

# EVALUATION REPORT

## CYPRESS COLLEGE

9200 Valley View Street  
Cypress, CA 90630

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  
Cypress College from March 14 through March 17, 2005.

Dr. Eva Conrad, Chair

**Cypress College**  
**Comprehensive Evaluation Visit Team Roster**  
**March 14 - 17, 2005**

Dr. Eva Conrad (Chair)  
President  
Moorpark College

Ms. Sally Ponce-O'Rourke (Assistant)  
Professor of Psychology  
Moorpark College

Dr. Robert Adams  
Vice President, Student Affairs  
Santa Monica College

Ms. Kindred Murillo  
Chief Business Officer  
Copper Mountain College

Dr. Carolyn Arnold  
Coordinator, Office of Institutional  
Research & Grants  
Chabot College

Mr. Marcelo Pimentel  
Professor of Philosophy  
Santiago Canyon College

Mr. Dave Bolt  
Dean, Educational Services  
West Hills College Lemoore

Dr. Donald Singer  
Member, Board of Trustees  
San Bernardino CCD

Dr. Steven Kinsella  
Superintendent-President  
Gavilan College

Mr. Glenn Yoshida  
Department Chair  
Natural Sciences, Health, Physical Education  
Los Angeles Southwest College

Dr. MaeFrances Moore  
Librarian  
Laney College

## Summary of the Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Cypress College

DATE OF VISIT: March 14 – 17, 2005

TEAM CHAIR: Eva Conrad  
President, Moorpark College

A ten-member accreditation team and an assistant visited Cypress College in mid-March for the purpose of evaluating the institution's request to reaffirm accreditation. Cypress College is moderate-sized community college and is one of two colleges in the North Orange County Community College District.

The college staff prepared well for the visit beginning with developing an organized and well-written self study report. The team room was spacious, comfortable, and contained information the team required to complete their work. Team requests both before and during the visit were quickly met. In addition to open forums and one-on-one interviews, the team had numerous opportunities to experience Cypress College dialogue in action during committee meetings. Team members were greeted with hospitality and candor in every interaction and were provided with open access to all documents, faculty, staff, administrators, and students needed to gather evidence related to the accreditation standards.

The team prepared for its visit by reviewing the Cypress College Self Study Report, responses to the previous accreditation team report, college publications, such as catalog and schedule, and online resources. The team noted that of the ten recommendations made by the 1999 visiting team, all but three have been met satisfactorily. Two of the three unmet recommendations focus on planning; these unmet recommendations are incorporated in the 2005 recommendations crafted by this visiting team.

Overall, team members were impressed with the collegial campus climate created by faculty, staff, and administrators and their dedication to students. The team observed excellent examples of instruction in a variety of disciplines. To acknowledge the college's good work on behalf of students, the team makes the following specific commendations:

- The college has made a great deal of progress in a relatively short time. The college community takes the task of dialogue seriously and has created various venues for collegial conversations. The college has dedicated resources to research, developed numerous components of planning, and begun to link these processes to the budget. By taking these important initial steps, the college demonstrates an acceptance of the 2002 accreditation standards and a desire to shift the college toward a culture of evidence.

- Since the last accreditation visit, the college has made impressive gains in providing students, faculty, and staff with up-to-date computer hardware and access to communication networks.
- The entire college community is commended for their focus on students and a dedication to this college's mission to support workforce development as well as transfer programs. The team visited day classes and night classes; transfer classes and vocational classes; online classes and off-campus classes; in each case, the team saw excellence in faculty presentations, student participation, and energy. One example of this college's unique excellence is the focus on partnerships that provide industry-level support for advisory committees, equipment, and networks for employment. Other examples are the exemplary programs for special student populations.
- The college is commended for the progress that has been made in developing institutional learning outcomes.
- The college/district is commended for using a management evaluation process that connects each manager's goals to planning objectives and solicits feedback from many members of the college community.

#### District Recommendations (Shared in Fullerton College report)

1. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and Chancellor implement a process to systematically develop and document strategic institutional goals for the district. The goals should
  - Provide a framework for the colleges' planning processes (Standard IB.4),
  - Include a review of the district mission statement to ensure that the institutional goals align with the mission (Standard IA.1), and
  - Be reflected in the allocation of district resources (Standard IIID.1).
2. The team recommends that the District Chancellor develop and implement an evaluation of the existing budget allocation model and make adjustments if appropriate to meet the needs of the entire district (Standards IIID.; IVB.3.c).

#### Cypress College Recommendations

After carefully reading the self study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Cypress College. The recommendations are organized according to three of the accreditation themes with the appropriate specific standards identified following each component of the recommendation.

#### Recommendation #3: Strengthen dialogue

The college must develop and implement a collaborative, inclusive processes that:

- Focuses on the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.1),
- Incorporates both quantitative and qualitative information in decision-making (Standard IB.2),
- Mentors all faculty and staff in the college mission, practices, and decision-making processes (Standard IIA.7; IIIA.3),
- Provides a clear and effective communication path for faculty and staff so they know how to advance needs that maintain and/or enhance students' learning environment (Standards IIIC.; IIID.; IVA.)

Recommendation #4 Evaluate, plan, and improve : Collegewide

The team recommends that the college move quickly to address the need to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. In so doing, the college must rely on the college mission and vision to develop a long-term educational master plan to guide short-term and long-term decision-making including resource allocations. This master plan must be developed collaboratively by college personnel and used as the foundational document for all other components of a comprehensive planning process, such as annual operational plans, technology plans, and facilities plans. All components of this comprehensive planning process must incorporate standardized data, contain measurable outcomes, and be widely disseminated. Once the comprehensive planning process is implemented, the process must be periodically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement (Standards IA.4, IB, IIA.2f, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIIA.6, IIIB, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.3, IVB.2b, Eligibility Requirement 19).

Recommendation #5 Evaluate, plan, and improve: Technology

The team recommends that the college rely on the educational master plan described in Recommendation #4 to collaboratively develop a comprehensive technology plan that addresses all components of technology resources identified in Standards IIIC.1 and IIIC.2:

- Academic computing needs,
- Administrative computing needs,
- Training for faculty and staff,
- Equipment maintenance, and
- Equipment replacement.

Recommendation #6 Identify and assess student learning outcomes across the campus

The college needs to implement and expand its strategic plan related to student learning outcomes. These outcomes must be developed and assessed for:

- Instructional programs at the course, program, degree and certificate levels (Standard IIA.2a, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2i, Eligibility Requirements 10, 11),
- Student services provided throughout students' matriculation at the college, (Standard IIB), and
- Campus support services (Standard IIC.2, IIIB, IIIC.1).

Once data on student learning outcomes measures are gathered for all campus programs, the information is then to be used to improve courses, programs, and services. All issues related to Student Learning Outcomes are to be regularly evaluated to establish a cycle of improvement (Standard IB.7).

**ACCREDITATION EVALUATION REPORT FOR**  
**CYPRESS COLLEGE**  
**March 14 - 17, 2005**

**INTRODUCTION**

Cypress College is the newer and smaller of two colleges in the North Orange County Community College District. The partner college, Fullerton College, serves about 19,500 students, was established in 1913, and is one of the oldest colleges in the state.

Cypress College was established in 1966 to assist Fullerton College in serving the rapidly growing populations in the communities included in this district: Brea, Buena Park, Cypress, Fullerton, La Habra, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Placentia, Rossmoor, Yorba Linda, Stanton, and portions of other cities, such as Anaheim.

Construction on its 110-acre campus began in 1966 and opened the same year to welcome 1,500 students. Construction is again visible at the college today, thanks to a general obligation bond for campus renovations and expansion as well as state funding for infrastructure improvements and a new library/learning resources center.

Like many community colleges, enrollment in the past five years has varied, from a peak in spring 2002 at nearly 16,000 students to the spring 2004 enrollment at 13,000 students. About half of Cypress College students are younger than 25, and about 40% of these students declare a goal of transferring to a four-year institution. College programs include general education courses and a broad array of vocational courses and certificates.

**Recent Accreditation History for Cypress College**

The spring 1999 comprehensive accreditation visit to Cypress College resulted in ten recommendations. The recommendation to address planning and research encompassed both college and district responsibilities. (See number 2 below.)

The college's accreditation was reaffirmed following the 1999 visit, with the requirement for a focused report and return visit in fall 2001. Of the ten recommendations, the three recommendations to be addressed in the return visit were:

1. The college must first determine whether the administrative organization is designed appropriately to enable the institution to achieve its stated mission and goals. Once the structure is determined, then permanent appointments can be made to enable the institution to move forward and to carry out day-to-day administrative oversight. (Standard 10B.2, 10B.3, 10B.4, see also recommendations 5.7, 7.1)
2. The college and the district need to address issues of planning and research so that they can develop a culture of evidence and demonstrate accountability. The college should consider integrating several of its different plans and then relying on the

integrated plans for resource allocation at the college. The college should consider a way to incorporate the research function into its on-going funding so that there is long-term stability for both planning and research. (Standard 3A.1, 3A.2, 3C.3, 4D.1, 5.10, 10C.1)

3. Cypress College should review its educational philosophy and vision to ensure that its mission is clear to the public, that it identifies its educational purpose, and that its purpose is related to the district mission. (Standard 1, Recommendation 1.1)

After an analysis of the focused mid-term report and the report of the November visit, the Commission found the college to have made substantial progress on all three recommendations. In January 2002, the commission accepted the college's report with commendations for "...the thoroughness of {college's} response to the Commission's recommendations as well as its self-identified agenda."

In fall 2002 Cypress College submitted a Substantive Change Report to the Accrediting Commission to extend the College's accreditation to include the Anaheim Campus. This request was approved in November 2002 with commendation for the college's "...thorough and well-documented report."

A ten-member accreditation team and an assistant visited Cypress College in mid-March 2005 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation based on the institution's request to reaffirm accreditation. The team prepared for its visit by reviewing the Cypress College Self Study Report, responses to the previous accreditation team report, college publications, such as catalog and schedule, and online resources. The team noted that of the ten recommendations made by the 1999 visiting team, all but three have been met satisfactorily. Two of the three unmet recommendations focus on planning; these unmet recommendations are incorporated in the 2005 recommendations crafted by this visiting team.

The self study document prepared for this spring 2005 accreditation visit effectively wove the self analysis with the college's unique history and characteristics, such as a collegewide commitment to collegiality and dialogue. The self study report is easy to read and complete in that it appropriately and adequately addresses eligibility criteria, each of the standards as well as subsections of the standards, the college history, mission, students served, programs and services, and delivery strategies. Throughout the self-study report there is a tone of honesty about where the college is...and where it isn't.

However, the self study report is incomplete in some minor and some significant regards.

Three examples of this lack of comprehensiveness are:

- (1) demographics of students are included without comparison demographic data on the adult population in the college service areas;
- (2) there is little explanation of how elements of planning link to other aspects of college decision-making; and
- (3) the functional map of the North Orange County Community College District relates college and district responsibilities to the accreditation standards rather than to functions within the college/district; therefore this map was not useful to the team in understanding the

flow of information and decisions within the district and between the district and the colleges.

### **Commendations for Cypress College**

Team members were impressed with the collegial campus climate and the dedication to students demonstrated by faculty, staff, and administrators. The team observed excellent examples of instruction in a variety of disciplines. To acknowledge the college's good work for students, the team makes the following specific commendations:

- The college has made a great deal of progress in a relatively short time. The college community takes the task of dialogue seriously and has created multiple venues for collegial conversations. The college has dedicated resources to research, developed numerous components of planning, and begun to link these processes to the budget. By taking these important initial steps, the college demonstrates an acceptance of the 2002 accreditation standards and a desire to shift the college toward a culture of evidence.
- Since the last accreditation visit, the college has made impressive gains in providing students, faculty, and staff with up-to-date computer hardware and access to communication networks.
- The entire college community is commended for their focus on students and a dedication to this college's mission to support workforce development as well as transfer programs. The team visited day classes and night classes; transfer classes and vocational classes; online classes and off-campus classes; in each case, the team saw excellence in faculty presentations, student participation, and energy. One example of this college's unique excellence is the focus on partnerships that provide industry-level expertise on advisory committees, equipment, and networks for employment. Other examples are the exemplary programs for special student populations.
- The college is commended for the progress that has been made in developing institutional learning outcomes.
- The college/district is commended for using a management evaluation process that connects manager's goals to planning objectives and solicits feedback from many members of the college community.

