



Southwestern College

Midterm Report

March 15, 2006

Submitted To: Barbara Beno, Executive Director
Accrediting Commission for Community
Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949

From: Southwestern College
900 Otay Lakes Road
Chula Vista, CA 91910

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Statement on Report Preparation

As the Superintendent/President of Southwestern College, I assigned coordination of this Midterm Report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) who serves as the College's Accreditation Liaison Officer. The preparation of this report was done as follows:

- For purposes of continuity and consistency, the decision was made in the Fall semester 2004 to follow the reporting structure used in preparing the 2003 Self Study. Thus the VPAA and the faculty co-chair for the Self Study worked as a team to oversee this project just as was done for the Self Study. An Accreditation Office was established, staffed by the faculty co-chair and a clerical assistant.
- Meetings with the co-chairs of the ten standards for the Self Study were initiated in February 2005. A review of the WASC recommendations and a list of the self-identified issues or action plans was held with each team of co-chairs. The co-chairs were introduced to the “action plan” template (a format designed to simplify the reporting of responses on the 328 self-identified issues from the 2003 Self Study). They were requested to submit the status of the action plans electronically and to provide supporting documentation. The co-chairs worked diligently to obtain input from individuals having primary functional responsibility for, or knowledge of, the specified action plans.
- Other individuals were solicited to respond to the WASC Recommendations based on their positions within the college community. The College Executive Leadership Team (formerly called the Executive Management Team) was asked to provide input to the Report as well. All contributors were invited to meet with the Midterm Report co-chairs or request assistance at any time from the Accreditation Office.
- A final draft of the Midterm Report was compiled by the Accreditation Office and reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team. Members of this team include: the Superintendent/President; the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and Human Resources; the Presidents of the Academic Senate and the Classified Senate; the President of the CSEA (classified union), and the SCCDAA (administrators’ association); and, the President of the ASO (Associated Students Organization). The President of the faculty union (SCEA) also reviewed the Report.
- With the approach taken to prepare this Report, the responses provided herein are the result of a collective effort and not simply responses based on the viewpoint of a few individuals. The SWC Governing Board approved the Midterm Report on March 8, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma L. Hernandez
Superintendent/President

Date: March 10, 2006



*Southwestern College
WASC Midterm Report
March, 2006*

Response to Team Recommendations

Recommendation # 1

**The team recommends that the College establish and implement a process for regular review and revision of the mission statement and utilize the statement as a key planning element
(Standards 1.3 and 1.4)**

Review and Revision of the Mission Statement

A comprehensive institutional planning process is currently underway at the College. Under the leadership of the Superintendent/President, the College Management Team (CMT) formed a subcommittee (the Planning Process Group) to study institutional planning and to propose a process for SWC. The last formal strategic planning initiative had not taken place since 1998. The proposal was formally approved by CMT in January 2004 and sent out for consultation with campus constituents.

Ultimately, guidance for the planning process was delegated to the Institutional Plan Steering Committee (IPSC) in January 2005. The Committee is led by two primary co-chairs and is comprised of six work groups with members from faculty, staff, administrators, and the community. The Superintendent/President and the Academic Senate President serve as *ex-officio* members of this body. Each group was assigned to study one of the following six areas identified as institutional priorities: (1) Student Success; (2) Student Access; (3) Workforce Development; (4) Fiscal Accountability; (5) Organizational Effectiveness; and (6) Human Resources. In addition, an outside consultant (KH Consulting) with extensive experience in management planning for educational institutions was retained to assist the College in this critical endeavor.

Revisiting our Mission Statement, as well as defining vision, values and measurable institutional goals, was at the forefront of this process. A day-long Planning Forum held in April 2005 was attended by over 100 faculty, staff and Governing Board members to give them the opportunity to share ideas and provide input. The focus was on discussing mission, vision, and values concepts as well as understanding the planning assumptions of important trends and developments that may impact SWC's future and how, in light of these potential impacts, we can best fulfill our mission and achieve our vision. The integration of key institutional processes, including resource allocation (human and fiscal), *Educational Master Plan*, *Facilities Master Plan*, and *Technology Plan*, will serve as the infrastructure or building blocks of the strategic planning process which includes the "balanced score card", a formalized system of accountability. Additionally, it is proposed that the new Accreditation standards serve as the approach or foundation for the development of the institutional plan.

