
STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

IIA. Instructional Programs

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.

IIA.1 *The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.*

IIA.1(a) *The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student-learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes.*

Description–IIA.1(a)

As presented in the mission statement, Santa Monica College

...strives to create a learning environment that both challenges our students and supports them in achieving their educational goals. We prepare our students to contribute to the global community as they develop an understanding of their personal relationship to the world's social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and natural environments.

As an open access college, Santa Monica College welcomes students of wide-ranging backgrounds, abilities, and educational aspirations. Diversity at Santa Monica College means not only that ethnic and racial backgrounds of students are varied, but that their ages, life experiences, goals, level of academic preparation, and outside obligations differ substantially.

In Fall 2002, the College's overall enrollment was 34,032 (including 29,341 students enrolled in credit classes and 4,691 enrolled in noncredit classes). This was an increase of approximately 18% over the enrollment in Fall 1998, the beginning of the period after the College's last accreditation self-study. About two-thirds of the students, 68%, attend part-time (less than 12 units per semester). In keeping with the population at other institutions of higher education, women account for a larger percentage of students, approximately 57% for at least the past decade. The geographic region represented by the student body extends well beyond the Santa Monica and Malibu district boundaries and reflects the cultural diversity of Greater Los Angeles. Historically underrepresented populations make up approximately 63% of the Santa Monica College student body, with Latinos representing 27%, Asian/Pacific Islanders 23%, African Americans 10%, and Native Americans 1% of the students. In addition, the College has one of the largest populations of international students at any community college in the country, accounting for almost 10% of the graded students on campus.

The median student age remains between 25 and 26, with full-time students substantially younger than part-time students (22 versus 27). About 14% of the students take only evening classes, but a larger proportion enrolls in both day and evening classes. The most popular goal identified by students is to transfer or receive an Associate in Arts degree (53% in Fall 2002, up from 48% in Fall 1998); about 15% of the students have a career-related goal; and the remaining students are undecided or fall into the categories of finishing high school courses, learning basic skills, attending for personal growth, or preparing for graduate school. Students enter the College with different levels of academic preparation. Approximately one-third of all students who take the college placement tests are assessed into the most basic level of English classes, and almost 40% of students assessed are placed into the lowest levels of math courses. Through a combination of special academic programs and student support services, the College has made a distinct effort to meet the needs of its diverse student population.

For students interested in transferring to baccalaureate-granting institutions, Santa Monica College has long been a cost-effective gateway to four-year institutions. An active transfer/counseling center, organized trips to universities throughout the state, articulation agreements with both public and private universities in California and other states, and a Scholars Program that challenges the most talented students all help to familiarize students with their options and prepare them to transfer. For years, Santa Monica College has transferred more students to the University of California than any other community college, and has had similar success with other public universities in the state. In addition, the College ranks first among community colleges in sending students to the University of Southern California and Loyola Marymount University.

The College has also faced the challenge of enrolling students whose academic experience has not prepared them for college-level courses. The College provides basic skills development courses in biology, English, ESL, mathematics, and psychology. All entering students are encouraged to take the college assessment instruments, and students wishing to enroll in a math or English course are required to do so. Recent data show that approximately 27% of students place into transfer level English courses ("A level"), 40%

place into “intermediate level” courses that count toward an Associate in Arts degree but are not transferable (“B level”), and 33% place into the most basic, developmental courses (“C level”) that do not count toward a degree. As a result of the large number of students placing into the most basic English courses, the faculty recently expanded English 83 (which addresses reading and vocabulary skills) from one course to three. In addition, the math, English, and counseling faculty who teach and advise the students in the most basic courses began meeting regularly, through a project known as the Specialized Curriculum Optimizing Retention in Education (SCORE) project, to share strategies for working with these students.

The challenge of non-traditional students returning to education includes accommodating those with full-time jobs and families to support. The College maximizes the use of its facilities to meet the needs of both day and evening students. In addition, the College maintains several satellite campuses to meet the students’ needs by offering a variety of high demand courses and programs. Until recently, the College had sponsored a program that offered special classes and counseling to meet the needs of returning adult students. Successful Education through the Extension of Knowledge (SEEK), as the program was known, is currently being reconfigured to better address the needs of these students.

For students interested in vocational training, the College has continued to update Associate Degree programs and Career Certificates. In addition, various vocational programs have developed Certificates of Completion—aggregates of courses, totaling fewer than eighteen units, that result in skills achievement leading directly to employment. Lifelong learning programs are offered through the Emeritus College, the Community Services/Extension Program, and the Office of Workforce and Economic Development, which has developed contract education agreements with local businesses.

The large number of international students who attend the College—2,749 in Fall 2002—tend to perform above average academically because of the selective admissions criteria established for students entering with an F-1 visa. However, these students do require extra attention to help them adapt to the culture and requirements of studying in the United States. The International Education Center has counselors who are specially trained in issues related to international students, offers a Summer Bridge Academic Program for new international students that allows them to acclimate to college life, and provides assistance in finding housing for students. The College offers a customized orientation course that familiarizes international students with higher education in the United States and, specifically, California.

Special programs have been organized to foster the academic success of the African American and Latino students on campus. The Latino Center offers a wide range of bilingual services, including academic, vocational, and personal counseling; financial aid and scholarship information; educational planning; and access to a computer lab. The Adelante program, affiliated with the Latino Center, is an academic program that focuses on academic achievement, transfer, cultural awareness, and personal growth. Students eligible for Adelante participate in classes taught by professors who have a special interest in promoting Latino student success and have ongoing contact with a network of

counselors to assist them. Black Collegians is an academic/transfer program that promotes academic excellence and guides African American students through the process. Eligible students benefit from a personal counselor to advise them on their course work, specially identified sections of selected courses that include additional components designed to strengthen study skills, academic and personal growth forums, a mentor, and eligibility for scholastic recognition and monetary awards.

In addition to the above-mentioned programs and services, the College offers the following programs targeted toward the particular needs of students.

Special Academic Programs:

- Academy of Entertainment and Technology
- Arts Mentor Program (including applied music and art mentor studio)
- Dale Ride Internship Program
- Emeritus College
- Scholars Program
- Student Success Program
- Women's College

Student Support Services:

- Career and Job Placement Center
- Disabled Students Center
- EOPS
- General Counseling
- Women's Center

Academic programs are evaluated through a number of processes. Every six years, all academic programs and services undergo program review, which is described thoroughly in Standard IIB. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research regularly tracks a number of academic outcomes, including semester-to-semester persistence for new students, success and withdrawal rates for each course at the College, student GPA by course, probation and disqualification rates, transfer outcomes, and degrees and certificates awarded. Most of these outcomes are tracked by gender, citizenship, and ethnicity, as well as for the overall student population. This information is available on the college website (<http://www.smc.edu/research/research1.htm>) and is updated regularly.

The Institutional Effectiveness Indicators report, which was first published in 2001 as an outgrowth of the Partnership for Excellence funding, provides additional information related to student outcomes. Data on student transfer readiness, time to degree, the English and mathematics progress made by students who begin at developmental levels, and

comparisons of success rates in vocational, transfer, and developmental courses are all available back to 1985.

Evaluation—IIA.1(a)

During the last two years, the issue of student retention has become a major theme within all groups on campus. Concerns were raised that, on average, about 18% of students within any given course withdraw from the course before the end of the semester, and that only slightly more than half of all new students who start at Santa Monica College in the fall return for the spring semester. For African American and Latino students, these figures are even higher. In Spring 2002, the Presidential Student Retention Task Force was formed. The task force reviewed college information related to retention and persistence, investigated what other colleges are doing to increase student outcomes in these areas, and developed a series of recommendations.

One recommendation involved reviewing the enrollment priority policy. Because the current policy assigns first-time college students one of the lowest enrollment priorities, the Task Force felt that it might inhibit student success, retention, and persistence.

The Presidential Student Task Force reported the following:

- Students who begin at lower level English and math courses are less likely to persist and are retained at a lower rate.
- Full time students persist at a greater rate than part-time students.
- First-time college students persist at greater rates than first-time SANTA MONICA COLLEGE students who have attended other colleges.
- Students who enroll in short-term courses have a higher success rate than students who enroll in full semester courses.
- Persistence rates are increased when students enroll in more units, complete the mathematics placement exam, attain at least a 2.0 GPA, successfully complete the current semester, and receive financial aid.
- Personal problems, finances, lack of academic preparation, mismatched teaching/learning styles, and overly large classes were identified as barriers.

With similar concerns related to success and retention in mind, the Superintendent/President requested that the Office of Institutional Research analyze the demographics and preliminary outcomes of first-time college students who entered Santa Monica College in Fall 2001. The researchers found that these 4,550 students formed a vulnerable group. While they were more interested in transferring to a four-year institution, and more likely to enroll full-time than the general student college population, their academic outcomes were lower than those of the rest of the student body. They had lower grade point averages and were more likely to be placed on probation. The good news is that this group is more likely than other students to re-enroll in the College for the following

spring and fall semesters. Thus, with appropriate counseling and support, their potential for success can be improved.

In addition to intervention strategies, the College also developed a more prescriptive approach in dealing with probationary students who either do not avail themselves of the intervention strategies or do not profit from them. A new administrative regulation, to go into effect in Spring 2004, will limit students who are placed on academic or lack-of-progress probation to nine, instead of twelve, units in the regular semester. Similarly, in Fall 2004, a new procedure will require students who are disqualified for a second time to “sit out” one semester and those who are disqualified for a third time to “sit out” for one year. It is hoped that these strategies will help students assess their commitment to study and break the spiral of failure.

Developing innovative programs, while maintaining fiscal responsibility, has been a challenge for the College. Contract Education, Community Services/Extension, and the non-credit offerings are currently under review to address budgetary, facility, and staffing concerns.

There is general agreement that, throughout its history, Santa Monica College has developed, implemented, assessed, and enhanced instructional programs and support services to address the varied educational needs of its students. However, the Spring 2003 Board of Trustees action, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent/President, to discontinue five occupational programs is viewed by many faculty, staff, and students as serving to erode the College’s efforts. Concerns include the relationship of some of the programs, such as automotive technology, to the local economy and the fact that the approximately 500 students who were seeking certificates or degrees in these discontinued programs included a higher percentage of students from underrepresented populations than that of the student body as a whole. (See Standard IA.1.)

Plan–IIA.1(a)

- ◆ Academic and Student Affairs will review the interventions and strategies that have been pilot tested and will implement those that are feasible in the current economic environment.
- ◆ The Counseling Department, Office of Institutional Research, and the Academic Senate Joint Student Affairs Committee will study the effect of the newly adopted regulation applied to probationary and disqualified students and review the enrollment priority of first-time college students.

IIA.1(b) *The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.*

IIA.2 *The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including*

collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.

IIA.2(d) The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.

Description—IIA.1(b) and IIA.2(d)

In recognition of the multiplicity of learning styles and of the diverse subjects presented, the College provides a variety of individual and group learning experiences. Modes of instruction include: lecture, laboratory, discussion, activity, collaborative groups, computer-assisted instruction, distance education, distance education hybrid, independent study, and study abroad. To complement classroom instruction, individually paced learning materials are available in the Library, and tutoring services are also provided through various departments. Students can complete unique projects through independent studies and gain practical experience through internships and cooperative work experience.

To accommodate a variety of individual student scheduling needs, local business training needs, and service to targeted populations with special needs, the College provides a number of delivery systems including:

- Community Services/Extension
- Noncredit courses
- Contract Education
- Distance Education
- Dual Enrollment
- Emeritus College
- Internships and Cooperative Work Experience
- Service Learning

The Community Services/Extension and noncredit offerings provide alternative sites, scheduling options, telescoped content, and other methods to meet the needs of working students, single parents, the non-traditional student, and the lifelong learner. Responsiveness to changing conditions is a major characteristic for these offerings.

Community Services/Extension offers not-for-credit, fee-based classes that are classified under two categories and have two very distinct purposes: 1) to meet the interests of the community and 2) to promote continuing professional training and enrichment. A brochure is published four times a year describing the classes. Ideas for courses are generated from a variety of sources: potential instructors submit ideas; staff and faculty make

suggestions; the office staff receives requests from students; or the program administrator invites proposals related to specific topics. Each proposal is carefully reviewed.

Courses that are deemed of interest to the community, and for which the College has the necessary facilities, may be selected for further development, when appropriate. These potential courses are discussed and adjusted by the program administrator and potential instructor. The proposal is then forwarded to the academic department most closely aligned to the topic of the class. Based on consultation with the department, additional adjustments may or may not be needed. Course proposals are presented to the Curriculum Committee for review and submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. Classes that promote continuing professional training and enrichment generally require more extensive discussions with the academic departments, since they are often designed and staffed by credit instructors or instructors recommended by the department chair. Courses in some disciplines may also carry Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credits.

Noncredit classes are ungraded and free. The classes are designed to strengthen basic skills, English as a Second Language (ESL) and skills that promote workforce preparation, as well as serve special populations. The state supports this instruction by funding the College according to student positive attendance. Only courses that have been approved by the Chancellor's Office can be offered. New courses are developed to meet the state mandate for adult noncredit instruction, faculty requests, student requests and community requests. Classes are offered mostly at satellite locations, but also on the main campus and Madison campus. Following consideration and approval by the Curriculum Committee, new courses are submitted to the Chancellor's office for approval.

The Emeritus College is a noncredit program designed to serve the older adult population in the Santa Monica Bay area. Approximately 2,500 older adults participate in weekly classes, ranging from health maintenance, self-expression, and skill development to coping with life changes. Bereavement, Issues in Aging, Hearing Impairment, and Stress Reduction are specialty classes that deal with needs prevalent in this age cohort. Student ages range from 50 years old to over one hundred years, with the majority falling into the age range of 60 to 75. The most frequently selected classes are in self-expression through art, music, and writing and the exercise program to maintain flexibility, strength, and stamina. Most classes meet at the Emeritus main site in downtown Santa Monica, near transportation routes and handicapped parking. Neighborhoods are served by offering instruction in up to 25 auxiliary locations.

Most Emeritus students have some type of disability, either apparent or hidden, or have restricted mobility due to age-related factors. The Pathfinders Program, a California State Exemplary Program serves individuals who have suffered a stroke, head injury or brain damage. Specialized speech and exercise classes are offered to these students. In addition, an innovative speech enhancement program is offered in the program's computer lab, using specialized speech software for aphasics.

Contract Education is a primary delivery system used by to provide services to business, industry, and government agencies. The College contracts with a public or private entity

to provide services, generally designed to improve business or individual performance. Besides instructional programs, contract education programs also offer additional services including academic assessment, development of training materials, performance needs analysis, job profiling, counseling, job placement, and other consulting services.

Distance Education—through the joint efforts of program staff, academic department chairs and faculty, and student services staff—provides an online delivery system of courses and programs via the Santa Monica College Virtual Campus, (<http://www.smconline.org>). The courses and services delivered online are of the same high quality, meet the same standards, and are offered by the same faculty and staff as those provided to students enrolled in courses and programs on-ground.

In order to ensure a quality distance education program that adheres to all campus governance and accreditation standards, Santa Monica College offers only those courses that have already been approved through the curriculum process and have been proven successful on-ground at the College. Distance Education courses complete a separate Curriculum Committee approval process designed to both meet Title V requirements and to ensure that only those courses appropriate for distance education are offered.

The Dual Enrollment Program offers high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses at their high schools. Santa Monica College’s program began in Spring 1998 and grew from 676 students at 17 campuses to approximately 1,700 students at 29 high schools in Spring 2002. High schools served are located throughout the Los Angeles basin—ranging from the suburbs to the inner city.

Classes are taught on the high school campuses. Faculty teaching dual enrollment classes are Santa Monica College faculty members who have been hired through the standard college hiring process. Classes offered through this program are taught according to the official course outline of record and must meet the same standards as classes taught on the Santa Monica College campus. The objective of the program is to enrich the high school curriculum by offering a broad range of classes that would not otherwise be available at high schools, including art, business, computer animation, dance, interactive media, psychology, speech, and scriptwriting. Students may earn both high school and college credit, and they pay no enrollment fees.

The Dual Enrollment Program was designed to offer college credit to and reach students who would not necessarily be in advanced placement courses—indeed, to reach students who might not even consider attending college. Many of the students in the program come from low-income and/or historically disadvantaged, minority backgrounds. When dual enrollment programs are established at high school campuses the culture of the high school is transformed. Students who never considered themselves as “college material” all of a sudden change their perspective. Since its inception, over 10,000 high school students have enrolled in the Dual Enrollment Program, and nearly 1,400 of these students have attended Santa Monica College after graduating from high school.

The College offers internships and cooperative work experience. As spelled out in the District Plan for Internships and Cooperative Education, internships and cooperative work experience are assumed to be identical in nature. (Cooperative work experience is limited to certain occupational programs, while internships are available in both occupational and transfer-oriented disciplines.) These on-the-job learning experiences may be paid or unpaid, and students may earn up to sixteen units. Work experience may or may not be directly related to the student's educational or career goals. The ultimate objective is to teach students skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will equip them to function successfully and adapt as employees in a variety of jobs and situations.

Service Learning is a teaching and learning method that integrates community service with academic instruction. Generally, students provide needed services through community agencies (typically 10-20 hours per semester) and critically reflect on the experiences as a part of their coursework.

The Vice President, Academic Affairs, through the Academic Affairs deans, is responsible for scheduling class sections and faculty assignments in collaboration with academic departments. To assist department chairs with the scheduling process, the Academic Affairs office provides historical data by section, which include enrollment figures, grade distribution, success and retention rates, and overall grade point averages. Department chairs are encouraged to use these data in the faculty evaluation process as well. The offerings are reviewed for breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, and student need or demand. Departments are encouraged to propose scheduling that balances offerings for full-time, part-time, day, and evening students. Experimentation with scheduling alternatives has occurred, using variations in days, times, length of section and repetition. Short-term intensive offerings have occurred to balance student demand throughout the semester. Experimentation with sequential short-term sections has also occurred. The office of the Vice President, Academic Affairs, expands offerings according to student demand at the time of registration. As sections close, the Vice President may add additional sections or cancel sections that are not successfully attracting students.

Santa Monica College faculty are cognizant of the fact that students have different levels of academic preparation and learning styles, which influence a wide range of student behavior—from enrollment patterns to student success levels, retention, persistence, completion rates, and choice of major and goal, to name a few. Academic probation and eventual disqualification can result when student learning styles are not maximized. In 1997-1998, the Office of Institutional Research conducted a longitudinal study, which showed that probationary rates combined with disqualified rates represent approximately one third of the student body. The result of this study prompted a series of research-based pilot projects to study effective interventions in an attempt to ameliorate this challenge. The initial project was called the Student Success Project and was a two-year model, implemented in Fall 1998. The prevailing high probationary and disqualified rates college-wide motivated faculty, students, and administration at the College to support the project. Sixty-eight faculty, students, and staff collaborated in the design and implementation of the program. Its aim was to implement intervention strategies based on Vincent Tinto's model of Social and Academic Integration, Alexander Astin's theory of Student In-

volvement, and extensive use of collaborative learning techniques to prevent first-time college students from experiencing academic difficulties.

Through this initiative, a number of instructional and counseling faculty members were exposed to student-centered pedagogy and strategies that enhance student perceptions of belonging and connectedness to the institution. Participating counseling faculty realized the importance of validating student self-esteem by promoting student participation in the educational decision-making process, beginning with the first encounter with the institution—orientation.

Even though some instructional faculty were well versed in and had employed collaborative learning strategies in their classes prior to the implementation of the project, the professional development activities that were made available prior to and during the implementation phase generated interest among the faculty in areas such as collaborative learning, learning communities, teaching and learning, and intrusive advising. In addition to workshops scheduled for faculty associated with the Student Success Project, these professional development activities included breakout sessions on institutional flex days—some of which were facilitated by experts on pedagogy and others presented by Santa Monica College instructional and counseling faculty.

