendation in its October 2002 Progress Report; however, while the District has a strategic plan for information technology resources, no up-to-date technology plan exists for the college. An inventory of technology resources was conducted and is being kept current. The information technology department was centralized in 2003 and provides support for all college needs. The department does not appear to have been involved in the college's program review process, but did participate in the unit planning processes.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The ACCJC Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation (Revised January 2004) contain expectations about the quality of the institution's degree of satisfaction of the Eligibility Requirements. Therefore, although Oxnard College satisfies the Eligibility Requirements in general, the College needs to take some steps to fully comply with Eligibility Requirements 10, 11, 19, and 20.

1. Authority

Oxnard College is authorized to operate an educational institution and to award degrees by the California Community College Chancellor's Office, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and the U.S. Department of Education. The College has been recognized as a degree-granting institution by ACCJC since 1975.

2. Mission

Oxnard College's mission clearly defines its role as a degree-granting institution dedicated to providing higher education opportunities for local residents in a student-centered framework. The mission statement is reviewed regularly by the College community and approved by the Ventura County Community College District Board of Trustees, most recently in February 2004.

3. Governing Board

As an independent policy-making institution, the Ventura County Community College District Board is accountable to the residents of Ventura County. The board is composed of six elected board members, five elected to represent specific geographic areas of the county and one student representative elected by students at the three colleges. The board is responsible for ensuring that fiscal resources are sufficient to maintain the quality and integrity of instructional programs, policies, and procedures. Board members' terms of office are staggered to provide continuity of this body. Officers are elected among the board members at the annual organizational meeting.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The chief executive officer for the Ventura County Community College District is the chancellor, who is appointed by and reports to the board of trustees. The chancellor is responsible for providing effective leadership for this three-college district by implementing board policies, managing resources, and ensuring compliance with statutes and regulations. The chief executive officer of Oxnard College is the College president, who is appointed by the board of trustees and reports to the chancellor. The College president is an appointed full-time position to provide leadership to the faculty and staff of Oxnard College.

5. Administrative Capacity

Oxnard College employs one president, one executive vice president, one vice president, eight managers (six academic and two classified), and the support staff for these

positions. The College attempts to maintain an administrative structure tailored to its student learning mission and conducive to an effective learning environment. All administrators possess appropriate qualifications, training, and experience.

6. Operational Status

Oxnard College operates with between 6,500 and 8,000 students enrolled each fall and spring semester. Students' goals include completing transfer requirements, associate degrees, vocational certificates, skill attainment, and personal enrichment.

7. Degrees

Oxnard College offers a range of degree and certificate programs described in both the published and online versions of the catalog. A significant proportion of the students attending the College are pursuing degrees and/or certificates.

8. Educational Programs

Oxnard College's degree programs are congruent with its mission and reflect recognized fields of studies in higher education. The degree programs are conducted with rigor and are of sufficient content and length, many of them requiring two years of study based on the completion of 12 units per semester. Oxnard College defines educational objectives for each course and bases the course descriptions on those objectives. Course descriptions are published in the catalog and the schedule of classes. The College has plans to establish student learning outcomes for all degree and certificate programs.

9. Academic Credit

Credit for coursework is awarded using the Carnegie Rule as stated in Title 5 of the California Education Code and the Curriculum Handbook. For semester-length classes, one unit of credit is awarded for one hour of lecture per week and three hours of laboratory activity per week.

10. Student Learning And Achievement

The college's overall planning process includes the assessment of student learning and achievement through the program review process. Each program analyzes its record of student achievement as part of the program review and beginning in 2003-2004, programs began to identify student learning outcomes at the program level. Assessment of these outcomes is planned. In addition, the college's Office of Institutional Research has accumulated and made available to the campus community data regarding student achievement including degrees and certificates awarded, students transferring to four-year institutions, persistence, and course success.

The visiting Team found that Eligibility Requirement 10 is only partially met. It is not evident from the Oxnard College Self Study nor from board minutes and materials how the board ensures the effectiveness of the educational programs and the student learning that demonstrates educational quality.

11. General Education

All associate degree programs require a general education component. These general education courses are designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. Students completing the Oxnard College general education program must demonstrate minimum competency in communication, reasoning, and critical thinking. The quality and rigor of the general education courses are consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education. The visiting Team found that this requirement is only partially met due to the lack of operational student learning outcomes for each program and regular assessment of program outcomes.

12. Academic Freedom

Oxnard College and the Ventura County Community College District Board of Trustees support faculty members' rights to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their disciplines. Intellectual freedom and independence are documented in the Ventura County Community College District Board Policy Manual and presented as a condition of the College and the District in the College faculty handbook.

13. Faculty

In the fall of 2003, Oxnard College employed 90 full-time faculty and 218 part-time faculty members. In order to meet the California Community College Chancellor's Office required ratio of full to part-time faculty, 14 additional faculty were hired by the College in spring 2004 to begin work in fall 2004; however, several of these positions were replacements for faculty retirements and resignations. The College currently employs 98 full-time faculty members. The number of part-time faculty decreased in fall 2004 as a result of the new hires.

Faculty members are qualified by education and experience to guide the college's educational programs. Roles and responsibilities of faculty members are clearly delineated in the faculty handbook and the collective bargaining agreement between the American Federation of Teachers and the Ventura County Community College District.

14. Student Services

Oxnard College provides a full range of student services and development programs to meet the needs of the college's student population. The services include the following departments and services: Admissions and Records; CalWORKS; Career Resource Center; Counseling; Educational Assistance Center (EAC); Extended Opportunities Program & Services (EOPS); Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE); Teen Parent; Financial Aid Services; International Students Program; Matriculation; Re-Entry Center; Student Activities; Student Health; Transfer Center; and Veterans' Services.

15. Admissions

Oxnard College is an open-access, public community college. All high school graduates or equivalent or persons over the age of eighteen are eligible and invited to take courses at the college. Open access extends to all college facilities, services, and courses, other

than those with established prerequisites. Admissions requirements are stated in the College catalog and in the schedule of classes.

16. Information and Learning Resources

The library and learning resources programs are the primary resources for information and learning resources. The library includes more than 32,000 books, 87 periodical subscriptions, instructional media for student use, and online access to five full-text databases. The Learning Center, through a variety of programmed learning materials, provides a broad range of services to supplement classroom instruction across the curriculum to assist students in skill areas such as reading, writing, and math, among other disciplines. The tutorial center provides free tutoring to students in a variety of disciplines and provides assistance with study skills, test preparation, and course content. The Media Center provides audiovisual materials and equipment sources, catalogs, web sites, material ordering services, and long- and short-term services.

17. Financial Resources

The Ventura County Community College District dedicated additional resources to the reserves after being placed on the California Community College Chancellor's Office "watch list" in fall 2003. The reserve amount now exceeds minimum requirements. The Board of Trustees exercises sound financial oversight of the district's resources in spite of the severe impact of the recent reductions in state funding. The District and the colleges follow generally accepted accounting principles and control procedures to help ensure financial stability.