[See Appendix 1.1]

Recommendation # 2

The team recommends that the College develop and implement strategies to ensure a supportive environment of trust and respect for all employees, in which the various constituent groups assume responsibility for its maintenance. (Standard 2.6)

Strategies to Ensure an Environment of Trust and Respect

Since the Accreditation visit in 2003, SWC has endured the challenges arising from many changes in administrative leadership from the top down and has weathered the storm of financial crisis and uncertainty. A constant, however, has been and continues to be the College's commitment to provide excellent educational programs and services within a supportive environment of trust and respect for all employees. To ensure that this commitment is realized the College has developed and implemented proactive programs and venues that provide the data and dialogue needed in order to address trust issues and reinforce a supportive environment.

The items listed below are representative of programs, activities, and initiatives that are part of this ongoing effort:

- A Campus Climate Task Force was established with the charge of studying "those aspects of institutional atmosphere and environment that foster or impede personal, academic, and professional development". Six surveys were conducted in Fall 2003 of all college constituent groups and the results and recommendations were shared campus-wide during Spring 2004. With their charge completed, the Task Force turned over the documentation to the constituent groups. At present, the Executive Leadership Team is discussing when to schedule the next survey which will provide information on how the campus climate compares to three years ago, and give direction as to how we can continue to improve.

[See Appendix 2.1]

- The Superintendent/President and the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs have facilitated budget forums for the college community and disseminated pertinent budget information for both the State of California and the District. During the height of uncertainty ensuing from the state-wide fiscal crisis, the College Leadership Council (CLC) formed a special budgetary task force with broad-based representation to address the financial challenges we were then facing. This approach was taken in part with the objective of achieving transparency, to the extent possible, in the decision-making process given the sensitive nature of dealing with budget cuts, etc. in troubled times. (Please see Response to Recommendation #7.)

[See Appendix 2.2]

- A Cultural Institute was established to promote cultural competency in our college environment. Various workshops and activities have been conducted to benefit all college staff and students through the Staff Development and Title V offices. Workshops such as "Cultural Competency", "Multicultural Course Transformation in Higher Education", and the Local Cultural Film Festivals and Cultural

Reading Circles are just a few of the meaningful programs offered at SWC in support of understanding the cultural competence continuum.

[See Appendix 2.3]

- The Diversity Advisory Committee, a District standing committee, completed a comprehensive document titled *The Diversity Initiative* in September 2005. This document is undergoing an in-depth review by all college constituencies. The Initiative has specific goals and activities with a recommended two-to-three year implementation. Equity and diversity are strong institutional values at SWC and the Diversity Initiative Statement is published both in the *2005-2006 College Catalog* and the *Spring 2006 Schedule of Classes* as follows: *Southwestern Community College District seeks to foster and engage diversity as integral to our learning community and in educational excellence. Diversity is valued as an essential cornerstone to civility, dignity, fairness, respect, and trust.*

[See Appendix 2.4]

- Under the auspices of Student Activities and the Diversity Initiative, the College Speakers Series Committee (with members from students, staff, faculty and administrators) was formed in Fall 2005. The stated goal of the Committee is “to host a learning environment that can foster an understanding of controversial, yet crucial topics that affect the quality and dignity of our lives.” For the academic year 2005-2006, the Committee has arranged for several speakers to present on issues relevant to our region under the general heading of “Positive Engagement: A Speaker Series for Global Understanding.” On May 11, 2006, Professor Cornel West of Princeton University, nationally known author (*Race Matters*, and *Democracy Matters*), will be speaking on our campus.

[See Appendix 2.5]

- The structure of the Institutional Plan Steering Committee (IPSC) itself and the strategy adopted to design a plan through a comprehensive process (it takes a village to create a successful plan) has ensured transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability. The structure of IPSC also includes an Executive Committee that provides oversight and recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Executive Committee membership is inclusive of the Superintendent/President and Cabinet, the Academic Senate President, co-chairs of the Steering Committee, and a representative from Institutional Advancement. (Please see Response to Recommendation #1.)