The data generated by the project clearly demonstrated that the strategies that were implemented enhanced student performance in the following areas:

- student success
- persistence
- achievement

The data collected from the initial pilot study provided the background for an FII (Fund for Instructional Improvement) Grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office in order to replicate and expand the project. The College received a grant in the amount of \$165,000 for years 2000-2002. Sixty-five faculty members were involved in the implementation of this project, which helped 1,500 students. The data generated from this second iteration were in some cases even more impressive than the first.

At the conclusion of this FII grant, an application was submitted for a second FII grant. This application initially yielded a grant in the amount of \$267,000 for 2002-04; however, it was later reduced to \$133,000, due to budgetary constraints in the community college system.

The interventions used in this second project were similar to those in the previous two, and they were based on the same theories. However, the one distinctive difference was that, instead of targeting first-time college students, this project focused on continuing students who were already on academic probation (below 2.0 grade point average). Instead of attending a new student (first year) orientation, the study group attended a re-orientation. Even though the task was more challenging, the results were just as impressive as for the previous study. Thirty-five percent of the students who attended a re-

orientation achieved good academic standing (left probation), and only 13% of students who did not attend the re-orientation achieved good academic standing.

Even though the Student Success Project has evolved from its original design, it continues to have the same emphasis—to enhance student performance in the areas of student success, retention and persistence. As mentioned in Standard I, the well-thought out design of the interventions earned the Student Success Project the “Exemplary Practices Award for 2003” in the category of “Enhanced Student Learning through Collaboration with Faculty, Co-curricular Activities and Other Activities” from NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) for its effectiveness, quality, significance to the field, and for its adaptability of strategies aimed at increasing student success, retention, and persistence.

The interventions and data generated by the prototype Student Success Project and subsequent pilot programs have been disseminated at national and statewide conferences including the following:

- American Counseling Association Conference
- First Year Experience Conference
- ACPA – American College Personnel Association Conference
- The Megaconference co-sponsored by the Board of Governors and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office
- The California Virtual Conference (an invited presentation)

Although the project was completed in December 2003, faculty at Santa Monica College continue to promote collaborative learning techniques and attend professional development meetings on a regular basis to share teaching and learning strategies. The initiative known as SCORE is a collaborative project composed of faculty members from the Counseling, English, and Mathematics departments. Its original goal was to identify and implement strategies to improve the performance of developmental students and ultimately to create enhanced collegewide programs for this student population. However, it has evolved into an interdisciplinary forum for the exchange of teaching strategies among faculty in the previously mentioned basic skills areas.

In addition to these interdisciplinary efforts, the College, through Partnership for Excellence funding, supported 19 collegewide projects that addressed a variety of topics. Some of these projects were in the area of student learning outcomes, others were in institutional effectiveness, and still others were technology related. Some of these projects were interdisciplinary in nature and others targeted a single discipline. (For a list of funded projects and descriptions, see Standard IB.)

Instructional technology initiatives include the use of classroom technology, online instructional resources, and training and support for the faculty users. It plays a steadily increasing role in the delivery of instruction at the College and is helping to make

instructional resources available to students any time, any place. Instructional technology is selected or developed in order to meet one or more of the following goals:

- To improve student learning by employing technology that enhances and/or supplements traditional teaching strategies;
- To provide more flexible and convenient access to learning and teaching resources for students and faculty via the Internet and/or campus network;
- To provide students with access to technology that is in widespread use in the industries related to their chosen courses of study;
- To streamline course management tasks by migrating class rosters and other class data to online formats that are integrated with the College's student information systems.

The Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee (ISC) solicits requests for new or replacement instructional technology annually from individual departments and programs. Each request must be accompanied by an explanation of how the technology supports the curricular needs of the department or program. The requests are then prioritized by the Information Services Committee and forwarded to the District Technology Committee—composed of faculty, staff, administration, and student representatives—for inclusion in the Master Plan for Technology. (For additional detail regarding instructional technology, see Standard IIC.1(d).)

Evaluation—IIA.1(b) and IIA.2(d)

The College is committed to meeting student needs by refining modes of instruction and developing additional delivery systems. The recent federal and California revenue shortages and budget deficits and their negative impact on California community colleges is of great concern for the entire operation and well-being of Santa Monica College. The entire College will strive to provide educational services at the highest level permitted by state funding and to seek alternatives in uncertain economic times.

The College has supported studies related to student-centered approaches—such as in the case of the Student Success Project and the project SCORE—which have generated very positive results in terms of student success, retention and persistence. However, incorporating these techniques across the curriculum has not been institutionalized, primarily due to issues related to academic freedom.

The Community Services/Extension, Noncredit, and Contract Education programs have experienced a roller coaster ride of change—growth followed by significant suspension of programming at least three times in the last twenty years. Most recently, the noncredit English as a Second Language program was suspended, due to the current budget crisis. (The College has worked with the adult education division of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District to ensure that this population continues to be served.) Funding levels, laws, Education Code changes, and accountability issues continue to require that these areas and delivery systems remain extremely flexible, responsive, and able to sus-

tain significant change, including those changes dictated by economics. The College must focus on its primary mission, but be committed to bounce back to meet student and community needs, including those of business and industry, as circumstances become more encouraging. Given the need to respond to the rapid changes in technology and the need for retraining and career laddering in business and industry, the future of the Community Services/Extension Program has to include course offerings that help address these needs and stimulate the economy.

Distance Education has proven to be an effective delivery mode to address the needs of students unable to take traditional on-ground classes and to address issues of growth. The College has invested in the resources necessary to offer successful online classes including faculty/staff training, faculty incentives, and dedicated equipment and technology. Online enrollment has experienced substantial growth each semester. A total of 67 courses from 23 disciplines have been offered to date, although the recent reduction in course offerings affected online sections as well.

The Academic Senate Joint Distance Education Committee (DEC) is responsible for making recommendations on issues associated with distance education. Faculty concerns about distance education are channeled to this committee. These issues may include universal accessibility, online assessment, and quality of support for faculty and students. The Distance Education Committee takes into consideration faculty comments and concerns when recommending a distance education provider. At a late Fall 2003 joint meeting of the Academic Senate Joint Distance Education and Information Services committees, the committees voted to extend the contract with eCollege, the current distance education provider. In the interim, the committee will survey faculty users to determine the functions that they value and will take the results of this survey into consideration when recommending a provider after the extension with eCollege expires. When other providers are considered, accessibility and faculty and student support offered by the providers will be evaluated. The Alternate Media Specialist and High Tech Training Center faculty currently work with individual distance education faculty to ensure that issues of accessibility are addressed, but the College needs to enhance the universal access component of the distance education.

Implementing a successful Dual Enrollment Program has the potential of building a bridge between two very different systems and cultures. And, even though the benefits that high school students reap from a Dual Enrollment Program are many, the necessary infrastructure represents an additional operating cost that, during the current fiscal contraction, cannot be borne by the institution. As a result, the program has been placed on a temporary hiatus.

A modest three-year FSS (Fund for Student Success) Grant from the Chancellor's Office was instrumental in promoting the idea of incorporating a service learning component into the curriculum of a number of courses. The College provided administrative support to this initiative for four years. However, the current fiscal constraints have prevented the College from continuing to provide administrative support. Faculty who are interested in continuing to avail their students of this delivery method are encouraged to maintain the

most effective and viable relationships with community agencies that are willing to collaborate in this approach to learning.

The College, through various interventions and pilot programs, has studied strategies to enhance student success and retention, and some groups have adopted the effective strategies informally. However, these measures have not been institutionalized, and the College has not yet created a central repository of the results of the various studies that have been successfully undertaken.

Plan–IIA.1(b) and IIA.2(d)

- ◆ When the College re-enters a growth mode, it will develop Extension courses that focus on career development needs and coordinate efforts with related academic departments.
- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Distance Education Committee will administer a faculty survey and develop an evaluation for the selection of course delivery systems that meet compliance standards.
- ◆ The College will consider reactivating the dual enrollment program, when fiscal conditions permit.
- ◆ The Office of Planning and Development will bring together the appropriate constituents to develop strategies to address the high probationary rate and include them in the College’s application for federal Title V funding.

IIA.1(c) *The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.*

IIA.2(f) *The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.*

IIA.2(g) *If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.*

Description–IIA.1(c), IIA.2(f) and IIA.2(g)

The English, English as a Second Language, and Mathematics Departments depend heavily on assessment tests to evaluate the appropriateness of student placement and resultant enrollments. They constantly review and attempt to improve the process toward ensuring or increasing student success by testing, counseling, and advisement. Evaluation of the

assessment instruments is done periodically, with the assistance of the Counseling Department, in light of research reports on success rates. The assessment instruments that are employed in the assessment process are on the Chancellor's Office approved list of instruments. As such, they have met the rigorous Matriculation guidelines and meet the scrutiny tests in terms of validation, test bias, and disproportionate impact.

Testing in individual courses and class sections is largely designed and implemented by classroom faculty. Departments attempt to ensure consistent measures of success in achieving learning outcomes among faculty members teaching similar content by including sample tests in department records. Faculty regularly participate in flex-calendar staff development activities that may include testing design and other methods of evaluation, such as portfolio review and fine arts performance. Distance education also employs extensive evaluation of online testing methods.

In an effort to identify student learning outcomes in the instructional area, faculty in some disciplines have developed and eventually adopted common final examinations. The faculty in a given discipline meet to determine which concepts students need to know at the conclusion of a course. This is particularly helpful in sequential courses in which students are required to possess certain exit level skills in a prerequisite course in preparation for a subsequent course, where achievement of entry-level skills is critical to ensuring student success.

Physical Science and Mathematics are two departments that have successfully developed and implemented common final examinations. The Physical Science Department faculty developed a common Chemistry 10 (Introductory General Chemistry) exam, which has been used since Summer 2001. Even though the department has made this final exam mandatory for all Chemistry 10 courses, the department allows each instructor the flexibility to determine the percentage of the final exam grade to be based on this assessment instrument. Each question tests a single concept. After all tests in a particular section are scored, each instructor receives a per question data analysis, which indicates the percentage of students who answered the question correctly. This information determines which concepts need to be reinforced, how well students have learned the concepts, and how effective the instructors are at teaching them.

The Mathematics Department has also implemented common final examinations for Math 22 (College Algebra), Math 31 (Elementary Algebra) and the math courses for business and social science majors—Math 21 (Finite Math), Math 23 (Calculus 1 for Business and Social Sciences), and Math 24 (Calculus 2 for Business and Social Sciences). The mathematics faculty have revised the examinations several times, monitoring outcomes by collecting and reviewing test results, question by question, for individual students. A common final examination is required for all sections of Math 31, and is at the discretion of the instructor for the other classes. For all common mathematics exams, the faculty followed a similar procedure to that for the Chemistry 10 exam. The faculty met to determine common student learning outcomes, then reviewed and modified the exam after the end of the semester.

The English Department—which offers courses in three skill levels: “A-level” (the collegiate level), “B-level” (pre-collegiate basic skills), and “C-level” (basic skills)—administers a common essay exam to all B-level students. The purpose of this examination is to evaluate all B-level students and to provide them with feedback regarding their progress in composition. Students identify their work by providing only their student and course section numbers to ensure objectivity in scoring. Each essay is read and scored by two composition instructors. When a discrepancy in the score is identified, a third reader reviews the work. The English instructors receive the class set of papers back from the graders, return them to the students, and review common organizational mistakes. The same common essay exam is administered to all “B-level” ESL students in collaboration with the English department to ensure consistency of preparation for college level English.

To prepare readers for scoring, the department holds a norming session for all B-level instructors. Participants sample score a set of anchor papers and discuss their findings in terms of a rubric. Therefore, in addition to a grading rubric, instructors have an anchor set of papers against which to measure their own scoring.

Identifying student learning outcomes for transferable courses is particularly critical, since they have been articulated with four-year colleges and universities. In addition to implementing common final examinations, faculty who teach transferable courses, such as chemistry, mathematics and modern language, coordinate by field the selection and adoption of textbooks. They meet on a regular basis, research on the Internet the textbooks that are available, and inquire as to the textbooks that are used for equivalent courses at the four-year colleges and universities where the majority of Santa Monica College transfer students complete their upper division coursework. In addition, the faculty who teach the prerequisites communicate with instructors of subsequent courses to ensure that the textbooks selected provide students with the necessary background knowledge and concepts to succeed.

The Math Department provides a typical example of the textbook selection process. Textbooks are selected by committee. Generally the committee consists of full-time faculty members who teach the target course, and part-time faculty are also invited to participate. The committee chair usually makes sure that copies of available texts are accessible to faculty. In addition, publishers often provide faculty with individual review copies. The committee meets initially to identify the criteria for textbook selection. Some of the factors considered are: topics covered (reviewed in light of the official course outline of record), readability, level of difficulty of problem sets, breadth of problem sets, and ancillary materials. Often, faculty agree to review a selected group of topics as a basis for the evaluation of the texts. The committee usually narrows the list through an initial vote then reviews the remaining texts in detail before making a final decision.

Two joint Academic Senate committees provide the structure and leadership in maintaining the high quality of instruction at Santa Monica College. The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees provide independent, but coordinated, efforts toward this end.

All programs of the College—including instructional programs, student services programs, and college support operations—are formally reviewed at least once every six years through the program review process. (New programs are added to the cycle upon receiving formal approval.) Each program being evaluated is required to submit a self-study report to the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee and is provided by the Office of Institutional Research with relevant data to be considered while conducting the self-study. For example, instructional programs are provided with information about student demographics and relative success rates in addition to the TIMS (The Instructional Management System) longitudinal data (dealing with student retention, grading practices, and faculty teaching load information), and the information on student demand for specific courses provided by the Academic Affairs Office each semester.

The Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee chair and the administrator serving as secretary to the committee meet with program leaders to clarify what is expected in the self-study report. After the self-study report has been reviewed by the members of the Program Review Committee, program representatives are interviewed by committee members. At the conclusion of this meeting, committee members discuss the report and prepare an executive summary of their commendations, recommendations for improvement to be accomplished within the program, and recommendations for institutional support of program improvement. The recommendations for improvement within the program are not currently monitored by anyone outside the program, and it is the responsibility of the program leader and the administrator responsible for the program to follow through on the recommendations through normal college processes such as curriculum, personnel, budget, and facilities. Updating of course outlines is considered part of the program review process for instructional programs.

The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee is composed of a broad spectrum of representatives from the faculty, students, and administration. Before a course is added to the curriculum it undergoes a rigorous review by the committee. Various components are reviewed during this process such as the content, method of instruction, learning objectives, and evaluation methods. Courses must meet all relevant state Education Code and regulatory guidelines. Departments must ensure that a course fits into the existing structure of the discipline or program and college mission; that it is relevant to the field of study, vocation, or occupation; and that the course takes into consideration the current needs and future trends within the field of study.

The Curriculum Committee uses a very systematic and detail oriented structure to evaluate the need for and the appropriateness of a course before it is offered. The committee also requires that every department and program conduct a periodic review of existing courses to evaluate the continuing currency, appropriateness, and relevance of the course and to ensure that learning objectives are explicitly stated.

The College has established an internal process for allocating VTEA (Vocational and Technical Education Act) funds that takes into consideration Core Indicator performance, anecdotal data, and individual program plans to improve or expand its scope and capacity. This process is spearheaded by an *ad hoc* committee composed of faculty leadership

and administrators. The funding decisions of the VTEA Committee are prime examples of funding decisions based on student learning outcomes in the vocational fields.

In an effort to enhance the performance of occupational programs in the area of job placement and retention, for 2003-2004, the VTEA Committee funded a research based project, submitted by the Career Services Center, that proposes to investigate the soft skills needed by program graduates to obtain and maintain jobs. The VTEA Committee also funded two collaborative projects for 2003-2004. These projects support the strengthening of basic skills of Nursing students by English faculty and the English communication skills of LEP (Limited English Proficient) Early Childhood Education students by ESL faculty. The collaborative nature of each of these three proposals is likely to generate results that will benefit all vocational programs. In addition, the English and ESL departments are implementing intervention strategies that should be replicable with other vocational programs.

Evaluation—IIA.1(c), IIA.2(f) and IIA.2(g)

Assessment test results have a significant place in determining the achievement of student learning outcomes. They also play an important role in student advisement and enrollment procedures. Departmental common examinations are modified according to departmental and student needs. Similarly, ongoing analyses of test results strongly influence adjustments to the curriculum.

The College consistently has provided a forum for the discussion of teaching strategies and pedagogy in general that was either associated with the research studies and pilot programs that have been implemented or on institutional flex days. In some cases, college faculty facilitated these discussions and workshops, and, in others, outside experts were hired as consultants to share their expertise on teaching and learning modes, such as collaborative learning. In addition, through the Office of Institutional Research, the College conducted longitudinal studies on student success, which indicate that students appear to have a higher success rate in short-term classes than in 16-week long classes. Subsequent to this study, the College began to expand its short-term course offerings.

In 2002-2003, the College began discussions leading to the design of the “Beta Project”— to obtain, through focus groups and other research techniques, faculty input that would begin to focus the institution on identifying student learning outcomes. However, the concentration of the institution had to be diverted to budget related issues, and the project was placed on hiatus. Both the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees need to focus on providing guidelines to departments and programs to facilitate the identification of student learning outcomes, particularly in establishing the relationship between course objectives and student learning outcomes.

In the last few years the benefits of the self-evaluation process used in program review have become apparent. During the last three years the committee worked extensively to revise and refocus the procedure. As a result, more appropriate and consistent information is being requested. The Office of Institutional Research provides these reports for in-

clusion in a department's program review report. Departments now have a better historical perspective about their progress toward meeting their objectives and responding to the recommendations made in the previous Program Review Executive Summary. Long-standing challenges can be identified and district support toward problem solving can be sought; outstanding achievements can be recognized; and the sharing of different viewpoints of the effectiveness of departments and programs can provide a healthy and positive result. The types of information requested have changed over the last six years to include more objective data measures to support department conclusions about student success and meeting department and college learning objectives.

Comments from the participants indicate that the self-evaluation process is extremely important in providing a focus for the efforts of the department in relation to the college-wide effort. This process has matured over time. Particular effort has been made to adapt the type of information requested to fit the profile of the student population served and the design of the program.

Through the articulation officer, Santa Monica College collaborates with local and national educational institutions in an effort to ensure that current program and course content is fully articulated. This has ensured the successful transferability of skills learned by our alumni. Student transfer success is a strong indicator. The success of this effort is reflected in the number of transfers to the University of California, California State University, private universities and colleges, and out-of-state institutions of higher education. Transfer Study findings indicate that alumni find that transferring is a relatively smooth process and that the skills learned at Santa Monica College are a determining factor in their success at the four-year institutions. Grade point retention studies indicate that grades are relatively consistent with expectations after transfer.

Anecdotal reports from vocational and occupational program graduates indicate successful job placement. Several occupational programs, including photography, communication, and those housed at the Academy of Entertainment Technology, maintain their own anecdotal data on program graduates because of the recent shift in the economy to freelancing. This hiring practice precludes occupational programs from accurately tracking job placement and retention of their graduates through the Core Indicators of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (This procedure, more often than not, fails to identify those individuals who perform jobs on a freelance basis.) Consequently, several occupational programs incorrectly reflect poor performance in the job placement and retention categories of the Core Indicators for vocational/occupational programs.

Although the English and ESL faculty find the common essay exam to be useful in terms of norming, there has not been a formal study to determine the validity of the exam. While administration of the common essay exam is required, including the results in the final student grade is left to the discretion of each faculty member. Therefore, a formal study might have more impact on determining the usefulness of the exam in evaluating student learning outcomes.

Plan–IIA.1(c), IIA.2(f) and IIA.2(g)

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees will study the relationship between course objectives and student learning outcomes; provide guidelines for identification and development of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; provide leadership in assessing student achievement of those outcomes; and study the relationship between student learning outcomes and assessment results, using the latter to make improvements.
- ◆ The English and ESL departments, with the assistance from the Office of Institutional Research, will conduct a study to determine the value and validity of the common essay exam.