### **Recommendations for Cypress College and the District (Shared in Fullerton College report)**

1. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and Chancellor implement a process to systematically develop and document strategic institutional goals for the district. These goals should

- Provide a framework for the colleges' planning processes (Standard IB.4),
- Include a review of the district mission statement to ensure that the institutional goals align with the mission (Standard IA.1), and



- Be reflected in the allocation of district resources (Standard IIID.1).
2. The team recommends that the Chancellor develop and implement an evaluation of the existing budget allocation model and make adjustments if appropriate to meet the needs of the entire district. (Standards IIID.; IVB.3.c)

### **Recommendations for Cypress College**

After carefully reading the self study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and comparing those findings to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Cypress College. The recommendations are organized according to three of the accreditation themes with the appropriate specific standards identified following each component of the recommendation.

#### **Recommendation #3: Strengthen dialogue**

The college must develop and implement a collaborative, inclusive processes that:

- Focuses on the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.1),
- Incorporates both quantitative and qualitative information in decision-making (Standard IB.2),
- Mentors all faculty and staff in the college mission, practices, and decision-making processes (Standards IIA.7; IIIA.3),
- Provides a clear and effective communication path for faculty and staff so they know how to advance needs that maintain and/or enhance students' learning environment (Standards IIIC.; IIID.; IVA).

#### ***Connection of Recommendation #3 to Accreditation Themes:***

***Dialogue:*** Standards require that institutions engage in inclusive, informed, and intentional dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. The dialogue should purposefully guide institutional change.

***Organization:*** Standards require that institutions (1) identify and make public the learning outcomes, (2) evaluate the effectiveness of programs in producing those outcomes, and (3) make improvements based on the evaluation. Such "organizational means" refer to adequate staff, resources, and the communication/decision-making structure necessary to produce and support student learning.

***Institutional Integrity:*** Standards require that institutions communicate with stakeholders with honesty, truthfulness, and clarity.

***Institutional Commitments:*** Standards ask institutions to make a commitment in action to providing high quality education congruent with institutional mission. Institutions develop consistency between mission and institutional goals and plans, and insure that the mission is more than a statement of intention – that it (1) guides institutional action and (2) maintains student learning as its primary mission.

#### **Recommendation #4 Evaluate, plan, and improve: Collegewide**

The team recommends that the college move quickly to address the need to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. In so doing, the college must rely on the

college mission and vision to develop a long-term educational master plan to guide short-term and long-term decision-making including resource allocations. This master plan must be developed collaboratively by college personnel and used as the foundational document for all other components of a comprehensive planning process, such as annual operational plans, technology plans, and facilities plans. All components of this comprehensive planning process must incorporate standardized data, contain measurable outcomes, and be widely disseminated. Once the comprehensive planning process is implemented, the process must be periodically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement (Standards IA.4, IB., IIA.2f, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIIA.6, IIIB., IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.3, IVB.2b, Eligibility Requirement 19).

***Connection of Recommendation #4 to Accreditation Themes:***

***Evaluation, Planning and Improvement:*** Standards require ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement to help serve students better. Three emphases are: (1) student achievement, (2) student learning, and (3) effectiveness of processes, policies, and organization.

***Dialogue:*** Standards require that institutions engage in inclusive, informed, and intentional dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. The dialogue should purposefully guide institutional change.

***Institutional Commitments:*** Standards ask institutions to make a commitment in action to providing high quality education congruent with institutional mission. Institutions develop consistency between mission and institutional goals and plans, and insure that the mission is more than a statement of intention – that it (1) guides institutional action and (2) maintains student learning as its primary mission.

**Recommendation #5 Evaluate, plan, and improve: Technology**

The team recommends that the college rely on the educational master plan described in Recommendation #4 to collaboratively develop a comprehensive technology plan that addresses all components of technology resources identified in Standards IIIC.1 and IIIC.2:

- Academic computing needs,
- Administrative computing needs,
- Training for faculty and staff,
- Equipment maintenance, and
- Equipment replacement.

***Connection of Recommendation #5 to Accreditation Themes:***

***Evaluation, Planning and Improvement:*** Standards require ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement to help serve students better. Three emphases are: (1) student achievement, (2) student learning, and (3) effectiveness of processes, policies, and organization.

***Dialogue:*** Standards require that institutions engage in inclusive, informed, and intentional dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. The dialogue should purposefully guide institutional change.

***Institutional Commitments:*** Standards ask institutions to make a commitment in action to providing high quality education congruent with institutional mission. Institutions develop consistency between mission and institutional goals and plans, and insure that the mission is

*more than a statement of intention – that it (1) guides institutional action and (2) maintains student learning as its primary mission.*

**Recommendation #6 Identify and assess student learning outcomes across the campus**

The college needs to implement and expand its strategic plan related to student learning outcomes. These outcomes must be developed and assessed for:

- Instructional programs at the course, program, degree and certificate levels (Standard IIA.2a, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2i, Eligibility Requirements 10, 11),
- Student services provided throughout students' matriculation at the college, (Standard IIB.), and
- Campus support services (Standard IIC.2, IIIB, IIIC.1).

Once data on student learning outcomes measures are gathered for all campus programs, the information is then to be used to improve courses, programs, and services. All issues related to Student Learning Outcomes are to be regularly evaluated to establish a cycle of improvement (Standard IB.7).

***Connection of Recommendation #6 to Accreditation Themes:***

***Student Learning Outcomes:*** Standards require institutions to consciously and robustly demonstrate the effectiveness of its efforts to produce and support student learning by developing student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level.

***Evaluation, Planning and Improvement:*** Standards require ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement to help serve students better. Three emphases are: (1) student achievement, (2) student learning, and (3) effectiveness of processes, policies, and organization.

***Dialogue:*** Standards require that institutions engage in inclusive, informed, and intentional dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. The dialogue should purposefully guide institutional change.

**Responses to  
Recommendations of the Previous Team  
March 16-18, 1999**

**Recommendation 1**

**The college must first determine whether the administrative organization is designed appropriately to enable the institution to achieve its stated mission and goals. Once the structure is determined, then permanent appointments can be made to enable the institution to move forward and to carry out day-to-day administrative oversight. (Standards 10B.2, 10B.3, 10B.4, see also recommendations 5.7, 7.1)**

The college has adequately addressed the recommendation of the previous team to determine whether the administrative organization enabled the institution to achieve its stated mission and goals.

Prior to fall 1999, there were two senior administrators at each college in this district: a President/Chief Instructional Officer and an Executive Vice President of Student and Administrative Services. Following an organizational review in fall 1999, a new structure of four senior administrators was created and implemented:

- President (Chief Executive Officer),
- Executive Vice President of Educational Programs and Student Services (Chief Instructional Officer combined with Chief Student Services Officer),
- Vice President of Educational Support and Planning, and
- Director of Budget and Finance.

These four senior administrative positions are permanently staffed at the time of this report. These structural and personnel changes indicate that the college and campus seriously considered the recommendation from the 1999 visiting team and developed a plan to fit the college's mission and goals.

**Recommendation 2**

**The college and the district need to address issues of planning and research so that they can develop a culture of evidence and demonstrate accountability. The college should consider integrating several of its different plans and then relying on the integrated plans for resource allocation at the college. The college should consider a way to incorporate the research function into its on-going funding so that there is long-term stability for both planning and research. (Standards 3A.1, 3A.2, 3C.3, 4D.1, 5.10, 10C.1)**

The college partially addressed this recommendation from the previous team by satisfying this recommendation in the following ways:

- Three planning documents were prepared and widely distributed: Strategic Plan 2000-2004, Strategic Plan Report Card 2001-2002, and Strategic Plan Final Report 2000-2004.
- A process for instructional quality assessment has been in place for a number of years, and parallel processes for student services and campus support services were piloted in 2003-2004.
- Two research positions were created and permanently staffed: the Director of Institutional Research and the Research Analyst. This office now produces research that forms the basis for instructional program review and collegewide measures for strategic planning, such as student and staff satisfaction surveys.
- The Director of Institutional Research and two faculty leaders have conducted and plan to continue training faculty and staff on institutional and course-level student learning outcomes to develop the knowledge needed to move the college toward linking evidence to program improvement.
- Responsibility for the college's planning was assigned the Vice President of Educational Support and Planning who led the college in developing and implementing processes to review and revise the college vision and mission, develop a four-year strategic plan, and allocate one-time funds according to the college directions identified in the strategic plan.
- The former Budget Committee was redrafted as the Budget and Planning Committee to integrate planning and budget. In fall 2004, the title for this participatory governance committee was changed to the Planning and Budget Committee to emphasize that planning precedes budgeting.

Despite these improvements, the college has only partially fulfilled this prior recommendation.

- It is not clear how the district has contributed to the college developing a culture of evidence and accountability. The functional map of the district in the self study report does not outline a flow of information or decision-making, and both the district and the two colleges lack educational master plans to use as foundational documents in developing strategic plans.
- The college's quality review assessments for student services and campus support services are not widely disseminated and have yet to become fully integrated into the college planning process.
- Although the instructional quality assessment process has been streamlined, it is still cumbersome and is not directly tied to the allocations of resources for faculty and staff positions.

- The quality review assessments are not clearly tied to the strategic planning process.
- In the three documents outlining and reporting on the Strategic Plan 2000-2004, key performance indicators are not connected to the objectives. The report card for 2001-2002 does not use the same performance indicators as the original plan, but introduced the term “targets” instead. When the plan was evaluated after four years, some of the original performance indicators were used, such as the Partnership for Excellence measures of success, retention, basic skills progress, degrees, certificates, and transfer readiness and student and staff campus climate and satisfaction surveys. However, most of the original key performance indicators are not referenced. Written in narrative form, this final report does not link the measures to the strategic goals and objectives. In this report many of the measures performed below the target or expectation; however, strategies to improve these indicators were not included.

In summary, although the college has earnestly made strides on issues of planning and research, the college is still in the initial stages of developing a consistent culture of evidence to create accountability for the college.

### **Recommendation 3**

**Cypress College should review its educational philosophy and vision to ensure that its mission is clear to the public, that it identifies its educational purpose, and that its purpose is related to the district mission. (Standard 1, Recommendation 1.1)**

The team finds that the college has substantially addressed this recommendation.

The college developed new vision and mission statements in 2001 using a participatory process of collegewide colloquia. The vision and mission statements were reviewed and slightly revised again in 2004, with the goal of making the college’s educational purpose and student target population clearer to the public. The most recent vision and mission statements were approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2004. These statements served as an important guide for developing the goals of the college’s strategic plan.

### **Recommendation 4**

**(1) Curriculum development, (2) curriculum approval, and (3) Instructional Quality Assessment should be evaluated with two goals in mind: (a) encouraging program currency and new program development to meet changing labor market needs; and (b) thorough integration into the college’s planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes. (Standards 4A.1, 4A.2, 4A.3, 4A.5, 4B.1, 4B.3, 4B.4, 4B.5, 4B.6, 4D.1, 4D.2, 4D.6. See also major Recommendation 2)**

The college has only partially satisfied this recommendation. Curriculum processes have been reviewed and revised to include a fast track process especially for vocational programs that require timely responses to industry needs. However, despite efforts in this direction, the Instructional Quality Assessment process has not been thoroughly integrated into college

planning and decision-making. Specific examples of this important point are cited throughout this team report.