18. Financial Accountability

The Ventura County Community College District is audited annually by an independent auditing firm and complies with routine financial reporting requirements of the California Community College Chancellor's Office and the U.S. Department of Education. The College provided a copy of the current budget and the most recent audited financial statements for onsite review by the visiting Team.

19. Institutional Planning And Evaluation

Oxnard College reports that it understands and embraces the concept of integrated planning and has established an overall planning process that integrates planning, implementation, resource allocation, and evaluation in a continuous cycle of improvement. The visiting Team was unable to find evidence that this requirement was being fully met. While the College has been working on its planning process, there is not yet evidence that it is connected to program outcomes, budgeting, or evaluation of institutional planning processes or student learning achievements. The College claims that its planning process will link to program review and evaluation but that is not yet demonstrated across all programs.

20. Public Information

Oxnard College publishes accurate and current information describing its purposes and objectives, admissions requirements and procedures, rules and regulations, programs and courses, degree and certificate programs, educational costs, refund policies, grievance

procedures, academic credentials of faculty and administrators, and other relevant information in the College catalog, schedule of classes, press releases, and other printed materials, as well as on the college's web site. However, it was noted the academic degrees for classified managers were not listed in the College catalog (Std. II. B.2.a).

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The Ventura County Community College District Board of Trustees and Oxnard College provide assurances that the College adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation Standards and policies of the Commission, describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

EVALUATION OF OXNARD COLLEGE USING ACCJC STANDARDS

STANDARD I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Observations and Findings

A. Mission

The College has reviewed its philosophy and mission statements, and these have been revised and discussed campus-wide on several occasions (Std. 1.A.3). The current mission is supplemented by the college's statements of Vision, Core Values, Strategic Goals, and college philosophy. These declarations and the mission statement together describe the college's understanding of its broad educational purposes and its commitment to student learning. The mission statement has been approved by the District governing board, and the College has posted the mission and related statements campus-wide and made them available to the campus and community through various media (Std. 1. A.2). College staff interviewed expressed support for the mission statement and accompanying declarations because of the values they represent and their breadth. Despite their perceived value, however, the very comprehensiveness of the mission statement and related declarations has resulted in statements so broadly stated that the Team observed that they are not effective tools for guiding the college's planning, or for clearly defining the institution's primary educational purposes (Std. 1A.).

A lack of effective integration of the mission into college-wide planning is evident in other important institutional processes as well. The Oxnard College Accreditation Update: Major Changes Since May 2004 submitted to the Team at the beginning of the site visit on October 18, 2004, includes several effective statements of administrative goals and objectives, but the goals and objectives listed by some units remain only at a strategic or operational level without any evidence of action taken to relate them to the College mission or assessment of student or institutional outcomes (Std. 1A.4) . Similarly, the Educational and Facilities Master Plans are not related in any clear or explicit way to the College mission, nor do they include any effective planning beyond the intentions of most units to grow, "at a rate comparable to the college," and to hire additional personnel. These same goals are repeated throughout the plan, but how the College will achieve the components of its mission statement—i.e., how it will meet the needs of its diverse community, provide an excellent and unique educational environment, or promote student success and lifelong learning—is not addressed in the plan (Std. 1A.4).

The Self-Study acknowledges that some Program Review participants had trouble "relating program goals to the mission because of its generality" and that "units are not required to respond to the mission directly" in their planning. Although the Planning Agenda says the Planning and Consultation Council will address these issues, there is no

evidence that it has a plan for doing so. Overall, the Team has concluded that the college's mission statement is not effectively integrated into its planning and implementation of educational programs and services (Std. 1A.I; IA.4.).

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The college's overall planning process is designed to be the means by which the College gauges its effectiveness and establishes new goals. A very positive step has been made in that the College has created an effective program review process. However, program review is not yet integrated into any college-wide planning process, nor is unit planning implemented and acted upon to any meaningful extent. There has been dialogue on the campus about the college's effectiveness and ways to improve (Std. I.B.1), there is no indication that this dialogue has led to actual, effective processes or improved student outcomes (Std. I. B. 3 5 6 7). As an example, while there has been some attention to adjusting course objectives on course outlines in Mathematics to reflect student learning outcomes, the Team was unable to find evidence that any program has made similar changes.

The College uses satisfaction surveys and California State University student transfer measures as indirect gauges of instructional quality; however, there is currently no plan described in the Self Study report or other planning documents to implement more direct and effective measurements of student learning outcomes (Std. I. B. 2).

The College did not provide evidence of sufficient use of institutional research developed data to measure its effectiveness (Std. I. B. 5). There have been discussions about student learning outcomes; goals to implement them have been established in several areas. Further plans have been made to include outcomes in the campus strategic plan; however, few learning outcomes, or ways to measure them have yet been established. The single exception is in the Department of Mathematics where common final exam components have been used to measure course and program outcomes (Std. II.A.1.c).

For example, in March 2004, the college's Institutional Effectiveness Report identified a number of significant "Student Outcomes" and "Implications for Planning" regarding entering students' lack of college-level skills and declining native American transfer rates (Std. I. B. 5). There is no evidence; however, that the College has a plan to address the problems identified in the report. The Team's conversations with faculty whose programs are mentioned in the report suggest they were unaware of its findings or of recent research that showed a significant decline in student success in English courses. As the college's Self Study states, "there is no mechanism in place at the institutional level to ensure that data analysis facilitates dialogue about improvement" (Std. I. B.2).

The College asserts that it has processes in place to measure effectiveness; however, these appear to be incomplete or not used effectively. Unit plans, for example, are reported to be a significant and important part of the overall planning process, but there is no evidence that unit plans are being completed or that they have any impact on college planning. As noted earlier, a well designed program review process is in place, but some

departments have not completed reviews, and participation of staff in program review is not consistent across departments or at the division level. When the reviews are completed they are shared with a review committee, but there is no apparent use of them for formal unit or campus-wide planning (Std. I. B.3).

Conclusions

The college's mission statement is not yet effectively integrated into the planning and implementation of educational programs and services. The Self Study report acknowledges that some program review participants had trouble "relating program goals to the mission because of its generality" and that "units are not required to respond to the mission directly" in their planning. Although the planning agenda says the Planning and Consultation Council will address these issues, there was no evidence that the College has a plan for doing so (Std. I. A.1; A.4).

The College has not yet fully implemented an effective planning process. The College has designed and implemented a program review process; it has established a campus intuitional research capacity; it has established a number of planning activities at the unit and campus level; and it has established a number of planning councils with appropriate involvement from faculty, staff, and administrators thus providing a number of avenues for collegial dialogue and consultation. The College has not, however, linked these various efforts together into an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation (Std. I. B.3).