IIA.2(a) *The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.*

IIA.2(b) *The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.*

IIA.2(e) *The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.*

Description–IIA.2(a), IIA.2(b) and IIA.2(e)

Santa Monica College consistently strives to ensure the quality of instruction. Sustaining high quality instruction depends upon regular review and evaluation of programs, courses, instructional support, and teaching faculty. The College’s curriculum approval and program review processes continue to be highly effective in ensuring instructional quality, appropriate rigor, and overall educational effectiveness for courses and programs delivered on the main campus, at off-campus locations, and through distance education.

During the past two years the curriculum approval process has encouraged greater collegiality among academic departments when putting forth new courses or programs. The transparency of the process, facilitated by the web-based Curriculum Handbook, directs academic departments to review their proposals with related academic areas prior to their formal submission. If necessary, the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee Chair coordinates this process. This action has minimized turf battles that have at times created lengthy and heated discussions during Curriculum Committee meetings.

The program review process has matured to the point that there are now fewer problems with timely program compliance, and the self-study reports tend to concentrate less on merely describing the programs and more on reflective, in-depth analyses of the programs and better developed plans for improvement. Both processes are well established and are flexible enough to be easily adapted to support new directions of the College.

Course outlines of record are on file in departmental offices and in the Office of Academic Affairs. Each course outline includes the teaching methodology, skills to be developed, and critical thinking concepts applicable to the course. These course outlines serve as the road map for faculty when syllabi are developed.

The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee reviews all proposals for new courses or programs, and the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee conducts a periodic review of all college programs every six years. For instructional programs, this program review process includes a review and updating of all course outlines, including course objectives and prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories. All courses and programs, regardless of location and delivery mode, are subject to these approval and evaluation processes.

The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee is the body responsible for reviewing and acting upon all proposals to establish new educational programs, to add new courses to existing educational programs, and to make substantive changes to existing courses and programs. All recommendations for new and revised courses, degrees, and certificates are initiated by faculty members and approved by their instructional departments before they are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee.

This committee is chaired by a faculty member appointed by the Academic Senate President and consists of fifteen faculty members, elected by individual departments or groups of departments; five academic administrators appointed by the Superintendent/President; and two students appointed by the Associated Students. One of the administrators serves as secretary to the committee. Proposals approved by the Curriculum Committee serve as recommendations to the Academic Senate and are forwarded to the Superintendent/President for submission as agenda items for the Board of Trustees.

The Curriculum Committee validates course prerequisites within disciplines for all courses in the curriculum. Entrance and exit skills are identified and used in the validation review and approval process. The validated prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories are clearly stated in the college catalog and in the *Schedule of Classes*, but the College's current student services computer system does not have the capability of enforcing prerequisites in disciplines other than English, ESL, and Mathematics. The Academy of Entertainment and Technology is currently pilot testing the enforcement of prerequisites in Computer Animation and Interactive Media.

Other related responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee include implementation of state-mandated curriculum regulations and policies and recommendation of changes in degree and certificate requirements and general education requirements for the Associate

in Arts degree, the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, and the California State University General Education Certification.

In addition, the Curriculum Committee reviews noncredit courses for compliance with the state guidelines, before their submission to the Chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges for approval.

The approval process for the not-for-credit offerings of the Community Services/Extension program differs because of the characteristics of the offering. (The process for approval of Community Services/Extension courses was previously described in Standard IIA.1(b).) Unlike courses in the credit program, the vast majority of Community Services/Extension classes are designed to stand-alone with no specific relationship to other courses in the program. Most have no prerequisites and are not designed to provide specific preparation for a subsequent course.

The College's long-standing curriculum approval process is a model faculty-centered participatory governance process. A course proposal is prepared by an individual faculty member within a program and presented to the faculty member's department for review and a departmental vote. If approved by the department, the department chair records the department vote and submits the course outline and all required forms to the dean serving as secretary to the committee, who works with the Curriculum Committee Chair to prepare it as an agenda item for the committee. The Curriculum Committee reviews the proposal before the committee meeting, and the department chair or designee attends the meeting to present the proposal and answer questions of committee members. After discussion, the committee takes action to approve the proposal, return the proposal to the department with recommendations for further development or revision, or to deny approval. Approved proposals are forwarded to the Academic Senate and, if approved, to the Superintendent/President to become agenda items for the Board of Trustees.

Santa Monica College's curriculum planning and evaluation procedures are clearly defined in the Curriculum Committee Handbook, and the procedures for development, approval, and modification of credit-bearing courses and programs are outlined. A Curriculum Committee website (<http://www.academicssenate.com/curriculum>) was launched in 2002 to increase accessibility of curriculum related materials. Additional functionality has been added periodically, as users of the website make recommendations. Currently, a beta test of a web-based course submission process is underway.

The Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee has the responsibility for the evaluation of all college programs on a six-year cycle. Each program is required to prepare a self-study that is reviewed and validated by the Program Review Committee. Faculty within the department and discipline in question conduct the self-evaluation of academic programs. Recommendations of the committee for improvement of the program in relationship to the College's Vision, Mission, and Goals are communicated through an executive summary sent to the leader of the program being evaluated, the administrator responsible for the program, and the chair of the Collegewide Coordinating Council. The

Collegewide Coordinating Council considers the findings of the Program Review Committee as it sets institutional objectives and prioritizes requests for new faculty positions.

Follow-through on previous Program Review Executive Summary recommendations and updating course outlines is considered part of the program review process for instructional programs, but compliance in this area was previously inconsistent. During the last two years, however, department compliance has reached nearly 100%. The Program Review Committee now withholds the Executive Summary until curriculum review is complete. In addition, the committee uses its last meeting of the year to evaluate the year's activities and discuss ways of improving the process for the following year. The Program Review Committee chair from the prior year gives a summary report to the Collegewide Coordinating Council to provide input in the development of *Master Plan for Education* institutional objectives.

Advisory committees are required for occupational and vocational programs, and may be formed for programs serving special populations, academic programs, programs supported by grant funding, and programs accredited by outside regulatory bodies. These advisory groups are used to provide input on current trends in the field of study or occupation. In addition, they often provide direction and recommendations for program review self-studies. For example, the Emeritus College responds to the needs of the older adults through an advisory group of senior citizens. The Emeritus College Executive Council meets to review the offerings and make recommendations concerning programming. The offerings, delivery system and outreach are designed to meet the needs of this segment of the community.

Departments are encouraged to have close links to educational institutions, professional organizations, and business and industry appropriate to their field of study. This applies to high schools in terms of the skills of incoming freshmen and to four-year institutions and employers for articulation and job placement.

Evaluation—IIA.2(a), IIA.2(b) and IIA.2(e)

The course approval process involves review by various areas of the College, and the record keeping required by the number of new courses and course revisions that are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee is somewhat daunting, due to the size of the College. Therefore, the process can be somewhat overwhelming. To facilitate the new course approval process as well as the record keeping, the Curriculum Committee is developing a web-based course submission process.

The size of the College has also inhibited the implementation of a biennial review process for occupational programs. However, with the support of the Academic Senate Joint Occupational Education Committee, which has reviewed effective program review models employed by other community colleges, the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee is in the process of developing a feasible process that can contribute to the enhancement of occupational programs.

Plan–IIA.2(a), IIA.2(b) and IIA.2(e)

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee will implement the web-based course submission process to facilitate the review and evaluation of new and revised courses.
- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Program Review and Occupational Education committees will exert pressure toward compliance with regard to biennial evaluation of occupational programs.

IIA.2(c) *High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.*

Description–IIA.2(c)

In accordance with its mission, Santa Monica College offers educational programs that enable students to transfer to universities, prepare for careers, develop college-level skills, and participate in educational enrichment experiences that support the concept of lifelong learning. The College currently offers courses in more than sixty fields of study for which the primary objective is to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions and/or for completion of the requirements for the Associate in Arts degree. Students also have the opportunity to prepare for employment or retrain to maintain state-of-the-art skill levels in more than thirty occupational education fields of study for which professional certificates are awarded upon successful completion of requirements in the major. (These students may also earn the Associate in Arts degree by additionally completing the Associate in Arts degree general education requirements.) Basic skills instruction for students unprepared to enter college-level courses of study is offered in biology, English, ESL, mathematics, and psychology. The College offers not-for-credit personal enrichment educational course work through its Community Services/Extension Program, and its nationally renowned noncredit Emeritus College responds to the needs of senior citizens for lifelong learning experiences.

Evaluation–IIA.2(c)

Santa Monica College is nationally and internationally known for the high quality of its academic programs and its success in preparing students for university transfer. This reputation is substantiated by the fact that the College transfers more students than any other community college to the University of California, the University of Southern California, and Loyola Marymount University and by its many specific articulation agreements with four-year institutions nationwide. The College is equally committed to workforce development and strives to adapt its educational offerings to changing workforce needs. Enrollment statistics and course demand data indicate that the College's basic skills offering is sufficient to meet the needs of students in need of preparation to enter college-level courses of study.

All Associate in Arts degree programs require the successful completion of at least 60 units of course work beyond the basic skills level and include a minimum of 18 units of general education courses in natural science, social science, humanities, and language and rationality. In 1998, an American Cultures requirement for the Associate in Arts degree—that one of these general education courses must compare and contrast three U.S. cultures—was added. Completion requirements for degrees, professional certificates, and transfer are clearly stated in the college catalog. Courses and program sequences are developed by faculty members and must be reviewed and approved by the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee to assure that Title 5 requirements are met. All new courses and programs are reviewed by the Library as part of the approval process to assure that appropriate learning resources exist to support them.

Plan–IIA.2(c)

None

IIA.2(h) *The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course’s stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.*

IIA.2(i) *The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program’s stated learning outcomes.*

Description–IIA.2(h) and IIA.2(i)

The College follows the Carnegie unit policies and practice for awarding course credit. Information is available to students and faculty through various online and hardcopy campus publications, including the college catalog, the *Student Planning Guide for Success*, and the *Schedule of Classes*. These policies include explanations of academic regulations for grades, award of credits, appeals procedures, withdrawal policies and deadlines, incomplete grades, computation of grade point averages, academic probation, definition/repercussions of academic dishonesty, special program requirements, and assessment procedures in mathematics, English, and ESL. Policies on credit for prior achievement and credit by exam are available in the Enrollment Services Office and are distributed by request. Course outlines of record are kept on file in the Academic Affairs and department offices to provide continuity and consistency within departments.

Information on grading practices is available through TIMS (The Instructional Management System) reports distributed to department chairs each semester to be shared with faculty members. Department chairs review these reports and discuss inconsistent grading patterns with individual faculty members. In a further effort to establish consistent grading policies, the English and ESL departments schedule a common essay exam for all composition courses at the level just below English 1 (Freshman Composition). Instructors attend norming sessions, and each essay is graded by two different faculty members

to provide additional assessments of each composition for comparison with the original instructor's evaluation.

Evaluation—IIA.2(h) and IIA.2(i)

Santa Monica College transfers more students to the University of California than any other California community college. Articulation agreements have been established with several major institutions, including California State University, Northridge; Loyola Marymount University; Pepperdine University; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Southern California; and some out-of-state universities, such as New York University. Surveys show that Santa Monica College graduates are consistently high performers at transfer institutions in grade point averages, retention, and completion rates. It is apparent that the faculty is preparing students appropriately for their continued study at universities. Occupational programs with standards established by accrediting or regulatory bodies demonstrate similar success.

The tracking of students after they leave the College is generally very inconsistent. The College receives yearly reports on the academic performance of its students from the California State University and University of California systems; however, private colleges and universities do not provide the College with any tracking data. This lack of data from private institutions presents a major challenge to community colleges in terms of determining student success after graduation. The tracking of vocational students in job placement and retention is just as challenging. Even though the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office matches the social security numbers of alumni with unemployment insurance files for job placement and retention tracking, this practice provides only partial data since a growing number of jobs are available only on a freelance basis and thus are exempt from these types of data collection mechanisms.

Although it is implicit in the College's many articulation agreements that the receiving four-year institutions accept the learning objectives stated in the course outlines of record for individual courses as equivalent to those in their own lower division courses, the College's dialogue has not yet reached the stage of defining and explicitly stating student learning outcomes in terms of degrees and transfer requirements. Likewise, job placements would indicate that employers accept the core competencies developed through completing occupational certificate requirements as meeting the skills needed for employment, but the College still needs to better define these competencies as student learning outcomes and articulate them more clearly and consistently.

Plan—IIA.2(h) and IIA.2(i)

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees will study the relationship between course objectives and student learning outcomes; provide guidelines for identification and development of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; provide leadership in assessing student achievement and appropriateness of those outcomes based on the

success of certificate and degree recipients; and provide guidance in the revision of those outcomes when necessary.

- IIA.3** *The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course. General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:*
- IIA.3(a)** *An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.*
- IIA.3(b)** *A capability to be a productive individual and life long learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.*
- IIA.3(c)** *A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.*
- IIA.4** *All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.*

Description—IIA.3(a), IIA.3(b), IIA.3(c) and IIA.4

All Associate in Arts degree programs require the successful completion of at least sixty units of course work beyond the basic skills level. Each degree requires completion of at least twenty units in a major field of study. In addition to the major requirements, Santa Monica College requires a minimum of eighteen units of general education in the following areas:

- Natural Science
- Social Science
- Humanities
- Language and Rationality, which includes English and mathematics, and
- American Cultures

Students receiving the Associate in Arts degree demonstrate competency in the use of language and computation by completing the Language and Rationality sections of the General Education Pattern. To complete the language requirement, students must successfully complete English 1 (Freshman Composition) or an English or ESL course that results in eligibility to enroll in English 1. Competence in computation is demonstrated by completing a mathematics course at or above the level of Math 20 (Intermediate Algebra) or passing the mathematics proficiency exam and completing one course from a list provided in Language and Rationality, Group B of the Associate in Arts Degree General Education Pattern.

The American Cultures requirement has been in effect since Fall 1998. To date, twelve courses, which simultaneously meet one of the other general education requirements, have been identified through the existing curriculum process as meeting the American Cultures requirement.

The curriculum process relies on the expertise of the faculty to determine whether a course that is considered by the Curriculum Committee for approval can be used for meeting the general education requirement.

If students are expected to properly make use of technology to the full extent—from employing word processing to write term papers to utilizing the Internet to conduct research—faculty need to have those skills and be able to teach them to students. In an effort to encourage faculty to integrate technology into the curriculum and to demystify its use, the College applied for and received an information competency grant. These funds facilitated the development and implementation of an online course to explore the uses and integration of technology into the curriculum. It is widely recognized that technology, when used properly, has the potential of enhancing the teaching and learning processes. It also enhances the individual's potential to become a productive member of society and a lifelong learner.

Santa Monica College faculty, generally speaking, have been very active in incorporating technology into the curriculum, as evidenced by the extensive course offerings through distance education. In addition to disciplines that employ technology on a regular basis to deliver the curriculum, a number of departments, including English and Communication, have not only encouraged, but required students to use technology both in and out of the classroom. For example, some English composition, journalism, and communication classes have been taught in computer labs for many years. Students in these classes access the Internet to identify information needs and learn to evaluate, incorporate, and cite resources appropriately. Also, students taking English classes use the writing and reading labs extensively. One of these labs is shared with the ESL Department, which recently purchased dedicated software to assist students in improving their basic language skills.

In an effort to enhance student information competency and computer literacy, the College increased budgets for library materials since the 1998 accreditation site visit with the assistance of categorical funding sources, such as the Chancellor's Office Instructional Equipment and Library Materials and Telecommunications and Technology Infrastruc-

ture Program (TTIP) grants. Some of these materials include the increase of both online databases and print resources. In addition, the Santa Monica College Library fully participates in the Council of Chief Librarians, California Community Colleges' consortium for electronic resources. The Library now has subscriptions to twenty-four web-based databases, providing students with the access to over three thousand full-text periodicals and reference sources. These web-based resources are available to students from off campus, twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

In its new facility, which opened in August 2003, the Library now has 216 personal computer workstations for students, including 47 in a dedicated "hands-on" bibliographic instruction classroom. In addition to providing access to the Library's catalog, electronic databases, and the Internet, 112 of these workstations feature Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, Access, Publisher and FrontPage). These resources provide students with the tools necessary to complete all of the steps of their research projects and assignments.

Evaluation—IIA.3(a), IIA.3(b), IIA.3(c) and IIA.4

All Associate in Arts degree programs incorporate the general education requirements defined in Title 5, and all new courses proposed to be included in the Associate in Arts Degree General Education Pattern are carefully reviewed by the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee to assure that these requirements have been met. As a result, the College offers an impressive array of general education courses from which students may select to explore various broad areas of knowledge. Since demonstrated competency in the use of language and computation is central to completing the Language and Rationality sections of the General Education Pattern, all students who receive a degree have met the College's competency requirements.

Santa Monica College provides outstanding general education training as well as specialized training. However, identifying student learning outcomes in relation to the general education core is a challenge the College needs to seriously address.

Although the American Cultures requirement has been in place since 1998, four years elapsed before implementation was complete. The process involved identification of the prospective courses, revising the curriculum to meet the new guidelines, and completing the internal course approval process. The courses currently identified as meeting the American Cultures requirement promote the understanding of and respect for cultural diversity. In addition, many courses and faculty through their teachings encourage students to become ethical human beings and effective citizens, as well as to display the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally and globally. Also, through their behavior, faculty model these attitudes for students to emulate. Furthermore, interpersonal skills are taught in many fields including counseling, communication, and psychology.

The College does not have an information competency requirement for the Associate in Arts degree. However, the Information Competency Task Force, which has been operational for a number of years, has held discussions on the idea of incorporating informa-

tion competency into the general education requirements to ensure that graduates possess the computer skills necessary to succeed in a job, function effectively at a four-year university, or to enable them to be lifelong learners. (See Standard IIC.1(b).)

The use of computers is generally encouraged and, in some cases, required for successful completion of general education courses, and informal discussions are underway among the faculty and the joint committees as to the most effective manner in which a computer literacy requirement can be fulfilled.

Plan–IIA.3(a), IIA.3(b), IIA.3(c) and IIA.4

- ◆ The Office of Academic Affairs will conduct a study to determine whether the current number of sections that meet the American Cultures requirement is sufficient to meet student need.
- ◆ The Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Academic Senate President will ensure that department faculty and the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees collaborate to address defining and articulating student learning outcomes for the College’s general education core curriculum.
- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee will formally undertake the discussion of identifying the most feasible alternative for ensuring that all graduates possess a specified level of information competency.

IIA.5 ***Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.***

Description–IIA.5

Standards for some occupational programs are defined by outside accrediting or regulatory agencies. These programs include Cosmetology, Early Childhood Education, Nursing, and Respiratory Therapy, a program that Santa Monica College offers jointly with East Los Angeles College. All students completing these programs meet or exceed the technical and professional competence requirements of these agencies. Other occupational programs such as Computer Animation, Computer Information Systems, Graphic Design, Interactive Media, Journalism, and Photography maintain standards of competence through the involvement of their advisory committees in the program and by the individual efforts of faculty members to maintain contacts in business and industry and participate in professional organizations.

Although Santa Monica College has collected student social security numbers since the implementation of electronic student record keeping, the College only began requiring them in Winter 2003. Therefore, Employment Development Department wage data for

alumni who have participated in the College's occupational programs are not yet available. However, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office matches the social security numbers of former students with unemployment insurance benefits. This match helps Chancellor's Office staff establish the performance of Santa Monica College alumni in job placement and retention. However, as indicated earlier, these data often-times fail to accurately identify the number of working alumni in occupational programs because of the recent trend in the economy toward freelancing. This economic activity and the lack of completeness of the data collected through social security matches have prompted individual departments to collect their own anecdotal data from alumni in order to maintain more accurate data on alumni job placement and retention. These data are maintained in-house. Job placement and retention indicators along with achievement and completion rates are compiled in the VTEA (Vocational and Technical Education Act) Core Indicators by TOP (Taxonomy of Programs) Code. These measures are disseminated and discussed with department chairs in vocational/occupational programs to ensure that deficiency areas are targeted for improvement with VTEA funds. Department chairs are invited to submit VTEA funding proposals based on program improvement and expansion plans and Core Indicator enhancements. Several programs have acquired or upgraded technology equipment with VTEA funds to ensure that students receive real-life training on industry standard equipment.