### **Recommendation 5**

**The major recommendation regarding administrative structure also affects Student Services. The college should review the administrative structure in Student Services with the goal of providing stable leadership and a cohesive student services program. (Standards 5.6, 5.10. See also major Recommendation 1)**

The college has met this recommendation.

Since the 1999 recommendations, the college completed its reorganization to create positions for two Vice Presidents: an Executive Vice President for Educational Programs and Student Services and a Vice President for Educational Support and Planning. In addition to permanently staffing these two positions, positions for three student services deans who report to the Executive Vice President were also filled. This blend of three student services deans with instructional deans reporting to the same Executive Vice President helped develop a stronger team between instruction and student services.

### **Recommendation 6**

**Cypress College should seek to identify and develop a common area (e.g. student union/center/cafeteria) or find other means to increase opportunities for the diverse student groups to interact informally. (Standards 5.7, 8.1)**

The college is in the process of meeting this recommendation.

Voters in this district approved a \$239 million general obligation bond for the North Orange County Community College District. This funding source provides \$62 million to Cypress College which the college plans to use in part to construct a Student Center scheduled for completion in 2006. In this new building, Student Activities will be located next to the dining hall, both of which will face the pond in the center of the campus.

### **Recommendation 7**

**Cypress College should consider incorporating a long-term funding plan for the fiscal support of the college library as part of the regular college budget. (Standard 6.2. See also major Recommendation 2)**

The college has met this recommendation.

Following a pattern of support with one-time funding for a number of years, in September 2004, the Planning and Budget Committee voted to make this library support a permanent line item in the college budget beginning 2005-06.

### **Recommendation 8**

**The college should examine and evaluate its entire staffing pattern to ensure that it can provide adequate support for its educational programs and services. (Standards 7A.1, 7B.1, 8.3. See also major Recommendation 1)**

The college has addressed this recommendation.

Since the 1999 accreditation visit, the college created and implemented an expanded senior administrative structure; the individuals hired for these positions have been retained in these roles. Also in the past six years, five new director positions were created and filled. Classified staff and full-time faculty have been hired as the budget allows.

As the college integrates the now-separate components of planning, a process of program review that views collegewide human resources needs in a comprehensive annual snapshot may produce a strategy to ensure equitable support for the college's programs and services.

### **Recommendation 9**

**The college should consider assigning managerial responsibilities for the budget to an individual who will then be able to coordinate financial matters and disseminate the information to appropriate personnel on the campus and be an advocate for the college at the district level. (Standards 9A.1, 9A.2, 9A.3, 9B.1, 9B.6, 10B)**

The college has satisfied this recommendation.

The position of Director of Budget and Finance was created and filled in 2000. This senior administrator chairs key committees related to finance, such as the Planning and Budget Committee, and advocates for the college in district planning and finance councils.

### **Recommendation 10**

**As soon as an effective district plan becomes available, the college should consider integrating its strategic plan with the district strategic plan. (Standard 10C.1. See also major Recommendation 2)**

Given that an effective district plan is not yet available, the college has failed to satisfy this recommendation.

The District Master Plan approved in 1999 has a greater focus on facilities than on an educational master plan or strategic operational plans. This document has been updated in recent years only as an introduction to the five-year capital construction plan. There are no plans at this time to develop a long-term educational master plan for the district.

The district's strategic goals are developed by the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees during his annual performance review. These final goals are shared with the college presidents who in turn use these goals to develop their annual goals. However, the district



does not formally develop a strategic plan that can be used by the colleges to develop their strategic plans.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The team found Cypress College to be in compliance with all eligibility requirements established by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges except numbers 10, 11, and 19. These areas of non-compliance are addressed in the teams' recommendations.

### **1. AUTHORITY**

Cypress College is authorized to operate as an educational institution and award degrees by the (1) Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, (2) the California State Chancellor's Office, and (3) the locally elected Board of Trustees of the North Orange County Community College District.

### **2. MISSION**

The team confirmed that the college recently completed a review and revision of its mission statement, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in November, 2004. This statement contains all information specified in the accreditation Eligibility Requirements and is communicated to the public in both print and online resources.

### **3. GOVERNING BOARD**

The North Orange County Community College District Board of Trustees is a seven-member body elected by registered voters within the District. Two student trustees, one each representing Cypress and Fullerton Colleges, are elected annually by students at their respective colleges. The team confirmed that this Board makes policy for the district and exercises oversight of its operations. Board members are precluded by public law from participating in any action involving a possible conflict of interest or from realizing a financial gain from their position as a Board member.

### **4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The Cypress College President is appointed by the Board of Trustees and has full-time responsibility for guiding the college. As the Chief Executive Officer, the President administers Board policies, manages resources, and ensures compliance with all statutes and regulations. The Cypress College President reports to the Chancellor, who holds a full-time position as the Chief Executive Officer of the North Orange County Community College District. Neither the President nor the Chancellor serves on the Board of Trustees.

### **5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY**

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

### **6. OPERATING STATUS**

The team certifies with no reservation that Cypress College is fully operational with students actively pursuing degree and certificate programs.

## **7. DEGREES**

The Cypress College catalog describes a variety of degrees and certificates offered by the institution. The majority of the college's courses apply to these degrees or certificates and the majority of students (87%) are enrolled only in degree-applicable courses; 11% of the students are enrolled in both non-degree-applicable courses as well as degree-applicable courses; and the remaining 2% of the students are enrolled only in non-degree-applicable courses.

## **8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

The team certifies that Cypress College offers degree and certificate programs that are consistent with the college mission and are provided in a manner conventional to community colleges and consistent with the eligibility requirements.

## **9. ACADEMIC CREDIT**

Cypress College awards academic credit in a manner conventional for community colleges and consistent with generally accepted good practice and state regulations.

## **10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**

The college has developed three institutional learning outcomes for students who receive a certificate and three institutional learning outcomes for students who receive an associate degree or general education certification for transfer. These institutional learning outcomes are published in the college catalog. However, the college is at the beginning stage of establishing student learning outcomes at the course and program levels. Processes have not been developed (1) to measure the institutional learning outcomes nor (2) to establish and measure student learning outcomes at the program and course levels.

## **11. GENERAL EDUCATION**

The team certifies that Cypress College has a clear general education component in its degree programs and that writing and computational skills are reflected in these requirements. Students are introduced to some of the major areas of knowledge, consistent with the practice at accredited community colleges. Of the 60 units required for an associate degree, twenty-five of these units must be from the approved general education list. However, the college is at the beginning stage of establishing and measuring student learning outcomes for general education programs.

## **12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

A district policy that supports and defines academic freedom is currently being developed. The college's statement of professional ethics includes a commitment to academic freedom for faculty and students.

## **13. FACULTY**

Cypress College's 196 full-time faculty and 386 adjunct faculty, all of whom meet or exceed the state minimum qualifications. With approximately 66% of the credit hours of instruction taught by full-time faculty, this staff is sufficient in size and experience to support the college's instructional programs. Faculty responsibilities are defined in the faculty handbook and the collective bargaining agreement.

## **14. STUDENT SERVICES**

The team reviewed the size and scope of student services provided by Cypress College and found them to be consistent with the needs of the student body and the college's mission statement.

## **15. ADMISSIONS**

Consistent with the college and state mission and California regulations, Cypress College maintains an open admission policy and process.

## **16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

The team found the current library and learning resources to be adequate in size and scope to support the college's instructional programs.

## **17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Although impacted by state budget reductions, the college and district demonstrate an adequate funding base and financial reserves to support student learning programs and services.

## **18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

The team examined recent external audits available for the college and district and verified that these audits resulted in no material findings.

## **19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

The college has begun the process of developing an integrated planning process; however at this time, the disparate planning components are not yet linked to one another and to collegewide decision-making. Much work remains (1) to refine, coordinate, integrate, and evaluate this planning process, (2) to establish and measure student learning outcomes at the course and program levels, and (3) to incorporate student learning outcomes in student

services and campus support services programs. The college is aware of and committed to these efforts.

## **20. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

The Cypress College catalog contains all of the requisite information and is available to the public in print and online. Although institutional learning outcomes are included in the catalog, student learning outcomes have yet to be developed for specific courses and programs.

## **21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION**

The self study assures that the college adheres to the eligibility requirements, standards and policies of the Accrediting Commission.

## EVALUATION OF CYPRESS COLLEGE USING ACCJC 2002 STANDARDS

This report pertains to a request for reaffirmation of accreditation for Cypress College. The college followed the 2002 ACCJC standards for this reaffirmation. In keeping with the theme-based approach initiated in the 2002 ACCJC standards, the visiting team crafted the college's recommendations holistically, weaving the standards and the issues into four themes in need of improvement: (1) strengthen dialogue, (2) evaluate, plan, and improve: overall, (3) evaluate, plan, and improve: technology, and (4) identify and assess student learning outcomes across the campus. In addition to these four college recommendations, there are two recommendations for both the college and district; these recommendations are repeated in the Fullerton College team report. Since the six final recommendations cross and link the standards, the same recommendation is presented as a conclusion of more than one standard.

### **Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness**

#### **General Comments**

The self study provides a clear and thorough description of the college's activities to review and revise the vision and mission statements and develop processes to evaluate institutional effectiveness. In keeping with the college culture, the mission statement for Cypress College was developed collaboratively in well-attended meetings by faculty and staff from the campus as well as community representatives.

The self study report also describes the college as developing and implementing integrated and systematic processes for planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and assessment. Although the team found that the college practice differs from these descriptions, the college has accomplished a major transformation in the last six years. Beginning in 1999 as a college with little integration of planning and budgeting and almost no reliance on research, the college now has taken important first steps in creating an integrated planning and budgeting process.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

##### ***Standard I A: Mission***

The college vision and mission statements clearly articulate a commitment to student learning and student success. In the 2004 version of the mission statement reference to student learning was added and the student population is more clearly defined compared to the 2001 version (Standard IA.1.). The mission now identifies the student population as, "...all qualified students pursuing their educational goals."

The vision and mission statements, approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2004, are attractively displayed on posters across the campus, in the catalog, and online (Standard IA.2). These statements are reviewed and revised as needed every four years at the time that the strategic plans from the prior four-year cycle are assessed and the strategic plans for the next four years are developed (Standard IA.3).

In terms of linking the mission to decision-making and planning, the college uses the vision/mission as the foundational document in committee work that focuses on issues that affect student learning (Standard IA.4). For example, the Strategic Plan 2000-2004 was intended to operationalize the mission statement by identifying specific college “Directions” or clusters of goals developed around a theme, such as, “designing and enhancing classroom instruction to promote student success and certificate, degree, vocational, and transfer education.”

However, the team found that the college’s intention has not been fully realized because the connection between the mission and the Strategic Plan is neither direct nor explicit. The evidence for this finding is delineated in the previous section on prior recommendations and in the next section of this report.

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

The college has begun to fulfill the standard to produce and support student learning measures by developing Institutional Learning Outcomes for degrees and certificates (Standard IB). The next steps are to develop measures to assess these Institutional Learning Outcomes, to use the information to improve programs, and to train faculty and staff on how to use these outcomes to extend the use of student learning outcomes to the course and program levels (Standard IB).

Cypress College is rightfully proud of their culture of inclusiveness. The vision and mission statements and the strategic plans were reviewed and revised in college forums that included faculty and staff as well as community members on occasion. These numerous meetings, task forces, forums, and retreats are documented with agendas and minutes. In addition, weekly bulletins are distributed electronically collegewide (Standard IB.1).

An analysis of the minutes indicates that participation is generally the same core group of 35 managers, faculty, and classified staff, with a wider circle of about 200 people who attend one planning-related meeting per year (Standard IB.4).

The self-study report indicates that most meetings and forums focus the dialogues on improving student success. However, there was little evidence in the minutes that student success was a primary focus in key committees, such as the Curriculum Committee or the Planning and Budget Committee. Although the strategic plan identifies student success as a key performance indicator, this topic appears to have been rarely discussed (Standards IB.1, IB.2, IB.4).