STANDARD II: Student Learning Programs and Services

Observations and Findings

A. Instructional Programs

The College provides instructional programs in general education, vocational, transfer, developmental English as a Second Language, and special education to approximately 6,600 students per semester (down from about 7,500 students last fall). All Oxnard College's instructional programs are developed through a collaborative process by the faculty beginning at the department/division level leading to recommendation for approval from the college's Curriculum Committee to ultimate approval by the district's Board of Trustees. The process for establishing courses and programs are detailed in the Curriculum Committee Handbook and the Curriculum Committee website, sponsored and maintained by the academic senate of Oxnard College. These primary resources are used by faculty to guide them in curriculum development and to assure quality and policy compliance (Std. II.A.1. a b).

The College has hired an institutional researcher and created internal processes, standing committees and procedures related to decision-making and resource allocation, in an effort to respond to the recommendations of the previous Team. The research office is charged with gathering and disseminating data to campus groups and individuals. Although the College is

generating data, as evidenced by copies of research reports on data available in the Team room, it is not clear in the Self Study or in interviews with college personnel, how the data are being integrated into the college's overall planning efforts.

The College has created an effective program review process (Std. II. A.2.a). However, the outcomes of program review are not integrated into any college-wide planning process. The next step in the campus designed evaluation and planning process, unit planning has not been completed. There has been dialogue on the campus about the college's effectiveness and ways to improve (Std. I. B. 1), but there is no indication that this dialogue has led to actual, effective processes or improved student outcomes (Std. I. B. 3 5 6 7). As an example, while there has been some attention to adjusting course objectives on course outlines in Mathematics to reflect student learning outcomes, the Team was unable to find evidence that any other program has made similar changes (Std. II. A.2.f).

The College uses satisfaction surveys and California State University student transfer measures as indirect gauges of instructional quality. The most recent transfer performance data indicate that while Oxnard College students have slightly lower persistence rates at CSU institutions than the system-wide average, Oxnard College transfer students consistently maintain equivalent or slightly higher grade point averages than the system-wide GPA (Std. II. A.2.c).

As noted earlier in the Team Report, the College does not provide evidence of sufficiently using institutional research developed data to measure its effectiveness (Std. I. B. 5). While there have been discussions about student learning outcomes; goals to implement them have been established in several areas; as well as plans have been made to include outcomes in the campus strategic plan; few learning outcomes, or ways to measure them have yet been established. The single exception is in the Department of Mathematics where common final exam components have been used to measure course and program outcomes (Std. II.A.1.c).

Neither the Self Study report, nor material provided in the Team room, nor the people interviewed provide evidence of any reasonable institutional dialogue concerning student learning outcomes. The faculty senate said it had participated in discussions led by one of its members on student learning outcomes, but they were unable to identify efforts by the College leadership to initiate an institutional dialogue related to student learning outcomes. There does not yet appear to be an integrated process in place for the College to engage in dialogue and plans related to student learning outcomes (Std. II.A.2.a).

Oxnard College's distance education offerings are limited. The College reported that the fall 2003 schedule included four courses via television, three fully online composition courses, and five hybrid online composition courses. Distance education instruction goes through secondary curriculum committee review. The College offered training to faculty on how to develop curriculum for distance education courses. The College does not offer release time or general funds dollars to compensate faculty for developing curriculum for distance education courses. Oxnard College does not have a Distance Education Plan and no one individual or group has been assigned the responsibility for developing a Distance Education Plan (Std. II.A.2.d).

Oxnard College has an institutional policy that requires all courses offered by the College to be reviewed every five years. The Team found courses were not being reviewed every five years as described in the College policy. One course outline had not been reviewed since 1976. Other courses were also found to be out of compliance with the college's policy: a basic skills course had not been revised since 1987, a Math 106 course had not been revised since 1998, a Psychology 101 course since 1988, a Sociology course since 1988 and a Reading course since 1987. Several courses that were out of compliance with the campus policy were listed in Oxnard College's fall 2004 Schedule of Classes, and some of those courses are part of the general education requirements for students intending to transfer to a baccalaureate institution (Std. II. A.2.e).

The College catalog includes a statement of philosophy and rationale for general education. This statement was developed by the College faculty, counselors, and staff, and formally adopted in 1999. Though it does not offer a single, clear statement of Oxnard College's general education philosophy, this section does stress the importance of general education in the curriculum at Oxnard College. The framework for general education is based upon State established requirements and corresponds to the general education pattern of the University of California and the California State University requirements. Completion of the general education requirements is required for graduation from Oxnard College (Std. II. A.3).

In the design of occupational programs, the College determines appropriate student competencies through the use of industry advisory committees; estimates of program demand through occupational projections, and regularly assesses program curriculum against current trends, technological changes, and employment statistics. However, as reported by the College, vocational programs such as Fire Technology, Computer Information Systems, or Engineering Technology, do not have any formal methods of tracking students, but do collect information from former students informally and use that information anecdotally to demonstrate student success after leaving the program. The Dental Hygiene Program maintains its own data regarding student success after program completion. These data include placement after taking the student board and national board exams as well as where students are employed after certification. The program has experienced exceptional success since its inception. Students in the program have maintained a 100% pass rate in the state board exams and a 100% employment rate since program inception. In 2003, the program was ranked second nationally out of 236 programs in colleges and universities (Std. II. A.5).

The College reported that it provides information about its degrees and programs in the college catalog, in curricular check sheets, in the schedule of classes, on the college website, and in program brochures developed by individual departments. Both the Articulation Officer and the Transfer Center Director maintain articulation and transfer information. The faculty member in each class section is expected to provide students with a course syllabus that specifies the purpose, content, and course requirements. Recently the College has had difficulty in publishing a college catalog and curricular check sheets in a timely manner. For example, the catalog for 2003-2004 was not available until December of 2003. Questions were raised regarding the accuracy of some of the catalog information. The College has

committed to develop and implement a plan that will include a quality assurance component for the publication process of its annual catalog (Std. II.A.6).

The college reported that curricular check sheets have not been consistently and timely available and that some check sheets available on time were inaccurate, the counseling office and the transfer center did not consistently distribute comprehensive information to students, and the articulation function did not always receive priority attention either in staffing or in review of effectiveness and integrity. An internal audit by the interim articulation officer discovered numerous errors in the past year's curricular check sheets which were published in the catalog (Std. II. A.6).

The Ventura County Community College District policy on academic freedom is specific, readily available to the public in print and on the District website. The policy is included in the Oxnard College Faculty Handbook which is available in hard copy and on the academic senate website. Hard copies of the handbook are currently distributed only to full-time faculty. Oxnard College does not have a part-time faculty handbook. The Ventura County Community College District policy on student academic honesty and the consequences of dishonesty is less specific than the policy printed in the college catalog (Std. II.A.7).

B. Student Support Services

The College enrolls a diverse student body; among the students enrolled in 2003, 61 percent reported their ethnicity as Latino, 59 percent reported their gender as female, 69 percent enrolled on a part-time basis, and a majority of the students listed their age as under 25. The average age, 27, has been steadily decreasing over the past several years. Nearly half the students (46 percent) report their goal as transferring to a four-year college, and 24 percent report occupational preparation/upgrading as their goal (Std. II. B). .