Evaluation–IIA.5

Title 5 of the Educational Code requires that vocational/occupational programs undergo a biennial program review. To date, the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee has not developed a formal process for ensuring these biennial reviews take place. However, the current budget crisis and the ensuing program discontinuance have prompted extensive discussions on the need to implement a process that addresses the biennial program review of vocational/occupational programs.

In 2001 the Academic Senate Joint Occupational Education Committee was formed to provide leadership, professional development and disseminate information on vocational/occupational programs. This committee has discussed various possible involvement opportunities in a yet-to-be established biennial review process for these programs. This year, an additional step has been taken toward implementation of such review for vocational/occupational programs by overlapping some of the membership of the Academic Senate Joint Program Review and Occupational Education committees.

Although occupational programs have advisory committees to assist in maintaining standards of competence, the level of advisory committee participation varies greatly from program to program. Expanding the number of industry partnerships and contract education relationships is a goal of most programs and a primary activity of occupational program staff. These relationships are viewed as essential in the development of new programs and in ensuring that the training in current programs produces skills that meet the expectations of employers.

Plan–IIA.5

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Program Review and Occupational Education committees will establish a viable biennial program review process for vocational/occupational programs, taking into consideration industry standards and trends as well as employment data to ensure that the curriculum and programs provide students with the skills necessary for employment and employment retention.

IIA.6 *The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution’s officially approved course outline.*

IIA.6(a) *The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.*

Description–IIA.6(a)

In an effort to improve and clarify curriculum and program transfer requirements with California State University and University of California campuses, Santa Monica College faculty have participated in IMPAC (Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum). The project enables faculty from the three higher education systems to discuss issues, concerns, and academic procedures that impinge upon the transfer of students in specific majors. Santa Monica College faculty have participated in these discussions, from 1999 with Science Cluster I through the current Language Cluster, to discuss prerequisite and lower division courses students must complete prior to transfer within their discipline. Business Department faculty attended the Business and Government Cluster regional meetings in 2001-2002 to address the need for common transfer requirements for Business students applying to various California State University campuses.

In addition, Santa Monica College is an active participant in the Presidential Summit, a voluntary association of Los Angeles region public institutions, including twenty-three community colleges, eight California State University campuses, and three campuses of the University of California. The Summit is dedicated to improving the transition of community college students to four-year universities. In this context, the Summit is concerned with issues relating to outreach and retention programs, obstacles that impede the transfer process, articulation between two- and four-year institutions and, most recently,

the need to increase the number of students in the mathematics, science, and engineering pipeline, as well as ensure their retention to degree completion.

The institution supports a comprehensive College website, which includes the catalog, *Schedule of Classes*, and special program information. To ensure students are accessing up-to-date information regarding transfer requirements, the Transfer/Counseling Center encourages students to utilize its website (<http://www.smc.edu/transfer>). The College also maintains numerous articulation agreements with four-year universities, including major preparations, general education, course-by-course lists, and transferable-course agreements that are available to students at the Transfer/Counseling Center or through ASSIST (<http://www.assist.org>). The college catalog also includes the policies of Santa Monica College in regard to credit from other colleges, advanced placement exams, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and military service credit. It is the College's policy to grant credit for most courses taken at accredited institutions of higher education. Counselors and Enrollment Services evaluators, in consultation with the appropriate Department Chair or faculty leader, review courses when there are questions in regard to equivalency of courses from other institutions. In addition, the College Articulation Officer maintains complete records for course equivalency.

In collaboration with Management Information Systems and Enrollment Services, the Counseling Department implemented the student degree audit program, which checks student transcripts against Associate in Arts degree requirements and provides information on remaining requirements to be met. Educational plans, transcript information, IGETC advisement, Associate in Arts degree and occupational certificate information, and all resources for transfer are available online.

New courses are developed by faculty and reviewed by the appropriate department. The College Articulation Officer works closely with all teaching faculty on proposals for course revisions or new courses to facilitate articulation. The College determines transferability to the California State University system. Once determined by the College, the transferability to CSU is subject to review by the CSU Chancellor's Office. The Santa Monica College Catalog is reviewed annually by the University of California Office of the President, where transferability of each course is determined.

The Transfer/Counseling Center regularly hosts college representatives from several institutions nationwide as well as the California State University, the University of California, and independent institutions in California. Representatives from these institutions are available on an appointment (drop-in or workshop) basis, to answer questions about articulation from students and faculty. Articulation agreements are available in hardcopy format.

Santa Monica College is clearly committed to fulfilling its transfer mission. Since 1990, it has led all community colleges in California in transfers to the University of California. In recent years, the College has also led in transfers to the University of California and the California State University combined, as well as in the number of African American and Latino/Hispanic transfers. It also leads in transfers to the University of Southern Cali-

fornia, Loyola Marymount University, and other four-year institutions. For the latest statistics on transfers, see (<http://www.smc.edu/transfer/statistics/>).

To determine transfer students' perceptions of the quality of academic preparation at Santa Monica College and assess how well prepared they are to undertake the academic challenges at four-year colleges and universities, the Transfer/Counseling Center, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, conducted the Transfer Readiness Research Project. Alumni at six major destinations for transfer students—California State University, Northridge; Loyola Marymount University; Mount St. Mary's College; Pepperdine University; the University of Southern California; and the University of California, Los Angeles—were asked to complete the Transfer Students Questionnaire. The questionnaire surveyed students about their experiences at Santa Monica College — coursework, writing, other learning and study skills, the Transfer/Counseling Center, and faculty. Key findings from the questionnaire include:

- Seventy-five percent or more of the students who returned the survey from five of the six universities agreed somewhat or strongly agreed that the courses at Santa Monica College developed their critical and analytical thinking.
- Seventy-five percent or more of the respondents from four of the six universities agreed somewhat or strongly agreed that the Santa Monica College courses prepared them for the academic standards at four-year institutions. The percentage of students from the other two universities agreeing with this assessment fell just below 75%.
- Over 75% of respondents from two of the six institutions agreed somewhat or strongly agreed that the Santa Monica College courses prepared them for their major at the four-year institutions. Students from the remaining four universities had the same assessment in well over 50% of the responses.
- Between 50% and 75% of the respondents at all six institutions somewhat agreed or agreed strongly that their writing assignments or instruction at Santa Monica College prepared them for upper division work.
- Approximately 70% of all respondents agreed somewhat or strongly agreed that because of their academic preparation at Santa Monica College they were confident that they would be successful at a four-year institution.

As a follow-up to the questionnaire, those students who were available were asked to participate in focus groups. Some of the key findings are:

- Over half of the focus group participants found the Transfer/Counseling Center helpful in providing admissions information. However, some concerns were expressed about inconsistency of information, and increased counselor training was suggested.

- Transfer students felt that Santa Monica College needed to provide more reading and writing across the curriculum.
- Some participants suggested that Santa Monica College offer more short-term courses.
- Participants expressed the need for more assistance with finding and evaluating sources of information.
- Transfer students expressed a belief that four-year institutions had higher expectations than Santa Monica College for both reading and writing in terms of quantity and quality.

The findings of this extensive study were shared with the college community. As a result, the College has begun some discussions to address the concerns expressed by transfer students in the study. Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the implementation of an information literacy requirement. Additionally, the Counseling Department created a policies and procedures manual, and additional staff development has been incorporated into the Counseling Department meetings. Finally, in response to some of the findings of this study and other studies that seem to indicate that students have a higher success rate in short-term than in full-term classes, the College has increased its offering of short-term courses.

Evaluation–IIA.6(a)

The College continues to improve and update transfer resources through the Transfer/Counseling Center and its online website. Santa Monica College is the leading transfer institution to the University of California and many of the local private colleges. The College continues to work closely with baccalaureate institutions in planning curriculum, and faculty members are actively involved in the curriculum planning process. The College Articulation Officer has established regular online updates for all articulation agreements, and this has improved accuracy of information for students.

Plan–IIA.6(a)

None

IIA.6(b) *When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.*

Description—IIA.6(b)

Although the College's Program Discontinuance Policy (Administrative Regulation 5113) was approved in 1995, it had never been used until recently. When programs have been discontinued in the past, the process occurred over a relatively long period of time, during which lack of student demand resulted in a gradually reduced course offering. When the time came to discontinue the course offering, the few students enrolled in the remaining sections were referred to similar programs at other institutions.

As a response to funding reductions, ten academic programs were considered for program discontinuance during Spring 2003. Eventually, five of these programs—Architecture, Public Safety, Recreation, Tourism/Hospitality, and Transportation Technology—were discontinued. Students identified as pursuing a degree or certificate in all ten of the programs originally under consideration were contacted directly by Student Affairs, notified of the possibility of program discontinuance, and assigned individual program counselors to identify possible alternatives for completing the remaining degree or certificate requirements.

When the discontinuance of the five programs was enacted in May 2003, counselors again attempted to contact affected students who had not responded to the initial communications. Neighboring institutions were contacted to facilitate articulation agreements for transfer of entry-level students. For students near completion of degrees or certificates, sections of advanced classes were offered during Summer 2003. In addition, college staff have displayed flexibility in reviewing student petitions pertaining to course substitutions, both for Santa Monica College courses deemed equivalent to particular requirements and for courses from other institutions. Timelines for meeting degree and certificate requirements have been extended to facilitate meeting Santa Monica College requirements through courses at other institutions. Although the course offerings for the other programs under consideration for discontinuance have been severely reduced, attention to the scheduling of sequential courses has minimized the impact of these reductions on students.

Evaluation—IIA.6(b)

Given the truly unfortunate circumstances surrounding implementation of program discontinuance in so accelerated a timeline, college staff, particularly the counseling faculty, performed heroically in contacting and advising the impacted students. Although the budget reductions for 2003-2004 have resulted in significant reductions in the counseling staff, designated counselors continue to have a portion of their loads devoted to the students affected by the discontinuance of these programs.

Much was learned through this experience, particularly in regard to the importance of data. The information compiled for assessment of the programs under consideration for discontinuance of programs is being refined for inclusion in the College's program review process, and the importance of defining student enrollment patterns that represent serious pursuit of a goal (degree or certificate) for all college programs is now apparent.

In the interest of improving institutional effectiveness—even through the most unfortunate and unpleasant situations—it is important that the effectiveness of the methods used in dealing with the students affected by program discontinuance be assessed.

Plan–IIA.6(b)

- ◆ The offices of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs will assess the effectiveness of the methods used in assisting students displaced by program discontinuance.

IIA.6(c) *The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.*

Description–IIA.6(c)

The transformation in technology has allowed the College to represent clearly, accurately, and consistently all information on the College website. The major online categories are available at (<http://www.smc.edu>).

In 2002-03, a primary planning objective was to streamline workflow through automation and to meet the needs of students and employees by integrating current technology into all learning and working areas. Management Information Systems has prioritized this project to web-enable student and faculty self-service functions as a major goal of the College.

In addition to the online advancement of information with technology, the College continues to create outstanding printed publications including the catalog, the *Schedule of Classes*, and various other special program guides.

In 1999, the District began a comprehensive review and revision of its Board Policy Manual. Administrative teams were appointed to prepare drafts of updated policies and regulations to be reviewed by college constituencies and, where appropriate, taken through participatory governance approval processes.

The Board Policy Manual was restructured as follows:

- Section 1000 Bylaws of the Board
- Section 2000 Administration and Public Relations
- Section 3000 Human Resources
- Section 4000 Student Services
- Section 5000 Curriculum and Instruction

- Section 6000 Business and Non-Instructional Operations
- Section 7000 Facilities and Grounds

The process culminated with the Board of Trustees approving the revised and restructured Board Policy Manual (by section), between May 2000 and July 2001. Board policies are posted on the college website (<http://www.smc.edu/policies/Policies/>).

An annual review of Board Policies was scheduled to start during the 2002-2003 academic year, culminating with Board approval in May or June. Unfortunately, dealing with the major budget crisis and related activities took priority; therefore, the review and revision of Board policies did not occur. However, Section 1000, Bylaws of the Board, was reviewed, revised, and approved by the Board at its December 2003 meeting.

The review and revision of the Administrative Regulations implementing Board policy followed the update of the Board Policies. To date, the Student Services (4000 Series), Curriculum and Instruction (5000 series), and portions of the Human Resources (3000 Series) have been reviewed and revised.

Evaluation–IIA.6(c)

The College updates its website in a timely manner to provide accurate and current information regarding scheduling, curriculum offerings, transfer/degree/certificate information, and other educational resources. A new *Schedule of Classes* is produced, in both hardcopy and online formats, for each semester and intersession. The college catalog is published on an annual basis, and the College Articulation Officer is responsible for immediate updates of all transfer information updates. Since the review, revision, and reorganization of administrative regulations is a lengthy, ongoing process, some understandable confusion has surfaced as to which versions of particular regulations are currently in effect. (See Standard IIIA.3.)

Plan–IIA.6(c)

None

IIA.7 *In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board-adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. These policies make clear the institution’s commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.*

IIA.7(a) *Faculty distinguishes between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.*

IIA.7(c) *Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.*

Description—IIA.7(a) and IIA.7(c)

Through its Vision, Mission, and Goals statements, Board of Trustees policies, and administrative regulations, the College addresses conduct codes and related policies. Creation of these plans, policies, and regulations is accomplished through the participatory governance committee structure. Faculty takes a leading role, through the Academic Senate, in the development of policies that impact the learning environment. (See Standard IVA for a description of the College’s participatory governance model.)

Board of Trustees policies that support institutional beliefs include Academic Freedom, AIDS education, Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace, Diversity and Equal Opportunity, Non-Discrimination in Employment, Sexual Harassment, Workplace and Campus Violence, Student Bill of Rights, Student Conduct (including Academic Conduct), Responsible Computer Use (for Students). In addition to such policies and implementing administrative regulations, both the Academic Senate and the Management Association have adopted statements of professional ethics—examples of constituent organizations adopting policies that reflect college beliefs. Policies are available on the college website and printed in college publications. The Student Code of Academic Conduct and the Statement of Professional Ethics for Faculty are posted in classrooms.

Santa Monica College is a member of the Riverside Community College professional development project 4faculty.org, an online professional development network of resources and learning modules designed specifically for the needs of community college faculty. The College was a founding participant and continues to provide support to create customized content including descriptions and overviews of Santa Monica College policies, procedures, and resources. Although the network was created primarily to address the needs of part-time faculty members, all faculty are encouraged to make use of this resource. To encourage participation, faculty created a distance education course applying the resources on 4faculty.org. The College agreed to accept the course as professional development flex requirements and for group advancement in pay schedules.

Faculty and staff at Santa Monica College recognize the importance of distinguishing between personal conviction and proven conclusions. Santa Monica College students come from diverse cultures and, depending upon the particular semester, as many as 100 different nations. Each year, a significant number of students transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Faculty members understand, therefore, that careful analysis of facts and ideas is especially important in classroom teaching. After the last accreditation self-study, the College considered including a conformity statement in faculty orientation materials, but, after discussion, deemed this unnecessary since, as a public institution, Santa Monica College imposes no political, religious, or other belief systems.

Evaluation–IIA.7(a) and IIA.7(c)

Board policies and administrative regulations, including those addressing academic freedom and student academic honesty, exist to publicly support college beliefs. Both the faculty (through the Academic Senate) and managers (through the Management Association) have adopted codes of ethical behavior. No such code yet exists for the College's classified staff because the collective bargaining unit considers this a negotiable item. Although a responsible computing use policy is in place for students, the proposed Computer and Network Use Policy for faculty and staff is pending agreement with collective bargaining units. (See Standard IIIC.1(c).)

Plan–IIA.7(a) and IIA.7(c)

None

IIA.7(b) *The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.*

Description–IIA.7(b)

The College's Student Conduct Code includes a Code of Academic Conduct that clearly states expectations and consequences for academic dishonesty. These documents are accessible in college publications, through the college website, and posted in all classrooms. Incidences of dishonesty are handled through the Student Judicial Affairs Office.

The Student Judicial Affairs Office was created in an effort to centralize the functions exercised by the college disciplinarian and the Ombuds office. The college disciplinarian has the responsibility of upholding AR 4410, the Student Conduct Code, and has initial authority to suspend students for code violations. The disciplinarian also serves on the Academic Senate Joint Student Affairs Committee, the primary role of which is to maintain and update all administrative regulations that affect students.

The Santa Monica College Ombuds Office, which has been in existence since 1976, is the first interface with students charged with academic dishonesty and has developed in breadth and scope since its inception. The office provides informal dispute resolution and mediation services, specifically for disagreements that arise between faculty and students. Ombudspersons have a multitude of roles and tasks. They gather information; explain college policies, such as the grade appeal process and college add/drop rules; have initial responsibility for advising students on the grade appeal process; act as a neutral resource between students and faculty and facilitate communication between interested parties; counsel faculty to minimize potential conflict and counsel students on appropriate communication skills when in a conflict situation; refer students to various student services offices, when appropriate; and, overall, serve as an informal resource to faculty, students, and staff. Students may make face-to-face appointments, call, or use e-mail to place their

complaints. Information is kept confidential. The ombudspersons try to bring harmony between differing points of view and do not take part in formal grievance processes.

Evaluation–IIA.7(b)

The Student Conduct Code and the Code of Academic Conduct are clearly described in college publications and available on the college website. This information is also included in the new student orientation process and posted collegewide in classrooms. In addition, faculty members have been encouraged to include or refer to the Code of Academic Conduct in course syllabi.

The Student Judicial Affairs team was developed to provide a comprehensive and organized approach in dealing with student conduct, academic honesty, and discipline. A review of recent data from the college disciplinarian, ombudspersons and the College Police, reveals that the number of student referrals and staff investigations has significantly increased. The causes for this are not yet known, but the increase is of concern to College.

Faculty have ready access to staff on the Student Judicial Affairs team for help in dealing with cases of academic dishonesty and other disciplinary issues. Reports can be submitted electronically, through campus mail or in person. Response is prompt. Students are immediately sent a letter describing charges, with specific options the student may exercise clearly outlined.

Plan–IIA.7(b)

- ◆ The Vice President, Student Affairs will initiate a study to determine the cause(s) for the increase in discipline cases and recommend mitigation strategies.

IIA.8 *Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.*

Not applicable to Santa Monica College.

IIB. Student Support Services

The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.

As an “open access” community college serving diverse missions and student interests, Santa Monica College prides itself on the quality and range of student support services that are delivered to students in a multifaceted and timely manner. With well over thirty such programs currently in existence, access to and quality of services are crucial tasks taken seriously by those involved in their planning and delivery.

Many discussions have taken place regarding the impact of student services on student learning outcomes and success. The Student Affairs division of the College has developed numerous programs in response to specific challenges facing students. For example, varied college orientation models (“Weekend of Welcome,” extended day-long model, for-credit model, and online model) have been tailored to the needs of new and reverse transfer students. When the student probationary rate was found to be high, the Counseling Department developed a mechanism to better serve these students, both through individual and group advisement. Additionally, in response to low persistence rates, the Dean, Counseling and Retention formed a student services retention committee to develop strategies related to improving students’ low retention, high attrition, and low success rates within their individual programs. Upon successfully implementing many retention strategies in student services, the Superintendent/President commissioned a student services/academic affairs task force to develop additional strategies. While these are but a few examples of how student success outcomes are addressed, they do provide a general picture to the responsiveness characteristic of student services personnel.

IIB.1 The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.

Description–IIB.1

The quality of student support services is assured through many avenues including the College’s program review process that occurs every six years. Through this process, programs receive an executive summary report that consists of recommendations, areas to be improved, and areas that could benefit from additional institutional support. Additionally, many special student service programs have designed their own annual evaluations.