The college has made significant strides since the last accreditation visit in the areas of planning and research. For example, three planning documents were prepared and widely

distributed: Strategic Plan 2000-2004, Strategic Plan Report Card 2001-2002, and Strategic Plan Final Report 2000-2004. Clusters of goals, or Directions, that are the foundation of the strategic plans are derived from the mission statement. In the Strategic Plan Report Card 2001-2002, there are specific, measurable targets identified for each goal (Standards IB.2, IB.3)

While a process for instructional quality assessment has been in place for a number of years, the parallel processes for student services and campus support services were more recently developed and were piloted in 2003-2004. These program review or quality assessment instruments require all components of the college to evaluate program strengths and weakness and to establish specific goals for improvement (Standards IB.1, IB.2).

To facilitate the college's recent focus on research, an Office of Institutional Research, two positions were created and permanently staffed: the Director of Institutional Research and the Research Analyst. This office now produces research that is the basis for instructional program review and collegewide measures for strategic planning, such as student and staff satisfaction surveys (Standard IB.3). The Director of Institutional Research and two faculty leaders have begun training faculty and staff on institutional and course-level student learning outcomes to develop the knowledge base needed to move the college toward linking evidence to program improvement (Standards IB.1, IB.3).

To link planning to the budget, one-time funds were assigned to each Directions Committee to recommend allocation of funds for projects based on college goals identified in the strategic plan (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IIID.1d.).

However, the team identified numerous specific areas of concern with the current direction of the college's planning processes and strategies to measure institutional effectiveness.

- The district lacks an educational master plan to use as the foundational document for the college's strategic plans (Standard I).
- The college reports that quality review assessments for student services and campus support services were piloted in 2003-2004. However, the team could only locate the forms to be completed in this process, rather than an example of a program review completed by a department during this pilot process (Standards IIB, IIC.2, IIIB, IIIC.1).
- The quality review assessments for student services and campus support services are in the initial stages of implementation and the results are currently used only within the department; these reviews are not apparently central to connect planning to budget (Standard IB.1, IB.2, IB.3, IIB, IIC.2, IIIB, IIIC.1).
- Although the instructional quality assessment process has been streamlined, it is still cumbersome and is not directly tied to the allocations of resources for faculty and staff positions (Standards IB.3, IB.4, IIIA.6, IIID.1).



- The quality review assessments are not clearly tied to the strategic planning process (Standards IB.2, IB.3).
- In the three documents outlining and reporting on the Strategic Plan 2000-2004, key performance indicators were not connected to the objectives. The report card for 2001-2002 did not use the same performance indicators as the original plan, but introduced the term “targets” instead. When the plan was evaluated after four years, some of the original performance indicators were included, such as the Partnership for Excellence measures of success, retention, basic skills progress, degrees, certificates, and transfer readiness and student and staff campus climate and satisfaction surveys. However, most of the original key performance indicators were not referenced. Written in narrative form, this final report does not link the measures to the college’s strategic goals and objectives. In this report many of the measures performed below the target or expectation; however, strategies to improve these indicators were not included (Standard IB).
- Although the strategic planning process of developing and measuring goals derived from the mission statement is now entering its fifth year, there are no established, documented processes to communicate this college process to members of the college community (Standard IB.4).
- Similarly, there are no established, documented processes to connect the work of the various college committees to one another and to the planning process (Standard IB.4).
- There is also no formal review of the effectiveness of college processes. Any review of individual processes has occurred on an ad hoc basis, which may explain the inconsistencies in the parameters analyzed in the planning documents produced between 2000 and 2004 (Standards IB.5, IB.6, IB.7).

## **Conclusions**

Cypress College meets the standard to develop and use a mission statement to define broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to student learning (I.A). The planning agendas in the self study report include strategies to expand awareness of the mission statement and the uses of this statement in decision-making processes (Standard IA.4). Although the vision and mission statements are conceptually central to the college’s planning processes, the links between planning and budget are tentative and apply only to a limited portion of the budget (Standard IA.4).

The college does not yet meet the portion of this standard related to institutional effectiveness (Standard IB) Although the college is beginning to transition to a culture of evidence where information is widely disseminated and is central in planning and evaluation, currently there are only disparate components of a planning process (Standard IB). These disconnected efforts cannot provide the comprehensive, collegewide view that is necessary in order for individuals to work collaboratively toward the achievement of stated goals (Standard IB.2).

Although the college is proud of its reputation for inclusiveness and dialogue, the dialogue that includes planning and research is sufficiently limited in scope of venues and participants to question whether this college is making a genuine transformation in planning and decision-making (Standards IB.1, IB.2). Materials have not been developed to train college faculty and staff on planning processes or to describe how college decisions are made (Standards IB.1, IB.4).

The college has not yet successfully (1) documented assessment results that reflect the college's planning goals nor (2) communicated those results to the campus and local community (Standard IB.5). A primary reason for this is the lack of connection between the assessment results and the college planning goals and objectives; currently, the assessment results appear to be an interesting but unrelated list of research and program review results. With a direct connection between the goals/objectives and the reported results, it would be easier to communicate how the college's initiatives and programs help students and move the college forward in achieving its strategic plans. In the first cycle of strategic planning (Strategic Plan 2000-2004 → Strategic Plan Report Card 2001-2002 → Strategic Plan Final Report 2000-2004) there are numerous inconsistencies in format, planning terms, and objectives (Standard IB.5). All three documents report information without including how this information will be used to improve programs (Standards IB.3, IB.4).

Although the college has earnestly made strides on issues of planning and research, the college is still in the initial stages of developing a consistent culture of evidence to create accountability for the college (Standard IB). Links between

- the district mission and the college mission,
- student learning outcomes and the college's Strategic Plan,
- budgeting and planning, and
- the institutional learning outcomes and planning

were unclear to many faculty, staff, and administrators at Cypress College and therefore, to the accrediting team (Standards IB.1, IB.4, IB.6).

Once established, a comprehensive planning process must be clearly articulated, widely distributed to faculty and staff, and periodically reviewed (Standards IB.1, IB.4, IB.6, IB.7).

### **Recommendation for Cypress College and the District** (Shared in Fullerton College report)

1. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and Chancellor implement a process to systematically develop and document strategic institutional goals for the district. These goals should

- Provide a framework for the colleges' planning processes (Standard IB.4),
- Include a review of the district mission statement to ensure that the institutional goals align with the mission (Standard IA.1), and
- Be reflected in the allocation of district resources (Standard IIID.1).

### **Recommendations for Cypress College**

### Recommendation: Strengthen dialogue

The college must develop and implement a collaborative, inclusive processes that:

- Focuses on the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.1),
- Incorporates both quantitative and qualitative information in decision-making (Standard IB.2),
- Mentors all faculty and staff in the college mission, practices, and decision-making processes (Standard IIA.7; IIIA.3),
- Provides a clear and effective communication path for faculty and staff so they know how to advance needs that maintain and/or enhance students' learning environment (Standards IIIC; IIID; IVA)

### Recommendation: Evaluate, plan, and improve: Collegewide

Echoing a prior recommendation from 1999, this team recommends that the college move quickly to address the need to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. In so doing, the college must rely on the college mission and vision to develop a long-term educational master plan to guide short-term and long-term decision-making including resource allocations. This master plan must be developed collaboratively by college personnel and used as the foundational document for all other components of a comprehensive planning process, such as annual operational plans, technology plans, and facilities plans. All components of this comprehensive planning process must incorporate standardized data, contain measurable outcomes, and be widely disseminated. Once the comprehensive planning process is implemented, the process must be periodically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement (Standards IA.4, IB, IIA.2f, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIIA.6, IIIB, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.3, IVB.2b, and Eligibility Requirement 19).

## **Standard II**

### **Student Learning Programs and Services**

#### **General Comments**

Cypress College serves students in the North Orange County Community College District by offering quality instructional programs tailored to the college mission by inviting students to take advantage of the college's opportunities for academic, vocational and basic skills education. These programs are offered on campus during the day and evening. Cypress College's Anaheim Campus, about 5 miles from the college, is the permanent location for one vocational program (Culinary Arts) and the temporary location for a second vocational program (Court Reporting).

The college catalog clearly identifies the course requirements for various degree and certificate programs. These instructional programs are offered through both traditional and distance education modes of delivery. The number of courses offered through online modes has significantly increased in recent years.

The college and district have established and implemented processes to ensure alignment of curriculum with the college mission and state regulations. New curriculum and course/program revisions are reviewed at both the college and district levels through the campus Curriculum Committee and at the district Curriculum Coordinating Committee prior to review by the Board of Trustees. Once established, the college documents the ongoing integrity of its curriculum through program reviews conducted every four years, designated as an Instructional Quality Assessment Validation. The primary assessment in these program reviews are data such as enrollment trends, student achievement, and retention, and student satisfaction surveys. Departments' self-reflections include a review of course outlines for currency and the development of actionable plans for program improvement.

The college has developed and published six Institutional Learning Outcomes, three for students seeking certificates and three for students seeking degrees (Standard IIA.6). The assessment of these outcomes and their use to improve programs is at the beginning stages as is the establishment and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course and program levels.

Vocational education programs partner with businesses and monitor state licensing requirements to ensure the quality and currency of instruction in vocational disciplines (Standards IIA.2a, IIA.2b).

To support instruction, Cypress College facilitates student success by providing accurate publications and establishing services and programs to support student learning, such as basic skills assessment, orientation, disabled students program and services, equal opportunity program and services, the Black Studies Learning Community, the Puente Program, the Re-Entry Program, and International Students Program.

Library and learning center services support the college's mission, programs of instruction, and the students it serves. Construction of a new Library/Learning Resources Center is located in the center of the campus with an anticipated spring 2006 completion date. The new center will provide space for the consolidation of learning support services including the library collection, the learning center, and a writing center. Staffing for a new position, Dean of Library/Learning Resources, is in process.

## **Findings and Evidence**

### ***Standard II. A: Instructional Programs***

The college and district processes for the development and revision of curriculum, including delivery mode, are well-understood by faculty and staff and support the vitality and integrity of the college's instructional programs (Standards IIA.2a, IIA.2c, Policy on Distance Education). All vocational and academic degrees awarded by Cypress College include the appropriate components of general education as well as focused study in a major (Standards IIA.3, IIA.4). Criteria used by the Curriculum Committee to determine whether a course may be used to fulfill general education requirements are clearly defined (Standard IIA.3).

The Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process is required for all instructional programs on a four-year cycle and incorporates instruction provided at both college sites and in both traditional and distance education delivery methods (Standard IIA.1, Policy on Distance Education).

However, the team found little evidence of links between assessment of student learning outcomes and the every-four-year Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process (Standard IIA.1a, Policy on Distance Education). The most recent revisions of the Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process requires (1) an annual, short-form of this program review process and (2) the inclusion of student learning outcomes at the course level to be included in course outlines. However, most members of the college community could not describe to team members how student learning outcome data or the existing Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process will be used to improve programs (Standards IB.1, IIA.1a).

In fall 2004, the college identified college-level student learning outcomes at the institutional level through a series of meetings and forums. During the first half of spring 2005, faculty completed a matrix that indicates (1) which courses in their disciplines offered students specific components related to these institutional learning outcomes and (2) whether those opportunities were offered to students at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced levels of the student learning outcome. The matrix was completed in each division, supported by training from the Director of Institutional Research and two faculty leaders (Standards IB.1, IIA.1c). The team found that most members of the college community could not explain the next steps in the process for assessing institutional learning outcomes nor how the information would be used to improve programs (Standards IB.1, IIA.1c).