The College has a comprehensive framework of student support programs in place to address the issues students encounter when they enroll. These include: Admissions and Records, CalWORKS, the Career Resource Center, the Counseling Office, the Educational Assistance Center (EAC), the Extended Opportunities Program & Services (EOPS), Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), the Teen Parent Program, Financial Aid Services, the International Students Program, the Matriculation program, the Puente Project, the Re-Entry Center, Student Activities, the Student Health Center, the Transfer Center, and Veterans' Services

The College has created an effective program review process, but has not yet conducted a comprehensive review of its student support services nor has the campus designed evaluation and planning process and unit planning been completed. There has been dialogue on the college's effectiveness and ways to improve student support services, but there is no indication that this dialogue has led to actual, effective processes or improved student outcomes (Std. II. B.1,3).

The College has participated in the Ventura County Community College District student satisfaction survey that covered the counseling center and a number of other student support

services. Student reported satisfaction is improved over the 2000 survey responses despite reduced student support staffing. (Std. II. B. 1, 3, 4).

The College is working toward shifting to a more evidence-based environment. As described in the previous section of the Report, the College has hired an institutional researcher and created internal processes, standing committees and procedures related to decision-making and resource allocation. The research office is charged with gathering and disseminating data to campus groups and individuals. Although the College is generating data, as evidenced by copies of research reports on data available in the Team room, it is not clear in the Self Study or in interviews with college personnel, how the data are being integrated into the college's overall planning efforts. The Team believes that the lack of institutional dialogue is having a negative impact on the college's ability to ensure all components of the institution are moving toward meeting the elements and intent of Standard II (Std. II.B.1, 3, 4)

As described in the Report earlier, the College reported that it provides information about its degrees, programs and student policies in the college catalog; however, in the recent past, it has had difficulty in publishing a college catalog in a timely manner. For example, the catalog for 2003-2004 was not available until December of 2003. Questions were raised regarding the accuracy of some of the information used in the catalog. The College has committed to develop and implement a plan that will include a quality assurance component for the publication process of its annual catalog (Std. II.B.2).

C. Library and Learning Support Services

Oxnard College provides library and learning support services at multiple campus locations. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) building houses the Library and Media Center on its first floor, as well as the Learning Center and Tutorial Center on its Mezzanine. Additional learning support locations include specialized facilities for languages, Mathematics, Office Occupations, and Social Sciences. When not in use for classes or tutoring, two of the learning support locations also serve as open computer laboratories for all currently-enrolled students. The largest such space is the Mezzanine area of the LRC building with 60 terminals, and a second open laboratory has 18 terminals (Std. II.C.1.a, c).

The Library contains over 32,000 books, 87 serials subscriptions, nine microform subscriptions, one microform viewer/printer, and 14 student computer workstations utilizing a wireless network. Leased access to full-text serials is obtained through five databases offering over 3,000 electronic subscriptions. During 2002-2003, faculty and staff conducted 68,751 database searches (Std. II. C.1. a, c).

According to the 2003-04 Annual Report that outlines library and other learning resource service centers, the collection development of the library's resources (books and print periodical collections and databases) is uneven mainly as a result of reduced financial resources. The databases and the periodical collections provide recent information. The book and reference collections show the effect of limited budgets. The library's collection development policy lacks any mention of building periodical collections and the connection to databases that serve the student research needs. The library has a good informal working relationship with the local public library and the multi-library Golden Coast Library

Network, although the three VCCCD libraries do not seem to work cooperatively. For example, not all District students have borrowing privileges at all District libraries (Std. II. C.1.a, e).

Information competency is being addressed mainly in the one-time library orientation sessions particularly for the English 101 classes. Library 100, a 2-unit course that may satisfy an information competency requirement, has not been offered for three years. There is no plan to enable students to achieve these skills in a systematic way (Std. II.C.1. b).

The media center is providing adequate services to the faculty through its classroom delivery service. There are well-defined resources sharing arrangements with the Tri-Counties Multimedia Cooperative. The media center collection needs to be evaluated for closed captioning Std.II.C.1.a,e).

Conclusions

The Team has found that the College has not yet integrated the outcomes of the completed program reviews with the campus unit plans or the resource development and allocation processes. While the college's overall planning process is designed to be the means by which the College gauges its effectiveness and establishes new goals, program review, while well designed in concept and completed for most programs, is not yet integrated into any college-wide planning process, nor is unit planning implemented and acted upon to any meaningful extent.

College faculty members have created a thoughtful program review process, the results of which, so far, are only shared at the department or unit level. Program review results are neither integrated with College unit plans, nor are they considered in the planning processes conducted by the Planning and Consultation Council or other campus planning and resource committees. While there has been some attention to adjusting course objectives on course outlines to reflect student learning outcomes, overall, there is no evidence that any program other than mathematics is seriously moving in this direction. The College uses satisfaction surveys and California State University student transfer measures as indirect gauges of instructional quality; however, there is currently no plan described in the Self Study report or other planning documents to implement more direct and effective measurements.

The visiting Team also notes that the College does not provide evidence that it has been using research data to measure its effectiveness. While there has been discussion about student learning outcomes, goals to develop and assess learning outcomes in several program areas, as well as plans made to include outcomes in the Oxnard College Strategic Plan; few learning outcomes or assessment strategies have been established. The single exception is in the Department of Mathematics, where common final exam components have been used to measure course and program outcomes.

The College has taken an important step in employing a campus institutional researcher who has published an Institutional Effectiveness Report, identifying a number of significant "student outcomes" and "implications for planning" related to entering students' lack of

college-level skills and declining native-American transfer rates. Given the lack of a campus plan to address the problems identified in the report, the Team believes the College has not yet learned how to incorporate data and analysis into an effective institutional improvement process.

The Team also found that there has not yet been a completed review of student support services programs. Additionally, there is a lack of dialogue between instructional programs and support services. There were some concerns expressed by campus staff that inaccurate and contradictory information is being published in the catalog and that the responsibility for revising and editing the College catalog has gone unaddressed. There is a lack of institutional dialogue related to student learning outcomes, and there are not yet any student learning outcomes developed for the student support services and learning center/library.

The Team sensed that faculty and staff trusted the program review and planning process that has been established. It is important, however, that the process be fully implemented in a manner that leads to the development and assessment of student learning outcomes, is linked to an effective resource allocation processes, and a comprehensive enrollment management strategy be developed that supports a resource recovery plan.

STANDARD III: Resources

Observations and Findings

A. Human Resources

As reported by the College, the VCCCD has established and published personnel policies and procedures for the College. These policies are different for faculty and administrators compared with classified staff. All classified staff employees are covered by the provisions of the new Classified Staff Employees Handbook approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2003. Faculty hiring qualifications are set in Articles 2 and 3 of the collective bargaining agreement between the VCCCD and Ventura County Federation of College Teachers. In addition, all faculty hires must meet state-mandated Minimum Qualifications (Std. III.A.1.a).