Newly unveiled technology further assures the quality of student support services. For example, many components of the academic counseling process are now done electronically, including the development of a student educational plan (SEP) and the ability to check a student's academic progress, using a degree audit system. In these examples, technology now allows for greater accountability and precision, as well as the ability to track student performance. Similarly, since the last accreditation visit, the Assessment Center has adopted computer adaptive testing as the primary means for assessing students. This has demonstrably improved the quality of student placement and has resulted in a lower rate of retesting. In Enrollment Services, non-Santa Monica College transcripts and records are now scanned and can be retrieved by counselors and/or admissions staff electronically.

Grant funds have supported improvements in services for all students. For example, a dedicated counseling staff for probationary students has developed new procedures that include re-orientations, more collaboration with instructional faculty, and a developmental counseling approach. This approach has yielded statistically significant improvements in retention and persistence rates, thus demonstrating improved quality of service.

The overall quality of Santa Monica College student services has long been hampered by aging and inadequate facilities. Student services are spread throughout the campus, making them difficult for students to find and hard to coordinate without unnecessary duplication. Within the last couple of years, efforts have been made to create clusters of services, which have resulted in improved delivery.

Since the last accreditation, the College has made great strides in making its student support services more accessible. Students can now apply, be oriented, enroll, and purchase textbooks online. Distance education students can resolve counseling and admissions issues via cyber-counseling. Additionally, greater effort is now made to provide in-person student services, including admissions, counseling, library and bookstore, at the satellite site. The College also participates in a child care collaborative consortium that offers state subsidized child care for students on a sliding scale fee basis.

In keeping with the mission of Santa Monica College, its student support services strive to create a learning environment that both challenges and supports students in achieving their educational goals. As an example, proactive efforts are made to assure that students apply for financial aid, transfer to four-year institutions, and obtain internal degrees and career certificates.

Additionally, the College's student support services are reflective of the extremely diverse community they serve. New programs such as Pico Partnership/On the Move, TRIO/Student Support Services, and the CalWORKs program are but a few examples of the diversity of services offered to students in direct support of the College's mission.

Evaluation–IIB.1

Overall, since the last accreditation, student support services have enjoyed tremendous growth, administrative support, and technological innovation. Unfortunately, these efforts are starting to slow and even reverse as a direct consequence of severe statewide budget cuts and the resulting reduction of student support services staff. In 2002-2003, Enrollment Services lost most of its temporary employees, and the Counseling Department had to reduce its part-time counseling staff resulting in a 30% reduction in hours that counseling staff is available to see students. Additional reductions in these and other vital student service offices have occurred in 2003-2004. With reductions like these, most programs will not be able to maintain the same level of quality or accessibility due to reduced staff and hours of operation. Additionally some special programs may soon cease to exist or be forced to provide services with inadequate staffing levels. Although the road that lies ahead does not appear to be an easy one, it is the exceptionally student-oriented staff that remains committed to student success and will ensure that the impact on quality of service is minimized.

On a brighter note, with the Spring 2002 passage Measure U that includes funding for a Student Services Building, the staff now confidently looks forward to the day when all student services will be consolidated under one roof. This will dramatically improve delivery of services.

Plan–IIB.1

- ◆ Student services staff will expand the use of technology as a means of assuring quality and accessibility to services, regardless of location.

IIB.2 The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information.

Description–IIB.2

The Office of Academic Affairs, in coordination with the Articulation Officer and Transfer/Counseling Center, updates the college catalog on an annual basis. The College website, *Schedule of Classes*, and the online *Student Planning Guide To Success* are other sources of college information.

Evaluation–IIB.2

General information including the mission statement, course, program and degree offerings, student support services, and various educational resources are listed in numerous online and hardcopy publications. Major policies affecting students such as grievance and complaint procedures, sexual harassment, nondiscrimination, and other academic regulations are widely published as well. The college catalog identifies the Board of Trustees and the names of and degrees held by academic administrators, full-time faculty, and associate faculty members.

Every effort is made to ensure that the College is represented with precise, accurate, and current information. Because requirements for transfer change frequently, students are directed to access ASSIST (<http://www.assist.org>) to obtain the most current information. For the most up-to-date Associate in Arts degree and occupational certificate requirements, students are directed to the Counseling Department website.

Although the current annual catalog review process serves to update information in all previously included categories, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs have identified a need to jointly rethink the catalog's organization and content. Most agree that moving to an exclusively electronic format would best meet student needs for accurate, timely information. However, many transfer institutions and external organizations still require printed catalogs for their review processes.

Plan–IIB.2

- ◆ Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will rethink the organization and content of the college catalog—in both its printed and online formats—and review and revise, as appropriate, the annual process for updating information.

IIB.3 ***The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.***

IIB.3(a) ***The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.***

Description–IIB.3(a)

Initial access to the College is typically gained through the Enrollment Services Offices of Outreach, Admissions and Records, or Financial Aid. For many students, initial access is gained through the College website. International student applications are processed by specialists in the International Education Center. Outreach assists individuals transitioning from high school to college through counselor presentations, group counseling, and financial aid workshops. These services are offered onsite at area high schools and other community venues. Enrollment Services offers a comprehensive array of services, both in-person and online, from the point of initial contact through graduation. Students' ability to enroll through the Internet or telephone has improved accessibility. The Financial Aid Office supports efforts to provide access by meeting each student's demonstrated financial need, to the extent possible. Financial Aid maintains a comprehensive website and conducts outreach workshops throughout the year.

Santa Monica College offers a broad range of services designed to support students as they pursue their educational objectives. Programs and services are publicized through orientation, workshops, the comprehensive college website, the catalog, the *Schedule of*

Classes, and program brochures. All new students receive a personalized welcome letter detailing specific relevant services. Most programs provide extensive online information and assistance to students and have coordinated evening hours so students can access all services in a single visit. Online students have access to registration staff, financial aid advisors, academic counseling, and instructional faculty. An online orientation, which includes an evaluation component, is available to all students. The Disabled Students Center ensures compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards and assures access by assisting special needs students with appropriate academic adjustments, such as test accommodation, provision of specialized equipment (including computer-based modifications), classroom aides and scribes, and academic materials in alternate media.

As the College has grown, classes are increasingly scheduled at three primary satellite sites. The College has recognized the need to provide onsite student services at these locations. Shuttle bus service between sites is available to facilitate student movement. Each location has its own bookstore and designated academic counselors.

Evaluation–IIB.3(a)

Access to services has continued to improve with increased use of technology. Despite budget cuts, every effort will be made to increase online services available to students and staff. Although the College is committed to expanding services to off-campus sites, its ability to do so has been impacted by budget cuts. Of particular concern to outreach efforts has been the inability to offer satellite assessment testing, especially to high school student. Many high schools do not have sufficient facilities to offer the computerized version of the assessment tests. Paper and pencil versions of the assessment tests have been administered, but since a consequential validity study by the Assessment Center indicates a significant increase in student placement accuracy with the computerized version, this is not a satisfactory option.

Additionally, the second floor of the Liberal Arts building is inaccessible to students with certain physical disabilities. Although accommodations are always made for these students, the College eagerly anticipates the completion of the new Liberal Arts replacement building that will comply with accessibility standards. Additionally, efforts will continue to provide technological and space modification accommodations for students in the Disabled Students Center.

Efforts are made to accommodate the needs of both day and evening students, and many services are provided online, allowing for 24-hour access without constraints on time or location. Online services are particularly important now that budget cuts have resulted in reduced in-person office hours.

Most college publications, such as the *Schedule of Classes* and the Student Services Workshop and Events Calendar, are comprehensive, of high quality, and available online.

On a monthly basis, Enrollment Services coordinates a discussion group that focuses on improving access and services. The Matriculation Advisory Committee meets each semester to evaluate the role of Assessment, Counseling, Admission, and Orientation in supporting student access and success.

Plan–IIB.3(a)

None

IIB.3(b) The institution provides an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

Description–IIB.3(b)

The development of human potential is a goal of Santa Monica College. The Office of Student Life, through the Associated Students, provides opportunities for student involvement that enhances student retention, assists with definition and clarity of personal and educational goals, and stimulates goal attainment through a commitment to academic excellence. The goal is to foster student involvement, leadership development, civic responsibility, and student retention through the College’s co-curricular programs.

The Office of Student Life and the Associated Students exist to enable students to take part in the many aspects of campus life, both inside and outside of the traditional classroom, and to give students a voice in college decision-making. Students can exert that voice by sitting on a variety of committees, including the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum, Academic Senate Joint Information Services, Grade Appeals, Academic Senate Joint Student Affairs, Food Services, and Budget committees and the Collegewide Coordinating Council. The essential components of the student activities program are the Associated Students Board of Directors, the Inter-Club Council, and student organizations.

Additional means for addressing the improvement of students’ aesthetic and intellectual development include participation in clubs and social activities offered during the college activity hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and on Fridays. There are over 70 student clubs that plan special events, attend conferences, and facilitate college and university tours and other outings during evenings and weekends. There is a movie night each Thursday evening and a Twilight Tuesday, held on the first of the month, that features local singers and music groups. Speakers are invited on a regular basis. Topic examples include racial and gender dialogues and current events.

The Director, Community Relations further exposes students to the broader learning environment by arranging speakers in a wide array of fields, creating lecture series, such as “Distinguished Scientists,” in specific disciplines, and bringing performances to campus. Such events are publicized in a biannual Campus Events brochure, through posters placed around campus, in the *Corsair* (student newspaper), and on the college website.

Additional opportunities for personal development are provided by Psychological Services and the Health Center. Professional personnel who are trained to address the physical and psychological well-being of Santa Monica College students staff these programs. These programs offer special workshops, blood drives, basic health services, and psychological counseling.

The Center for Environmental and Urban Studies offers students an opportunity to learn more about the natural and human world around them. In addition, in collaboration with the City of Santa Monica, the center sponsors the Sustainable Works Project, a local environmental education organization. Students can also participate in environmental forums and learn from guest lecturers.

Evaluation—IIB.3(b)

Santa Monica College is committed to its co-curricular learning program. Students are active members of participatory governance committees and college task forces. Further evidence of the College's commitment to fostering student life is the College's student activity hour. This is the time set aside on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 11:15 a.m. – 12:35 p.m., when few or no classes are offered, thus allowing for faculty and student collaboration in club meetings, committee meetings, and events. Activities at the satellite sites have increased over the past two years; an opening day pizza bash is held at each campus location, including the satellite sites. However, more consistent effort needs to be applied here.

The number of student clubs on campus has increased from an average of 50 in 1999 to a current average of 70 active clubs each semester. Although the number of faculty advisors has increased, it still does not keep up with demand. With the opening of the new library in fall 2003, there is no longer the need for the Cayton Center to provide study space, so it can revert to programming space for student activities.

More needs to be done to measure the affective gains of students who participate in student life on the campus, so the Student Life Office needs to follow through with its plan to work with the Office of Institutional Research to develop and implement a proper method of assessment.

A Student Services Survey was conducted in Spring 2003 to assess student satisfaction with student services on the campus. Two questions that related specifically to student participation in co-curricular activities were included. To a question related to awareness of opportunities for involvement in student activities, students indicated that they deemed opportunities for involvement important (3.92/5.00) and were satisfied to a lesser degree (3.61/5.00). For the second question, which asked students to respond as to how well they were informed about student activities through the campus newspaper or other publications, the responses were similar (3.79 for importance and 3.64 for satisfaction).

Plan–IIB.3(b)

- ◆ The Office of Student Life and the Associated Students will develop a plan to re-design the second floor of the Cayton Center to include a space for activities, speakers, and other entertainment.
- ◆ The Office of Student Life will work with the Office of Institutional Research to assess the affective gains of students who participate in student life on campus.

IIB.3(c) The institution designs, maintains and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

Description–IIB.3(c)

Counseling Department faculty support and lead counseling services in almost two dozen unique and varied student support programs. Each program offers academic, personal, and vocational counseling. Specialized counseling programs exist to address the unique needs of students facing financial and economic barriers, physical and learning disabilities, childcare issues, licensing regulations, and federal, state, and local program requirements. Additional services vary according to the target population and may include, but are not limited to book vouchers, specific financial grants, childcare, a Brain Injury program, a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program, specialized tutoring, developing interventions for probationary students, and career assessment and services.

Designing and Maintaining Academic Counseling Programs

Since the last accreditation self-study, the Santa Monica College Counseling Department has undertaken a variety of initiatives to further increase opportunities for student success. These initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Development of various college orientation models, including a biannual “Week-end of Welcome” orientation, consisting of two-hour in-person seminars and a campus resource fair; an expanded nine-hour, 0.5-unit course entitled “Orientation Seminar,” which is based on collaborative learning techniques; and, most recently, an online college orientation.
- Creation and implementation of the Counseling Department Website, containing extensive information about the department and specific links to all counseling programs and services at Santa Monica College. This website is accessed approximately 17,000 times a week by counselors and students.
- Creation and implementation of the Transfer/Articulation Website which includes detailed information on requirements for available career certificates, Associate in Arts degrees, and transfer institutions. This website is accessed by counselors and students 23,000 times a week.

The department has also supported the development, pilot-testing, and evaluation of strategies aimed at assisting specific groups of students, the most recent being the:

- Student Success Project - a nationally recognized award-winning program initially aimed at increasing retention, persistence, and success of first-time college students. Program outcome statistics indicate that the program, while in full swing, made significant gains across student success indicators, compared to a control group. For example, program participants enjoyed a higher grade point average (2.73 vs. 2.35); higher retention rate (90% vs. 84%); higher persistence rate (80% vs. 67%); higher success rate (74% vs. 62%); and completed a higher number of units per semester (10 vs. 7).

Since Spring 2003, the Student Success Project has contacted all probationary students at the College to encourage participation in an innovative, group counseling orientation. Initial results suggest that participating students have overcome their probationary status to a greater extent than those not participating.

- SCORE (Specialized Curriculum Optimizing Retention in Education) Program - an interdisciplinary faculty-based program where basic skills English, mathematics, and Counseling 20 (the Student Success Seminar) instructors meet regularly to discuss and exchange pedagogical strategies to improve the academic performance of developmental students. The English Department has recommended that all students enrolling in basic skills level English also take Counseling 20 during their first year at Santa Monica College. For Spring 2004, plans have been made to recommend that basic skills students enroll in at least two classes per semester designated as SCORE course sections. This is intended to reinforce collaborative learning techniques and allow students to benefit more fully from instructor participation in the SCORE instructional support network.

Training of Counseling Faculty Members

The training of counseling faculty members is one of the most critical factors in maintaining the highest quality of service to students in each counseling program. Since the last accreditation review, a complete policies and procedures manual for counseling has been developed and distributed to all counselors. All new counselors are also asked to complete the Santa Monica College counseling internship which includes: 1) six two-hour training sessions on various counseling topics; 2) counselor rotations through student services areas; and 3) regular meetings with an assigned mentor. The main topics covered in the training include:

- Computer skills, including mastery of WebISIS (Online Integrated School Information System) and the degree audit program
- Mastery of Santa Monica College electronic forms that assist student enrollment
- Review of student populations unique to each counseling program.
- Counseling Department philosophy

- Review of the Counseling Department Policies and Procedures Manual, with special attention given to policies related to probation and disqualified students
- Review of the assessment process, including how to evaluate math and English assessment scores and factors to consider when granting prerequisite waivers
- Calculation of grade point averages and eligibility evaluation for academic and progress renewal
- Counseling services/activities such as campus tours, application workshops, etc.
- Santa Monica College referrals and resources
- Additional resources for information including counseling public e-mail folders, Bridges, ViaTron, ASSIST, College Source, and the Counseling Department and Transfer Center websites

In addition, regular training on a variety of topics is provided for the entire counseling staff on an ongoing basis. For example, in recent years multiple training sessions have been offered in each of the following topics: use of the electronic educational planning system; handling disqualified students; and processing academic and progress renewal requests. Staff members also receive on-the-job training in order to provide counseling in special program areas. Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) counselors, for example, are particularly trained in the entire financial aid process to better assist their students.

Evaluating Counseling Faculty

Another key, critical factor in maintaining quality of counseling services is ongoing counselor evaluation. The evaluation process varies according to three groups of faculty: tenured faculty, probationary faculty, and adjunct faculty.

All counselors are evaluated for their knowledge, technical skills, and ability to relate to students. This process ensures that counselors are given comprehensive feedback on areas of strength those which need improvement.

As part of the accreditation self-study, a comprehensive student services survey was conducted in Spring 2003. The survey included twelve statements pertaining to the influence that attending Santa Monica College had on students' affective development. These included:

- understanding career prospects
- developing self-confidence
- developing a sense of personal identity
- recognizing the potential for success
- coping with change; ability to handle stress
- developing a personal code of values and ethics
- understanding people of diverse cultures, values, and ideas

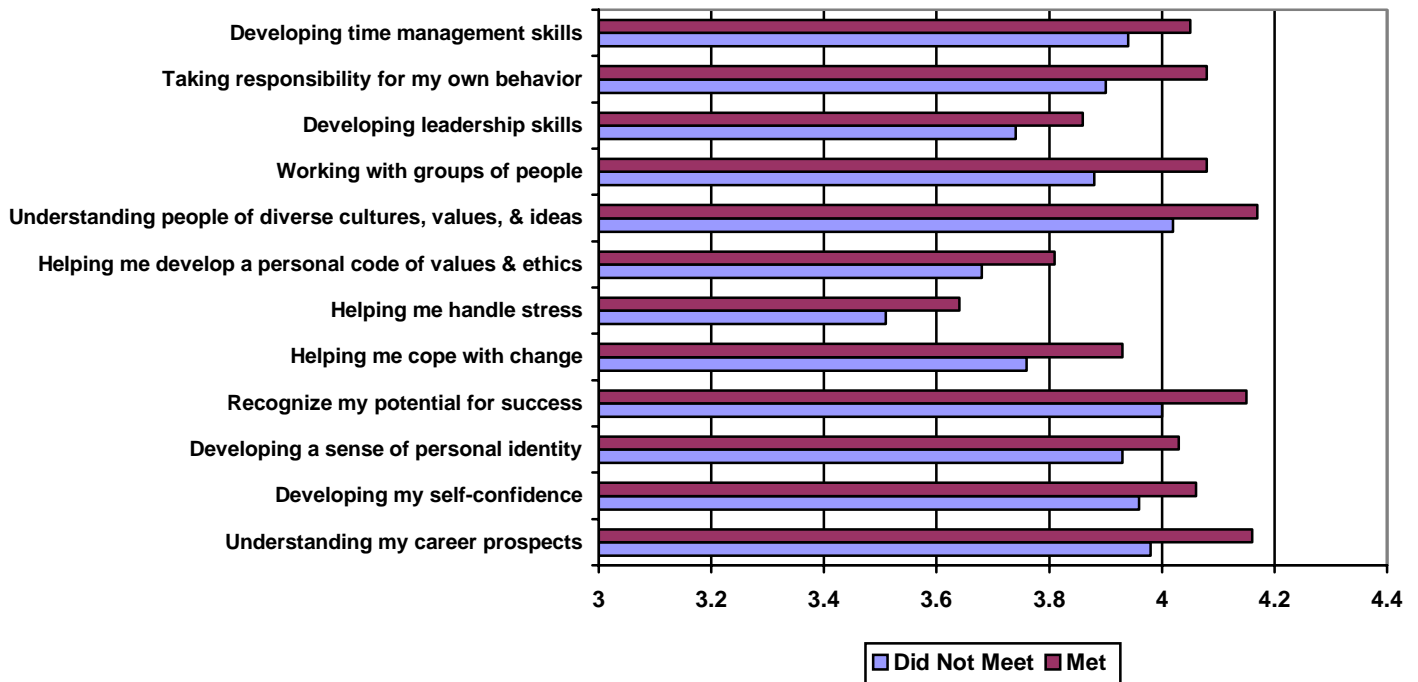
- working with groups of people
- developing leadership skills
- taking responsibility for behavior
- developing time-management skills.

Evaluation–IIB.3(c)

The Counseling Department continues to emphasize ongoing assessment and improvement of counseling programs to meet the needs of the constantly changing student population. Professional counselor training and evaluation are considered to be valuable and integral factors in maintaining quality of counseling services.