In this academic year, the college is taking the initial steps of training the campus community on how to develop student learning outcomes at the course and program levels beginning with workshops conducted in fall 2004 (Standard IIB.1c). However there is not yet a clear campuswide understanding of how to establish, assess, and use student learning outcomes at any level. In order to minimize faculty resistance and provide incentives for participation in work on student learning outcomes, faculty members receive educational credit units. In the college's self study report, encouraging faculty and staff understanding of the benefits of student learning outcomes is the first Planning Agenda item of Standard II.

Cypress College's vocational programs and degrees are clearly related to the college mission and maintain a dual focus on student success and economic development (Standard IIA.5). In particular, the health sciences, automotive technology, and tourism/airline programs document student success in both program completion and the use of active advisory committees that support the college's programs with industry-level equipment and networks for employment (Standards IIA.1b, IIA.2b). Many of these vocational programs collaborate with English and other disciplines to ensure that communication skills are addressed and meet student needs (Standard IIA.2d).

In an initiative to increase student transfer, Cypress College has created several programs tailored to specific student needs related to transfer. Three of these are the Puente Program, the Transfer Alliance Program which is an honors program link with UCLA, and the use of Supplemental Instruction strategies to increase course completion rates in high risk courses (Standard IIA.2d).

Thanks to a Title V grant, Cypress College has initiated other strategies to accommodate a broader range of students' learning needs, such as faculty training workshops on using technology in the classroom and the creation of online and hybrid courses (Standard IIA.2d). As reported in the self study, student success in online courses is documented, but these data do not appear to be used to make improvements in this delivery option (Standard IIA.2a).

Online courses are approved by the Curriculum Committee, and an Online Advisory Committee chaired by the Online Coordinator develops policies related to online courses (Standard IIA.2d, Policy on Distance Education). Faculty and students involved in online instruction are required to participate in a well-organized online orientation program. The hybrid course orientation involves faculty development of student learning outcomes and assessment from existing course objectives. In addition to 40% reassigned time for the Online Coordinator, additional support is requested in the form of a help desk to assist faculty and students encountering technical problems.

Although departmental examinations are used in health sciences and English, these instruments have not yet been formally validated to ensure alignment with student learning outcomes or an absence of test bias (Standard IIA.2g).

The college's instructional degrees and certificates and, policies are communicated to the public both in print and electronically as well as in individual and group sessions with counseling faculty (Standard IIA.6). Transfer status and policies are monitored by an

articulation officer and are communicated to the public through the college catalog and class schedules (Standard IIA.6a).

The college and district do not currently have written policies for program discontinuance or academic freedom, although leaders are aware that both policies need to be developed and draft of both policies are currently under review at the Chancellor's Cabinet (Standards IIA.6b, IIA.7a).

College policies for student conduct, including academic honesty, are published in the catalog and on the website (Standards IIA.7b, IIA.7c). Codes of ethics for faculty, Board of Trustees, and management personnel are documented in the faculty handbook and board policy. A code of ethics for staff is currently being developed (Standards IIA.7c, III.A.1d).

### ***IIB. Student Support Services***

The college is committed to providing services to support students' educational goals. Students are invited to take advantage of a comprehensive range of student support services located across the campus (Standard IIB.1).

Services for all students include basic skills assessment, college orientations, assessments to guide placement in college-level courses, and counseling services. Services for students with special needs include disabled students programs and services, equal opportunity programs and services, the adult re-entry center, the Black Studies Learning Community, Puente Program, and CARE/CalWORKS programs. A new Student Center is under construction and will consolidate campus student services under one roof.

The college catalog, available in print and online, includes all required information and policies (Standard IIB.2). In addition the printed and online versions of class schedules include course descriptions.

Services are provided to students on campus during the day and evening, at the Anaheim Campus, and online (Standard IIB.3a). The college's use of the internet as a means of providing information to students has dramatically increased in the past six years. Online applications are used by 70 percent of the students and those who register online can access relevant campus services such as Financial Aid, counseling, and tutoring.

Cypress College creates an environment for the development of students' interpersonal skills and awareness of civic responsibilities through both coursework and extracurricular activities (Standard IIB.3c). The college's general education requirements have been expanded beyond the minimum units required by the state to include a cultural diversity requirement. Associated Students provide opportunities for students to become involved in campus and state governance. Athletic teams, clubs, the college newspaper, and performance opportunities provide opportunities for students to be involved.

General counseling is available to students across the campus dispersed according to majors during the day and centralized in one building during the evening. In addition to general counseling, specialized programs are also available to students, such as transfer and financial

aid counseling. At the current time, these services are assessed primarily through student satisfaction surveys (Standard IIB.3c). Some aspects of counseling services have taken the initiative to use survey results to improve the programs offered to students. However, the use of such assessment data is not consistent throughout all counseling services (Standard IIB.4).

The requirement for comprehensive program review of all student services programs, titled the Student Support Quality Review, has not yet been implemented even though the process was developed and piloted over a year prior to the accreditation site visit (Standard IIB.3c). As proposed, this process will not lead to collegewide dialogue regarding support services since the program review will only be distributed to managers (Standard IB.1). In addition, the program review is not yet tied to resource allocation (Standards IIB.4, IIID.1a).

The college's core value of inclusiveness is demonstrated in the strategies used to make the entire college community aware of issues related to diversity (Standard IIB.3d). Training begins with faculty and staff Equal Employment Opportunity training on hiring committees, periodic sexual harassment training, and staff development activities focused on diversity. This value is expressed to students by the college's provision of open forums on topics related to diversity and tolerance, the degree requirement that students complete a course in cultural pluralism, and specialized clubs and programs.

In adherence with state regulations for matriculation, the college's standardized assessment and placement instruments are routinely validated (Standard IIB.3e). Students are accommodated if they need special assistance during the administration of these placement tools. The college fulfills all requirements to maintain student records permanently and securely (Standard IIB.3f).

Student support services have not yet launched a college-wide approach to student learning outcomes and program review. A cycle of planning, review, and evaluation is new territory for student services (Standards IIB, IIB.3c, IIB.4).

### ***IIC. Library and Learning Support Services***

Learning support services are currently available at a number of attractive well-utilized service points on the campus, including the library, discipline-specific learning centers, and computer laboratories (Standard IIC). The Learning Center and Writing Center are open to all students while discipline-specific centers and laboratories are dedicated to serving students enrolled in specific courses (Standard IIC).

The Learning Center provides support instruction in reading, foreign languages, and English as a second language through computerized reviews as well as one-on-one tutoring. Access to word processing and the internet are also available.

To augment the collection of 60,900 books, periodicals, and media titles, the library subscribes to 20 electronic databases and offers access to internet resources. A survey of the online catalog indicates that resources reflect the breadth of the college curriculum. However, there is concern about the currency of materials. Collection analysis data indicates that 57



percent of the general collection and 47 percent of the collection in the sciences are more than fifteen years old (Standard IIC.1).

In accordance with the Cypress College Collection Development Policy, the selection of new materials is based on student information needs, faculty requests, new courses, and collection deficits identified by the library staff. Librarians attend department meetings and send written solicitations to encourage faculty participation in the selection process. New course proposal forms have a check off indicating that the faculty member submitting the proposal has consulted with a librarian regarding additional library resources that are required for the course. Learning support services personnel select materials in consultation with appropriate faculty (Standard IIC.1a).

Both the library and learning center provide class orientations and one-on-one instruction to guide students in the effective use of these campus resources. This library orientation is also available on CD-ROM as are step-by-step tutorials for faculty classroom use. An online library research tutorial is available on the library website. A dialogue among librarians, the Curriculum Committee, and English faculty resulted in development of a course, Library 100: Introduction to Library Research, as a response to the need for information competency. The course has been offered for six semesters to all students and is offered in spring 2005 as a portion of the Black Studies Learning Community (Standards IIC.1a, IIC.1b).

Librarians are beginning to develop a knowledge base regarding information competency, student learning outcomes, and assessment. This project is not yet complete, and the library has yet not identified specific student learning outcomes and assessment methods for its programs and services. Further dialogue leading to an integrated information competency program with links to human, fiscal, and facilities resource allocations is needed (Standard IIC.1b).

The library is open 76 hours per week including evening and Saturday hours. In addition, the library's online catalog including twenty electronic databases and an e-book collection is accessible twenty-four hours a day seven days a week via the internet. A user authentication system provides remote users, including distance learners and students attending classes at the Anaheim Campus, access to information and library resources. Disabled students are provided access via workstations and software designed for persons with disabilities. The library's home page provides links to other community college, university, and public libraries in the area. Users may also send librarians questions via email. Furthermore, interlibrary loan service provides access to resources not currently in the library's collection (Standard IIC.1c, Policy on Distance Learning).

The college maintains detection and security systems for its library and learning support services. Academic Computing and Media Services maintains and updates all computer and audiovisual equipment (Standard IIC.1d).

The library has reciprocal borrowing agreements with Cal-State Fullerton, Cal-State Long Beach and the Cal-West Consortium of Fullerton, Golden West, Coastline, and Orange Coast Colleges. Interlibrary loan services and e-book collections are provided through the Online

Computer Library Center. In addition, the library subscribes to electronic databases under the auspices of the Community College League. Formal agreements exist for these services and utilization data are maintained (Standard IIC.1e).

Although the library and learning support services have not participated in the college program review process, the Student Support Services Quality Review, for the self study report, the library staff compared the college's library holdings and services with external markers, such as the California Community Colleges Library and Learning Resources Programs Annual Data Survey; Telecommunications Technology Infrastructure Program Guidelines; National Center for Education Statistics for Academic Libraries; Association of College and Research Libraries Standards for Community College Libraries; and the ACRL Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices: A Guideline. Other assessments of the effectiveness of services provided by the library and learning centers were use statistics and student satisfaction surveys (Standard IIC.2).

These data have not been used to critically examine the library and learning support services, or to link these services with the college planning process. The development of specific program and student learning outcomes, appropriate assessment measures for these outcomes, and the use of the results for program improvements is scheduled for spring 2006, following the move of these services into a new building in December 2005 (Standards IIC.2, IB.1).

## **Conclusions**

### ***IIA. Instructional Programs***

The college fulfills only a portion of Standard II.A which defines the benchmarks of excellent practice in instructional programs.

The college's program review process is well-established for instructional programs (Standard IIA.2e). The college dedicates resources to maintain integrity of faculty-driven curricular processes, remain current in vocational disciplines, and accommodate students' diverse needs and learning styles (Standards IIA.2a, IIA.2b, IIA.2c, IIA.2d, IIA.2h). The Title V grant includes plans to integrate training on hybrid courses with the application of student learning outcomes (Standards IIA.2c, IIA.2d).

However, as noted in the self-study report, these are initial steps in a long journey. The college is at the beginning of incorporating student learning outcomes at the course level and has yet to begin the development of student learning outcomes at the program levels (Standards IIA.2a, IIA.2i). Although certain departments, such as geology and fine arts, have begun this task with engaged dialogue of student learning outcomes, this dialogue has not begun across the campus (Standard IIA.2a) Recent revisions to the Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process may spark a greater reliance on student learning outcomes to drive and inform program improvement, but whether or not the current planning process provides reliance on student learning outcome data to improve programs is yet to be demonstrated (Standard IIA.2). Similarly, the college has not yet developed a plan to link

grant-funded initiatives to institutional student learning outcomes and/or program student learning outcomes (Standards IIA.2d, IIA.2e).

Given the pattern in vocational programs to assess students with exit tests, sequential course skills, assessment tests, portfolio review and in-class demonstration of skills and knowledge, student learning outcome assessments are in place despite the absence of explicit statements of those outcomes and the absence of the use of these results to drive program improvement (Standards IIA.2a, IIA.5).

In addition to the overriding absence of a formal approach to evaluate → plan → improve in instructional programs, the college also fails to fully satisfy Standard IIA in four specific areas:

- Departmental examinations in health sciences and English have not been validated to ensure alignment with student learning outcomes or to document an absence of test bias (Standard IIA.2g).
- Although in draft stages, there is no Board-approved policy for program discontinuance (Standard IIA.6b).
- Although in draft stage, there is no Board-approved policy for academic freedom (Standard IIA.7a).
- There is no code of ethics for staff (Standard IIA.7c).