[See Appendix 1.1]

- The Classified Senate and the CSEA (classified union) have monthly meetings with the Superintendent/President to discuss issues specifically relating to classified employees. The Classified Senate sends out weekly updates to classified employees to keep them informed on campus issues of special interest to their group. The CSEA held a “brown bag” lunch during the fall with the President of the SWC Governing Board to discuss pertinent classified concerns and another such event is planned for this spring. The classified staff feel that although the College has made significant strides in attempting



to include them in shared governance and while the effort for inclusion has generally been positive, there are some concerns that still remain.

- In Spring 2006, a workshop on Shared Governance, sponsored by the Community College League of California (CCLC) and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), will be held for all campus constituent groups.

In summary, the college community is progressing collectively to create “a supportive environment of trust and respect for all employees”. This effort has brought the various college groups together to discuss, debate, and review what has occurred in the past and to assess where we are now. From these dialogues, plans are being formulated to institutionalize a framework that supports practices, procedures and policies to strengthen confidence in the District’s commitment to this recommendation.

Recommendation # 3

The team recommends that the College establish a culture of evidence, relying on data and analysis to ensure improvement of programs and services. In particular, the College should use student learning outcomes as the means to determine institutional effectiveness and, as previously identified in the 1996 AACJS WASC Accreditation Report, develop and implement a process for program discontinuance. (Standards 3.A.3, 3.A.4, 3.C.1, 4.D.1, 5.10, and 6.7)

Culture of Evidence

- The Director of Institutional Research (IR) position has been vacant since January 2005. SWC has, however, created a new position (in replacement of the Director of IR) which is entitled “Director of Institutional Research and Planning” and the College is currently recruiting to fill this position. The requirements for this position are in alignment with the current needs of the College as it establishes a comprehensive culture of evidence so that decisions for program design and improvement are made utilizing relevant and verifiable data and best practices. The Director of Institutional Research and Planning will be responsible for leading the institutional effectiveness review, providing data for Program Review, validation of prerequisites, institutional planning, accreditation and other such efforts which will assist both in effective decision-making and in determining implications of college practices, policies, measures, and procedures. Institutional planning duties are mostly defined by the annual evaluation cycle that has been built into the strategic planning process.
- The IR web page is currently being re-designed and will be updated by January 2006. This page will contain the most recent studies performed by the Institutional Research unit. During the past two years, the major institutional research studies have included: a suite of surveys to determine San Ysidro and Otay Mesa educational needs; Program Review survey and analysis; ACT: Faces of the Future survey and analysis; Student Equity Plan; and the Campus Climate survey and analysis (see Appendix 2.1).

[See Appendix 3.1]

Student Learning Outcomes

- The Curriculum Committee, which was fundamentally restructured in January 2003, meets twice each month to review both current and new courses and programs. The Committee is chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate President Elect, and is composed of faculty representatives from each school, the Presiding Chair of the Council of Chairs, the Articulation and Assessment Officers, a school dean, a resource person from Disabled Student Services (DSS), and other pertinent representatives. The Curriculum Committee has initiated the discussion of integrating student learning outcomes into the course/program review and approval process. Discussions are being fostered in other groups as well: Academic Senate, Instructional Administrators Council, Executive Leadership Team, and the College’s “Fifth Thursday” academic forums. Various faculty and administrators have attended workshops directly and indirectly related to student learning outcomes (e.g., learning communities and student retention) both locally and throughout the state. A team of seven consisting of



administrators, faculty and classified staff attended a three-day workshop in Glendale, California presented by WASC on Student Learning Outcomes.

- Two faculty members (the Academic Senate President Elect and the Articulation Officer) are serving as co-chairs for the Student Learning Outcomes initiative and a task group formed in Spring 2005 is scheduled to meet twice a semester. Members of the task force include the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, a vocational dean, two representative school deans, faculty and classified personnel. The co-chairs are in the process of making presentations to the various schools, departments, programs and services at SWC. Presentations are also scheduled for the Higher Education Center in National City and the Education Center in San Ysidro. Student Learning Outcomes Institutes were anticipated to be held twice a semester starting in the 2005-2006 academic year.

[See Appendix 3.2]

Program Discontinuance Policy (College Policy #7007)

The Academic Senate Executive Committee designed and authored a policy and process for program discontinuance which was sent in draft form to the full Academic Senate during the Fall 2003. The draft document went through an extensive consultation process, inclusive of the Instructional Administrators Council, Student Services Council, and the Executive Leadership Team, before receiving final approval from the Governing Board in January 2006.