The College Academic Senate takes an active role in the hiring of faculty, determining the number and priority. The Self Study describes faculty selection procedures that involve the faculty senate's faculty prioritization process and the unit planning process; however, the report does not explain how these two entities work together and/or intersect in the process of faculty hiring. While faculty play a significant role in the selection of new faculty, there does not seem to be any institutional criteria for what constitutes effective teaching, and what that would look like in the hiring process (Std. III.A.1.c).

The policy and procedures for faculty evaluation are set forth in Article 12 of the Agreement between the Ventura County Community College District and the Ventura County Federation of College Teachers AFT Local 1828, AFL-CIO, July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2004. Separate sections of Article 12 deal with classroom and non-classroom faculty evaluation;

and the evaluation of part-time faculty. Evaluations of faculty include student evaluation, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and administrative evaluation. The Agreement calls for faculty to be evaluated using the same process every three years. Part-time faculty members are to be evaluated in the first semester and at least once every six semesters thereafter (Std. III.A.1.b,c).

The hiring process for classified staff is also described, but the Self Study does not explain how the personnel commission policies are linked to the hiring process and unit plans process. The College reports that the process to hire administrators is similar to the faculty process; however, no linkages are made to the unit plan process and no entity within the institution is identified as responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the current process (Std. III.A.1.b,).

The Self Study reports that some faculty evaluations are not performed consistently. For example, some faculty members have not been evaluated in over five years. The college administration is planning to review current practices and revising the campus process of identifying which faculty members are scheduled for evaluation. Meeting student learning outcomes is not a part of faculty evaluations at this time, nor are faculty members held responsible for or evaluated on ensuring students achieve course and class learning outcomes (Std. III.A.1.c).

The evaluation of classified staff is described in the collective bargaining agreement between the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 535 and the VCCCD. All permanent classified staff personnel are evaluated by their immediate supervisor on a yearly basis. Administrators are evaluated by their immediate supervisor on an annual basis per the VCCCD Managers Policy and Operations Manual. This policy document specifies the criteria by which administrators are to be evaluated (Std. III.A.1.b).

Both the faculty and administrators are bound by published codes of professional conduct; however, there is not a similar code for classified staff (Std. III.A.1.d).

As reported by the College, in the fall of 2003, there were 90 full-time faculty and 218 part-time faculty members employed. In order to meet the state's required ratio of full-time to part-time faculty, six additional faculty members were hired by the College in spring 2004 to begin work in fall 2004. The number of part-time faculty decreased in fall 2004 as a result of these new hires. All full-time faculty members and academic administrators at Oxnard College all have earned master's or doctorate degrees, have established equivalency granted by the governing board, or have appropriate training for their teaching area(s) (Std. III.A.2).

As described earlier in the Report, during the past two years, the College enrollment has struggled with enrollment declines (a drop in nearly 2,000 headcount students), erasing all of the growth that had been achieved in the previous five years, and significant resource reductions. The resultant cost reduction initiatives have resulted in fewer staff. The Self Study and the interviews with a cross section of the College faculty and staff confirm that they believe they are not adequately staffed to maintain the effectiveness of programs and services to students (Std. III.A.2).

The College and District have published documents, board policies, handbooks, employee contracts, job descriptions, and job announcements. The College relies on district personnel policies, and the faculty union and classified contract for its policies and procedures. The Self Study reported that some of the policies, such as the Part-time Faculty Handbook, are not updated consistently (Std. III.A.3.b).

Although the College relies on district, board, and state regulatory policies, there is no evidence that the College has an institutional policy to ensure diversity. There is no evidence to suggest that the College community addresses the complexity of diversity issues through its policies and procedures. While the report states that, “all complaints and grievances related to discrimination, harassment, and other personnel issues are taken seriously and investigated,” there is no mention of the process of contacts to initiate a process of reporting (Std. III. A.4.).

The College does not have a comprehensive professional development program. As reported by the College and confirmed by Team interviews, since the state cut staff development funding, professional development activities at Oxnard College have been sharply reduced. There is no campus professional development plan, nor does the College Professional Development Committee chair see a need for planning since as is currently no money to fund such activities (Std. III.A.5).

B. Physical Resources

The College moved to its current 118-acre site in 1979 with the completion of two permanent buildings: the liberal arts building housing 20 classrooms plus science and business laboratories and faculty office wings, and a library/learning resources center consisting of the College library, learning center, general classrooms, and administrative and student services offices. The College currently occupies facilities with approximately 200,000 assignable square feet of classrooms, laboratories, and essential learning support facilities. The Team found the facilities to be in good repair, well maintained, well utilized, and appropriately designed for the programs offered by the College (Std. III.B.1).

The College has identified the need to update its physical resources. In March 2002, the voters of Ventura County approved a \$356 million bond for the Ventura County Community College District to improve its facilities. Oxnard College’s portion of this bond is \$110 million and is to be used to finish building out the Oxnard College campus site that was stopped abruptly after the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. These funds are planned to renovate, construct, and/or equip the following: Athletic fields and track, Child Care Center (expansion/renovation), Classroom building, Library and Learning Resources Center (renovation), Performing Arts Center, and Student Services Building. In addition, funds will be used to expand and improve the college’s infrastructure for technology, utilities, and parking. The College is doing this planning with the assistance of the College “Measure S Management Team,” but it is not using relevant data to support their assumptions on student and community need (Std. III.B.2).

The College has two different processes dealing with the allocation of physical resources. The collegial governance Campus Use, Development and Safety Committee is responsible for the allocation of current facilities. The Facilities Planning Committee is responsible for the overall campus planning in relation to the “Measure S Bond” facilities development process. The Facilities Master Plan (April 12, 2004) is used to guide the allocation of the new bond funding. Individual projects have committees made up of users of the project to guide the architects (Std. III.B.2).

The facilities planning processes need to link to other college planning processes. For example, planning for the campus technology physical infrastructure is needed and should be integrated with a new Oxnard College Technology Plan. Other programmatic facilities needs from the program reviews and unit plans need to become the responsibility of the two established facilities committees (Std. III.B.2.b; Std. III.C.2.).

C. Technology Resources

As reported by the College in 1999, the institution hired a computer specialist to provide Information Technology (IT) support for administrative areas, faculty, and staff. The computer specialist assisted the instructional areas by providing support to computer labs that did not have designated lab technicians. Technology continued to be pushed onto the campus, increasing the need for additional technology support. In 2001, a computer communications technician (fulltime), and a computer maintenance technician (60%) were hired (Std. III.C.1).

In order to provide responsive and effective support, Information Technology (IT) services were centralized in 2003. The IT department now provides support to the entire campus and off-site facilities for instructional computer labs, faculty, staff, and administration. This support includes system administration, desktop support, network administration, telecommunication support, college-wide communications, and budget administration (Std. III.C.1).

