Abstract

Response to the Prior Accreditation Team
The prior accreditation visit resulted in several recommendations to the College. The 1996 visiting team noted that the College had made little or no progress in responding to many of the recommendations in the 1990 Accreditation Evaluation Report. Those areas included program review, effective assessment instruments for mathematics placement, faculty evaluation procedures allowing student input, support for a quality library collection, concerns about participation in shared governance, and the delineation of roles and responsibilities. The report also noted that implementation of shared governance requirements outlined in AB 1725 had been difficult at the College and conflicts over shared governance were hampering a list of planning, evaluation, and decision-making issues that needed to be addressed. Finally, the report called for a systematic and integrated process of planning and evaluation involving all segments of the campus community.

By 1998, the College had taken a number of steps to address these concerns in its Mid-Term Report to the Accrediting Commission. Program review processes are much farther along today, and the College has adopted a policy of reviewing programs at least once every six years. In the academic area, virtually all programs have completed at least one review, and many vocational education programs have completed a second review since the last accreditation cycle. Reviews of Student Services programs have been completed on a timely basis. A number of administrative program reviews have also been completed, though the College could improve in this area by having a more active review committee. The Commission's concern about the assessment issue regarding math placement was addressed in the 1998 report. Student evaluations have been included in faculty evaluations since the adoption of a new collective bargaining agreement between the College and teacher's association in March of 2000. Library resources have been enhanced by infusions of capital outlay money. Shared governance issues still exist on the campus, but there is a greater degree of communication and collegial spirit on the campus than in 1996, when the faculty and administration were in the throes of a contract dispute. Faculty leaders have made an effort to clearly delineate the distinctive roles of the union and Academic Senate. Leaders of the two faculty groups drafted a letter of understanding and presented their delineation to the Board of Trustees in early 1999.

Planning processes have also been undertaken to respond to the prior accreditation visit, though some work can still be done in this area. In 1998, the separate Planning and Budget Committees were merged into one committee to enhance coordinated planning and budgeting decision-making. Program review recommendations are referred to the Planning and Budget Committee for discussion and in order, though it appears that better connections can be made between budgeting decisions and program review recommendations. The College's Planning and Budget Committee, and campus constituency groups worked with a consultant to draft a comprehensive Master Plan in 1999. That document provides a planning benchmark for future programmatic changes at
Delta College. The Master Plan has also guided the College's efforts to plan for an educational center in the growing South County region of Tracy. The institutional research and planning supervisor at the College was elevated to Dean status in 1998. The hiring of a Research Analyst in 2000 strengthened the research capacity of the office.

**Standard One -- Institutional Mission**

The Self-Study describes the College Mission Statement, which was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1989 and revised slightly by campus governance groups through a master planning process in 1999. The statement guides the College's master planning process. The mission emphasizes the provision of high quality educational programs in the arts and sciences, vocational, and occupational fields. The College Mission Statement stresses open access, the provision of student services to enhance opportunities for success, and the need to provide economic development to the greater community. The College's Mission Statement places a value on cultural diversity, and the College's student and staff population is generally reflective of the diversity of the region, though the College should continue to strive for better staff and faculty representation among Asians and Hispanics.

**Standard Two -- Institutional Integrity**

The College presents itself clearly and accurately in its publications, catalogs, brochures, and electronic formats. Policies on academic freedom are clearly stated and endorsed by the College leadership. The College has recently adopted revised policies pertaining to cheating and plagiarism that clearly describe guidelines and possible sanctions for academic misconduct. Clear guidelines also exist for affirmative action and staff and student diversity. While improvements can be made in the area of ethnic representation in the faculty ranks and in some student populations, the College has made great strides in recent years, and many staff and faculty believe the campus is receptive to women and minority leaders and faculty members. African American staff and faculty are less positive about the College's atmosphere toward minority leaders.