[See Appendix 3.3]

Recommendation #4

The team recommends that the College establish, implement, and make known to the college community its planning processes, integrating financial, facilities, technology, and human resources plans to support its Educational Master Plan. The team further recommends that the College define the purpose and function of collegial consultation committees and councils, effectively involving faculty, staff, administrators, and students from both the main campus and the Centers.

(Standards 3.B.2, 3.B.3, 3.C.3, 4.B.1, 8.5, 10.A, 10.B.6, 10.B.9, and 10.B.10)

Planning Processes

- The current institutional planning process (as outlined in the Response to Recommendation #1) has evolved over the past two years with valuable input from the constituents of the college community as well as the external community. Planning forums were held specifically for faculty, staff, the Governing Board, and students (April 2005), classified staff (June 2005), and the community (October 2005) and attendance was open to all interested parties. An outcome from the concerns, suggestions and recommendations made by participants in these discussions, was the determination that the integration of key college processes, including resource allocation (human and fiscal), the *Master Facilities Plan*, the *Technology Plan*, and the *Educational Master Plan*, should serve as the infrastructure or building blocks of the strategic planning process. Additionally, it was suggested that the new Accreditation standards, with emphasis on student success and student learning outcomes, serve as a guide to the approach or foundation adopted in developing the institutional plan.
- The Institutional Plan Steering Committee (IPSC) was assembled with the goal of having cross-campus representation so that the foundational strategic plan could be created on the basis of a college-wide consultation process. The six work groups have been meeting on a regular basis and have participated in all aspects of the initiative. The attendance of these individuals from faculty, staff and administration has been of critical importance in keeping the process relevant to what they learn as the result of information gathering based on discussions in their respective areas. The commitment to an inclusive and comprehensive process for the creation of an institutional plan is evidenced by the continuing participation on the part of our internal and external constituencies that this planning effort continues to enjoy. The structure of the process has ensured transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness.

[See Appendix 1.1]

Purpose and Function of Collegial Consultation Committees and Councils

- Under the purview of the Executive Leadership Team, a task force undertook a review of the College's standing committees to: (1) clarify the charge of each committee; and (2) ensure that membership is inclusive so that individual interests are appropriately represented. An additional benefit of this endeavor was the elimination of redundancies or overlap between the committees which led to a reduction in the number of standing committees. A hard copy of the new directory listing the standing committees was distributed throughout the campus and the list is available electronically on the college website under Public Folders.



[See Appendix 4.1]

- As part of the District's commitment to review its multi-center organizational structure, a task force was reconvened in Fall 2002 and again in Fall 2005 to review the existing operational procedures between the main campus in Chula Vista and its educational centers in San Ysidro, National City and future Otay Mesa location. The main goal of the task force was to clarify district-wide relationships and practices, and promote equity and consistency for students, faculty, and staff throughout the District.

[See Appendix 4.2]

- When a new policy for the College is drafted by any college entity, the draft document is distributed for consultation and feedback from appropriate, or potentially affected, college constituencies, before being presented to the Governing Board for their approval. Groups on campus are very aware of the importance of adhering to the collegial consultation process. As evidence of this awareness, a consultation sign-off sheet was drafted and implemented last year as a pilot project by the Executive Leadership Team.

[See Appendix 4.3]

Recommendation # 5

As previously identified in the 1996 AACJC WASC Accreditation Report, the team recommends that the College develop a comprehensive Technology Plan that ensures end-user training on the full functionality of Datatel's Colleague system; integrates the functions of instructional and Distance Learning technology support; provides a reliable budgetary process for the systematic upgrading and replacement of instructional and administrative technology.

Develop a Comprehensive Technology Plan

The College developed and approved a new *Technology Plan for 2005–2010*. A Technology Taskforce, with a wide variety of constituent groups represented, was established and charged with this task. In addition, a Technology Planning Retreat was held that focused on: 1) identifying the College's technology strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and trends; 2) developing a set of technology visions for the College; 3) identifying and ranking a list of technology values for the College; and 4) reviewing and identifying a list of current and future technology projects and action plans. The *Technology Plan*, approved in December of 2005, will begin to be implemented this fiscal year, as well as updated and evaluated on an annual basis.