Various funding sources are used for technology purchases. No funding has been identified for complete replacement/upgrade for systems that are older than three to four years. The College and the District have many security protections in place, including firewalls and a separate password protected intranet; however, no philosophy statement exists that defines what is provided to the public Internet as opposed to the in house intranet (Std. III.C.1).

The College Technology Committee worked for a short period on a technology plan, but no work has been done recently. Some technology initiatives are being identified and implemented in spite of the lack of a technology plan. Currently, planning for technological priorities are made in unit plans and program review processes. However, unit planning and program review processes have not adequately addressed technology needs. A campus computer specialist reviews hardware and software purchases for compatibility issues; however, there is no coordinated plan to develop, maintain, and replace technology (Std. III.C.2).

D. Financial Resources

The College has financial resources allocated into a number of accounts that are available for specific purposes. The General Fund-Unrestricted account is the primary operating fund for the College. It consists of revenues and expenditures that support the instructional programs, instructional support services, student services, maintenance and operations, and business and institutional services, all of which are instrumental to successful fulfillment of the mission of the College. The overall level of appropriation to the college is determined by a district-wide allocation plan.

Financial resources have taken major reductions over the past two years. State budget reductions and declining College enrollments over the past two years have made for difficult decisions and a long period of uncertainty. In the 2003-04 Fiscal Year, the College had an appropriation of \$ 20,014,027, a reduction of 10.2 percent from its previous year appropriation, and only slightly higher than its appropriation for FY 2000-01. Conversations with business services staff and viewing state budget documents indicate these issues will continue to be a major concern during 2004-2005 and into the next fiscal year.

As described earlier in the Report, the College program review and planning processes, while appropriately designed, have not been completed, and are not currently linked to the College resource acquisition and allocation processes (Std. III.D.2).

Despite this uncertainty, financial accountability, record keeping, auditing and daily practices of generally accepted accounting principles, as verified in annual VCCCD financial audits, remain as strong components to the success of the business services function at the College and the District Office (Std. III.D.2).

As part of a multi-campus district, there is a requirement for close coordination between district accounting personnel and the College financial staff. The mechanisms that enable college and district personnel to track expenditures versus budgets are easy to use, as verified in discussions and demonstrations in the office of one of the instructional division deans. (Std. III.D.2.b).

Campus financial staff tracks their debt obligations, monitor variances and project their ending balances frequently with a number of different reports in an effort to remain within budget. Staff uses appropriate management information tools to do an effective job (Std. III.D.2).

In conducting an evaluation of its current fiscal circumstances, the College has expressed the belief that the Budget Allocation Model, which was adopted by the board in 1997 for use in budget development, was shown not to fairly distribute resources at the three colleges and district office. Past experience as described by the College is that in "good" budgeting cycles, due to the allocation model, Oxnard College struggles to provide minimum services. In lean years, Oxnard College then must make decisions on eliminating staff or cutting back on minimal services to be able to balance the budget. The allocation model does not help Oxnard during "good" budget years and is devastating during the lean years (Std. III.D.3).

Conclusions

The College was the last of the three colleges in the District to be established and has not yet developed the facilities comparable to the other well established colleges. Unfortunately, the passage of Proposition 13 occurred the year before the College moved to its current site. The effects of the reduced resources to the District and the College seemed to embed a perception within the faculty and staff of unequal treatment, a feeling that persists to this day. The comment was made by several individuals that Oxnard College is perceived to have a victim mentality. There is a widespread feeling by faculty and staff (indicated in meetings and interviews) that unfair budget allocations limit the opportunities to improve instruction and services at the college.

The College has not integrated the outcomes of the completed program reviews with the campus unit plans or the resource development and allocation processes. As an example, when individuals were asked how the College determined its priorities for resource allocations, they were either uncertain, or due to the lack of a fully implemented governance structure and the time constraints on developing budgets to present to the district, they thought it was done at the senior administrative level.

Given the sharp enrollment decline over the past two years and the resulting loss of revenues, the Team believes the major issues facing the College are the implementation of a college level planning process and integrating the results of its planning process with resource development and allocation processes. While there are a number of planning processes described by the College, it was clear to the visiting Team that these processes have not been implemented in an integrated manner.

The Team found that the technology resources issues are addressed quite well in the Self Study. Evaluations are clear and planning agenda items reflect issues that can be addressed as long as the agenda items are addressed by the college.

There is great concern at this time regarding reduced revenues. Oxnard College has already gone through two years of budget reductions which have affected staff and student programs and services. Reduced budgets will have a major impact on future development of the campus “build out.” The College believes it is now critical to evaluate the current District allocation model to determine if adequate resources are being provided to satisfactorily support the college’s educational program.

Since the College’s 2004-05 budget allocation from the District is based upon projected enrollment growth, growth that has yet to materialize, the College administrative team must communicate this reality to the campus, and continue to work to ensure that the growth target is met.

Oxnard College has received Measure “S” bond funds that can be the beginning of great change for the campus; however, due to reduced enrollment and the lack of an integrated planning process, the College may not have sufficient additional resources needed to operate

the newly built facilities. In addition, the College needs to reevaluate their projects to determine what is best for the community and how these projects meet the learning needs of its current and prospective students.

STANDARD IV: Leadership and Governance

Observations and Findings

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The College reported that it has established and operates a representational governance process as outlined in the Shared Decision Making and Collegial Consultation policy document. Participation in the collegial governance process includes faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Members of the college community can bring their ideas and concerns to their representative on the appropriate committee. Most committees have representatives from each department, including representatives from the academic senate, representatives from the classified staff, and a student representative (Std. IV.A.1, 2).

The College's seven shared governance committees include: Program Review Committee; Campus Use, Development and Safety Committee; Curriculum Committee; Student Services Council; Technology Committee; Financial Resources Committee; and Professional Development Committee. Each one of these committees has a representative on the Planning and Consultation Council (PCC), which serves as the main entity for shared decision making at the college and reports directly to the president (Std. IV.A.1, 2).

The College administrators interviewed by the Team reported that they are empowered to propose courses and programs while using collegial consultation to decide institutional priorities. Faculty leaders reported somewhat less of a sense of empowerment to find solutions for enrollment declines. As the most stable entity on campus, the Academic Senate leadership recognizes the significant authority and responsibility delegated to it for decisions about faculty prioritization and curriculum; however, the Academic Senate could be more proactive in taking the lead on issues such as planning and student learning outcomes. The continued investment by the college in release time of 2.0 FTE for senate officers indicates the empowerment the senate has, and reflects the accountability the Senate will need to accept to help the college meet its challenges (Std. IV.A.2.).