The College has an athletic program that embodies the spirit of Title IX standards for gender equity, and has added a program in women's water polo since the last accreditation cycle. The College has excellent facilities for student athletes who represent the College with honesty and integrity. The College takes its relationship with the Accrediting Commission seriously and has responded appropriately to Commission requests in its prior communications and the 1998 Mid-Term Report. The College regularly evaluates and revises institutional policies, practices and publications. The College has begun a process of improving its web site for more effective use by students and the public.

**Standard Three -- Institutional Effectiveness**

The College relies on its Office of Planning, Research and Grants Development to coordinate institutional research efforts with planning and evaluation projects.
The Office is assisted by the Institutional and Academic Research Committee to establish research priorities on an annual basis, and works collaboratively with the Planning and Budget Committee on planning issues. Staffing has been added to the Office to increase institutional research capabilities and to begin the design of a data warehouse. The institution is moving toward placing a high priority on this project, and College leaders recognize the value of enhanced research capabilities for the College. The Planning and Budget Committee has adopted institutional outcome measures that can be utilized as annual benchmarks to document how well the College is meeting its mission and purposes. The program indicators will be examined on a systematic basis for the first time in the 2001-02 academic year.

The College has adopted systematic and standardized procedures to conduct program reviews that are designed to improve program delivery and effectiveness. College constituency groups are included in planning initiatives through their representation on the Planning and Budget Committee, and in their participation in the development of a Master Plan for the College in 1999 and 2000. While program review processes are in place, the College needs to do a more effective job of ensuring that budgeting decisions flow from the recommendations in the program review documents. The College has begun publishing an annual report to communicate to the public the College's outstanding programs and services and a profile of its students and faculty. However, the College can do more to further these efforts through more effective marketing and dissemination of information.

**Standard Four -- Educational Programs**

The College offers dynamic educational programs that are geared toward its mission of providing high quality instruction that leads toward degree completion, the acquisition of vocational and technical skills, lifelong learning, community service, economic development, and remedial instruction. The College honors catalog rights when programs are discontinued, but no programs have been eliminated since the last accreditation cycle. The College is sufficiently staffed and maintains adequate resources and facilities to support its educational offerings. The College has added several counselors since the last Accreditation cycle, and sufficient counseling staff are available to provide information and advice to students who pursue educational offerings at the College. In all, 14 instructional staff have been hired over the past two years using Partnership for Excellence funds.

The College offers degree and certificate programs that mesh with the College's mission, and are planned and approved by faculty governance groups and the Board of Trustees. Degrees, general education requirements, and course outcomes are clearly outlined in College publications and class information sheets. The institution has clearly defined expected minimum competencies for its general education course work in English, reading, and mathematics. Some clarification of general education requirements is needed in the nursing and engineering areas, and the College may consider adding information literacy as a general education requirement. Program review processes are in place to
document student success and program needs; though the system can be improved. Curriculum review processes can be improved by moving to a curriculum database system. The College follows principles of good practice in the area of distance education, and course work offered in this format must meet the same criteria in the curriculum review process as on-campus courses.

**Standard Five -- Student Support and Development**

The College publishes its admissions policies in the *College Catalog*, *Schedule of Classes*, and the College Web site. Admission requirements are consistent with state law, and specialized admission criteria are available in the *Schedule of Classes* each semester. The College is exploring greater use of technology to provide general student information in alternative formats (perhaps in CD-ROM form or electronic kiosks). Students have access to accurate and current information about academic and social policies, campus events, and services through a variety of offices and resources. Specialized programs have brochures and fliers that can be given to students in person, through the mail, or at open house events. Other programs have targeted programs and materials that are provided to students (such as MESA and EOPS).

The College provides a wide range of support services to students, including Guidance and Counseling, EOPS and CARE programs, DSPS, Learning Disabilities Center, Financial Aid, CalWORKs, Tutor Center, MESA/CCCP, Career Development and Transfer Center, International Student Program, Puente Program, and the Probation Intervention Program. College officials recognize the need to develop a more systematic presence online to provide counseling and advising services to its growing online population and to students at regional education centers. The College uses a "multiple measures" approach to assessment that guards against any form of testing or placement bias. Assessment tests are approved by the Chancellor's Office and are periodically reviewed for potential bias.