[See Appendix 5.1]

Ensure end-user training on the full functionality of Datatel's Colleague system

The College has undertaken a number of actions intended to meet this recommendation including:

- Development, installation and training on the Datatel Web Advisor system, online matriculation system, and online (Web Advisor) faculty interface to the Colleague system;
- Training on the use and management of the Colleague Budget Management (BID) System;
- Training on the use and management of the Colleague Student Information System;
- Hiring consultants to conduct a gap analysis and provide training on the full use and functionality of several modules of the Colleague system; and,
- An action plan will be developed for the Human Resources and Administrative Affairs departments for the purpose of automating many functions within those areas.

[See Appendix 5.2]

Integrate the functions of instructional and Distance Learning technology support

The College has undertaken a number of actions intended to meet this recommendation including:

- Purchased and installed the enterprise edition of the Blackboard Learning System;
- Established an Online Learning Center to provide technical support to online students and faculty;
- Hired an Instructional Designer to support faculty in use of online learning and instructional technology;
- Hired Online Instructional Support Specialist to serve as the systems administrator for the online learning system as well as provide technical support and training;

- Installed an online learning hot line as well as a help desk tracking system;
- Established an Instructional Technology Department to provide technical support to faculty using classroom technology every hour the campus is open;
- Installed or upgraded over 120 smart classrooms throughout the campus;
- Installed a classroom technology hot line as well as a help desk tracking system;
- Exploration of other instructional technologies for faculty; and,
- Development and implementation of an *Online Instructional Plan*.

Provide a reliable budgetary process for the systematic upgrading and replacement of instructional and administrative technology

The College has undertaken a number of actions intended to meet this recommendation including:

- Completion of an annual college-wide computer inventory;
- Additional smart classrooms, instructional labs, and faculty computers;
- Approval from the College Leadership Council to use the State Block Grant for Instructional Technology to replace instructional lab and faculty computers;
- Installation and upgrade of over 120 smart classrooms with funds from Title V, Prop AA and the District; and,
- Development of a Hardware and Software Replacement and Upgrade Process.

In summary, the College has made great strides in the past few years in the area of technology support and planning. The Academic Technology Committee (ATC), comprised of faculty and administrators, has contributed greatly to this effort. The effect has been felt by students, faculty and staff alike. The establishment of standards, replacement and upgrade of old computers and equipment, purchase of the industry leading online learning system, installation of over 120 smart classrooms, increase in the number of computers available to students, and the creation of an online learning center and Instructional Technology Support department have all had a significant impact on classroom and online instruction.

[Appendix 5.3]

Recommendation #6

To ensure fairness for all employees, the team recommends that the College establish, clarify, and implement hiring, promotion, and equal employment practices and provide appropriate orientation, training, and evaluation. (Standards 2.6, 7.A.1., 7.A.2., 7.B.1., 7.B.2., 7.B.3, C.2, 7.D.1, 7.D.2)

Hiring, Promotion, and Equal Employment Practices

- One of the goals established by the Governing Board for the academic year 2005-2006 was the review and revision of District policies and procedures. The Human Resources Department is administering the process; the Community College League has been retained as a consultant. The review process began in September 2005 with the first policy, “Program & Curriculum Development, Modification and Discontinuance,” going to a first reading by the Governing Board in December 2005 and receiving approval from the Board at their January 2006 meeting. The District has developed a timeline for the revision of all policies and procedures. Final adoption of Board policies is expected by October 2006. Final chapter review for procedures, which do not require Board adoption, is expected to complete the shared governance process by December 2006. This District-wide process includes review and revision of all Human Resource policies and procedures. Human Resources will begin the process in April 2006, following the timeline.

[See Appendix 3.3]

- The *Equal Employment Plan*, required by Title 5 regulations for all Districts, is under legal review by the State Chancellor’s Office. Once the local colleges, including SWC, receive the directive from the Chancellor’s Office, we will begin to implement the recommended changes and move forward to final approval. The Vice President for Human Resources, who was recently hired, is reviewing the current draft plan to ensure compliance with recent California court decisions.
- A joint Academic Senate/Administrator committee on Faculty Hiring Prioritization was formed in Fall 2003 to examine current college needs, future needs, and other models available that address the challenges associated with prioritizing faculty hires. At present, the plan is in the final stages of study and once completed will be sent out for consultation.