The Counseling Department is committed to evaluating the effect that support services have on student achievement (e.g., success, retention, persistence, transfer) and on student learning outcomes, particularly those pertaining to affective development. A summary of the results of the student services survey, administered in spring 2003, is presented below:

Mean Self-Development Response for Student Meeting and Not Meeting with Counselors



Analyses indicated that students who met with a counselor were more likely to have experienced a higher degree of self-development to a statistically significant degree than those who did not meet with a counselor. Furthermore, Latino and African American students, compared to white and Asian students, were more likely to report greater development in items relating to self-management and in the development/enhancement of personal values.

Another strategy the Counseling Department needs to evaluate to determine the impact on student success is the Student Success Project Probationary Student Orientation implemented in Summer 2003.

Counselor Training

Although the Counseling Department has offered considerable in-service training over the past six years, there is always a need to provide more. In particular, as more and more counseling functions and procedures become automated and merged into the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS), counselors must learn to balance keeping pace with expanding technology and offering face-to-face time with students. Although progress is being made towards helping counseling faculty achieve this balance, more regularly scheduled training is needed to fully accomplish this goal.

Counselor Evaluations

Consistent, substantial and timely evaluations for both full time and adjunct counseling faculty are critical goals for the Counseling Department. The department could do a better job of keeping evaluations for adjunct and tenured faculty members up-to-date. In addition, more training in how to evaluate peers and colleagues would be helpful in improving the entire evaluation process.

As the budget for counseling services has steadily shrunk in response to the state budget crisis, the department has been faced with a greatly reduced number of part-time counselors. In addition, many full-time counselors have been reassigned to different counseling programs because of a necessary reorganization, which has necessitated additional training and cross training.

Plan–IIB.3(c)

- ◆ The Offices of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs will evaluate the impact of the SCORE Program on student academic performance and retention and explore ways to apply this approach to other groups of students.
- ◆ The Office of Student Affairs will evaluate the impact of the Student Success Project Probationary Student Orientation implemented in Summer 2003.
- ◆ The Counseling Department will create an online version of the existing Counseling Department Policies and Procedures Manual.

IIB.3(d) The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Description—IIB.3(d)

Since the last accreditation self-study, services and programs that support student understanding and appreciation of diversity have grown. Examples of these programs are Student Life, EOPS, Events, Public Programs, Office of School Relations, Latino Center, African American Collegiate Center, Student Judicial Affairs, and International Education. In its own unique way, each program supports the diverse student population and promotes an atmosphere that allows students from all backgrounds, ages, and socioeconomic groups to thrive and learn.

The College has instituted an American Cultures requirement for those students seeking an Associate in Arts degree. To meet this requirement, students may select from courses in art history, cinema, communication, English, geography, history, music appreciation, nutrition, political science, psychology, sociology, and speech. The goal of these courses is to compare and contrast at least three United States ethnic groups, such as African Americans, Latino Americans, European Americans, and Asian Americans. By requiring an American Cultures course, the College provides another opportunity for students to enhance their understanding of cultural diversity.

The creation or expansion of the Institutional Research, Institutional Effectiveness, Grants, and Planning and Development departments has improved the appreciation of diversity. Programs that have elected to address issues of diversity sought guidance from the leaders of these departments. For example, through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the College was involved in the University of Southern California Diversity Scorecard Project; this project was designed to specifically take a “snapshot” of how African American and Latino students are progressing at the College. Unfortunately, due to current budget cuts, some of these programs have been severely curtailed.

The College also addresses issues of diversity through such activities as efforts by the Office of School Relations to reach out to various community organizations by making presentations in Spanish as well as English. Additionally, one of the stated objectives of Student Life is to develop positive approaches to conflict resolution. Student Judicial Affairs provides mediation services and has created two credit courses—in Conflict Resolution and Behavior Management. These are taken by students seeking to better manage their lives in a diverse, stressful, and challenging environment.

Evaluation—IIB.3(d)

Many of the programs that promote student understanding and appreciation of diversity have conducted self-studies and have adjusted their delivery services accordingly. Among the programs that have conducted particularly effective self-evaluations regarding responsiveness to issues of diversity are the African American Collegiate Center, Disabled Students Center, EOPS, the Career Center’s Internship program, the Office of

School Relations, and the Ombuds office. For example, the main goal of the ombudspersons is to bring harmony to differing points of view; these challenges often involve cross-cultural issues between students and faculty.

Training is currently offered by a variety of college offices to faculty, administration and staff specifically dealing with issues of diversity, some of which deal directly with student issues, classroom management, and cultural differences among groups.

The student services survey conducted in Spring 2003 revealed that the preponderance of participating students believe that the College positively impacted their “understanding of people of diverse cultures, values, and ideas,” and, more broadly, their “development of a personal code of values and ethics.”

Plan–IIB.3(d)

None

IIB.3(e) The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.

Description–IIB.3(e)

As an open access community college, Santa Monica College has no formal admissions testing requirements. However, students are mandated to complete the assessment process. Management and oversight of the assessment/placement process at Santa Monica College resides with the Assessment Center, under the direct supervision of the Dean, Enrollment Services. The center has the primary responsibility for assessing students’ reading, writing, and mathematics skills when they enter the College. In addition, a chemistry challenge exam is given upon request. Center staff ensure that Title 5 guidelines and professional and ethical standards and practices for testing are adhered to. This includes using only assessment instruments approved by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. The center faculty leader and proctors maintain subject currency, are trained and certified to administer tests, and are involved in state and national organizations to ensure that the center stays abreast of assessment trends and practices.

Evaluation–IIB.3(e)

To ensure that placement instruments are appropriate for use with the Santa Monica College student population and that no one group is negatively impacted, diverse studies are conducted on a regular basis. The Assessment Center faculty leader convenes appropriate faculty (e.g., English, ESL, mathematics), administrators, and students to outline and discuss the assessment research agenda. Over the past three years, the following studies have been conducted:

Course Placement Accuracy and Student Satisfaction

A consequential validity study conducted by the Assessment Center in the spring 2002, indicated that student placement accuracy in English and ESL classes significantly increased with the use of computer adaptive testing (CAT), namely the ACCUPLACER tests. A comparison between the old paper-and-pencil tests (DTLS) and ACCUPLACER revealed that placement accuracy increased to a statistically significant degree from approximately 50% to 83% in English and in ESL. While this percentage may not be as high as desired, the College continues to explore ways to increase accuracy without significantly impeding students from advancing in coursework. Instructors surveyed also indicated that 89% of students performed average or better/exceptional work in the class in which they were placed, while 77% of students indicated that they were prepared for the course. Finally, 80% of students in English and 83% in ESL indicated satisfaction with their placement levels. A similar study for the COMPASS mathematics test is underway.

Assessment and Disproportionate Impact for Impacted Groups

In Summer 2001, the Assessment Center undertook, for the first time in the College's history, a study to assess the disproportionate impact of English/ESL placement on traditionally impacted groups. The study indicated no overall differences in placement for gender. The study did suggest, however, that disproportionate impact existed between white and students from underrepresented populations and between "abled" and disabled students. Given that disproportionate impact is assessed over time, additional studies will be conducted before changes to the testing program are made. Additionally, two studies were commissioned and completed to study bias effects in test items. The diverse panel of student and faculty participants did not find any test bank items or directions offensive to the affected groups. The Assessment Center plans to conduct another study, reassess the issue, and develop a set of recommendations for change, if appropriate. Other studies of the math assessment and chemistry exams are currently being conducted.

Deriving Cutoff Scores for Optimal Placement

The Assessment Center faculty leader and faculty from the English and ESL Departments worked together to derive cutoff scores for all English placement tests used at Santa Monica College. The following guiding principles, using research findings and professional judgment, were applied:

- Select a cut-off score for which maximum placement accuracy can be achieved without significantly compromising student access into all placement levels.
- Maintain the highest sample sizes possible for each group of students where statistical inference can still be drawn.
- Increase placement accuracy for the ACCUPLACER tests compared to previously used paper-and-pencil tests used at Santa Monica College.

Using these guiding principles, placement of students into English classes resulted in approximately 30% being placed into college-level classes, 40% into intermediate level (Associate in Arts degree applicable/non-transferable), and 30% into developmental level. The study also revealed that students following their placement recommendation

were more likely to complete the course successfully (68% vs. 51%) and attain a higher semester grade point average (2.6 vs. 2.1) than those not following the recommendation.

Plan–IIB.3(e)

- ◆ The Assessment Center will complete a second disproportionate impact study for English, ESL, and mathematics tests.
- ◆ The Assessment Center will conduct a criterion-related validity and a predictive validity study of current ESL cutoff scores to improve placement accuracy.
- ◆ The Offices of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Institutional Research will conduct a comprehensive study to assess the relationship between assessment scores, placement, student retention, persistence, and success.

IIB.3(f) The institution maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for release of student records.

Description–IIB.3(f)

Santa Monica College maintains student records in full accordance with the California Education Code and secures them in full compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the guidelines in the Title 5 chapter on Retention and Destruction of Records. Class 1 records, which are to be kept permanently, are preserved securely and confidentially, as are all records with student identifiable information. Hardcopy records and microfiche are stored in a fireproof vault that includes a halon fire extinguishing system. Microfiche, magnetic tape, CD-ROMs, and computer imaging are utilized to ensure that all records are securely backed up and available for the reconstruction of transcripts. Class 2 and 3 records are stored for a longer period of time than that required by Title 5 regulations and destroyed, upon approval by the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the state destruction policies to ensure the security of the student information contained therein.

Student records maintained on computing systems include sophisticated security provisions for recovery and disasters. These include network security, server physical security, password policy, backup/recovery plan, and antivirus software protection. Computing data retention is one month on-site and six months off-site. The College uses Oracle Database online re-do archive technology to enable up-to-fail-point recovery capability. Physical storage is handled by RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks) 5 technology to protect data from individual drive failure.

Computerized student records information is stored with an Oracle 8i database and is backed up daily at 2:00 a.m. Oracle database files are stored on a Hewlett-Packard SureStore SP256 disk array. Hardcopy documents, such as incoming transcripts, are scanned

into the ViaTron document imaging system and backed up Tuesdays through Fridays at 3:00 a.m. Imaged files are stored on a Dell PowerVault 220S disk array, and the imaging database is stored via Oracle 8i on a Hewlett-Packard SureStore XP256 disk array. The aforementioned disk arrays are considered highly available and redundant. The backup storage medium is DLT, utilizing Hewlett-Packard OpenView OmniBack II. When not in use, production backup media are stored on-site in a Chubb Data Safe. Selected media are taken off-site for storage at Iron Mountain storage facility and returned after six months.

The Dean, Enrollment Services or designee approves access to student data and records to individuals and departments on an as-needed basis. Access to different levels of student records information is governed by an employee's individual computer access code and is specific to the needs and functions of staff within that area of the College. These access codes not only limit access where appropriate, but also leave a "fingerprint" of transactions for auditing purposes.

Enrollment Services student help and limited term employees, who have daily access to student records, sign a "Confidentiality Agreement" before beginning their employment in the office. Access to more sensitive information requires higher security clearance, which is administered through employee access codes. As employees separate from the College or are away for extended periods of time, in the case of limited term employees, their access codes are suspended or disabled.

Each term, the student's right to privacy information, informing students of their rights, is published in the *Schedule of Classes*. The College also collects, at the time of application and at any time thereafter that a student wishes to exercise his/her rights, the choice for a FERPA block on student records. This block is prominently posted on the system to ensure compliance with the student's choice.

Evaluation—IIB.3(f)

The College has always been concerned about the security and confidentiality of student records and has implemented policies and procedures that ensure proper authorization and authentication in the storage and access of student records. Management Information Systems now requires the periodic change of network passwords to reinforce security. Use of VPN server access for off-site access to the system has been implemented to ensure the use of the College's enhanced firewall security. Secure-socket layer encryption is used for student access to online systems, such as online applications and enrollment.

Imaging and electronic systems have changed how records are maintained, but the College's commitment to maintaining security for students remains a top priority. Although the student's right to privacy information is published in the *Schedule of Classes*, a FERPA website is needed to help the college community better understand the rules governing student records security.

Plan–IIB.3(f)

- ◆ Enrollment Services will provide a website for faculty and staff on FERPA regulations.
- ◆ Enrollment Services and Management Information Systems will work together to establish guidelines for the centralization of records back-up information.

IIB.4 The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Description–IIB.4

Evaluation of student support services takes place through four processes: (1) program review, which all programs and services at the College undergo every six years; (2) fulfillment of state and/or federal reporting requirements, which are applicable to programs such as EOPS, the Disabled Students Center, CARE, and TRIO/Student Support Services; (3) internal evaluations initiated by the program leaders, sometimes done with the assistance of Management Information Systems and/or the Office of Institutional Research; and (4) occasional collegewide surveys undertaken to determine student satisfaction with these services.

Federal and state funded programs often have to meet reporting requirements mandated by the funding agents. EOPS, for example, completed an operational program review for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office covering the 2001-02 academic year. The director utilized data from student and staff surveys, along with information provided by the Office of Institutional Research, that compared student success, withdrawal, persistence, and completion rates for EOPS and non-EOPS students. The TRIO/Student Support Services Program is required by the U.S. Department of Education to maintain a 70 percent student persistence rate. Therefore, the program tracks student progress to assure compliance with this requirement.

Many of the programs regularly conduct internal evaluations. Processes followed include assessing student progress on a specified set of outcomes, administering surveys to measure satisfaction, capturing academic outcomes of program participants, and tracking participation levels. Following are a few examples of the internal evaluations being done by individual programs at Santa Monica College.

- The Student Success Project (SSP), which provides support to students on academic probation, compared the persistence rate, success rate, subsequent probationary rate, units completed, and GPAs of students who participated in the program with a control group of probationary students who did not participate. On all measures, the SSP students outperformed the control group.

- In preparation for regular Chancellor’s Office Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) site reviews, the Disabled Students Center uses data from the Institutional Research Office to compare the academic outcomes of students with disabilities to those of the general student population. These studies have revealed that the GPA of both groups is virtually identical, while proportionately fewer students with disabilities are placed on academic probation, and a higher percentage earn Associate in Arts degrees.

- The Internship Program measured its impact on student outcomes in three ways: counting the number of internships available; tracking the increase in the number of students who participated in internships; and asking employers to complete a survey evaluating the performance of the interns at the end of the semester. The number of student interns increased 65% between 2001 and 2002, and employers generally gave very high ratings of student performance on the job.

- The Office of School Relations/Outreach is charged with attracting, recruiting, and transitioning new students to the College, and developing a pool of transferable students. Since 1997 the number of applicants from feeder high schools increased by 164% and the number of basic skills assessments of high school students increased by 147%. Student diversity has increased, with the College officially becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in 2002. Additionally, the number of students who attended the orientation program increased by 25%.

- The Dual Enrollment program, which offers college courses to high school students, determined through a study that students enrolled in dual enrollment classes achieved at levels equal to or higher than on-campus students enrolled in sections of the same course. After graduating from high school, approximately 10% of these students enrolled at Santa Monica College as college students.

Spring 2003 Student Services Survey Results

In Spring 2003, a collegewide assessment of student services was conducted as part of the accreditation self-study. Students were asked to describe their familiarity with campus services, to assign a level of importance and satisfaction to a variety of student services, and to rank the extent to which attendance at Santa Monica College strengthened their personal development in a number of areas. Surveys were distributed in classes and in the student services offices. A total of 1,433 responses were obtained. A detailed report of the results is included in the Statistical Support section. Highlights of the findings include:

- Awareness levels of individual student services vary tremendously. Campus wide services that are open to all students have the highest levels of visibility, with more than three-quarters of the students indicating awareness of financial aid (91%), general and transfer counseling (89%), health services (85%), career ser-

vices (77%), and the scholarship office (76%). More specialized programs, such as TRIO/Student Support Services, Student Success Program, Veterans Program, and Pico Partnership were known to fewer than half of the respondents. Somewhat surprisingly, 41% of the students indicated they were not aware of the Assessment Center on campus.

- The services most utilized by students were general counseling (used at least once by 59% of the respondents), transfer/counseling (50%), financial aid (37%), and the Assessment Center (34%).
- For students who have used student services at least once, satisfaction levels ranged from 3.26 to 4.16 on a 5-point scale, with 3 being “neutral,” 4 being “somewhat satisfied,” and 5 being “very satisfied.” Satisfaction levels for the African American Collegians Center, the Latino Center, Health Services, Disabled Students, TRIO/SSS, and EOPS were all at or above a 4-point level, indicating a positive relationship between special counseling programs and student satisfaction. Only the Veteran’s program was rated at a level below 3.5, but the number of responses (46) was relatively small, so conclusions about the reliability of this finding should be drawn carefully.
- The students were presented with a series of statements related to service provision in four areas: counseling services, course enrollment/registration services, financial aid/scholarships, and other miscellaneous items. Two sample statements are “The process for adding and dropping classes is easy” and “I am made to feel welcome at SMC.” For each of these statements, the students were asked to rank the level of importance and their level of agreement using 5-point scales. Almost all counseling services, all registration services, and issues related to campus security and students’ sense of being made to feel welcome were rated between a 4.0 and a 5.0 level (with 4 being “great importance to me” and 5 being “very great importance to me”). Financial aid/scholarship information and information about student activities were rated between 3.7 and 3.9 (with 3 being “moderate/average importance to me”).
- The students’ level of agreement with the extent to which Santa Monica College provides these services in an appropriate manner revealed greatest satisfaction with the ease of the process for applying and enrolling, counselor availability through appointments, and students’ feelings of being secure on campus. A comparison between the importance and agreement rankings indicated two areas in which the College’s performance fell far short of students’ expectations—being able to enroll in the classes they need and obtaining their financial aid early enough in the semester to meet their educational expenses.

- A final section of the survey asked students about the extent to which their experience at Santa Monica College contributed to their self-development. A description of these findings appears in section IIB.3(c).

Evaluation—IIB.4

Relating traditional student achievement outcomes, such as GPA, course success, or degree attainment, to student service participation is challenging because the amount of time that most students spend with counselors or in student services programs is relatively limited. It is difficult to create a reliable cause and effect relationship between isolated visits to counselors or participation in a single workshop and a higher GPA or decreased time to degree. In the case of special programs, such as EOPS, Black Collegians, or the Latino Center, where substantial, ongoing involvement with counselors is mandated, it is easier to assess the relationship between the services offered and the student learning achieved.

One additional problem at Santa Monica College has been the inability of the student services counselors and staff to reliably track student utilization of services. Paper records, or sometimes no records, had been kept when students met with counselors or participated in workshops. In 2002, an electronic student educational plan system, which allows counselors to electronically access student academic plans and other information that any counselor has recorded about the student on the system, was implemented at the College. This improved flow of information makes it easier for counselors to respond quickly and knowledgeably to student requests for assistance. These records may eventually make it easier to examine the relationship between utilization of student services and student learning outcomes.

Within these constraints, most of the student services programs have assessed the effect of their programs on student outcomes. The Institutional Research Office has worked with EOPS, Black Collegians, the Financial Aid Office, the Latino Center, the SEEK program (recently discontinued on the basis of a survey indicating students no longer felt the program met their needs), and the Transfer/Counseling Center to develop surveys to administer to students who utilize their services. It has also provided data about student enrollment, success, and degree attainment to a variety of other programs. For the most part, these have been isolated efforts that the programs have used to improve their own services. Greater sharing of these evaluation strategies and results would be useful, especially given the large number of students who participate in multiple programs and would benefit from improved coordination.

Another area of concern, identified by both students and staff, has been the excessive amount of time it takes to process student financial aid. This negatively impacts student success when the flow of financial aid benefits is not timely. For Fall 2003, an exceptional delay in processing benefits occurred because of the late notification from the State (August 5, 2003) of the increase in student fees - which altered benefit amounts that had already been processed. This late notification exacerbated existing processing delays due to financial aid staff shortages (resulting from unfilled positions).