### ***IIB. Student Support Services***

The college only partially meets Standard II.B which defines the benchmarks of excellent practice in student support programs. Cypress College students benefit from a robust array of student service options both on campus and at the Anaheim Campus.

The college's quality review assessments for student services are in the initial stages of development and have yet to be fully integrated into the college planning process (Standard IIB.4).

### ***IIC. Library and Learning Support Services***

The college library and learning support services substantially meet the good practices outlined in Standard III.C in all areas except integrated planning and the use of assessment for program improvement. Effort must be given to identifying program and student learning outcomes, developing appropriate outcome assessment measures, and employing those results to improve the library and learning support services. Especially given that information competency has been identified as an institutional outcome, implementation of a program evaluation component for library and learning support services with links to the college's planning, evaluation, and resource allocation processes is essential (Standards IB, IIC.2).

## **Recommendations for Cypress College**

### **Recommendation: Evaluate, plan, and improve: Collegewide**

Echoing a prior recommendation from 1999, this team recommends that the college move quickly to address the need to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. In so doing, the college must rely on the college mission and vision to develop a long-term

educational master plan to guide short-term and long-term decision-making including resource allocations. This master plan must be developed collaboratively by college personnel and used as the foundational document for all other components of a comprehensive planning process, such as annual operational plans, technology plans, and facilities plans. All components of this comprehensive planning process must incorporate standardized data, contain measurable outcomes, and be widely disseminated. Once the comprehensive planning process is implemented, the process must be periodically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement (Standards IA.4, IB, IIA.2f, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIIA.6, IIIB, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.3, IVB.2b, and Eligibility Requirement 19).

Recommendation: Identify and assess student learning outcomes across the campus

The college needs to implement and expand its strategic plan related to student learning outcomes. These outcomes must be developed and assessed for:

- Instructional programs at the course, program, degree and certificate levels (Standard IIA.2a, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2i, Eligibility Requirements 10, 11),
- Student services provided throughout students' matriculation at the college, (Standard IIB.), and
- Campus support services (Standard IIC.2, IIIB, IIIC.1).

Once data on student learning outcomes measures are gathered for all campus programs, the information is then to be used to improve courses, programs, and services. All issues related to Student Learning Outcomes are to be regularly evaluated to establish a cycle of improvement (Standard IB.7).

## **Standard III Resources**

### **General Comments**

Cypress College employs qualified staff of employees in sufficient numbers to support student learning programs and services. Positions are currently open to replace recent losses due to attrition as well as growth positions. However, dialogue regarding human resource planning does not appear to be communicated to all constituency groups. Timely and effective employee evaluations occur in accordance with collective bargaining agreements and Board policy. Cypress College offers various workshops for professional development, on topics such as learner-centered instruction and understanding learning styles. Professional teaching quality and effectiveness is maintained through peer review, hiring and the tenure review process.

Cypress College has safe and sufficient physical resources to support its educational programs and services. Although the campus is undergoing major construction, the classrooms and major portions of the campus are available to service students' needs and provide instruction. Regular safety audits are conducted and there appears to be no safety hazards even with the campus construction. There is a process for voicing concerns and issues through the instructional Deans and the Campus Safety Committee.

Cypress College has made tremendous strides in technology since the last accreditation site visit in 1999. These strides include an increase in faculty and student access to computers, staff training, an integrated software system, and sufficient staff to support this increase in both academic and administrative computing.

Annual audits conducted by an independent auditing firm provide a review and assessment of fiscal procedures at the district and college. This review is used to improve program operations. Documents, such as budgets, audits, and financial plans, indicate that the district has sufficient financial resources to ensure financial stability for both Fullerton and Cypress Colleges. These documents as well as interviews with key financial personnel provide evidence of the ability of the district's resources to support (1) current educational programs and services and (2) plans for payment of future obligations and liabilities.

### **Findings and Evidence**

#### ***A. Human Resources***

Cypress College follows Board policies for recruiting, selecting, interviewing, and hiring administrators, tenure-track faculty, adjunct faculty, and classified personnel. These processes ensure that applicants meet the minimum qualifications stated in the job description to be eligible for hiring. If a candidate claims an equivalency in lieu of meeting the state-approved minimum qualifications for a faculty position, an equivalency process guides the evaluation of that candidate's experience and education. The selection of new faculty includes active participation by current faculty members, as well as, a demonstration of subject matter mastery, such as a teaching demonstration (Standard IIIA.1). However,

candidates for adjunct faculty position do not routinely have the same opportunity for teaching demonstrations during the interview (Standard IIIA.1a).

Personnel evaluations are routinely conducted consistent with negotiated collective bargaining agreements and include the development of remediation plans when appropriate (Standard IIIA.1b). The college is commended for (1) linking management evaluations to the college strategic plan by requiring managers to address the Directions in their evaluations and (2) soliciting a broad range of feedback for management evaluations. The college/district does not currently include achievement of student learning outcomes as a component of faculty evaluation (Standard IIIA.1c).

Codes of ethics for faculty, Board of Trustees, and management personnel are documented in the faculty handbook and board policy. A code of ethics is currently being developed for staff (Standards IIA.7c, IIIA.1d, IVB.1h).

The institution provides sufficient numbers of faculty, staff, and administrators to support its mission and purpose (Standard IIIA.2). To guide hiring of classified staff, a prioritized list of 21 new classified positions was developed in 2000 through collaborative college processes. New faculty positions are prioritized by the college's administrators following input from the faculty, but the prioritization is not integrated with broad institutional planning (Standard IIIA.6).

Through separate collective bargaining agreements with classified employees, full time faculty, and adjunct faculty, the North Orange County Community College District develops personnel policies and procedures that appear to be equitable. These policies are readily available on the district website (Standard IIIA.3a). Personnel records are secured at the district office and employees can access their own records with sufficient notice to the Human Resource Office (Standard IIIA.3b).

Diversity awareness is a college theme when recruiting, selecting, and hiring personnel. Located in a racially blended neighborhood, the college's student body generally meets or exceeds the percentages of non-white populations in the community. However, as is common across the state, the diversity of the college's professional personnel does not mirror the community or the student body (Standard IIIA.4b). Mandated Equal Opportunity training of all hiring committee members has helped to increase awareness about the importance of considering ethnicity and gender during the selection of new employees (Standard IIIA.4a). There is significant evidence in the form of learning communities, open forums, and organizations on campus that the college diligently works toward educating the larger campus community on diversity issues (Standard IIIA.4a).

Numerous on-site staff development activities are available to all constituency groups coordinated by a Staff Development Committee and Coordinator. As an example, in 2003 a consultant provided a workshop writing learning outcomes; college dialogue continued after that initial workshop and culminated in the development of the Cypress College Institutional Learning Outcomes. Faculty and staff interest in these opportunities are periodically assessed and these results are used to develop future programs (Standard IIIA.5b). In addition to on-

campus opportunities, faculty and administrators may apply for funds to attend professional conferences (Standard IIIA.5a). As on other campuses, the opportunities for classified staff to take advantage of training are more limited than for professional staff due to office coverage.

Currently, planning processes are uneven across campus and separate components of planning, including human resources planning, are completed in silos rather than being integrated as a comprehensive college plan (Standard IIIA.6).

### ***B. Physical Resources***

Cypress College is physically accessible to students, faculty, and staff. With assistance from Disabled Students Programs and Services, in recent years the college developed an Architectural Barrier Removal Plan and to date has completed approximately 80 percent of the projects identified (Standards IIIB.1b, IIIB.1c). Students are in a relatively safe environment; security is visible on campus and most buildings provide a safe and secure area for students to study and work with other students. The parking lots surround the perimeter of the campus, providing a level of pedestrian safety (Standard IIIB.1).

The college participates in the statewide Facilities Condition Assessment, a database developed to assist colleges in assessing and planning maintenance and replacement of facilities. The college has effectively used this information to gain approval for an Initial Project Proposal for improvements to the science/engineering/math facilities and a Final Project Proposal for the Humanities Building (Standard IIIB.2). A scheduled maintenance plan has been developed based on a condition assessment.

A 1999 comprehensive educational and facilities master plan prepared by consultants appears to be the foundational document for today's construction projects. This Educational Master Plan was briefly updated to introduce the more recent Five Year Construction Plan. There is little college awareness of this brief Educational Master Plan. Facilities plans are therefore not linked to reflective dialogue about the future direction of the college's programs and services (Standard IIIB.2).

Cypress College's Facilities Condition Report, Scheduled Maintenance Plan, Space Inventory Plan and Five Year Construction Plan are current and readily available. When developing these documents, the college invited involvement of campus employees and students in planning for physical resources (Standard IIIB.2b). However, the lack of an Educational Master Plan to guide planning for facilities disconnects these two primary components of planning (Standard IIIB.2b).

For the physical resources that are planned, there are solid operational processes to expand or remodel the campus. State funding for capital construction and the passage of the bond enabled the College to meet many of its goals in this area (Standard IIIB).

### ***C. Technology Resources***

Cypress College has made impressive progress in the use of technology to support the needs of learning, teaching, collegewide communications, research and operational systems (Standard IIC.1). The number of computers rose from 600 to 1,350, online courses increased from 1 to 91, and all faculty and staff who need a computer now have one. Students have computer access in the learning centers and computer laboratories on campus. Servers have been purchased and remote access is now available through Citrix (Standards IIC.1a, IIC.1d).

This dedication of resources to technology includes an increase in support staff (Standard IIC.1a). Technology services are decentralized and therefore the college is responsible for organizing and hiring technology support staff. The Cypress College Academic Computing and Media Services Department consists of seven staff members including a Director, a recently hired webmaster, and technicians. These staff members provide hardware and software purchasing and licensing support services, help desk functions, monitoring the maintenance of the inter- and intra-net (the J Drive), a campus inventory, and other information technology services for the college (Standards IIC.1a, IIC.1b).

Faculty and staff training on email and webpage development is provided by Academic Computing and Media Services staff three times a year. In addition, special training is provided as needed, such as recent training for EOP&S on unique software. The Campus Support Services Satisfaction Survey in July 2004 indicates that additional training is needed for both continuing staff and new staff (Standard IIC.1b).

The district Banner system is quite effective in integrating and managing student registration, purchasing, and payroll processes. The Banner system, however, doesn't interface with Blackboard, the online course management system (Standard IIC.1). The Online Coordinator must register online students manually to California Virtual College. Both the campus and the North Orange County Banner Steering Committee acknowledge this problem but corrective action has not yet been taken.

Although computers that are five-years old or older are now on a 3-year replacement plan, a plan to maintain, upgrade or replace media equipment is not documented. The survey referenced above reflected 87.5% *excellent* to *good* rating for overall quality of service for Academic Computing and Media Services, despite some concerns regarding the length of time required for repairs. Given the lack of up-to-date media equipment and a single staff person with this expertise, requests are prioritized, with the repair requests that impact the greatest number of individuals addressed first (Standard IIC.1c).

The Campus Technology Committee is described as a shared governance committee that recommends priorities, procedures, and guidelines for technological resources to the President's Advisory Council and the Planning and Budget Committee. However, the Campus Technology Committee no longer appears to be functioning in that role. For example, a review of Planning and Budget Committee minutes since fall 2003 did not reflect input from the Campus Technology Committee when technological resources were funded (Standard IIC.1).



The college prepared an Information Technology Strategic Plan (2001-2004) that was largely based upon California Community College's Technology II plan and district standards. The extent of college-wide participation in its development is uncertain. Some goals were accomplished (virus checking, SPAM, faculty and staff email, three-year computer replacement plan) but a written report of these accomplishments has not been prepared. A new Information Technology Strategic Plan is being developed and will incorporate unmet goals, such as student email and network security issues (Standard IIIC.2). The new technology plan will include input from the Campus Technology Committee and may span less than four years due to rapid changes in technology.