[See Appendix 6.2]

Orientation, Training and Evaluation

- The District has implemented a revision of its process for selection committee orientation. Each member of every selection committee now participates in a small group orientation, which provides committee members an opportunity to ask questions about the process in general, and/or specific questions regarding the position being filled. All selection committee orientations are presented by the Director of Human Resources or designee. This new practice, in combination with the service of a Hiring Compliance Officer on each selection committee, and modification of the protocol used for

checking references, has contributed to achieving the goal of a hiring procedure that is consistent and fair to all applicants.

- To provide appropriate training and evaluation processes for tenure track faculty initial steps were taken in Fall 2002. Sessions (three at various times) were held for all faculty (tenured and tenure track) to “engage in a dialog” to assist in gaining a better perspective from those in the tenure process as to their experience and opinions as to what could be done to strengthen the process. Next, a Tenure Review Procedures Committee was formed and began meeting in Spring 2003. The initial discussion for a review of the tenure process formally began with the Vice Presidents for Legal Affairs and for Academic Affairs, the Presidents of the Academic Senate President and SCEA (faculty union). Forums to discuss the tenure process were open to all faculty. The expanded Tenure Review Procedures Committee membership was comprised of faculty (Academic Senate and Union members) and administrators (both VP and dean levels). Draft documents were circulated on campus for consultation (Academic Senate, SCEA, Instructional Administrators, Student Services Council, Executive Management Team) before finalization. A significant outcome of this discussion was the unanimously supported decision to reactivate the position of Tenure Review Coordinator

In May 2004, a faculty member was appointed to serve as the Tenure Review Coordinator. The work accomplished by this individual has vastly strengthened the tenure review process and increased faculty confidence in the level of integrity and fairness in the procedure and thus their willingness to participate on tenure review committees as well. Just briefly, the Tenure Review Coordinator has: trained all tenure review committee members and candidates; been a presenter at the Teaching Academy for new faculty; held numerous workshops for new faculty on a variety of topics such as language acquisition, andragogy and the ESL student, classroom evaluation techniques and syllabus writing; and, maintains an open door policy for new faculty who may have questions or concerns. The Coordinator also assumed responsibility for chairing the Tenure Review Procedures Committee and has moved forward the *Tenure Review and Faculty Evaluation Manual* which is still under discussion with approval anticipated in Spring 2006.

[See Appendix 6.3]

- The Human Resources Department, in consultation with the College Management Team and the Administrators Association, has developed a professional training program to address administrative issues in leadership, management, supervisory, and District operations. These workshops are scheduled throughout the year.
- The Classified Senate and CSEA have worked cooperatively with Staff Development to provide training and workshops that are inclusive of: individual job coaching; portfolio development; technology skill building; Classified Staff Development Week; and, monthly meetings. The Superintendent/President and VPAA in collaboration with Staff Development and the Classified Senate have sponsored annual scholarships for classified employees to attend the Classified Employee Development Academy (CEDA) through the San Diego County Office of Education. This is a year long program covering such topics as leadership, supervision, budget management, human resources, communications, personal development, and team building.

Recommendation # 7

The team recommends, as previously identified in the 1996 AACJC WASC Accreditation Report that the College define and communicate budget development and budget decision-making processes to achieve College goals. (Standard 9.A.1)

Budget development and budget decision-making processes at the college have become more important than ever due to the instability of state funding, recent years of state fiscal crisis, and impact on SWC's budget. Public forums to discuss fiscal matters and to educate college constituents have become a consistent part of the SWC administrative landscape. Further, the communication process and discussion venues for budgetary matters have been changed to disclose information and promote greater understanding of the fiscal issues facing the college. This philosophical change in approach to information regarding resource allocation is an outcome of the institution's commitment to building an environment of trust among its staff. Sharing critical information and conducting itself in alignment with stated goals and in compliance with policies and procedures is key to being a trustworthy organization. SWC is in the process of creating transparent operational systems, such as its budget development processes, that disclose information and welcome participation from college constituents.

Budget development and decision-making process

Campus wide Budget Forums are held periodically in conjunction with State Budget development events. This is done to share information on a college-wide basis with all interested individuals. This information determines to a great extent the resources that will be available for the coming year (both increases and decreases). The anticipated impact is shown in user friendly methods and sufficient time is allowed for questions and input. This was initiated on February 7, 2003 and a total of six forums had been held through February 11, 2004. Under the leadership of a new Vice President-Administrative Affairs, the budget communication process has continued and been strengthened.