Plan–IIB.4

- ◆ The Office of Student Affairs will devise a plan to systematically disseminate research findings and strategies related to the use of student services.
- ◆ The Office of Student Affairs will define student learning outcomes expected of students as a result of accessing student services.

IIC. Library and Learning Support Services

Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.

IIC.1 *The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.*

Description—IIC.1

Library

Over the past six years, the Library has been housed in three facilities: the original building, a temporary facility, while the library renovation and expansion project was being completed, and the new Library. The temporary facility was half as large as the original building and one-fourth the size of the new Library. The new Library has a state-of-the-art computer classroom for library instruction, 21 group study rooms, over 200 computers for student use, and over 1300 seats configured in a variety of ways to meet differing learning styles.

In addition to the main Library, there are several branch locations. The collections in the branches were established to meet the needs of specific audiences and/or curriculum taught at these locations. These branches include Health Sciences, Academy of Entertainment and Technology, Science LRC, and Career Center.

The Library currently has 99,220 books, 160 periodical subscriptions, and 1,447 videos and DVDs. With regard to electronic resources, the Library currently has 6,025 electronic books and subscribes to 23 databases, which provide access to over 3,000 full-text periodicals. The electronic books and databases support the curricular needs of both traditional on-campus students and distance education students, all of whom may access these resources twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The Library's reserve collection of 1,200 items provides students short-term access to many textbooks and other course materials.

The Library currently has over 200 personal computers available for student use that provide access to the Library online catalog, web-based proprietary databases, Internet resources, and specialized software. Examples of the specialized software include Foundations of Music, Zoom Text, Jaws, Kurzweil 1000 and 3000, and Microsoft Office.

The Library also offers a variety of audio-visual equipment to support students' curricular needs, including microform reader/printers, TV/VCRs, DVD players, slide projectors, photocopy machines (one color), printers (networked), a scanner, CD Players, and CCTV (video text magnifier). Much of this equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and is in the process of being replaced.

The Library staff consists of one administrator, six full-time librarians, 1.15 FTE (full-time equivalent) part-time librarians, three full-time classified staff, two half-time staff, and 4.38 FTE student assistants. The staffing level in the Library has decreased by five full-time classified staff over the past two years; all but one of these positions are now frozen, due to the recent budget situation.

The reference desk is staffed by faculty librarians all hours the Library is open. The reference librarians answer reference questions, conduct one-hour Library orientations, and also teach the three-hour Library component of Counseling 20, *Student Success Seminar*. The reference librarians also answers e-Reference questions. During fiscal year 2002-2003, the reference librarians conducted 286 Library Instruction sessions and answered an average of 1,058 reference questions per week.

The Library has reduced its hours of operation from 71.5 hours per week to the current 53.75 hours per week, due to five vacant classified positions (four "frozen" and one unfilled).

The Library's budget for collections for the 2003-2004 academic year is \$154,700. This dollar amount includes periodicals, electronic resources, books, microforms, etc. The Library's funding comes from a combination of college general funds, Telecommunications and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP) and Instructional Equipment and Library Materials funds.

Computing Resources

Santa Monica College is committed to providing students access to technology and to empowering them to use technology effectively to reach their educational goals. The response to this standard focuses on information relevant to the use of student computing facilities for the support of student learning, (See Standard IIC for details regarding the operation and maintenance of student computing facilities.)

Student computing resources are designed to facilitate learning by providing plentiful access to computers and networked resources. This is accomplished by selecting software and online services that clearly support instructional goals; by providing thorough, relevant training and other user support resources for faculty; and by staffing the student computing facilities with knowledgeable, courteous staff members, who can ensure that equipment is in good working condition and that student questions are answered promptly and accurately.

Since 1997, the number of student computers on campus has jumped from about 300 to over 1,200. Student computing facilities include drop-in labs, where students can work on their own time to complete class assignments, access standard office and Internet software, and/or use discipline-specific software; computer classrooms where hands-on classes meet; and some facilities used in both ways, according to posted schedules.

Below is a summary of student computer labs and classrooms that house student use workstations equipped with standard Internet browsers and office applications. Most also include printers, servers, projection systems, scanners, special equipment for disabled users, and a wide variety of discipline-specific software applications.

The following labs are available to students enrolled in the specified department or program:

Computer Lab Name	Number of Workstations
Academy of Entertainment & Technology	80
Assessment Center	45
Associated Student Government Offices	23
Broadcasting	4
Career Center	6
Cayton (for Associated Students members only)	112
Corsair (student newspaper)	17
Counseling Annex	6
Counseling Complex	25
CSIS Lab (Computer Science & Information Systems)	100
Math Lab	7
Modern Languages Lab	55
Science Computer Center	45
Total	525

The following computer classrooms are available for class meetings only:

Department	Number of classrooms	Total Number of Workstations
Academy of Entertainment & Technology	7	175
CSIS	4	136
Earth Science	2	34
Library	1	47
Math	1	34
Total	15	426

The following facilities are used both for class meetings and drop-in work:

Computer Lab/Classroom Name	Number of Workstations
Art Lab	25
Continuing Education Computer Lab	24
Disabled Students High Tech Center	9
Emeritus College Computer Lab	23
English Computer Classrooms (2)	70
Library	148
Music Lab	9
Nursing Computer Lab	17
Photography Lab	27
Reading Lab	25
<i>Total</i>	377

To serve the printing needs of students using these computers, there are 35 networked-printers maintained by a third-party vendor. The cost of printing is 10 cents per page; however, the Associated Student Government provides limited free printing for students in the Cayton Center computer lab.

Most computer labs are open five days a week, and also have evening hours. Until the current academic year, most labs were open on Saturdays, and many on Sundays. Due to recent budgetary constraints, labs are now open only Monday through Friday. Computer classrooms are scheduled in accordance with standard class scheduling procedures.

Santa Monica College entered the online learning arena through a variety of instructional methods. These include online courses, hybrid courses (which include both online and on-ground components), and online supplements to traditional classes. While the software used is the same for web supplements and for online classes, the support services provided by eCollege (the third party vendor contracted to support online instruction) differ, with a higher level of support available for online classes. Supplements to traditional classes are served by eCompanion and online classes are served by eCourse. In Spring 2003, 122 instructors used eCompanion for a total of 248 class sections, serving 11,994 students (duplicated headcount).

Several departments are responsible for supporting student computer resources at the College. The Academic Computing Department operates most computer labs and computer classrooms for students, faculty, and staff use, hosts most College websites, and is integrally involved in instructional technology planning, budgeting, and implementation campus wide. The Academy of Entertainment Technology and the Library manage their own computer labs, computer classrooms, and websites.

Each drop-in lab is staffed by an Academic Computing Instructional Specialist and up to five student lab assistants. Support for faculty and staff is provided by the instructional specialist, if the request relates to the use of a student computing facility. Otherwise, it is handled by the staff in the Faculty/Staff drop-in lab (Multimedia Specialist or Internet

Services Coordinator). Assistance is available for faculty and staff via drop-in, telephone, or e-mail.

Learning Resources

Since the last accreditation, many changes have been made in the delivery of learning resources in an effort to better serve faculty and students. Rather than being centralized in the Library building, the Learning Resource Center (LRC) has been decentralized to build a stronger bond between the LRC and the students and faculty served. In essence, there are now a series of Learning Resource Centers. The English/Humanities, Modern Language, and Science Tutoring programs have also been decentralized and are located near their respective departments. Tutoring Coordinators for the English and Math tutoring programs are responsible to the department chairs, while those for the Modern Language and Science tutoring programs are responsible to the Assistant Dean, Learning Resources. The table below details the various Learning Resource Centers, the type of services provided, location, and hours.

Table 1: Learning Resource Centers

LRC	Location	Hours of Operation	Services
Automotive Center (closed due to program discontinuance Summer '03)	Adjacent to Drescher Hall 105	Mon –Thurs 8:00a - 4:30p 6:30p - 9:30p Fri 8:00a - 4:30p	Supplemental course materials
English / Humanities	Drescher Hall 313	Mon –Thurs 8:00a - 5:00p Fri 9:00a - 2:00p	Tutoring
Health Sciences Center	Madison 205	Mon –Fri depending on faculty and student volunteer hours	Supplemental course materials
Math Center	Math Lab Complex	Mon –Thurs 8:00a - 10:00p Fri 8:00a - 4:00p	Tutoring, Supplemental course materials
Modern Language Center	Drescher Hall 219	Mon –Thurs 8:30a - 8:00p Fri 8:30a - 4:00p	Tutoring, Supplemental course materials, Language lab
Reading Lab	Drescher Hall 312	Mon –Thurs 8:00a – 5:00p Fri 9:00a – 2:00p	Supplemental course materials
Science Center	Science 245	Mon –Thurs 8:00a - 7:45p Fri 8:00a - 4:00p	Tutoring, Supplemental Course Materials, Com- puter lab
Writing Lab	Drescher Hall 308	Mon –Thurs 9:00a – 6:00p	Supplemental course materials

Santa Monica College’s commitment to student success has dictated an increasing investment in the resources and staffing levels supporting these LRCs. The College offers free tutoring services to all enrolled students. These services are designed to improve student success and include both individual and small group tutoring sessions. Tutors consist of Santa Monica College peer tutors; instructional assistants; department instructors; Federal Work Study students from UCLA, Loyola Marymount University, and California State University Northridge; and community volunteers. Tutors are approved for hire after having been tested in their areas of expertise and/or after having been recommended by a subject area department member.

The English and Humanities Center, which includes tutoring and the Reading and Writing Labs, is located in Drescher Hall. Presently, 17 tutors and one (1) instructional assistant are employed and offer over 80 hours of tutoring per week.

The Math Center employs some 35 tutors, offering more than 160 hours of tutoring per week. In addition, all math instructors are required to hold office hours in the Math Lab at least one hour per week.

The Modern Language Tutoring Center is located in Drescher Hall, along with the Modern Language Lab. Tutoring is also offered at satellite sites when deemed necessary. More than 150 tutoring hours per week are offered by some 35 tutors. In addition, several full-time instructors hold weekly office hours in the Modern Language Tutoring Center.

The Science Tutoring Center is located in the Science Building, with the Science Computing Lab immediately next door. Currently employing some 15 tutors, the Science Tutoring Center offers approximately 100 hours of tutoring per week.

Santa Monica College has several special support services that offer limited tutoring to students served by these programs. They include the Disabled Students Center, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), ESL Tutoring Program, Pico Partnership, Scholars Program, and TRIO/Student Support Services. Some disciplines, such as history and philosophy; offer a limited amount of tutoring within their departments. With the exception of the ESL program, which employs only instructional assistants, tutors for these special programs are hired through consultation with the Learning Resource Center for the specific discipline.

A significant number of computers have been purchased and installed in each LRC location since the last accreditation self-study. With the exception of the Writing Lab, these computers are networked and loaded with preinstalled domain-specific software packages to support student learning in that area. In addition, these computers make electronic databases available to students. With the exception of the Health Sciences Center, each LRC has part-time and/or permanent staff to assist students.

Faculty and students make great use of these LRCs, as most are overcrowded during some portion of their daily operations. In addition to lending out audio/visual materials, software, models, kits, and the like, the LRCs are used by faculty when conducting learning group sessions, and are scheduled by student study groups. This significant usage demonstrates just how effective these centers are in meeting the needs of faculty and students.

Evaluation–IIC.1

Library

In May 2003, the Library conducted a User Survey, as an aid in assessment of services and in planning for services in the new Library. The results of this survey provided the

Library with information about the students' perceived needs and also some limited information about the users of the Santa Monica College Library and their reasons for using the Library.

While the temporary Library was inadequate for the needs of Santa Monica College students, faculty, and staff, the new building provides users with a spacious, state-of-the-art library. There are over 200 computers, all with Internet access and selected application software, available to students in the new Library. The new facility will meet the needs of users for the foreseeable future. According to the User Survey, over 60% of the students use the Library to study by themselves, and nearly 8% come to study in groups. With the increased student seating and 21 group study rooms, the new Library accommodates varying study needs and styles.

Comparison of Old, Temporary and New Libraries			
	Old	Temporary	New
Size (square feet)	55,000	27,000	96,500
Student Seats	550	175	1300
Student PCs	60	60	208
Group Study Rooms	5	0	21

The Library is heavily used by students throughout the day. This heavy use results in higher than normal wear and tear on the facility, requiring regularly scheduled cleaning and maintenance. Upkeep of the building has become an even greater issue, now that the Library has moved into the new facility, with an average of over 25,000 student visits per week.

The Library does not have an adequate collection of resources to meet the needs of the students. The budget for library materials (books, periodicals, AV, electronic resources) has not increased substantially since the last accreditation. In anticipation of the Library's reduced material budget, the Library cancelled roughly two-thirds of its current periodical subscriptions, leaving approximately 160 active subscriptions. In making the difficult deselection decisions, some of the factors considered were the curricular needs of the students, the title's circulation statistics, and the availability of the title through full-text databases.

Through careful planning and thoughtful allocation of its limited resources, the Library attempts to meet the information needs of students. Although the student population has increased, the number of books in the collection has remained steady since the last accreditation. Reasons for this lack of growth include the fact that the Library undertook a long overdue deselection project and the increase in the cost of books, without a commensurate increase in the book budget. The College strives to teach students to be information competent, but it is increasingly difficult to meet their information needs with an inadequate materials budget.

The table below provides collection data from some peer institutions.

Institution Name	Student FTE(2000/01)	Titles	Microforms Units	Serials (Periodicals)	AV Materials Units
EL CAMINO	11,703.33	103,075	19,317	496	15,382
ORANGE COAST	11,830.67	84,447	8,276	420	2,510
MT SAN ANTONIO	12,325.00	64,291	20,857	753	6,494
PASADENA	12,392.00	N/A	N/A	500	7,246
DE ANZA	12,644.00	76,686	20,200	1,125	3,404
SANTA MONICA	13,942.00	89,074	77,408	425	981
Average	12,473	83,515	29,212	620	6,003
Median	12,359	84,447	20,200	498	4,949

(Data from NCES, Library Statistics Program)

Most of the Library's equipment needs have been met since the Library moved to the new building. The state-of-the-art facility has over 250 new computers for staff and student use, three new servers, and upgraded audio-visual equipment. In addition, the Library is the first building on campus to provide wireless access.

The Library is critically understaffed. Over the past two years, the Library has lost 3.5 FTE library assistants, 0.5 FTE department secretary, and 1 FTE computer support specialist. These losses have diminished the Library's ability to meet the needs of the students. As a result of the hiring freeze, these staff shortages have caused a reduction in the Library's hours of operation. The new Library is used much more heavily than was the temporary facility, and this has imposed even greater demands on services. The average weekly gate count for FY 2002 was 11,796, and there were approximately 1,196 circulation transactions per week. The first week that the new Library was open, the gate count was 29,000 students.

At the current staffing levels, the Library will be unable to meet this increased demand. The lack of support staff is a critical issue that needs to be addressed in order for the Library to operate. The table below compares Santa Monica College's staffing to California community colleges of similar size and the American Library Association's Standards for Community, Junior, and Technical College Learning Resource Programs.

Institution	FTE Enrollment	Administration	Librarians	Staff	Student Assistants
EL CAMINO COLLEGE	11,703.33	1	6.6	23.5	12.79
ORANGE COAST COLLEGE	11,830.67	1	7.17	7.5	7.12
MT SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE	12,325.00	1	5.5	19.5	4
PASADENA CITY COLLEGE	12,392.00	1	10.8	8.13	8
DE ANZA COLLEGE	12,644.00	1	5.5	10.5	17.7
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE	13,942.00	1	7	5	4.4
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	15,000	2	18-27	19-32	55-89

(Data from NCES, Library Statistics Program)

Up until the 2002-2003 academic year, the Library's hours of operation had not changed for over 20 years. Beginning in the 2002-2003 academic year, the Library decreased its hours of operation, due to staffing shortages. The Library had to further reduce access by eliminating weekend hours. In previous times of budget reductions, the Associated Student Government generously offered the Library funding to maintain hours of operation, especially weekend hours. It is unfortunate that the library staff shortage is now so critical that, even if Associated Students were to provide funding to enable a return to pre-2002-2003 hours of operation, the Library does not have the staff to do so.

Hours of Operation, Fall & Spring Semesters		
School year	Schedule	Total hours/week
2000/01	Mon – Thur 7:45am - 9:45pm Fri 7:45am - 3:45pm Sat – Sun 11:00am - 2:45pm	71.5
2001/02	Mon – Thur 7:45am - 9:45pm Fri 7:45am - 3:45pm Sat – Sun 11:00am - 2:45pm	71.5
2002/03	Mon – Thur 9:00am - 8:45pm Fri 9:00am - 3:45pm Sat – Sun 11:00am - 2:45pm	61.25
2003/04	Mon – Thur 9:00am - 8:45pm Fri 9:00am - 3:45pm Sat – Sun Closed	53.75

The Santa Monica College Library has traditionally been open more hours per week than most peer institutions. (see table below) Given the fact that the Library has moved into an expanded facility, it is unfortunate that budget constraints will not allow the College to continue this tradition. Students have expressed the need to have access to computers, printers, reserve materials, and study space in the morning, evening, and weekends, when the Library is currently closed. In the comments section of the User Survey, many students stated that they wanted the Library to be open earlier during the week and open on weekends.

Hours Open Weekly, 2000/01	
Institution	Hours Open
EL CAMINO	68.0
ORANGE COAST COLLEGE	64.0
MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE	70.0
PASADENA CITY COLLEGE	67.0
DE ANZA COLLEGE	70.0
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE	71.5

(Data from NCES, Library Statistics Program)

The total Library 2001-2002 budget, including staff salaries, is \$1,274,390. As demonstrated in the table below, Santa Monica College has the largest student population, but the next to the smallest Library budget of peer institutions.

Institution	Student FTE	Total Library Budget (2000/01)
EL CAMINO COLLEGE	11,703	\$1,962,755
ORANGE COAST COLLEGE	11,831	\$905,610
MT SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE	12,325	\$1,110,244
PASADENA CITY COLLEGE	12,392	\$1,505,121
DE ANZA COLLEGE	12,644	\$1,208,284
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE	13,942	\$1,032,791

(Data from NCES, Library Statistics Program)

The ALA minimum standard book budget for a two-year college library of Santa Monica College's size is \$220,350. The Library's current book budget is \$56,500, which is only 26% of the recommended amount. The ALA minimum standard periodical budget for a two-year college library of Santa Monica College's size is \$130,500. The Library's current periodical budget is \$29,500, which is only 22% of the recommended amount. The Library does, however, offer access to over 3,000 full-text periodical titles through electronic databases. The table below compares Santa Monica College's budget with other California community colleges of similar size (based upon FTES). Although Santa Monica College has the largest FTES of this group, it has next to the smallest budget.

Institution Name	FTES (2000/01)	Books	Serials (Periodicals)	Electronic Serials (Periodicals)	A/V	Electronic Books
EL CAMINO COLLEGE	11,703.33	\$91,532	\$54,700	\$23,086	\$3,495	\$37,429
ORANGE COAST COLLEGE	11,830.67	\$57,195	\$51,236	\$14,116	\$12,390	N/A
MT SAN ANTONIO	12,325.00	\$95,000	\$109,000	\$50,000	\$26,610	\$10,000
PASADENA CITY COLLEGE	12,392.00	\$217,777	\$21,031	\$71,965	\$6,648	N/A
DE ANZA COLLEGE	12,644.00	\$50,611	\$23,697	\$69,922	\$7,739	N/A
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE	13,942.00	\$63,650	\$49,466	\$42,000	\$5,100	\$6,000
Average	12473	\$95,961	\$51,522	\$45,182	\$10,330	\$17,810
Median	12359	\$77,591	\$50,351	\$46,000	\$7,194	\$10,000

The last accreditation team stated that inadequate funding for library materials was of serious concern. Funding issues continue to be of concern. As stated earlier, the materials budget has not kept pace with the rise in student population or the increased cost of materials. The College's information competency efforts are hampered by inadequate resources and/or outdated materials.