There is not an equivalent level of institutional support to facilitate participation by the classified staff as is currently the case with the faculty through the Academic Senate. As reported by the College, it is the classified individual, not the entire constituency that is primarily involved in the collegial governance process. Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the classified union, has the authority to appoint or elect classified members to committees where classified representation is required according to their collective bargaining agreement with the district. However, the method for selection is neither broadly communicated, nor understood. Development of a forum for classified staff to effectively participate in collegial governance and policies needs to be reestablished (Std. IV.A.2).

The Classified Senate had been the vehicle for collegial governance for years; however, it no longer has that role. The Classified Senate is limited to meeting at lunch hours, thus requiring staff to volunteer if they wish to participate in college governance. Although the Team observed a very active and well organized meeting of the Classified Senate, the Self Study reports concerns from classified staff that include the belief that there is limited participation on governance committees. The primary cause for this is that classified staff must return to their work sites to face a workload that has built-up during their absence, and must be handled with no overtime (Std. IV.A.2).

The College's expressed concerns about the Board and the District indicate that the college may be missing an opportunity to work more positively with the District and Board to strengthen the college. As an example, the insistence on building a signature performing arts center without addressing what programs and enrollment will be improved if the building were to be built, illustrates the college's attention on a resource opportunity without addressing the plans to increase enrollment and improve student learning. While the frequent change in presidents and chancellors has hindered institutional focus on improved communications and process of continuous quality improvement, the College, the Chancellor and the Board now have an opportunity to focus on strengthening the College and District (Std. IV.A.3).

The institution demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies, although the college was not responsive to all of the 1993 recommendations in a timely manner (Std. IV.A.4).

The college could strengthen its image and credibility by better communicating its institutional special qualities and effectiveness. The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures should be regularly evaluated for effectiveness and the results should be communicated to the college community (Std. IV.A.5).

B. Board and Administrative Organization

Oxnard College is a part of the three-college Ventura County Community College District. As part of the comprehensive visit, a Team composed of the visiting Team chairs to the three colleges and selected college visiting Team members dealing with leadership, governance and resource issues played the role of a visiting Team to the district. Team members had the opportunity to meet with members of the District governing board, the District chancellor, and members of the staff of the chancellor's office.

The VCCCD Board of Trustees consists of six members, five elected from specific service areas within the county, and one student representative elected by students at the three colleges. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects public interest (Std. IV.B1).

The responsibilities of the VCCCD Board of Trustees are delineated in the VCCCD Board Policy Manual. In accordance with established policy, the District Chancellor is expected to develop and maintain an organizational structure that best meets the diverse educational

needs of the students and communities. The College believes the District's organizational structure is flexible enough to provide for recognized differences in the three colleges and communities they serve (Std. IV.B.1, B.2).

While the district's governing board has developed and published policies through its policy manual, including a code of ethics and process for dealing with unethical board behavior, existing policies do not address a number of important issues, including: a process for assuring the quality and effectiveness of the college student learning programs and services (Std. IV.B.1.b); a self-evaluation process for assessing Board performance (Std. IV.B.1.e; B.1.g); and procedures for selecting the district chancellor and college presidents (Std. IV.B.1.j).

There is not an on-going program of board development. While new member orientation has occurred, individual board members have developed knowledge on their own through participation in state and regional meetings. Terms of office are staggered to retain continuity of membership (Std. IV.B.1.f).

The Board was involved in the accreditation process at the District level. Although the board's self evaluation process is not established in policy, the Board did complete a self evaluation as part of the Self Study process in spring 2004. In addition, the Board reviewed the first drafts of the colleges' self studies, and approved the final versions before they were submitted to the ACCJC (Std. IV.B.1.i).

The three district colleges' perceptions differ as to whether the board advocates for and defends and protects the colleges equally. While the Oxnard College Self Study questions the board's depth of understanding of what is happening in the District and at Oxnard College, Team members did not find that same degree of concern in the Self Study reports of Ventura and Moorpark colleges. Team member discussions with two of the members of the Board of Trustees and district executives, and a review of documents provided by the District indicate that there is greater Board understanding of the colleges and the need for the District to respond to community needs than Oxnard College faculty and staff currently perceive.

The College has suffered from a lack of stable administrative leadership. Between 1999, the year of the College's last accreditation visit, and 2004, the campus has gone through four presidents—two permanent (including the current president who was appointed in June 2002) and two interim appointments. In addition, there has been significant turn over in other campus administrative positions. This leadership instability has had an adverse effect on the operational management of the campus.

The College president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution. Through stated 2004-2005 goals, the president has begun to articulate the need to assess student learning and institutional effectiveness outcomes. The president had delegated adequate authority to the College administrators to guide the implementation of the newly designed campus processes established to assure institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by utilizing established campus collegial processes (Std. IV.B.2).

The administrative leadership of the College consist of the President; the Executive Vice President of Student Learning; the Vice President of Business Services; the Dean of Student Services; the Dean of Library, Learning Resources, Letters, and Social Sciences; the Dean of Business, Technology, Public Services and Health Occupations; the Dean of Math, Arts, Physical Education, and Science; the Dean of Economic Development and Community Initiatives; the Director of Maintenance and Operations, the Comptroller/Director of Evening Services; and Director of Institutional Research. This is three (21%) fewer administrative positions than the College employed in the 1999-2000 Academic Year (Std. IV.B.2.a).

The College is in the initial stage of learning about student learning outcomes and assessment. While the 2004-2005 goals of the administrators address these topics as well as continuous quality improvement and completing the planning process, the College culture is not yet one of evidence-based decision making or dialogue about student learning and institutional improvement. The College administrative leadership is committed to ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions, and to ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and allocation processes. However, key administrative turnover in the past several years have proven to be major impediments to the implementation of an integrated assessment and planning system (Std. IV.2.b).

In response to declining revenues, the District imposed a restriction on filling administrative positions which is still in effect. When vacancies occurred in two key positions, the Dean of Liberal Education and the Dean of Planning, the College was unable to fill the positions. The existing workload was distributed among the remaining administrative staff. The College attributes the loss of key positions, especially the Dean of Planning, as being a significant factor in limiting its ability to move important assessment and planning elements along in a timely, integrated manner, as called for in the original “Hub and Spokes” planning process (Std. IV.2.d; Std. IV.3.d, 3.e).

The Team believes that the concerns expressed by the College faculty and staff through their responses to the 2004 VCCCD Personnel Survey regarding relationships with the Board and the District indicate that the College may be missing an opportunity to work more positively with the District and board to strengthen the college. For example, the insistence on building a signature performing arts center without addressing what programs will be served and how enrollment will be improved if the center is built illustrates the college’s attention on the acquisition of a resource without concomitant plans to increase enrollment and improve student learning. The frequent change in campus presidents and district chancellors has hindered institutional focus on improved communications and continuous quality improvement (Std. IV.A.3.f).

The discussion in the Self Study about how the District is organized, the various councils and committees with membership including administrators, faculty, and classified staff from the colleges for information-sharing and decision-making shows that the District has structures in place to facilitate understanding and collegial decision-making. However, the frequency in changes in college presidents and chancellors contributed to some incoherence in the processes and confusion about the status and work of the various committees (Std. IV.A.3.f).