Students are involved in the planning and evaluation of student services through their representation on College committees. Input of students in this process could be increased with more regular involvement. The College has an active co-curricular environment for students, and the student government association offers a vehicle for leadership development. The Associated Student Body (ASB) government has been prominently involved in statewide lobby efforts, and leaders have attended national and state conferences. Program review processes are in place to review student support services on a regular basis. The College has a policy that ensures the security and confidentiality of student records.

**Standard Six -- Information and Learning Resources**

The College has improved its library holdings since the last Accreditation visit by increasing its book holdings and significantly improving its online databases. The College has extensive plans for information technology expansion in the library over the next five years. Library resources are easily accessible via off-campus
connections and on campus through expanded hours of service on the weekend. Student and faculty assessments of library services are generally positive. The library has added a fifth librarian and has expanded courses in library instruction. The library has adequate financial backing to support the educational goals of the College and has collaborative relationships with surrounding libraries to provide easy access to source material beyond the confines of the College.

Computing resources at the College are outstanding and are readily accessible to students. The College boasts more than 1,050 computers in direct use by faculty or students, distributed across 55 multimedia classrooms and 17 instructional laboratories. The College has expanded its online course offerings through a contract with eCollege, offering 61 sections over the Internet in fall 2001. The College has institutional procedures in place to select and replace information resources. Plans exist for the development of Intranet "portals" for student, staff, and faculty access to key data via the College web page. College administrators have reorganized the Information Services Division and increased salaries in order to maintain its professional staff and prevent departures to higher paying companies. The College has a number of contracts with outside vendors who provide information resources, but maintains adequate control over the contracts to ensure the integrity of the institution. Information security policies have been established to protect the integrity and security of information stored on the College's computers.

**Standard Seven -- Faculty and Staff**

The College employs roughly 220 full-time faculty and more than 300 adjunct faculty on a semester-by-semester basis. Student and staff surveys indicate that the level of teaching is of high quality. Criteria for the selection of staff are clearly outlined in policies and procedures. College administrators and the Academic Senate are attempting to arrive at an agreed upon set of standards for entitlement review. Recent difficulties hiring staff in certain employment sectors (like campus police and computer science) suggest that the College should explore creative ways of recruiting for these positions.

Selection processes for faculty include opportunities for the demonstration of subject matter mastery, teaching effectiveness, and a potential to contribute to the mission of the College, though some staff expressed concerns about the consistency and effectiveness of brief teaching demonstrations. Evaluation procedures exist for all levels of staff, although many of the classified staff surveyed were uncertain that evaluations are geared toward assessing effectiveness and encouraging improvement. Faculty and the District have implemented a student evaluation process since the last accreditation visit. Faculty transfer processes need clarification and should be addressed in the next round of contract talks.

The College offers a variety of staff development opportunities, and is moving to establish a Faculty Training Center to enhance faculty improvement, particularly
in the use of technology to aid instruction. Most staff and faculty are aware of policies pertaining to employment equity, and perceptions of the College’s openness to minority and women managers and faculty have improved. The College has a faculty and staff that is generally reflective of the county population, except for the Hispanic community. The College has personnel policies that are clear and equitably administered and procedures for maintaining the security and confidentiality of employment records.

Standard Eight -- Physical Resources
The College has well-maintained facilities that provide access to educational programs at a 165 acre Stockton campus, and several regional education centers in Manteca, Tracy, Lodi, Jackson, Rio Vista, and Mountain Ranch (in the Sierra Foothills). The College is pursuing the development of a large educational center in Tracy (Delta College at Mountain House) to serve the growing population of southern San Joaquin County. At the Stockton campus, the College has broken ground on a $7,000,000 Electron Microscopy Building. Long-range planning calls for the possible passage of a bond measure that could finance upgrades at the Stockton campus, the capital costs of building Delta College at Mountain House, the construction of a regional library, and other regional education centers.