Computing Resources

Student computer labs at Santa Monica College are heavily used. While the current quantity and quality of student workstations appears by all measures to be sufficient, the distribution of those workstations is not ideal. In earlier years, when the state budget was more stable, the College was able to implement one or two new computing facilities for specific instructional programs each year. Now, funding is barely sufficient to replace outdated equipment in existing computing facilities. As a result, some instructional programs are well equipped with instructional technology, while others are still awaiting an infusion of technology that is not forthcoming. In fact, the College cannot afford to install, maintain, and staff a dedicated, decentralized computing facility for each instructional department. The Information Technology Department has made the recommendation that computing labs, staff, and servers be centralized to maximize use of resources.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office commissioned the Gartner Group, a nationally recognized technology consultant to develop guidelines for the number and type of workstations that should be provided to each student, faculty member, staff member, or administrator. The baseline standard for student workstations is 1 PC for every 20 FTEs. For Santa Monica College, that means that there should be 1,100 student workstations. Indeed, the College has exceeded that standard, with a current total of approximately 1,400 student workstations deployed.

The Gartner Group's study also determined what software should be standard on student use workstations. The College is in full compliance with the Gartner Group study recommendations for providing students with local network access, Internet access, standard

office applications, e-mail, and virus protection software. Many computers provide access to additional, more specialized software, as appropriate for the disciplines served.

Usage statistics for faculty homepages indicates strong user interest in these resources. The explosive growth in the number of faculty who opt to maintain homepages (increasing from 37 in 1999 to over 600 by the end of 2002) also gives testimony to their perception of its benefit to students.

Santa Monica College Website Usage Trends since 1999

Average page views/day	April 1999 *	March 2003**
http://homepage.smc.edu	932	26,641
http://www.smc.edu	11,378	49,233

*Daily average based on full month 4/99

**Daily average based on 3/02/03 – 3/08/03

Usage of the learning management system to supplement classroom instruction dropped in 2002-2003, after the platform was changed from Prometheus to eCompanion. Reasons for the decrease in usage are not yet known.

Learning Resources

The previous accreditation self-study outlined a plan that has largely been implemented as of this report. Specifically, the College did replace the Modern Languages Lab with a state-of-the-art facility. LRC resources have been organized by the Library according to the Library of Congress classification system and included in the online catalog. Web pages for the Reading Lab and Science LRC promote the use of resources in these centers. The Reading Lab has acquired both print and online resources to improve reading levels and comprehension.

In response to a concern raised in the College's 1998 accreditation self-study, the dissemination of information regarding the availability of tutoring services has been improved. The development of the Tutoring Services web page (<http://library.smc.edu/tutoring>) that includes general information, hours, and locations is one such improvement. Tutoring coordinators keep in close contact with their respective departments. Faculty members are reminded of the service by both the coordinators and department chairs, and many faculty members include the tutorial services information in their syllabi. Tutoring services are promoted in a number of ways including the *Schedule of Classes*, on the Santa Monica College website, and by discipline instructors. In addition, the Modern Language Tutoring Program is described in the Modern Language Lab Orientation.

The decentralized LRCs continue to actively support students and faculty in each field of study. Faculty are involved and relied upon to update and improve each LRC. In addition, LRC staff members provide valuable feedback, based upon their first-hand knowledge of each LRC's usage and needs. Although there is no systematic approach for tracking overall LRC usage, it is quite clear that each LRC plays a vital role in achieving student success. For example, the Science LRC circulates over 2,000 models, videos, and computer programs in a single semester. The Reading and Writing Labs together support 1,000 en-

rolled students each semester. The materials available from each of the LRCs have been directly incorporated into numerous classes including courses in English (reading and composition), biology, anatomy, physiology, chemistry, physics, nursing, music, and many others. Students are clearly using the resources made available at each LRC.

The College has continued to review the benefits of decentralization of the tutoring programs. One benefit of the decentralization of the main tutoring programs is an improved connection between the coordinators and the respective departments and discipline faculty. A downside of decentralization is that there are no standard policies, training programs, or organizational structure that support the tutoring coordinators.

The Collegewide Coordinating Council has reviewed the results of extensive tutoring surveys, conducted in July 2000 and October 2001, and has made several recommendations to improve the effectiveness of tutorial services. One recommendation has already been implemented—a tutoring course for prospective student tutors, Education 7.

Tutors are evaluated by the Tutoring Coordinators and, at times, by faculty members before being hired. Tutors are regularly observed and coached by the coordinators to ensure effective tutelage.

Santa Monica College has had no tutoring for the Health Sciences, Business, and Computer Science and Information Systems departments for over two years, due to lack of staffing. (The tutoring coordinator positions for these departments are “frozen” due to budget constraints). There are no math tutoring services available for students who are not enrolled in a math class. Students and faculty have identified this situation as problematic. While the English/Humanities Tutoring Center does provide assignment-based tutoring for students not enrolled in an English class, this service is not widely known by students or faculty.

Because of the vacant tutoring coordinator position in the Health Sciences Lab, staffing is limited to student and faculty volunteers. This results in limited access to valuable resources.

Plan–IIC.1

- ◆ The College will address Library staffing and increase the materials budget as soon as fiscally possible.
- ◆ Library staff will work with the Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee to develop a plan to upgrade and replace all 250 computers in the Library on a regular basis.
- ◆ The College will review the Information Technology Department’s recommendation that computing labs, academic computing staff, and servers be centralized.

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee will administer the recently developed eCompanion survey for faculty to evaluate the effectiveness, ease of use, and overall quality of the eCompanion service and to determine the reason for decrease in usage of course management software.
- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee will develop a set of weighted criteria to aid in evaluating prospective learning management systems in the future.
- ◆ The College will appropriately staff and organize the tutoring labs when the budget improves.
- ◆ The Academic Departments will address the cross-discipline tutorial needs for course-related assignments (e.g., nursing students needing math tutoring, history students needing writing assistance).
- ◆ Tutoring Coordinators will investigate means of dissemination of tutoring information to all students and faculty.
- ◆ The College will implement the Collegewide Coordinating Council recommendations related to tutoring, when feasible.
- ◆ The College will offer Education 7 for prospective tutors.

IIC.1(a) Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.

Description–IIC.1(a)

Library resources, in a variety of formats, are selected, cataloged, and maintained by professional librarians and paraprofessionals. Materials are selected to support the curricular needs of the College. Great effort is made to involve the faculty in the selection, evaluation, and deselection of materials, both formally and informally. The Library stays informed of new courses and programs through active participation on the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee. All courses and new programs going through the curriculum process are reviewed by a faculty librarian to ensure that the Library has adequate materials to support the courses.

Materials are purchased for the LRC and tutoring programs based on the recommendations and requests made by the subject-area faculty and staff working in these areas. The main tutoring centers maintain contact with the subject area departments and are mindful of the academic standards and needs. This participation ensures that the materials meet the needs of students and are appropriate for the courses offered. To make the materials recommendation easier, the Library has added a “purchase request” form linked to its Web page.

The Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee (ISC), whose membership provides technical and faculty expertise, reviews computer hardware and software requests from academic departments. Requests are normally submitted via annual technology plans written by each department. The plans are used to gather and prioritize technology goals and objectives for the academic departments of the College. They include an explanation of the technological needs of the department, proposals for meeting those needs, and equipment, staffing, and facilities required. The ISC prioritizes these proposals and forwards recommendations to the District Technology Committee for its review. The ISC gives greater weight to projects which must be implemented in order to teach a particular class.

Student services departments forward their technology requests directly to the District Technology Committee. The District Technology Committee then prioritizes projects from all departments and programs on campus. Again, this process, driven by input from the teaching faculty, ensures that the equipment and materials purchased support student learning. Leaders of the various Information Technology departments provide input regarding special projects, upgrades to existing systems, and other system and infrastructure maintenance needs that are not included in their regular departmental budgets.

Evaluation–IIC.1(a)

The established processes work well for the selection of materials that support the academic needs of students. Collaboration between department/program faculty and the Library ensures the quality and appropriateness of materials. Librarians oversee the selection, acquisition, cataloging, processing, and maintenance of the materials, and their expertise has greatly increased student and faculty access to these materials.

Collections in Learning Resource Centers have been augmented and updated as a result of effective collaboration between Learning Resource Center coordinators and teaching faculty. For example, Library equipment funds were used to purchase new microscopes for the Science Learning Resource Center, allowing students better viewing of slides that were obtained from the Life Sciences Department budget.

The District Technology Committee develops an annual technology budget. This budget is allocated based on input, recommendations, and requests from the Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee, student services departments, and Information Technology departments. This inclusive process has ensured that computing resources support student learning and the mission of the College.

Plan–IIC.1(a)

None

IIC.1(b) The Institution provides ongoing instruction for users of Library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency.

Description–IIC.1(b)

Santa Monica College has a number of ongoing efforts to develop and support skills in information competency.

The Library offers half-unit, one unit, and three-unit classes in library research methods, and librarians teach a three-hour introduction to the Library Catalog, online databases, and bibliographic citation of these resources, as a component of Counseling 20, *Student Success Seminar*. The Library conducts over 200 library instruction sessions per year, including general orientations. In addition to these activities, students who use the Library computer lab for research and writing papers are acquiring experience in research, writing, and word processing. The Library considers each of the 36,000 reference encounters a year an opportunity to enhance students' information competency skills.

In 2000, the Library formed the Information Competency Task Force to explore the many issues relating to information competency, including the possibility of making it a graduation requirement. The Taskforce, chaired by the Bibliographic Instruction Librarian, included faculty from various disciplines such as English, Social Sciences, Counseling, ESL and Life Science.

In Fall 2001, Santa Monica College applied for and was awarded a Fund for Instructional Improvement Grant (FII) from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The Information Competency Task Force served in an advisory capacity for the project.

The grant had four objectives:

- To establish a common core of understanding of what information competency is (and is not) and its importance in instruction among 100% of faculty incorporating information competency assignments in their classes.
- To create information competency assignments for a pilot group consisting of 30% of the selected courses and implement them in the classroom.
- To increase, by 80%, students' level of competency with using a variety of information resources, as evidenced by a pre- and post-test of students' effective use of information resources during the process of writing a research paper.
- To create an online information competency course that provides distance education students with the opportunity to develop their own information competency.

As a result of this grant, and recognizing that incorporating information competency into curriculum was an issue for educators at all levels, the Information Competency Taskforce developed a course. Library 15/Education 15, *Incorporating Information Competency Into The Curriculum*, is designed to assist educators and education students in

developing the ability to interpret, evaluate, and critically analyze information for the purpose of infusing information competency skills into their curricula. The class was first offered in Summer 2002 and approved for online delivery.

Until recent staff layoffs due to the budgetary situation, two Educational Computer Specialists offered technology training for all faculty and staff on a wide variety of topics including computing basics, Internet skills, e-mail skills, web page authoring, use of graphics, office applications, and learning management software. Training was available in traditional workshops, online, and via help documentation developed in-house and purchased. Customized training was also available to departments or other groups engaged in more specialized technology initiatives. The Educational Computer Specialists also participated in training on institutional flex days, coordinated by the Academic Senate Joint Professional Development Committee. The College offers technology training through a variety of web-based resources, such as Element K, 4faculty.org, and @One. (For full details on the technology-training program for faculty and staff, including its evaluation and plans for the future, see Standard IIC.)

As a result of the increased availability of learning management software, Internet use in general, and training on its use, the amount of course material available online has increased significantly since the previous accreditation self-study. More faculty have homepages, and a large number of faculty are using eCompanion, Santa Monica College's online learning management system. As a result, students have had to exercise and improve a component of their informational competency skills in order to keep up with their coursework.

Learning Resource Center staff members make themselves available to assist students in acquiring information and developing critical thinking skills. Increases in faculty homepages and the use of the eCompanion online course support system encourage students to refine their information competency skills.

The new Library has a curriculum development room where it is anticipated that Librarians and instructional faculty will meet to design assignments that enhance student information competency skills. This room is equipped with computers and work areas that provide faculty the space and resources necessary for collaboration.

Evaluation–IIC.1(b)

Through participation in the Counseling 20 course, the Library is able to provide three hours of library instruction to at least 1,500 students per year. Through the general orientations and workshops, the librarians instruct another 6,000 students per year in basic library research skills. Feedback from both instructors and students indicate that the instruction received in these sessions improved students' ability to conduct their research successfully.

The Library 15/Education 15 course was taught for the first time in Summer 2002. Course evaluations completed by the first cohort of students were very positive. As a re-

sult of taking the class, the students believed that they increased their own level of information competency, and consequently, that they were better able to develop assignments that would increase their students' information competency skills. Indicative of a need for such a course is the number of inquiries received from around the state regarding the timeline for offering the course online. Unfortunately the total reduction in class offerings has delayed offering this class again either on-ground or online.

One class participant, an Santa Monica College faculty member, conducted a research project of her own, after taking the class. She taught three sections of the same history course in Fall 2002 and introduced three information competency assignments into only one of the three sections. At the end of the semester, 72.4% of the students in the course section that incorporated the information competency assignments concluded that they used the Internet more, since they had taken the class. An overwhelming majority of the students felt that the assignments helped them on their second paper. (85.2% indicated that these assignments definitely helped, and 13.8% said that they may have helped.) Of the three assignments, they found exposure to the Library's online databases the most helpful. All of the students believed that they would continue to use these resources in their future academic careers.

Plan–IIC.1(b)

- ◆ The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee will address if and how Information Competency will be included in graduation requirements.
- ◆ The Librarians will promote the curriculum development room as a venue for collaboration between discipline instructors and Library faculty to create assignments that will help develop students' information competency skills.
- ◆ The Library staff will provide information competency training to tutoring coordinators, academic computing instructional specialists, and computer lab personnel so that they can provide better assistance to students in conducting Internet and database searches.

IIC.1(c) The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.

Description–IIC.1(c)

Santa Monica College is committed to providing access to the Library and other learning support services for all students. It provides this access in a number of different ways.

Over the past six years, the Library has increased the number of electronic resources available via remote access. These services are a benefit to both on campus and distance

education students and faculty and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the Library website (<http://library.smc.edu/>).

These library resources currently include:

- Access to the Library online catalog
- Ability to review personal circulation records
- Ability to renew checked-out items
- Ability to place holds on items desired
- Access to the Library new book list
- Access to Library Internet resource lists and research topic guides
- Access to e-mail reference service (Ask-a-Librarian)
- Ability to send comments or purchase requests through a web form
- Access to over 20 databases, which include over 3000 journals and periodical titles available in full-text and over 6000 electronic books

By offering online courses, the College serves the needs of students for whom attendance on campus is inconvenient or impossible. To date, Santa Monica College has offered 67 different online courses from 23 disciplines. Students taking online classes currently must come to campus to access materials in the Learning Resource Centers. This is feasible for students in “hybrid” classes that meet at least once a week on campus, but not so for students enrolled in strictly online classes, as they may be physically located far from campus. The Reading Laboratory has a significant set of online resources to allow students to complete their course requirements outside of open laboratory hours. When the budget improves, the College will need to address the feasibility of adding additional online learning resources.

Students may sign up for a Santa Monica College network account that provides free e-mail and access to the Library databases. They may also take advantage of free Santa Monica College-provided dial-in access to the campus network and the Internet. In addition, students may remotely do the following:

- Apply for admission
- Register for classes and pay fees
- Locate and purchase course materials from the campus bookstore
- View the current *Schedule of Classes* and list of open course sections
- Add or drop classes
- Secure access to view and print all grades
- Secure access to view transcripts, print an unofficial copy, or order an official transcript

Santa Monica College is committed to fulfilling its legal and ethical obligation to provide equal access to electronic and information technology to all students and employees including those with disabilities. The Disabled Students High Tech Training Center is dedicated to ensuring that all students with disabilities in academic courses and all Santa Monica College employees have equal access to campus resources. Towards this end, the High Tech Training Center provides access evaluations, training in assistive technology, computer courses, and consultation to the campus community on all aspects of universal technology access. Each year, the Academic Senate Joint Information Services Committee recommends a budget for collegewide assistive technology in computer labs.

Evaluation–IIC.1(c)

The Library has made a concerted effort to meet the information needs of both the on-campus and distance education students. The Library’s strategy to achieve an appropriate balance between electronic and print resources has been successful. Services such as electronic reference, that were originally designed with the distance education student in mind, have been embraced by on-ground students as well. Student comments on the User Survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the online resources.

The Library has also made a concerted effort to ensure that all of its electronic resources, including its website, are accessible to students with disabilities. For example, the Library purchases databases that are compatible with screen-reader software and include alt-tags for images. Although faculty are informed of accessibility compliance standards, not all faculty homepages and eCompanion sites are compliant. There is currently no college-wide screening mechanism in place to ensure accessibility compliance.

The online format necessitates greater exchange between faculty and each individual student. For many instructors and classes, this, in essence, involves some level of tutoring for those students having trouble with the course. However, concerns have been raised that tutoring services are not available to students enrolled in online classes.

Plan–IIC.1(c)

- ◆ Library staff will develop strategies for informing faculty and students of the full range of library services available.
- ◆ The College will study the feasibility of developing online LRC resources.
- ◆ The College webmaster, using recently acquired InFocus software, will screen all Santa Monica College websites for accessibility compliance.

IIC.1(d) The institution provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services.

Description–IIC.1(d)

The College maintains service agreements for crucial hardware and software systems used in the Library and other learning support services. For equipment not covered by service agreements, the College relies on staff and general repair budgets to repair this equipment. Library books are security stripped and electronically sensitized, and a security gate is in place to alert staff when a sensitized book goes through the gate. The Science LRC now utilizes the Library's automation system to circulate its materials. This enables better tracking of materials and their use.

The College's Information Technology departments have developed and implemented numerous strategies to keep hardware, software, and network access secure. The Information Technology departments maintain up-to-date anti-virus software for all campus computers. (For more information on information technology security and maintenance procedures and policies, see Standard IIC.

Evaluation–IIC.1(d)

The institution provides adequate maintenance and security for the Library and learning support services. It is of concern that most of the computers on campus are now out of warranty and at an age when repairs become necessary. With the current budget crisis, it is questionable whether there will be funds available for these repairs.

Plan–IIC.1(d)

- ◆ The District Technology Committee will review the current technology maintenance and cascading plans and recommend appropriate adjustments.

IIC.2 The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Description–IIC.2

All library and learning support services participate in the College's program review process. This process involves the preparation of a self-study, revision and updating of course outlines of record and a review by the committee. The executive summary prepared by the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee is forwarded to the Collegewide Coordinating Council to aid in institutional planning.

The Library conducted a User Survey in Spring 2002, while occupying the temporary library facility, as an aid to determine user satisfaction. The Library also participates in several annual state and national library surveys. The results of these internal and external surveys are used to assist in the evaluating and planning future library services.

Adequacy of Learning Resource Center resources and services are evaluated through an informal process. Faculty provide feedback and suggestions to LRC staff regarding the need for updated and additional materials to support the curriculum.

Evaluation–IIC.2

The comprehensive program review process is an effective tool for the evaluation of college programs. This process includes both a self-evaluation and an external review of the program by the Program Review Committee. As stated earlier in this report, part of the program review process involves the updating of a department’s course outlines of record. The committee’s executive summaries provide commendations, suggestions for strengthening the program from within, and identified areas that require additional institutional support. The Library and LRC have striven to improve the areas noted by the committee in need of strengthening from within, while either maintaining or improving the quality of the areas commended.

Although the User Survey conducted in the temporary library building provided interesting and beneficial information, some of the results were both surprising and contradictory. For example, most of the students stated they were satisfied to very satisfied with the amount of study space in the Library, yet students were often studying on the floor due to lack of space. The survey instrument will be reviewed and refined for development of future surveys.

The informal process of suggestions and feedback from faculty to Learning Resource Center staff appears to work well. Purchases of new materials are made based on these suggestions.

Plan–IIC.2

- ◆ The Library will conduct regular user surveys as an aid to refining and planning library services.