District leadership expresses intent to help college managers strengthen management and leadership skills. Senior college leadership as well as mid-management and faculty leaders could benefit from in-depth training in community needs assessments and enrollment management (Std. IV.A.3.b).

The concerns expressed about the Board and the District indicate that the College may be missing an opportunity to work more positively with the District and board to strengthen the college. While the frequent changes in presidents and chancellors have hindered institutional focus on improved communications and continuous quality improvement, the college, chancellor and board now have an opportunity to focus on strengthening the College and district. More evidence of collaborative work to achieve goals and improve learning would demonstrate the achievement of this element (Std. IV.A.3).

Conclusions

The leadership and governance processes in Oxnard College and the Ventura County Community College District have been in a state of flux for the past several years. The College has had three changes president and similar turnover in other senior leadership positions in the past five years. An experienced new Chancellor for the District was appointed in September 2004, which should resulting stability and direction for the District.

As a consequence of its recent financial difficulties, the District was placed on the California Community College Chancellor's Financial Watch List in 2003 and a number of campus and district positions were eliminated, including the district academic leadership position. Academic coordination for the District is currently the responsibility of a series of faculty and administrative committees which are of limited effectiveness. The frequent change in leadership has been a major contributing factor in the inability of the College and the District to deal effectively with its enrollment and financial declines.

The Oxnard College Self Study expresses the perception that the District and board have never supported the College equitably because it is not fully "built-out," and is not funded at a higher level to serve its larger service population of students at the basic skills level. The Self Study contains complaints and implies that this lack of support has contributed to the enrollment and financial difficulties the College is currently experiencing. The Team feels that the persistence of this attitude over a long period of time has compromised the ability of the College to respond to its challenges.

The College leaders, as well as all faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to move from this culture of "victimhood" to one of problem solving and survivorship capable of tackling the institution's problems. This the team believes can best be accomplished by setting goals that focus on improvement in institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes, and using evidence and analysis to evaluate progress and identify areas where change is needed.

The fiscal and enrollment crises facing the District and college coupled with new district leadership and board membership provide an opportunity for the College to concentrate on the future and put the past into historical perspective. Leaders at every level and in every

unit of the College should accept that they have the responsibility to create a brighter future for Oxnard College by more effective planning and use of resources (Std. IV.A.1, 2.,2.a).

In general there is a lack of coordination and connection between recently created decision-making processes and the internal operation of the institution. The College acknowledges the need for a more collaborative decision-making environment, but appears to feel that their economic crisis prevents them from fully addressing this concern. This is evident in the lack of “written action plans” to support a number of their goals, initiatives and planning objectives, and that many of the plans they do have are dependent on increased funding rather than internal reallocations.

The College appears to have a poorly articulated governance and leadership structure, other than that of the senior administrators. It is unclear what leadership is exercised by groups such as the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate, the student services council and the curriculum committee. Elements of a decision-making and resource allocation structure are missing or not yet implemented. Internal communication on processes, procedures, data and learning outcomes are inconsistent and undermines the college’s ability to create a collaborative environment, or engage in an institutional dialogue on important topics related to student success and the organizational infrastructure of the college.

The college president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution. Through stated 2004-2005 goals, the president has begun to articulate the need to assess student learning and institutional effectiveness outcomes. Although the president delegates adequate authority to administrators, together the president and senior administrators could provide stronger guidance for institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions and by ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning. The College President has primary responsibility for organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel as well as assessing institutional effectiveness. Since the district’s budget includes the enrollment growth dollars and the college budget allocation includes the growth dollars, the President is encouraged to communicate this reality to the campus and to ensure that the growth target is met within existing resources.

A good first step on hiring an institutional researcher has been taken, but the college should now focus on the kinds of questions and studies needed to assess student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness, as opposed to using the research office solely as a data acquisition source.

The response to nearly every part of Standard IV is almost totally descriptive and, as a whole, the Self Study lacks evidence and analysis. Claims are often made about the governance of the College and District as it relates to student success, but no evidence is provided on student success, or how student success has improved, or how it can be improved because of the way in which the District and College are led and governed. Typically, a section ends with the contention that “no plan is needed” even though a problem has been identified in the analysis section. There often is not any effort to link what the Board or College does in its planning and decision-making to activities that can impede or improve student learning.

There is an overall lack of evidence of dialogue about student learning and no indication of a college culture that is comfortable with and uses evidence to evaluate results and outcomes.

In June 2001, the Ventura County Community College District Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan 2001-2005. This plan, however, provided little guidance to the colleges as to academic or occupational program needs for the district, or priority directions. This plan appears to have done little in shaping a coherent, coordinated response to meeting community educational needs. In addition, the frequency of turnover in key leadership positions for the District and college, the practice of autonomy for college educational and student services programs, the fiscal and enrollment challenges facing the district, and the length of time since the last development of a district and college strategic planning process all indicate a need for the development of a new strategic plan.

The Ventura County Community College District Strategic Plan should examine current evidence of community and student needs, make use of reliable data developed with the existing institutional research capacity within the district, provide direction for the development of each of the colleges, express Standards for student learning and institutional effectiveness, and clearly delineate and communicate the operational responsibilities and functions of the District from those of the colleges.

The Ventura County Community College Board has five members who are elected to represent specific service areas in the district. There was some concern expressed about a pattern of behavior that suggests some board members appear to be spokespersons for specific colleges, particularly the one in the service area from which they were elected, rather than the District as a whole, or that they appear to be directly involved in issues that are beyond the scope of their role as a policy-making body (Std. IV. B.1.a; B.1.j).

While there is a board commitment to a process of collegial governance involving the faculty, classified staff, and administration of the district, there do not appear to be any published policies and procedures (Std. IV.B.3.a.) that describe appropriate roles and responsibilities. A survey of the College and district employees (2000 and 2004) conducted by the District indicates a number of areas where the respondents were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied.” These areas included items such as: communication among the colleges governing board relations, and collegial governance process within the District as a whole.

While the College and the District have been experiencing recent problems in the area of leadership and governance, the visiting Team believes that there are also significant opportunities to successfully deal with these problems. The current administrative leadership Team at the College is starting its third year. They have an understanding of many of the major planning, assessment and resource allocation issues they need to deal with, and are starting to provide a stable base from which to develop greater integration among the units of the College and among the colleges in the District. The District has appointed an experienced, new Chancellor in September 2004, who is pursuing an aggressive strategy to overcome the numerous problems confronting the District. Finally, the November 2004 election will result in the appointment of two new board members.

The current Board Chair, first elected in 2002, the newly elected and continuing Board members, and leadership team at both the College and district, have the opportunity to work together over the next several years to develop a well functioning educational environment, responsive to the educational needs of the residents of Ventura County.