Although the Strategic Plan 2000-2004 and Strategic Plan 2004-2008 both a Direction related to technology, these goals do not appear to provide the guideline for the Information Technology Strategic Plan (Standards IIIC.1c, IIIC.2). An analysis of these documents and interviews indicate that (1) the Information Technology Plan does not guide equipment acquisition, replacement, or standardization and (2) that the Campus Technology Committee is out of the loop on technology requests made directly to Directions Committees. For example, team members observed two Directions Committees consider requests for technology, such as servers. In these requests, there was no reference to the Information Technology Plan or to review by the Campus Technology Committee (Standard IIIC.2).

As part of the pilot process, Academic Computing and Media Services completed a program review, the Campus Support Services Quality Review in spring 2004. The primary assessment was a staff satisfaction survey. However, there is no documentation of how this review process was used to develop strategies for improvement or to generate strategic plans. A more formal process linking program review to institutional planning and resource allocation is needed (Standards IB.4, IIIC).

#### ***D. Financial Resources***

Cypress College Planning and Budget Committee minutes indicate regular meetings of this group, where a recent focus has been to tie the budget development process to the strategic plan (Standards IB.4, IIID.1a, IIID.1d). This effort was verified in interviews; many Cypress College faculty and staff attest to some knowledge of the budget development process and the allocation of one-time funds through a process associated with the strategic plan (Standards IB.4, IIID.1d).

Clusters of college goals, or Directions, are derived from the mission statement. To link planning to the budget, Direction Committees recommend the allocation of funds to projects based on college goals identified in the strategic plan (Standards IB.2, IB.3, IIID.1d). In priority order, the budget requests then move from the Directions Committees to the Planning and Budget Committee and then on to the President's Advisory Council for final approval (Standards IB.4, IIID.1a, IIID.1d).

Over the past couple of years, this admirable objective of linking plans with budget in a participative process has resulted in several changes in planning and budget development processes (Standards IIID.1a, IIID.1b). Each change was made with the goal of continuous

improvement. Inevitably during this time of transition and multiple changes, there is some measure of confusion related to the processes (Standards IB.4, IIID.1d, IIID.3).

Communication between the college and the district is facilitated through two groups. Several members of the college community participate on the District Planning Committee which is the central group for dialogue about budget issues. In addition to this large, participatory governance group, the budget officers from the two colleges, the School of Continuing Education, and the Interim Vice Chancellor of Finance and Facilities handle the details of budget operations in a collegial working group (Standards IIID.1d, IIID.2b)

Like many other California community colleges, the North Orange County Community College District has an unfunded liability in the form of retiree health benefits; for this district, that total is approximately \$70 million. District staff is assessing the true obligation through an actuarial study and will recommend a prudent process to start addressing funding the liability (Standards IIID.1b, IIID.1c).

Three years of audits demonstrate the financial integrity and accountability of the district as a whole. Two issues arose in the 2003 audit as reportable conditions: (1) a discrepancy in fixed assets and (2) the calculation of the GANN limit. These audit exceptions were resolved in a timely manner (Standards IIID.2a, IIID.2b).

District documentation in the form of the audits, cash flow reports and budget demonstrate sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability. There are strategies for appropriate risk management through safety committees and appropriate insurance levels (Standard IIID.2c).

From documentation such as audits, cash flow reports, budget models, and budgets the team found that the district practices effective oversight of finances. The Board of Trustees approves all appropriate contracts, grants and financial statements as provided for in the Education Code, Title 5 and the Budget and Accounting Manual (Standards IIID.2c, IIID.2d).

The college and district demonstrate oversight of the Foundation to ensure that the Foundation's financial activities meet the college's expectation of consistency with accounting good practices. This oversight is accomplished through periodic fiscal review by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors for the Foundation (Standard IIID.2d).

Accountability processes are in place for proper oversight of contractual agreements within the College. Designated authorized agents may sign contracts and project managers are versed in guidelines both from the grant or categorical project and the district contract guidelines. There appears to be effective communication between project managers and the Business Office (Standards IIID.2e, IIID.2f).

The district oversees contracts associated with the bond projects. There were some issues associated with the first and second year of issuing project management and construction management contracts as identified in a report issued regarding the compliance of the district

with Proposition 39 requirements. These issues have been addressed through stronger oversight at the district level through the Interim Vice Chancellor of Finance and Facilities and the District Director of Facilities Control (Standards IIID.2f, IIID.2g).

The long-range financial priorities of the district and college are not identified in an educational master plan, making it impossible to assess any plans to finance future programs and services (Standards IIID.1c, IIID.3). Currently, there is tension across the district and college centered on the process for allocating district resources. The current model allocates resources to the colleges in blocks based on personnel costs, operating expenses, extended day (adjunct faculty), and Partnership for Excellence buckets. Other than faculty positions, there is a buy and sell process for personnel if there is a vacated position. Tensions surrounding the current allocation model include perceptions that the existing approach does not take into account fixed costs, economies of scale, and differences between the colleges' growth rates and unique program needs (Standard IIID.3).

## **Conclusions**

### ***A. Human Resources***

Cypress College satisfactorily meets the standard to employ qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services, to treat those employees equitably, conduct regular evaluations, and to provide ongoing professional development including sensitivity to many forms of diversity (Standard IIIA). However, as with other areas in this report, human resource planning is not integrated with other components of college planning (Standard IIIA.6).

### ***B. Physical Resources***

Cypress College meets the standard to provide for facilities that support student learning programs and services (Standard IIIB). However, planning for physical resources must be integrated with all other components of planning following collegewide and districtwide dialogue on the future of the college's programs and services. An educational master plan is designed to provide the direction that links facilities planning to the college's future institutional programs and services (Standards IIIB.1a, IIIB.2).

The projects funded by the bond and the state capital outlay program demonstrate the college's commitment to providing a safe, secure and healthy learning environment for employees and students (Standard IIIB.1c).

### ***C. Technology Resources***

Despite impressive gains, Cypress College does not yet fully meet this standard to design and implement technology resources to support academic and administrative computing. The college needs to work diligently to prepare a technology plan that is driven by a comprehensive programmatic college master plan, that effectively links such plans to resource allocations, and that provides clear paths of communication for the college community on technology issues (Standard IIIC).

A comprehensive technology plan preceded by a thorough program review would call into question specific issues related to the allocation of technology resources, such as the inventory of media equipment, the Blackboard interface problem, appropriate levels of staffing and training, and the role of the Campus Technology Committee (Standards IIC.1a, IIC.1b, IIC.1c, IIC.2)

#### ***D. Financial Resources***

With the exception of integrated planning at the college and district levels, Cypress College primarily meets Standard III D which identifies standards of excellence for financial resources.

At the district level, the institution has sufficient resources to support programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Information is widely disseminated (Standard IID.1d). However, the process of allocating resources across the district is in transition and there is no educational master plan to guide future planning (Standards IID.1b, IID.1c, III.3).

At the college, substantial effort has gone into linking the Instructional Quality Assessment Validation process with the budget. This link is yet to be developed for Student Support Services and Campus Support Services Review (Standards IID.1a, IID.1d). An integrated planning model would include a complete feedback loop, with resource allocation contingent on evidence of need and accountability in terms of demonstrated results (Standard III.1a).

The district and college manages financial affairs with integrity. When an exception to this integrity was discovered related to bond contracts, the district responded swiftly and concisely to bring this problem under control (Standards IID.2a, IID.2d, IID.2e, IID.2f).

The district and college have a reasonable expectation of financial solvency. The issues about unfunded liabilities have not been ignored and work is commencing to address the retiree health benefits and construction programs (Standards IID.1c, IID.2c, IID.2f).

The District Planning Committee intends to conduct a needed review of the budget allocation model to ease current tensions and to consider whether financial resources are effectively used for students' benefit (Standard IID.3).

#### **Recommendations**

##### District Recommendations (Shared in Fullerton College report)

The team recommends that the District Chancellor develop and implement an evaluation of the existing budget allocation model and make adjustments if appropriate to meet the needs of the entire district (Standards IID.; IVB.3.c).

##### Recommendations for Cypress College

##### Recommendation: Strengthen dialogue

The college must develop and implement a collaborative, inclusive processes that:

- Focuses on the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.1),
- Incorporates both quantitative and qualitative information in decision-making (Standard IB.2),
- Mentors all faculty and staff in the college mission, practices, and decision-making processes (Standards IIA.7; IIIA.3),
- Provides a clear and effective communication path for faculty and staff so they know how to advance needs that maintain and/or enhance students' learning environment (Standards IIIC.; IIID; IVA).

Recommendation: Evaluate, plan, and improve: Collegewide

The team recommends that the college move quickly to address the need to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process. In so doing, the college must rely on the college mission and vision to develop a long-term educational master plan to guide short-term and long-term decision-making including resource allocations. This master plan must be developed collaboratively by college personnel and used as the foundational document for all other components of a comprehensive planning process, such as annual operational plans, technology plans, and facilities plans. All components of this comprehensive planning process must incorporate standardized data, contain measurable outcomes, and be widely disseminated. Once the comprehensive planning process is implemented, the process must be periodically evaluated to facilitate a cycle of continued improvement (Standards IA.4, IB., IIA.2f, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIIA.6, IIIB, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.3, IVB.2b, and Eligibility Requirement 19).

Recommendation: Evaluate, plan, and improve: Technology

The team recommends that the college rely on the educational master plan described in Recommendation #4 to collaboratively develop a comprehensive technology plan that addresses all components of technology resources identified in Standards IIIC.1 and IIIC.2:

- Academic computing needs,
- Administrative computing needs,
- Training for faculty and staff,
- Equipment maintenance, and
- Equipment replacement.

## **STANDARD IV LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **General Comments**

Cypress College's mission, vision, and core values document its commitment to excellence. The Strategic Plan operationalizes that mission by defining steps the college plans to take to promote student success and foster excellence in a positive learning environment. The Strategic Plan clusters goals and objectives organized around specific college Directions for a two-year period.

Faculty, staff, administrators and students are invited to participate in institutional governance and exercise their voices in policies, planning and budget. The Budget and Planning Committee and the President's Advisory Council include representatives from all constituency groups and meetings are well attended. Representatives of campus constituency groups are active in discussions related to making improvements to achieve the college's goals. All college constituencies, such as the Academic Senate, are invited to raise issues in the President's Advisory Council when there is a need. Associated Students are an active, involved voice for students with a seat and a vote on major college committees.

In this self study, the college clearly affirms the institutional intention to maintain honest and direct dealings with external agencies including the Accrediting Commission. Cypress College provides information to the community through distribution of an End of Year Report to the community.

Cypress College is governed by the North Orange County Community College District Board of Trustees, a seven-member Board elected by voters in a general election. This Board is responsible for establishing policies which ensure the quality of the student learning programs and services and the district's financial stability. In addition, the Board has established processes for assessing its performance, follows a Code of Ethics, was involved in the accreditation process, and annually evaluates the Chancellor of the District.

The president of Cypress College is responsible for overseeing and evaluating the college's administrative structure, actively communicates institutional values, goals, and directions, and ensures that institutional policies are consistent with the college and district mission and policies. The president effectively controls budgets and expenditures and communicates with the many communities served by the institution.

The North Orange County Community College District contains two community colleges, Fullerton College and Cypress College. Both community colleges are lead by presidents and other appropriate administrators. Besides the two colleges, the district offers a large non-credit, adult education program at multiple sites within the district. The non-credit program is lead by a provost housed in the District Office and operates independently from the two colleges. The District Office is located between the two colleges in Anaheim and houses support functions for the colleges that include Budget and Finance, Facilities, Human

Resources and Information Services. District operations are led by a chancellor and a Board of Trustees.