Budget Forums are held twice a semester for the campus community. The minutes, agendas, and other important pieces of information from the CLC Budget Taskforce are posted on line. Budget information is shared regularly at CLC, ELT, and through workshops held for the Governing Board. Budget and other key pieces of financial information and issues are presented and discussed, as requested, by the Vice President – Administrative Affairs and fiscal staff at various regularly scheduled meetings held by the Academic Senate, Instructional Administrators meeting, Enrollment Management Committee, and school meetings. This has been informative and well received by the various constituency groups and provides additional mechanism for communication of important budget topics.

The CLC Budget Taskforce in its expanded role re-examined its committee membership and charge at the beginning of the FY 2005-2006. The Taskforce will be looking for additional revenue streams to augment current state funding. Its role in budget development and communication will continue to be strengthened and improved this year and during the budget development process for FY 2006-2007.

Furthermore, through the strategic planning initiative, the budget development process will become an integral part of the strategic plan cycle with the completion of a new perpetual plan.

[Appendix 7.1]

Process and participants in the consultation process

Groups involved include but are not limited to:

- Representative constituent groups as appropriate
 - Preparation and submission of requests
 - College Management Team has responsibility for coordination, participation, and submission of requests
- College Leadership Council and CLC Budget Taskforce
 - Serves as budget committee
 - Reviews and recommends resource allocation
 - College Leadership Council Budget Task Force Subcommittee meets regularly to provide input and guidance in budget development, issues, and communication.
- President's Cabinet
 - Assists Superintendent/President in finalization of budget based on college-wide input, CLC recommendations, and income parameters
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Annual budget will be linked to this plan after it is finalized

In summary, the budget process has been greatly expanded in order to empower the college community with fiscal information and decision making capabilities. The CLC Budget subcommittee members represent cross college constituents and part of their responsibility is to share fiscal information with their respective employee groups. This information and participation will be instrumental when the College is in the Tentative Budget planning process in Spring 2006.

Further, the budget education component, which is critical to promoting staff's understanding of urgent fiscal matters facing the College, has been fully implemented via budget forums that have been well attended by college employees. As the institutional planning process is complete, the budget process will become more evident in the daily operations of the College. Our proposed planning process is based upon the integration of key processes (such as resource allocation) being included into institutional measurable goals. A component of the budget process will be fiscal accountability, monitoring, and communication. Key business and fiscal procedures that need to be revised or updated have been identified, as well.

Recommendation #8

The team recommends that the Governing Board establish and monitor itself as a policy-making body, delegate operational authority to the Superintendent/President, clarify management roles, and support the authority of management in the administration of the College (Standards 10.A.3 and 10.A.4)

Governing Board as Policy-Making Body

Building upon the strong and productive working relationship that was established in 2003 between the Governing Board and the Superintendent/President, the Governing Board, acting within its appropriate role as a policy-making body, has set the following goals for the Superintendent/President for 2005-2006:

1. Implement a thorough review of all district policies and procedures.
2. Conduct a comprehensive review of programs and services to assess their cost effectiveness and impact on student success.
3. Conduct a comprehensive review of the College budget to determine resources for long-range planning.
4. Establish periodic educational sessions by legal counsel on relevant issues.
5. Implement strategies to improve outreach to the business community to identify opportunities for support for the College.
6. Improve communications through regular updates to the Board from the Superintendent/President and regular messages to the College community from the Board.
7. Automate functions in the business and human resources divisions to improve the efficiency of these programs.
8. Implement strategies to meet cap in 2005-2006, including, but not limited to:
 - a. intersession expansion;
 - b. compressed calendar; and,
 - c. market survey of local residents.
9. Complete the strategic planning process to identify strategic goals and priorities.
10. By January 2006, the Superintendent/President should recommend a reorganization plan to address critical issues including enrollment management functions.

Clarify Management Roles/Support Authority of Management in the Administration of College

In an effort to ascertain a better understanding of the current organizational structure and its supporting administrative functions, the College is undertaking an organizational study to coincide with the implementation of the institutional strategic planning initiative. Begun in December 2005 with an anticipated end date in April 2006, the scope of the study is to determine the most effective organizational structure in order to successfully implement the new strategic plan for the college. A comprehensive interview schedule of the various college administrative functions is attached to demonstrate the comprehensive nature of this review. This study is expected to yield organizational improvements designed to address the future needs of SWC in relation to the goals and priorities that have been identified via the strategic planning process.