Maintenance and Operations staff at the College have worked diligently to maintain the beautiful campus setting at the College. Surveys of staff and students generally applaud the College for its attractiveness and well-preserved appearance. Surveys of the staff suggest a need for improvement in the fleet of vehicles owned and operated by the institution. At locations where the College leases space for educational offerings, the lessor is responsible for maintenance and upkeep, and the College police have agreements with local agencies to ensure security. The College has adequate procedures in place to maintain its inventory of goods and supplies, although storage space is a critical issue. The College has made significant progress improving the safety and accessibility of the campus to students since the last accreditation.

Standard Nine -- Financial Resources
The College has appropriate planning processes in place to ensure the long-term financial integrity of the College. Conservative budget assumptions have allowed the District to maintain healthy budget reserves on an annual basis (including a five and a half percent reserve this year). While little long-term indebtedness exists at this time, much of the College's long-range financial and resource planning will be tied to the pursuit of a voter-approved bond measure in November of 2002. Budget planning processes are in place to ensure standardized submission of budget requests from departments and programs, with the opportunity to use program review processes as a justification for new money. The College typically adopts a tentative budget in June and a final budget in September to coincide with the close of the state legislative session. The
composition of the Planning and Budget Committee ensures active participation in the planning and budget process by all groups on campus. However, the committee will need to address the new budget planning process first initiated in 2001 to ensure adequate time for committee prioritization of budget requests early in the process.

The College has a financial management system that provides appropriate access to financial data, and control mechanisms to ensure the integrity of the data. The College conducts annual audits of its auxiliary foundation and has responsibly managed financial aid dollars and other grant and contract funds. Annual audits reflect the strength of the College's financial management. The College participates in a self-insurance fund to guard against risks associated with liability claims and workman's compensation. The College has planned well in weathering a loss of a major contract education program in 1996, and has steadily increased FTES revenues since that time. Yet the College must explore whether the FTES/FTEF target written into its contract with the teachers union is a suitable benchmark for fiscal planning.

**Standard Ten -- Governance and Administration**

The College is governed by an independently elected board of seven members who serve staggered four-year terms. The Board holds ultimate authority over the development of educational programs, financial integrity, and institutional mission and policies. The Board receives recommendations from the Superintendent/President of the College after consultation with College governance groups. Senate representatives from various campus constituencies have a regular opportunity to comment on matters appearing before the Board, and union representatives are provided an opportunity to speak at each meeting. A student trustee can cast advisory votes prior to an official vote of the Board on all matters except those discussed in closed session.

The College has entered a new era of shared governance quite different from the prior accreditation cycle. While new procedure processing has drawn some criticism from faculty leaders, the acrimonious tone of campus relations has faded away. The Board is still seen by some as ineffective at setting the overall policy direction of the College, but Board actions have helped to foster a sense of collegiality after the hiring of a new Superintendent/President in early 2000. Board members have pursued professional development at national and state conferences, and have taken leadership positions in key associations and a state commission on student aid.

Faculty and staff at the College desire more input into the evaluation of the Superintendent/President of the College, but he has won high marks from many on campus. The Superintendent/President has structured an annual goal setting workshop with the Board and other groups, leading to the formal adoption of College goals in the fall. Communication has been much improved under the new President and informal messages and gatherings have strengthened the sense of
camaraderie on campus. The Board has helped foster this spirit with its sponsorship of an end of the year barbecue dinner.

The College is administratively organized to reflect the size and purpose of the institution. Regular meetings take place at various levels of management to ensure the effective day-to-day operation of the College. Very few staff believe that the College is not administered effectively. Recent turnovers in division chairs have raised concerns, but many of the departures have been due to retirements. College policies clearly delineate the role of managers, faculty, and classified staff in the governance process. Classified staff survey responses suggest that many believe they do not have effective participation in the governance process, but this might be improved with more classified staff retreats. Student participation in governance committees is formalized in College policies, but has not always been effective because of a shortage of representatives. The Student government has taken steps to improve this with the creation of a Senator of Committees position.

A map of the College district identifies the trustee boundaries for the seven members.