## **Findings and Evidence**

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

The college values inclusiveness in dialogue. Faculty and staff are appointed to participatory governance committees by the Academic Senate and the classified union. Classified personnel indicate that there is a waiting list of interested individuals who want to serve on committees. Representatives on participatory governance committees, such as the President's Advisory Council, are proud of their involvement in developing institutional goals and objectives and voice support for a collegewide focus on planning and the use of the Strategic Plan to make decisions (Standards IVA.2a, IVA.3). However, most could not identify a specific goal listed in the Strategic Plan 2000-2004 without first reviewing the document. This leads to a question of whether the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan have been internalized by the campus leaders (Standard IVA.1).

Interviews with faculty, staff, students, and administrators indicate that the college welcomes innovations and ideas and the college's organizational chart provides the primary documented path for such ideas (Standards IVA.2a, IVA.3). For departments, support service programs, and campus support programs, the process for forwarding innovations and addressing programmatic weaknesses is the Quality Assessment program review process. Instructional Quality Assessment is scheduled collegewide so that each instructional program completes a program review every four years along with a short annual report as an update. Similarly, the student support Services Quality Review and the Campus Support Services Quality Review processes are to be implemented collegewide during this year. However, there was no evidence that this component of the program review process was initiated during 2004-2005. In addition, college personnel have stated that the information from those reviews will be provided at this time to the responsible administrators only rather than distributed to the campus at large (Standards IVA.1, IVA.3).

There is a general lack of campuswide awareness of how plans are linked to the program review process and to the budget process. Some processes, such as decisions related to allocation of new full-time faculty positions and the result of specific program reviews, operate outside of the strategic plan process (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVA.3).

About half of this college community report satisfaction with the opportunity to participate meaningfully in participatory governance. However, the team found that the lines of communication between and among committees and decision-making bodies are neither documented nor consistently described by members of this college community. The description of campus committees found in the faculty handbook identifies committee membership, but does not document the links between/among committees nor the authority of these groups in making decisions (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVA.3).

The Cypress College Curriculum Handbook and Faculty Handbook describe the responsibilities of faculty and academic administrators in curricular matters. Observations of

this committee in action demonstrated collaborative, active involvement of all participants in matters related to the review and approval of curriculum. Faculty members form the majority of this committee, along with two academic administrators (Standard IVA.2b).

Even though there is active participation by representatives of constituency groups in governance processes, the larger campus community is unaware of how individual planning efforts and components of data analysis are integrated into an overarching plan for the institution (Standard IVA.2a, IVA.3). Most information is provided in an electronic format, making the information widely available. However, it is not known how frequently this information is accessed and used. Also information from critical assessment mechanisms, such as quality assessment reviews, is not shared with the broader campus unless a program's action plan requires new funding. Portions of the assessment results are attached to funding requests and presented to the Planning and Budget Committee to be considered for resource allocations.

The college regularly conducts surveys of students, faculty and staff to obtain information on various aspects of the college's operations. The survey information is intended to be useful to make improvements within departments, although the team could not identify an operational link between these results and plans for program improvement in areas such as student services, library/learning resources or technology (Standard IVA.3).

Cypress College's core value of integrity guides the college's dealings with external agencies such as the Accrediting Commission, granting agencies, and industry partners (Standard IVA.4). Cypress College provides information through distribution of an End of Year Report to the community.

The governance process is not routinely reviewed. Information from surveys and Institutional Quality Assessment reviews are not incorporated into processes that focus the college using the information for program improvement on any level including governance (Standard IVA.5).

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

The board's policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and the district's financial stability are published in the Board Policy manual that is available in hard copy and online (Standard IVB.1).

The Board of Trustees of the North Orange County Community College District is in the process of updating its Board Policies, Administrative Procedures, and Administrative Guide (Standards IVB.1b, IVB.1c, IVB.1d, IVB.1g). To ensure that all requisite components are included in this update, the Board is guided by the Board Policy Manual template provided by the Community College League of California. Faculty, staff, and administrators from both colleges and the district office have participated in this review process, which is expected to be completed in fall 2005.

This governing board participates in training as needed to maintain a collective focus on trusteeship and districtwide issues related to student access and student success (Standards



IVB.1a, IVB.1f). While the Board's Code of Ethics (Board Policy 2175) spells out the role and responsibility of individual Board members with respect to standards of good practice, this policy is silent with respect to actions to be taken in the event of a Board member violating a specific code section (Standard IVB.1h).

The governing board evaluates its performance through an assessment form distributed to members of the district community who regularly attend board meetings. The results are made public at the first board meeting in May. In the most recent assessment, the majority of respondents rated the board as *excellent* in the categories of efficiency, respecting each other's opinions, and knowledge of community issues. This assessment indicated some concern about micromanaging. However, discussions with board members and administrators indicate that this perception may arise from occasions when complex issues are greeted by numerous questions from the board (IVB.1e.).

In the past, the board was involved in accreditation late in the process following the completion of the colleges' self studies. During this accreditation cycle, the board was involved prior to completion of these documents; time was dedicated to staff explanations of the accreditation process and board members had an opportunity to review an initial draft of each self study report (Standard IVB.1i).

The chancellor is evaluated by the board at an annual retreat (Standard IVB.1j). This retreat includes (1) a review of prior year goals and objectives; (2) a review of results of a performance evaluation instrument completed by college and district leadership and (3) the development of district goals and objectives for the coming year. The chancellor's goals and objectives are then shared with the college presidents for incorporation into campus goals and objectives. This process is the primary means by which the board and chancellor communicate a districtwide vision to be used by the college in planning.

Cypress College is led by a president who has full-time responsibility for guiding the college. The chancellor assigns full responsibility and authority to the president of the college to implement district policies without interference from the district and acts as the liaison between the college and the governing board (Standards IVB.2, IVB.3). The remaining seven administrators all report directly to the president: the Executive Vice President of Educational Programs and Student Services, the Vice President of Educational Support and Planning, the Director of Budget and Finance, the Executive Director of the Foundation and Community Relations, the Manager of the International Students Program, the Staff Development Coordinator, and the Campus Diversity Officer (Standard IVB.2a).

The current president has served the college in this role for six years. She has successfully led the college through significant restructuring outlined in the first chapter of the self study report. Her leadership during periods of rapid shifts in enrollment, changes in technology, and construction is effective thanks to her focus on students, communication, and open processes. Components of the college planning process have been developed, but these components are not yet integrated into a comprehensive planning process that can be readily used to inform decision-making. The president's collegial approach is appreciated by the faculty and staff. She is active in the community and advocates for and represents the college at the local and state levels (Standards IVB.2a, IVB.2b, IVB.2c, IVB.2d, IVB.2e).

Based on discussions at both the district office and the college, there appear to be clear delineation of functions between the two entities. While the team had some difficulty deciphering the delineation using the Multi-Campus District Functional Map included in the self study report, it was clear from interviews that the participants had a clear understanding of the different roles. Also, while there are tensions from time-to-time between the college's desire for decentralization and a desire among certain district administrators for centralization, the chancellor has found an appropriate balance and has clearly communicated those decisions to all parties (Standards IVB.3a, IVB.3g).

The chancellor understands and fully performs his responsibility as the liaison between the colleges and the Board of Trustees. However, in the district's desire to maintain a decentralized operation, the Board of Trustees and the chancellor have not defined critical strategic institutional goals for the district. It is apparent from talking to the district leaders that such goals are contemplated, but by failing to articulate them, there is no assurance that this vision will be incorporated into the college strategic planning processes. Furthermore, when districtwide decisions are being made, such as resource allocations, it would be useful to have these stated goals serve as guideposts in making those decisions (Standard IVB.3e., IVB.3f.).

The financial management of the district has been extremely prudent, as evidenced by a district ending balance last year that was nearly 20% of expenditures. Obviously, there are no issues related to effective expenditure control. However, like most multi-campus districts, there are some fundamental disagreements between the colleges over the budget allocation model. These conflicts are the classical differences in which on one college wants the model to more closely reflect the way revenue is earned by the district and the other college wants the model to better reflect actual operating costs. It may never be possible to completely resolve these conflicts but the district needs to keep evaluating its model to insure that it is always trying to achieve a better solution (Standards IVB.3c, IVB.3d).

The services provided by the district to the colleges seem to be both adequate and appropriate. The district experienced some difficulties in the implementation of the facilities program related to the recent passage of a local bond. Following an independent inquiry into the management of the program, the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Facilities separated from the district last November. After his departure a number of changes were made and all of the issues appear to be resolved (Standard IVB.3b).

The team also observed the primary district shared governance committee in operation, the Chancellor's Cabinet/District Planning Committee. This large group includes representatives from all segments at the colleges and district office. While it is clearly an open forum in which policies are fully discussed, it appeared to be somewhat unwieldy when policies were experiencing their seventh and eighth reading on a discussion that had been going on for months. It partially explains why certain policies in the resource documents have yet to progress beyond the draft stage.

## **Conclusions**

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

Cypress College primarily satisfies the standards to provide effective leadership throughout the organization (Standard IVA). The college value of inclusiveness is readily demonstrated by the multiple opportunities for a role in decision-making by all members of the college community (Standards IVA.1, IVA.2, IVA.3). The college is commended for its dedication to students, to ensuring the continuation of collaborative processes, and the progress that has been made in developing institutional learning outcomes (Standard IVA.3).

As noted in other sections of this report, the primary areas in which the college fails to fully comply with this standard relate to the lack of an institutionalized and integrated planning process that includes a review and documentation of college decision-making processes (Standards IVA.2, IVA.5).

#### ***IVB. Board and Administrative Organization***

The governing board of the North Orange County Community College District satisfies the standard to establish and implement policies and to employ and evaluate a chief administrator to guide the effective operation of the institution (Standard IVB.1).

Cypress College satisfies the standard related to the responsibilities and authority of the college president (Standard IVB.2). The college president led the college through numerous changes created by external forces, such as recent dramatic shifts in enrollment, and internal forces, such as work on a college planning process.

Cypress College and the North Orange County Community College District need to develop a more comprehensive and integrated planning process (Standard IVB.3, Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College Districts). The process needs to begin with the Board of Trustees and the chancellor delineating strategic district goals to frame the strategic planning at the college. This would insure that goal integration occurs at the college level and it would ensure that in a decentralized system the goals of the total organization serve as the driving force.

In a multi-campus district, tensions between sister colleges are common. While working to encourage individual college achievement, the shared goal for all in this system is to keep the entire organization functional as a working whole. Tensions most often are pronounced related to the budget allocation model. The revenues and operating costs of colleges vary depending on the characteristics of the college and student demand. Therefore, fiscal needs differ within the same district. Although a perfect solution is elusive – and perhaps impossible – districts must keep working on a budget allocation model to minimize the tension and work toward more balanced funding systems (Standard IVB.3, Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College Districts).

#### **District Recommendations (Shared in Fullerton College report)**

1. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and Chancellor implement a process to systematically develop and document strategic institutional goals for the district. The goals should
  - Provide a framework for the colleges' planning processes (Standard IB.4),

- Include a review of the district mission statement to ensure that the institutional goals align with the mission (Standard IA.1), and
- Be reflected in the allocation of district resources (Standard IIID.1).

2. The team recommends that the District Chancellor develop and implement an evaluation of the existing budget allocation model and make adjustments if appropriate to meet the needs of the entire district (Standards IIID.; IVB.3.c).

### Cypress College Recommendation

#### Recommendation: Strengthen dialogue

The college must develop and implement a collaborative, inclusive processes that:

- Focuses on the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard IB.1),
- Incorporates both quantitative and qualitative information in decision-making (Standard IB.2),
- Mentors all faculty and staff in the college mission, practices, and decision-making processes (Standard IIA.7; IIIA.3),
- Provides a clear and effective communication path for faculty and staff so they know how to advance needs that maintain and/or enhance students' learning environment (Standards IIIC.; IIID.; IVA.)