[See Appendix 8.1]

Recommendation# 9

The team recommends that the Governing Board systematically review and update its policies, especially those on academic honesty and academic freedom, and delegate the development and implementation of corresponding procedures to the administration. (Standards 2.9 and 10.A.3)

The Governing Board Review and Update of its Policies

As part of its goals for the Superintendent/President the Governing Board has requested a thorough review of the College's policies and procedures. In an effort to keep the College current in these standards for operation SWC has partnered with the Community College League of California (CCLC) and Liebert Cassidy Whitmore to implement their subscription service regarding policy and procedure.

A League consultant was hired in November 2005 to work with appropriate groups in revising all district policies. Timelines for a review of the various constituencies within the College have been identified.

[See appendices 9.1 and 9.2]

Recommendation # 10

The team recommends that the Governing Board establish and implement on-going Board training, as previously indicated in the 1996 AACJC WASC Accreditation, and includes a consistent self-evaluation process. (Standard 10.A.6)

Training

The Governing Board continues its commitment to on going training and to the on-going educational outreach series. Continuing in the tradition that was established in 2003, the Governing Board conducted its retreat on July 22, 2005. The retreat focused upon college programmatic accomplishments and established goals for 2005-2006 academic year.

The Board advanced its development by attending conferences such as the CCLC Legislative Conference and Board Chair Workshop, CCLC Annual Convention, and ACCT/AACC National Legislative Conference. Further, the Governing Board continued its already established practice of conducting Board workshops and information forums on a variety of topics such as student retention and budget outlook. Some of the Governing Board members participated in a training on shared governance presented by the State Academic Senate and the CCLC that was held on campus in Fall 2004 and open to all interested parties. In Spring 2005, Board members attended a training by the CCLC on policy service. A joint meeting with Sweetwater Union High School District focused on student success through the segments.

Also, special sessions of the Governing Board have been devoted to learning about the progress and status of college initiatives. Topics such as the University Center Project, Strategic Planning, and Otay Mesa Project were of special interest for the Board during 2004 and 2005. Please see the appendix for listings of the comprehensive topics presented at various Governing Board meetings that have been part of this entity's commitment to training.

During Spring 2006, the Governing Board will be participating in a workshop on the Brown Act and in a follow-up session on shared governance to the one presented by the State Academic Senate and the CCLC in Fall 2004.

[See Appendix 10.1]

Self Evaluation

The Governing Board revised its self-evaluation process, including the evaluation instrument in 2003-2004. The SWC trustees are pleased with the revised evaluation protocols and instrument as 2005 was the first full utilization of the new process and the results yielded great feedback for each of the trustees as well as the Superintendent/President.

[see Appendix 10.2]



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Responses to Self Identified Issues

RESPONSES TO SELF-IDENTIFIED ISSUES

Southwestern College reported over 350 action plans (self-identified issues) within its 2003 Self Study. The action plans were identified specific to the ten standards then in place for assessment. It is an understatement to say that we were overly ambitious! However, given the fact that the College was in the midst of internal turmoil, which eventually resulted in the dismissal of the Superintendent/President who had initiated the Self Study, it is understandable. The prevailing climate of distrust and uncertainty made it a challenge to enlist individuals to assist with the work needed to produce a thorough and valid assessment of our institution. Therefore, the participants were assured that the work they did would be meaningful and presented accurately in the Self Study. The theme repeated again and again was to “take a critical but loving look” at the College. On the positive side, these action plans are assisting the College to focus on present and future improvement of programs and services.

As preparations began for the writing of this report, the decision was made to establish a permanent Accreditation office in order to facilitate, strengthen, and institutionalize the accreditation process as an ongoing function of the College. The office will serve as a repository for supporting data, documents, and other materials deemed relevant to accreditation.

Please note that the Exhibits supporting the various action plans have not been forwarded with this report. It would have been an overwhelming submission and some documents are not available electronically. If there are any of the Exhibits that you would like to review, we will send them to you immediately at your request. Thank you for your understanding of this matter.



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Update on Substantive Change